

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
MARTIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2024  
@ 9:00 A.M.**

The regular meeting of the Martin County Board of Commissioners was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairwoman Kathy Smith. Commissioners present were Jaime Bleess, Kathy Smith, Elliot Belgard, and Richard Koons. Commissioner Steve Flohrs was absent. Also present were Scott Higgins, Martin County Coordinator, Taylor McGowan, County Attorney, Michael Forstner, Auditor/Treasurer, Leigha Johnson, Human Resources Director, Bill Fahey, Jason Sorensen, Fairmont Photo Press, Brooke Wohlraabe, Sentinel Newspaper, Julie Walters, Administrative Assistant, and other members of staff and public.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Motion by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Koons, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Board of Commissioners, hereby approve the agenda for the September 3, 2024 regular Board of Commissioners meeting. Duly passed.

Representative Bjorn Olson was present and provided a brief legislative update and responded to various inquiries from commissioners and staff.

Pam Flitter, Planning and Zoning Director, was present and noted Joseph Sanders is proposing to develop a housing subdivision on property located in an “SL-2” Residential Recreational District. The proposed subdivision would divide 16.13 acres consisting of six (6) lots. The Martin County Zoning Ordinance requires any division of land that involves improvements to one or more parcels of land for residential structures must be an approved plat in an “SL-2” Residential Recreational District. Flitter went on to note the Planning Commission met and approved the Preliminary Plat at their August 27, 2024 meeting and is recommending approval. Flitter also noted pending County Board action today, Sanders will bring forward the application for the Final Plat to the Martin County Planning Commission September 24, 2024, and to the Martin County Board for the Final Plat review on October 1, 2024.

Motion by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Koons, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Board of Commissioners, hereby approve and authorize Board Chair to sign the resolution approving the Preliminary Plat Request received from Joseph Sanders within Section 32 of Silver Lake Township.

R-#41/’24

**RESOLUTION  
FOR PRELIMINARY PLAT REQUEST FROM  
JOSEPH SANDERS WITHIN SECTION 32 OF SILVER LAKE TOWNSHIP**

WHEREAS, the proposed plat is located in Section 32 of Silver Lake Township, County of Martin, MN; and that the Martin County Planning and Zoning Ordinance requires any division of a parcel

of land that involves improvements to one or more parcels of land for residential structures must be an approved plat; and

WHEREAS the proposed preliminary plat would divide approximately 16.13 acres consisting of six (6) lots located in an “SL-2” Residential Recreational District; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Sanders requested and received approval of the Preliminary Plat/Findings on August 27, 2024 from the Martin County Planning Commission and the preliminary sketch was reviewed by the Martin County Planning Commission on June 25, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Martin County Board of Commissioners is the final plat approval authority for the County of Martin; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Martin County Board of Commissioners to protect the public health, safety and welfare of its residents.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Martin County Board of Commissioners, upon the recommendation of the Martin County Planning and Zoning Commission regarding the proposed preliminary plat of Sanders Lake View Addition, and that the proposed preliminary plat is consistent with the Martin County Comprehensive Plan, the County’s Subdivision Ordinance and Land Use and Zoning Ordinance, hereby approves the preliminary plat for the Sanders Lake View Addition located in Section 32 of Silver Lake Township, County of Martin, MN, for a proposed housing subdivision on property located in an “SL-2” Residential Recreation District.

Upon this motion made by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Koons, was duly made and passed this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of September, 2024.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MARTIN COUNTY, MN

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Kathy Smith, Board Chair

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Scott Higgins, County Coordinator

Roll Call AYES: Commissioners Bleess, Koons, Belgard, and Smith. NAYS: None. Commissioner Flohrs was absent. Resolution duly passed and adopted this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of September, 2024.

Kevin Peyman, County Engineer, was present and provided a brief Highway Department Update including driving CSAH 263 with MnDOT staff to specifically look at some of the County’s concerns with the construction project.

Leigha Johnson, Human Resources Director, was present and recommends the wage increase for Library Union Employee Christine Hasek. Johnson noted the proposed new wage for Hasek is Grade 11 Step 5 at \$29.05 per hour, effective September 13, 2024.

Motion by Commissioner Koons, seconded by Commissioner Bleess, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Board of Commissioners, as the governing board and having the authority to determine wages for Martin County Library employees, and upon the recommendation of the Human Resources Director, hereby approve the wage increase for Christine Hasek to Grade 11 Step 5 at \$29.05 per hour, effective September 13, 2024. Duly passed.

