

**MOWER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
WORK SESSION**

July 6, 2021

The Mower County Board of Commissioners in and for the County of Mower, Minnesota, met in a Work Session on July 6, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. at the Government Center, 201 1<sup>st</sup> Street NE, in Austin, Minnesota.

All members present, viz: Polly Glynn, Chair  
Jerry Reinartz  
Mike Ankeny  
Jeff Baldus  
John Mueller  
Trish Harren, County Administrator

The Chair called the meeting to order.

The Board discussed options due to the resignation of County Recorder. The Board has the option to move the position from elected to appointed. Following discussion, the Board plans to make an interim appointment and proceed with the steps necessary to make the position appointed.

Sheriff Sandvik and Chief Deputy Mark May appeared before the board to discuss Correctional Facility staffing. Several staff are currently out on medical and two staff are anticipated to retire. Due to the length of time to suitably train new staff, the department is requesting adding two correctional staff to assist with the staffing issues now and then will be the replacement staff for the pending retirements. The Board will consider the department's request at the next Board meeting.

The City of Austin and Mower County have had a long term Joint Law Enforcement Center operating under a Joint Powers Law Enforcement Commission. There are approximately 15 joint law enforcement centers in the State of Minnesota. Mower County has housed the Law Enforcement Center (LEC) in the Government Center and the City and County have jointly funded expenses. The budget includes 911 dispatch, records management, equipment, building maintenance, IT services, etc. During a recent Joint Power Law Enforcement Commission meeting to discuss the 2022 budget, the City of Austin advised the County that the trend line is for counties to fund 100% of the cost to provide 911 dispatch services. Currently the City participates in a 50:50 cost share. The total budget is \$1.9 million. This change would shift approximately \$600,000 in cost to the County. The City noted that it would be a more equitable way to fund the service that is used by the entire county. The City advised that the entire cost shift would not need to occur in one year. The County is seeking legal advice, doing its due diligence, and will be reviewing the entirety of the Joint Powers Agreement which has not been updated since 1997. The County values the long-term relationship with the City in working together to deliver quality public safety to our shared constituents and will work diligently to find a way forward to continue that partnership.

It was noted that the City of Austin intends to annex the land by the Ramsey Dam.

Auditor-Treasurer Scott Felten with Deputy Auditor-Treasurer Amanda Kiefer presented the Board with lists of tax-forfeited properties and provided a status update. It is the department's goal to host a land sale for the list of tax-forfeited parcels from 2019 this fall. The Assessor's office currently is reviewing these parcels and then the list will be brought to the Board to set minimum values. The 2020/2021 list of tax-forfeited parcels need more time as the department works through the processes necessary.

The work session concluded at 3:41 p.m.

**THE MOWER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**BY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Chairperson**

**Attest:**

**By:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Clerk/Administrator**

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