

County to partner with Longville to improve recycling drop-off area

by Gail DeBoer Staff writer gdeboer@pilotindependent.com | Posted: Saturday, May 28, 2016 7:00 am

Cass County commissioners authorized the Environmental Services Department (ESD) May 17 to spend up to \$15,000 to improve the recycling drop-off area in Longville on city property behind city offices.

Local residents have complained about the site at the corner of Manders and Aspen Lanes because of dust and difficult access.

Longville has offered to partner with ESD to pave and improve the site. The project would involve a cement pad where roll-off bins would be placed. The area around the pad and the rest of Manders Ave. south to the alley, and from the north corner of Manders Lane and Aspen Lane to Hwy. 84 would also be paved.

This would be a city project, and Longville would take responsibility for managing stormwater. ESD would split the costs with the city, not to exceed \$15,000; (total estimate is \$29,335). ESD would also install a fence around the containers, if necessary. Cass's project manager Mark Beard will coordinate the project with the city.

The Board authorized a one-year extension to allow ESD to complete the **Cass County Water Plan**, which expires May 27. The priority concerns scoping document has been submitted, reviewed and approved by the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). ESD is waiting for the final MPCA WRAPS report to be completed in June. A public hearing will be announced this fall, before the Water Plan is submitted to the BWSR.

The extension also allows BWSR time to execute further grant agreements with Cass County; without extra time, funding for the upcoming year could be jeopardized. ESD plans to apply for two grants to create watershed plans for the Leech Lake and Pine River watersheds, which are crucial first steps to obtaining future grants.

The **first quarter 2016 Planning and Zoning Permit report** showed permit activity nearly flat in 2016 when compared to 2015. This year between January and March, 241 permits were issued, compared to 248 last year at the same time. First quarter revenue was down at \$42,219, compared to \$53,073. ESD Director John Ringle commented that April's permit activity leads him to expect a year similar to last year. This is significant, since land use permits activity had increased over the past two years, when compared to five or six years ago.

Newly-appointed Land Commissioner Kirk Titus presented updates to the June 25 land sale parcel list.

Seventeen parcels with an appraised value of \$360,000 will be offered at public auction at the Courthouse in Walker, beginning at 9 a.m. Four parcels have been removed from the land sale list as township residents requested those lands remain in public ownership.

Any parcels that do not sell will be available for purchase over the counter at the Land Department during regular business hours.

The brochure and website listings will be available to the public at the Land Department Office in Backus, the Auditor-Treasurer's Office in Walker and in the county website, www.co.cass.mn.us.

The board approved a resolution regarding Grant In Aid Trail applications; the applications are required to obtain funding for those trails. Titus will be the county's authorized representative and Kevin Dahlman will be trail coordinator.

In other actions the board

Authorized Cass County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Director Jaimee Meyer to apply to the National Joint Powers Alliance Innovation Funding Program to develop a region-wide brand and marketing program, facilitated by Cass County ESD, including the county's letter of support for the grant.

The region includes the counties of Cass Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd and Wadena, with a combined population of 162,000. The goal will be to promote the many assets and business opportunities of the region to the workforce and businesses that EDC hopes to attract.

Approved purchase of a Honda Rancher 420 ATV to be used by the Land Department for \$6,524 from Bemidji Sports Center, the lowest of three bidders. This will be in lieu of a budgeted 2016 snowmobile; funds will come from the recreation account. The vehicle will replace a 2000 Yamaha Big Bear that will be sold on the sheriff's auction.

Noted the Land Department's April 28 timber sale totaled 9,035 cords and sold for \$369,282.53