Johnson next noted the Jail Administrator recommends the termination of Cody Leiding, Part Time Probationary Correctional Officer in the Martin County Sheriff's Office, effective August 20, 2024.

Motion by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Koons, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Board of Commissioners, hereby approve the termination of Cody Leiding, Part Time Correctional Officer in the Martin County Sheriff's Office, effective August 20, 2024. Duly passed.

Johnson noted the Board has authorized the recruitment of a Part Time Correctional Officer in the Martin County Sheriff's Office and recommends the hire of Hunter Jahnke at Grade 12 Step 1 at \$26.02 per hour, effective September 4, 2024.

Motion by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Bleess, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Board of Commissioners, upon the recommendation of the Human Resources Director, hereby approve the hire of Hunter Jahnke to Part Time Correctional Officer in the Martin County Sheriff's Office, effective September 4, 2024. Duly passed.

Johnson noted the County has received its 2025 Health Insurance Renewal from South Central Service Cooperative and as anticipated is receiving a 21.21% increase. Johnson recommends that Martin County advertise for proposals to seek out options for the County's 2025 Group Health Insurance Plans.

Motion by Commissioner Koons, seconded by Commissioner Bleess, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Board of Commissioners, hereby approve and authorize advertising for proposals for the County's 2025 Group Health Insurance Plans. Duly passed.

Johnson next noted the County has received its renewals for ancillary benefits including Life Insurance, Long Term Disability, Dental, Vision, and Long Term Care coverages. Johnson reviewed 2025 benefits noting monthly rates for Life Insurance with Sun Life will remain unchanged for the year 2025; monthly rates for Voluntary Long-Term Disability (The Hartford) will remain unchanged for the year 2025; monthly rates for Voluntary Vision (VSP) Plan will remain unchanged for the year 2025; monthly rates for Long Term Care (UNUM) will remain unchanged for the year 2025; and monthly rates for Voluntary Dental (MetLife) will increase 8% for the year 2025. Johnson recommends acceptance of the Ancillary Benefits renewal(s).

Motion by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Bleess, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Board of Commissioners, hereby accept the Ancillary Benefit renewal(s) and authorizes the Board Chair and/or its designee to sign all necessary documents for the following employee benefit plans with Integrity Employee Benefits, LLC with rate changes for the year 2025 which includes: Life Insurance – monthly rates from Sun Life will remain unchanged for the year 2025; Voluntary Long Term Disability – monthly rates from The Hartford will remain unchanged for the year 2025; Voluntary Dental – monthly rates from MetLife will increase 8% for the year 2025; Voluntary Vision (VSP) Plan – monthly rates from VSP will remain unchanged for the year 2025; and Long Term Care (UNUM) – monthly rates will remain unchanged for the year 2025. Duly passed.

Johnson presented and reviewed an addendum to the Granada Huntley East Chain (GHEC) School Resource Officer (SRO) Contract for the 2024-2025 School year. Johnson noted the addendum updates the contract dates for Deputy Gerhardt to perform his duties as the School Resource Officer and teach the course that he is teaching. There is new language regarding contract renewal noted in Paragraph D. of Section 1 Teaching/Additional Hours: The terms of this addendum shall commence on September 3, 2024 and expire on June 6, 2025. Any renewal of this addendum shall be at the discretion of the Martin County Board of Commissioners, and any renewal must be agreed upon and authorized by the Martin County Board of Commissioners by June 27, 2025. Failure to renew by the designated date will preclude any renewal for the following school year. Johnson went on to note the County Personnel Committee has met and recommends approval.

Taylor McGowan, County Attorney, was present and noted there was some concern that the contract renewal is not submitted until the last possible moment and the Board is faced with taking action after the school year has begun and so in drafting the potential addendum for this school year language was added that any subsequent renewal has to be approved by the County Board by June 27<sup>th</sup> of next year and any failure to renew by that date would preclude renewing the contract.

