

**Minutes of the
Bayfield County Executive Committee Meeting
4:00pm, February 9, 2023**

Meeting was held Remotely through Microsoft Teams and in person in the Bayfield County Board Room, Washburn, WI

Members Present: Fred Strand, Dennis Pocernich, Brett Rondeau, Jeff Silbert, Jeremy Oswald, Mary Dougherty

Members Excused:

Others Present: Mark Abeles-Allison-County Administrator, Kristine Kavajecz-Human Resources Director, Bill Bussey, Bill Bailey, Ben Popp, Mark Solberg, Cole Rabska (remote), Marty Milanowski, Charly Ray, Michael Kuchta (remote), Kim Mattson (remote), Gail Reha (remote), Madeline Rekemeyer, John Carlson-Corporation Counsel (5:55pm)

Called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Rondeau.

Motion Pocernich, Silbert to approve minutes of the January 12, 2023 Executive Committee Meeting. Motion Carried (6-0).

Public Comment:

Bill Bussey, Mark Peterson (CCL Forest Committee members): Shared recommendations regarding the CCOR and FCOR Carbon Reserve Programs. The proposals were provided in a written document.

Mike Fitzgibon: Supports the recommendations make by the CCL.

Bill Bailey: Stated that by increasing the contributions for the grant, it will reduce the number of years needed to pay back/recoup the expense.

Presentation, Town of LaPointe Regarding Ferry Line, Letter of Support Request: Mike Kuchta with the Town of LaPointe is requesting a support letter for a RAISE Grant for the Town to acquire the Ferry Line rather than it remaining a private company. Grant is due February 28. Initially would purchase the equipment and enter into an agreement with current management to continue management of the service.

Motion Silbert, Dougherty to authorize the County Board Chairman and County Administrator to write a letter of support for the Town of LaPointe. Point of order that this is not identified as an action item on the agenda. Motion Withdrawn.

Consensus of the committee is to support the issuance of a support letter for the RAISE grant application for the Town of LaPointe related to the Ferry Line acquisition.

American Birkebeiner WEDC Community Development Investment Grant Sponsorship: Ben Popp reported that \$4.6 million has been invested in improvements in the Cable/Telemark

area. The next phase in the process is for the removal of an abandoned school building and construction of a community center, which would also include business spaces.

Motion Oswald, Silbert to recommend that the full county board support a resolution supporting the WEDC Grant application with Bayfield County as co-sponsor. Motion Carried.

County Supervision Program; Barb Flynn: Postponed

Site Selector Project Funding at the Bayfield County Business Park: Cole Rabska with Bayfield County Economic Development Corporation reported that Bayfield County was one of three projects selected as part of the Wisconsin Certified Sites program. WEDC is requiring an administrative fee of \$7,500 for administration of this program. A report on the program was included in the meeting packet.

Motion Strand, Silbert to utilize \$7,500 of the business park budget for costs related to the WEDC Site Selector Project administrative fees. Motion Carried (6-0)

Closed Session Attendance for Remote Attendees: Public Health Emergency Declaration will expire later this Spring. During the declaration, the county board modified it's policy to allow remote participation in closed sessions. A survey of counties revealed that those responding will require in-person attendance for closed sessions. This is also recommended by Corporation Counsel.

Motion Pocernich, Dougherty to recommend to the full county board that the policy revert to requiring in-person attendance for closed sessions. Motion withdrawn by Pocernich.

Motion Dougherty, Oswald to recommend to the full county board that the policy revert to requiring in-person attendance for closed sessions effective with the expiration of the Public Health Emergency Declaration. Motion Carried (4-0) Silbert and Pocernich opposed.

Contingency Fund for Employee Training: *Motion Silbert, Oswald to authorize designation of \$12,000 for Employee training with funds being designated from contingency.*

Discussion regarding whether departments could earmark funds within existing budgets rather than allocating contingency for this purpose. *Motion Carried (5-0) Pocernich opposed.*

County Carbon Offset Reserve Program: The committee reviewed language of the draft CCOR program outline and reviewed the comments that were received recommending modifications to the draft document as identified in the public comments earlier in the meeting. Comment received that some consideration should be given to how non-profits could be eligible for some of the CCOR funding for operating costs, not "projects". Suggestion using the title: CCOR "Projects and Goals"

County Board Supervisor Technology: Charly Ray brought up the question of whether County Board members should have laptops rather than ipads so that they could have access to Microsoft products to work on documents, etc.

Budget Amendments for Multiple Departments: These will be available in March.

Wisconsin State Broadband Expansion Grant Program Application and Funding: Norvado is applying for 2 broadband grants. They are requesting support and some funding from the county to help bolster their applications. Draft resolution to identify support of the Broadband Grant applications and that \$5,000 be allocated from contingency for this purpose.

Motion Oswald, Pocernich to approve the resolution supporting the Broadband Grant with the changes suggested. Motion Carried (6-0)

Reports:

- a. **Financial Reports including Personnel. End of December 2022 and end of January 2023:** Included in the meeting packet and was reviewed.
- b. **Treasurer's Report, end of January 2023:** Balance of \$24,516, \$2.3 million over this time last year.
- c. **Artesian Well Study:** Public meetings sharing the data that has been compiled will be conducted in the coming months.
- d. **CDBG-CV:**
- e. **EIGP Grant Submittals:**
- f. **County Wide EMS Update**
- g. **Coroner Report, Suicide Counts.**
- h. **Broadband Coverage Maps in Bayfield County**
- i. **Town of Russel Tax Base Review:** John Carlson, Corporation Counsel joined the meeting to share an update on this topic. If a tribal member has any ownership in a parcel within the tribal boundaries, it cannot be taxed and cannot be taken back for lack of tax payment. Discussions are ongoing with the department of Revenue and State regarding this situation. Town of Russel residents observed a 29%

Motion Pocernich, Oswald to enter into Closed Session pursuant to §19.85(1) (g) Conferring with legal counsel for the governmental body who is rendering oral or written advice concerning strategy to be adopted by the body with respect to litigation in which it is or is likely to become involved.

j. Discussion and Possible Action, January 12, 2023 Minutes.

k. Discussion Regarding Strategy as it relates to 7th Circuit Court Decision, LCO v. Gov Evers.

Motion Carried (6-0) Entered closed session at 6:00pm.

Motion Oswald, Dougherty to return to open session. Motion Carried (6-0) Returned to open session at 6:25pm.

Meeting adjourned at 6:25p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Kristine Kavajecz.