

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE ROSEAU COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
SPECIAL MEETING REGARDING 911 ADDRESS SIGNS**

November 14, 2018

The Board of Commissioners of Roseau County, Minnesota met in the Courthouse in the City of Roseau, Minnesota on Wednesday, November 14, 2018.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Board Chair Glenda Phillipe. Commissioners present were Roger Falk, Mark Foldesi, Glenda Phillipe, Jack Swanson and Russell Walker. Others present were Jeff Pelowski, Joleen Kezar, Steve Gust, Donald Castle, Brent Walsh, Tim Erickson, Joy Bukowiec, Jamie Bender, Damian McMillin, Jeff Ballard, Mary Corneliusen, Clarence Meeker, Jeramy Swenson, Chris Stauffer, and Kathy Jenson.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Board Chair Phillipe amended the Agenda to delete Wade Steinbring from the list of public testimony and add Jeramy Swanson from the Badger Fire Department. A motion to approve the amended Agenda was made by Commissioner Walker, seconded by Commissioner Swanson, and carried unanimously.

**Overview of Purpose: To assure that every locatable structure in the County is assigned an address that reflects a known location, in order to assist the provision of emergency response services to all persons in Roseau County, regardless of place of residence or location.**

**PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

Jeff Ballard, Roseau Fire Department Firefighter – He has been pushing for this for the past 6 years. When he has been out on fire calls, he has not been able to find the places. Board Chair Phillipe asked if he has any examples of calls that they weren't able to find the place. He told of a call to a place on County Road 9 where they drove past the place and went to the wrong home. If the homeowners aren't at the end of the driveway flagging them down or there isn't any smoke to lead them to the fire, they can drive right by. He has a property in LOW County that has the sign.

Jamie Bender, Warroad Fire Chief – He also has property in LOW County and has a sign. Many of the Warroad Fire Department's calls are in the dark and it is difficult to find the address. The time issue could be the difference of a smoke instance to a fully engulfed fire. A five minute time loss to a mobile home fire could be the difference of saving the home to losing it. We need to protect our citizens. Damian McMillin from the Warroad Fire Department also spoke and he mentioned that his brother is a Border Patrol Agent and they have a hard time locating properties in certain areas.

Clarence Meeker and Mary Corneliusen, Warroad Estates residents – In the Fall of 2017 they had a neighbor that called the ambulance. The ambulance couldn't find her. It took an extra 45 minutes to locate her. They stated that the lighting is poor in the Warroad Estates and there are very few residents there that have their addresses on their mailboxes.

Joy Bukowiec, Warroad EMS Manager – She has been with the Warroad Rescue Service for 31 years. She has had many experiences throughout her years of service of not being able to find the right homes. She provided a spreadsheet of incidents where they had trouble locating the homes because the GPS was off. They waste precious time. They need the 911 signs at each house. The numbers are all uniform, reflective, and easy to read.

Brent Walsh, Greenbush EMT – He also works part-time for LifeCare. He is also in favor of the signs. Also, to get everyone in the County on the same database so the emergency personnel can work together, find the signs, and make it to the right home.

Jeremy Swanson, Badger EMT – He also agrees that the signs are needed.

Tim Erickson, LOW County Engineer – He was directed by the LOW County Board to install the signs. He provided a handout on how their signs are installed. The signs are located at the end of driveways, near the culvert. They utilized seasonal help to put the signs up. The signs are GPS points. There were deficiencies in addresses so those were corrected as the signs were installed. There are no more than three signs per driveway. If more than three homes in a driveway, it then becomes a road and has a green road sign installed. The signs, bolts, and posts cost \$20 per home. (plus labor) Currently, only the County has the GPS information but it will be going out to all law enforcement and EMS staff.

Don Castle, LOW EMS Manager – He has been involved with EMS since 2003 with Roseau and LOW Counties. He is also currently a dispatcher for LOW County. GPS does fail. If there is no internet service the phones/GPS systems do not work. They have been waiting for the 911 mapping for years. The signs have saved lives.

Steve Gust, Roseau County Sheriff – He would like to make sure the technology we get for the 911 system will work properly and do what we need it to do.

Chris Stauffer, Roseau County IT Administrator – 911 funds are used to put in the new \$45,000 software. It would take 6 months to get it working. The software gets loaded into the system so they can run their devices off of satellite and won't require cell service.

Commissioner Swanson noted that we all agree that we want emergency services to get to where they need to be quickly. It sounds like the first step is to get the GPS system up and running correctly.

Board Chair Phillippe asked the Commissioners if they were in favor of the signs. Commissioners Walker and Falk stated they would need to talk to their townships/constituents to see if they are in favor of the signs. Board Chair Phillippe and Commissioner Foldesi are in favor of the signs. Commissioner Swanson said that the Jadis Township supervisors did not want the signs. He stated that it should be each homeowner's personal responsibility to pay for their sign. We need to do this with technology. He agrees that the signs would be good but the proper technology would guide Emergency personnel to the correct address.

Board Chair Phillippe apologized to the testifiers at the meeting. She felt that their heartfelt concerns were not being heard. She stated that based on the line of questioning by other commissioners, they were not in favor of the signs. She stated that there will only be progress, if the commissioners want the signs and form a committee to specifically concentrate on the purchase and placement of the signs. There should be representatives from Fire, EMS, Law Enforcement, Emergency Management, and IT on the committee. She said she would have wholeheartedly served on the committee to implement the sign purchase and placement; however, she said she will not be volunteering to serve on a committee that will concentrate on technology alone; that committee would be just another kick-the-can-down-the-road committee.

Upon motion carried, the Board adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

Attest:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Jeff Pelowski, County Coordinator  
Roseau County, Minnesota

Glenda Phillipe, Chair  
Board of County Commissioners  
Roseau County, Minnesota