Doug Storbeck, Superintendent of GHEC Schools, was present and noted Deputy Gerhardt is a great addition to the GHEC school district and always a positive presence. Gerhardt is providing two classes at GHEC, an Intro to Criminal Justice and Careers in Criminal Justice and we have approximately 17-18 students that he served last year and we anticipate the same numbers this year. Looking at every area in our district I think we're struggling with attracting people back to not only our school districts but our communities and really in criminal justice, just as in teaching. So, the more people we can get into those careers is good. Storbeck went on to note I did have a conversation with Chairwoman Kathy Smith and Vice Chair Steve Flohrs and Scott Higgins, County Coordinator, about the contract. It was my misunderstanding of what needed to be done. Storbeck noted I did read the contract for this upcoming school year and did see a June renewal date is expected and I have it on my calendar to take care of that in May when we have our numbers for next year to renew. Storbeck also noted one option I would like to have in even if we didn't use Deputy Gerhardt in this role next year depending on numbers is that we would have subsequent years available to us to continue this maybe on every other year if it is not needed every year because there are certain courses that we don't provide every year just because numbers wouldn't suggest that we keep that open every year. So, I would like that to be taken into consideration in the future. But, we will continue with this contract this year and will look to renew it come May of next year.

Commissioner Belgard noted we have a contract for an SRO that doesn't necessarily state that it will be Deputy Gerhardt. If there would be another deputy they probably wouldn't be doing the teaching part. I think we need to keep them separate a little bit.

Storbeck noted yes. It's an addition to (the contract), an addendum. I would agree that not everybody is suited to be teaching. That would need to be reevaluated.

Corey Klanderud, Chief Deputy Martin County Sheriff's Office, was present and noted our department has been very happy with this arrangement. Deputy Gerhardt does a very good job in that role and we've made it work. Deputy Gerhardt also covers our court security aspect and so during this addendum extra time we've been able to make those coverages with some of our other staff to make it work. I believe it has been a win, win for us and the school district.

Commissioner Bleess inquired the dollar amount that GHEC contributes to this program.

Klanderud noted the standard contract is a 40% of our cost for the position and with this addendum it's another 5% for the extra hours that on the days that are not fully contracted that he goes in and provides teaching on those days. So, the dollar figure, I don't have it with me, but I would probably say the standard 40% is in the ballpark of somewhere in the high fifty thousands and with the other 5% I think it's in that sixty thousand dollar range. Klanderud also noted the addendum to the original contract was only needed because when we switched from full time (SRO) coverage at the school down to part time coverage we wanted to allow some of those certain timeframes on the other days and so even with the original contract if something serious occurs all our people leave other responsibilities and go and handle that.

Commissioner Koons noted I was on the County Personnel Committee last year when this all started. I had my questions then and I still have my questions now. I get it that we have an SRO there, but I still question why this isn't a program that's available through the CER so that all school kids have the opportunity. I think we're singling out one group of kids that are given a chance at something that none of the other school kids are getting.

Commissioner Belgard noted it's not the County giving them that option. The school district is providing that extra option.

Klanderud noted this came out of the role of being an SRO at Granada. Granada decided they wanted to offer a class and Gerhardt was willing to teach it. We have not offered it to other students. Could we? Absolutely. I think that's something that we would have to have classes get into the CER Program because you need a curriculum and an instructor and we have that. We could definitely go that direction. But I think that would be something we'd need to bring to County Personnel Committee and I don't want to volunteer one of my people without talking to them. So, that's another option and we just haven't explored that path at this point.

Chairwoman Smith noted I don't know if that's the responsibility of the County to be teaching outside of hours.

Klanderud noted right now we are facilitating it. GHEC is paying for that time. We are simply facilitating something they are budgeting for.

Additional discussion ensued pertaining to GHEC's student state aid funding; if Storbeck feels anybody specifically enrolls to GHEC to take the classes; and a comment was made a year ago to do something that would be interactive or bus kids from one school to the other for one class.

After further discussion,

Motion by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Bleess, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Board of Commissioners, after review and consideration per the request of the Granada Huntley East Chain (GHEC) School District, hereby approve the GHEC – SRO Contract Addendum, effective September 3, 2024 and will expire on June 6, 2025, including new language in Paragraph D. of Section 1 Teaching/Additional Hours: The terms of this addendum shall commence on September 3, 2024 and expire on June 6, 2025. Any renewal of this addendum shall be at the discretion of the Martin County Board of Commissioners, and any renewal must be agreed upon and authorized by the Martin County Board of Commissioners by June 27, 2025. Failure to renew by the designated date will preclude any renewal for the following school year. Duly passed.

Lucas Cyphers, Building Maintenance Technician, was present and provided an update on the Human Resources Building Window Replacement Project including a few items for Board consideration.

Cyphers noted there are a few loose ends to address before we can start in on the project. The first order of business would be choosing the window tint color. Cyphers went on to note the Building and Purchasing Committee met and it was his understanding that we wanted to go more towards the original window tint and provided samples of window tint colors. Cyphers also noted there is roughly a two to four week lead-time once you make the window tint decision to get the glass. A lot of the parts for the frames are already in.

