

SPECIAL MEETING AS POSTED

BECKER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

DATE: Friday, September 2, 2011 at 8:15 a.m.

LOCATION: Board Room, Courthouse

Agenda:

1. Meeting presided over by Board Chair Nelson. All Commissioners in attendance; and Minute Taker, Cindy Courneya.
2. Pledge of Allegiance.
3. There were no changes to the agenda.

Board Chair Nelson welcomed all present and noted that Tom Mortenson would be making a statement in reference to his request for his resignation as Becker County Administrator.

Mr. Mortenson thanked the public for their show of support and respectfully requested that the Board allow individuals from the public to speak that wished to speak. After discussion, Board Chair Nelson noted that Mr. Mortenson would speak first and following, the Board would then make a determination of whether to allow for public comment.

Peter Balega, on behalf of Mr. Mortenson, requested the Board allow Mr. Mortenson to yield his time to the public.

Board Chair Nelson made note of the request and stated the Board would hear Mr. Mortenson's statement and then make a determination of whether to allow for public comment at that time, with it more than likely being allowed.

Mr. Mortenson expressed his gratitude to the citizens, employees, and elected officials of Becker County for their support and thanked them for the opportunity to serve Becker County. Mr. Mortenson stated that based upon any public comment, he is reserving the right to re-consider his statement. Mr. Mortenson proceeded to read his letter of resignation, effective August 30, 2011.

Board Chair Nelson thanked Mr. Mortenson. Mr. Mortenson then requested permission to allow the public to speak at this time. It was the consensus of the Board to allow for public comment.

Public Comments:

Lester Ristinen spoke in support of Mr. Mortenson stating, "he is an honest man, an officer, and a gentleman".

Roger Boyce, commented that when he ran for Township Supervisor he came to Mr. Mortenson's office for assistance and noted the kindness shown by Mr. Mortenson in assisting him.

Chuck Church noted that this was a situation where everyone was going to lose something and requested everyone take a step back and consider another way to handle this. He also noted that he respects the Board and realizes there is no ill intention, however, felt there may have been poor judgement.

Sally Hausken referred to Mortenson's stellar background and noted that the Board unanimously hired Mr. Mortenson, knowing his management style. She expressed concern for only allowing Mr. Mortenson seven (7) months as County Administrator, and stressed the importance of thinking about the long-term best interest of the County.

Dan Niemi encouraged the Board to not accept this resignation until an inquiry has been completed.

Arthur Yliniemi, Township Supervisor for Osage Township, spoke in support of Mr. Mortenson, and thanked him for his ability to listen, etc.

Clarence Suvanto of Spruce Grove Township expressed his concerns and showed his support of Mr. Mortenson, and then thanked Mr. Mortenson for his service to the County and the United States of America.

Cleone Stewart, Tourism Director of the Detroit Lakes Regional Chamber of Commerce spoke in support of Mr. Mortenson and respectfully requested the Board re-consider their decision.

Roger Winter, Chair of the Becker County Township Association, requested the Board re-consider Mr. Mortenson's resignation at this time and allow for another six (6) month probationary period and to move forward then with making a final decision.

Carol Ristinen noted that she felt this was a real injustice; that Mr. Mortenson has been a tremendous help to the Becker County Taxpayer's Association.

Josie Niemi requested an investigation into the reason why Mr. Mortenson is being asked to resign, and that his resignation not be accepted.

Following the Open Forum, Board Chair Nelson proceeded with presenting Resolution 09-11-1S, to accept the Resignation of Tom C. Mortenson, as County Administrator of Becker County, effective August 30, 2011 and asked for any discussion, but noted to use caution with discussion, to comply with data privacy practices.

Being no further discussion, Board Chair Nelson stated that Mr. Mortenson has requested that the Becker County Board of Commissioners accept his resignation. It was moved and seconded to approve Resolution 09-11-1S, to accept the Agreement and Resignation of Tom C. Mortenson as the Becker County Administrator, effective August 30, 2011. (Knutson, Nelson). Carried. Roll Call: Knutson – Yea; Schram – Nay; Skarie – Yea; Nelson – Yea; Okeson – Nay.

The meeting was adjourned.

/s/ Larry Knutson
Larry Knutson
Board Vice-Chair

/s/ Barry Nelson
Barry Nelson
Board Chair