

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE
RICE COUNTY COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Commissioner's Room / Government Services Building
Tuesday, August 3, 2021 at 8:30 AM**

I. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

(At the beginning of each Committee of the Whole Work Session meeting, the floor will be open to solicit public comments. Public comments will be limited to two (2) minutes for each person, subject to the discretion of the County Board Chairperson)

II. OUTSIDE AGENCY:

- A. Delane James spoke on behalf of Buckham Memorial Library. She discussed the last year in perspective and new plans taking place. Currently they are starting a program called Storywalk. There will be signs on corners of the street located around the library. These are open to everyone. She described that they received a grant through the City. This will allow them stories for the next 5 years. August 22 will be Plaza dedication day. The public is urged to come down and take a look.
- B. Erica Staab-Absher spoke on behalf of the Hope Center. Each year we ask the outside agency to speak on behalf of their facility and what they offer for Rice County. Per Erica, the funds from the County were utilized to pay for a portion of their Blueprint Coordinator's salary to help facilitate the furthering of the multidisciplinary team work of the Blueprint (The county-wide coordinated response to Domestic Violence in Rice County.) Erica talked about some statistics stating that they work with about 1,200 clients a year. They project this year to be a bit higher. If you know of anyone that may be dealing with an abusive relationship, or have been involved with some type of assault, contact the Hope Center. The Hope Center is there to help. They have a safeline to call 1.800.607.2330. Your voice will be heard. So reach out even if it's not you, but you know someone that is having difficulties coming forward. We as a community are the only ones that can prevent further issues from happening.
- C. Natalie Draper spoke on behalf of the Northfield Library, stating that their proposal for 2022 will remain the way it was last year. They are not asking for an increase in funds. She included information on library budgets for 2021 and 2022, key indicators for the past years, notable achievements for 2021 and important goals and measures for 2022.
- D. Kathy Jasnoch, Shelter Director for Prairie's Edge Humane Society spoke regarding their request for the upcoming year. They are asking for funding of \$5000.00 from Rice County to continue with their work, providing medical services for the animals to come to them for help. Between 7/1/2020 and 6/30/2021, they transferred in 78 cats and 20 dogs (69 were owner surrenders and 29 were strays and transfers from other facilities, such as city impounds); during that same time, they have adopted out 79 cats and 22 dogs. Kathy stated they have had some delay in getting the animals adopted due to the pandemic. Since they had to cut workers, they no longer have a veterinarian who comes to their facility on a regular basis. All animals are being taken to local clinics for their medical needs, which is causing a longer time for the animals getting through the adoption process. Kathy states they are experiencing a steady increase in the animal intakes and expect to return to the usual numbers into 2022.
- E. Susan Garwood, Executive Director of the Rice County Historical Society, brought in their funding request for 2022. The mission of the Rice County Historical Society is to discover, preserve, and share the history of Rice County and the State of Minnesota for present and future generations. Susan states that during the pandemic they were closed for 5 months in 2020. Additionally, they were required to maintain social distance, limit the number of people in the museum at all times in all spaces, and wear masks for an additional 6 months. No in-person events were to happen. They did eventually turn to virtual events, which went fairly well. The Rice County Historical Society Board of Directors sincerely thanks Rice County and the County Commissioners for the ongoing support of the Society.

III. PARKS & FACILITIES DEPARTMENT: Matthew Verdick

- A. Matthew Verdick, Director of Parks & Facilities talked about what his plans for the future look like. He also included a PowerPoint presentation showing us what all of his employees are currently responsible for and how their roles play out with daily functions.

IV. ASSESSOR'S OFFICE: Joshua Schoen

- A. Josh Schoen, County Assessor, presented a PowerPoint presentation which went through Assessment Measures, market trends-Residential/SRR, market trends-Apartments, and market trends-Commercial/Industrial. He also went over the market trend for Ag/RVL Land as well. The topic of discussion was over the tillable land valuation method change from CER to CPI (Crop Productivity Index). Soils will be valued as if they are being marketed.

V. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES: Julie Runkel

- A. Julie Runkel talked about the Solid Waste Management plan that must be updated every 10 years. Rice County is currently in that timeframe to adopt an updated policy. Specific requirements for what the plan must contain are laid out in Minnesota Rules 9215.0500-9215.0950 (the checklist is included in the packet). Julie has given us a draft copy of what the Solid Waste Plan Update consists of. A PowerPoint walking through some of the main points of the plan will be presented to the Board of Commissioners at a later date.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Galen Malecha, seconded by Dave Miller, to adjourn the meeting.

RESULT: Approved, AYES: Jeff Docken, Dave Miller, Steve Underdahl, Galen Malecha, Jim Purfeerst,
NAYS: None