Cyphers noted the second matter of business would be removal of blinds. It states in the build list that the contractor will remove the existing blinds. It does not state whether the contractor will dispose of the blinds; or replacement of the existing blinds with new blinds. Cyphers noted the blinds that are currently in the building are very old and most don't work. Cyphers went on to note he has been slowly replacing the blinds as they've broken. Cyphers also noted it is his recommendation and the contractor's staff's recommendation that the blinds be disposed of and replaced.

Cyphers continued the third matter of business is window inspection. There will be periodic inspections of the window installation by Tim Auringer (Oleson & Hobbie Architects). However, it is being asked that the County's maintenance staff provide ongoing inspection of every window once they are installed prior to putting furniture back. This is to keep the project flowing and to avoid County maintenance staff moving furniture more than once.

Much discussion ensued including infrastructure dollars for installation of energy efficient windows; contractor did not have window blind replacement in their project dollars; who installs the new blinds; current contractor can order and install the window blinds at a rough estimate of 118 blinds at \$28,000; the need for additional quotes for replacement blinds or consider as a change

order to the contract; disposal of old window blinds; proposed window schedule is to start installation October 14, 2024 and complete by November 18, 2024 (weather dependent); with goal of contractor installing 2-4 windows per day, need window inspection on a regular basis so furniture can be moved back into offices and not keep everything disrupted until project completion when the punch list inspection will be performed; will window inspection by County staff preclude any warranty work.

After discussion,

Motion by Commissioner Bleess, seconded by Commissioner Koons, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Board of Commissioners, hereby approve the preferred tint color for the window replacement project at the Human Resources Building; and approve periodic inspections of the window installation at the Human Resources Building by Martin County maintenance staff to provide ongoing inspection of every window once they are installed prior to putting furniture back to keep the project flowing and to avoid County maintenance staff moving furniture more than once. Duly passed.

Additional discussion ensued pertaining to the purchase and installation of replacement window blinds and the contractor's quote of \$28,000.

After discussion,

Commissioner Blees noted can we just make a motion requesting a change order to replace those blinds and dispose of the old blinds and come back here in two weeks with what we would actually be replacing them with and a price to consider? That would be my motion. I don't want to do anything without seeing stuff on paper.

Commissioner Belgard noted I'll second it to get it to the floor. In doing that, if we push it off a week or two, does that give us a chance to get additional quotes.

Commissioner Bleess noted in a perfect world I would like that as well. But if we're trying to do it all one window at a time, logically, doesn't make sense to upset the crew there.

Chairwoman Smith questioned approval of change orders without knowing the dollar amount.

Commissioner Bleess noted that's not what my motion was. My motion was can we ask for the paperwork so we know what we're voting on (the change order). I'll retract my motion just so it is not confusing. I think it is important for us to see things on paper for us to consider and this isn't that. So, it might just be better to table it and come back in two weeks.

Cyphers noted we can do that because the actual project start date would line up with that. We could even ask that the contractor be here with his samples and a firm number in writing so it is on the agenda for the next meeting.

After further discussion,

No Action taken regarding the purchase of replacement window blinds and disposal of old window blinds for the Human Resources Building Window Replacement Project.

Amber Patten, CEDA Consultant for Martin County, was present to request County Board consideration to set a public hearing to establish a Local Housing Trust Fund (LHTF) Ordinance. Patten noted a Local Housing Trust Fund is a dedicated pool of money set up by a local government or community organization to address housing-related needs within specific areas including demolition, low income, rental assistance, and down payment on a house. The LHTF Committee has met several times and the county attorney has drafted a proposed ordinance. Patten recommends that a public hearing be set for 10:00 a.m. on October 1, 2024.

Motion by Commissioner Koons, seconded by Commissioner Belgard, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Board of Commissioners, in consideration of the proposed Martin County Local Housing Trust Fund Ordinance, hereby set a Public Hearing on October 1, 2024, beginning at 10:00 a.m. in the Commissioners Meeting Room – Martin County Courthouse. Duly passed.

Forstner and Higgins reviewed the preliminary CY2025 budget which is currently at an 15.66% or with further cuts for consideration at an 13.44% increase from 2024 to 2025 Levy.

Much discussion ensued pertaining to an additional cut of \$420,000 in LEC debt service, along with further potential cuts from Human Services levy request, Human Resources, 2025 Property/Casualty-Workers Compensation estimated contributions from MCIT; and budgeted versus actual for County department budgets.

The Board reviewed Warrants, Auditor Warrants, and EFT Transactions to be paid September 3, 2024.

Motion by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Bleess, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Board of Commissioners, hereby approve Warrants, Auditor Warrants, and EFT Transactions to be paid September 3, 2024, and includes the Drainage bills as presented. Duly passed.

Warrants received and paid September 3, 2024, are registered on file in the Auditor/Treasurer's Office as follows:

Revenue Fund – Warrants Approved September 3, 2024	\$ 38,620.94
Enhanced 9-1-1 Fund	\$ 1,631.58
Solid Waste Management Fund	\$ 2,783.61
Human Services Fund	\$352,504.92
Recorder's Technology Fund	\$ 2,536.50
Building – CIP – Fund	\$ 750.00
Human Services Building Fund	\$ 950.15
Total	\$399,777.70
Road and Bridge Funds Totaled	\$106,143.44
Martin County Ditch Funds Totaled	\$ 80,942.72

The Board reviewed reports and announcements including the 2025 Estimated Contribution Notice from Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust (MCIT); Thank You Note received from South Central Volunteer Dive Team; and information from CREST – Caregiver Response Effort & Service Team.

Commissioners reviewed their calendars of previous and upcoming meetings and activities: August 20, 2024 – regular Martin County Board of Commissioners meeting at 9:00 a.m., Special Projects meeting to talk about remaining ARPA fund balance, Human Services Citizen Advisory Board at 5:30 p.m.; August 21, 2024 – F/M Joint County Human Services meeting, Martin County Parks/Trail Committee meeting, County Personnel Committee meeting; August 23, 2024 – Prairieland; August 27, 2024 – Prairie Lakes Transit Full Board meeting, Planning and Zoning meeting at 5:30 p.m.; August 28, 2024 – Local Housing Trust Fund meeting; August 29, 2024 – Des Moines River Watershed One Watershed One Plan meeting in Windom, MN; September 2, 2024 – Labor Day Holiday – Courthouse Closed; September 3, 2024 – regular Martin County Board of Commissioners meeting at 9:00 a.m.; September 4, 2024 – F/M Joint County Human Services Board meeting, Martin County Veterans Memorial Committee meeting; September 5, 2024 – Drainage Ditch Redetermination meetings, Justice Center Core Committee meeting with Wold Architects and Engineers; September 6, 2024 – Prairie Lakes Transit Executive Board meeting; September 10, 2024 – Prairieland meeting at 9:00 a.m., Martin County EDA meeting at 5:15 p.m.; September 11, 2024 – Department Directors meeting at 8:30 a.m., Martin County Parks/Trail Committee meeting at Martin County Veterans Memorial Site, Rural Minnesota Counties Zoom meeting; September 12-13, 2024 – AMC Fall Policy Conference at Arrowwood Conference Center; September 12, 2024 – Martin County Historical Society Annual Meeting; September 16, 2024 – WorkForce meeting in Mankato, MN; September 17, 2024 – next regular Martin County Board of Commissioners meeting at 9:00 a.m., Employee Appreciation Luncheon at 12:00 p.m. at Green Mill Restaurant, County Extension Committee meeting.

The Board recessed at 10:39 a.m.

The Board reconvened at 10:49 a.m.

Greg Ous, District 7 Engineer, along with Angie Piltaver, Planning Staff with the Minnesota Department of Transportation, and Willie Rabenberg, District State Aid Engineer, were present and provided an update on the District 7 Capital Highway Investment Plan (CHIP) Presentation including 2023 MnSHIP (State Highway Investment Plan) Investment Direction; District 7 System Overview; Pavement Performance Targets; 2023 System Ride Quality Index (RQI); 2024 Span Bridge Condition; Typical Project Cycle; 2024 Construction Map; 2024 Flooding on Mn 4 and CR 32 (July 1, 2024) and MN 4 Flooding north of Fox Lake at CR 32 (July 12, 2024); 2024-2033 District 7 Funding Targets; June 2024 Draft CHIP; 2029-2034 CHIP Projects; 2034 Projected System Ride Quality Index (RQI); 2034 Projected Bridge Conditions; and District 7 Projects. The Board thanked MnDOT District 7 staff for their presentation.

With no further business to wit,

Motion by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Koons, to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 11:23 a.m.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MARTIN COUNTY, MN

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Kathy Smith, Board Chair

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Scott Higgins, County Coordinator