

**Minutes of the  
Bayfield County Executive Committee Meeting  
4:00pm, July 13, 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, Mary Dougherty

**Members Excused:** Jeremy Oswald

**Others Present:** Mark Abeles-Allison-County Administrator, Kim Mattson, Marty Milanowski, Madeline Rekemeyer, Paul Houck, Jenna Stephenson, Deidre Zifko, Judge John Anderson, Tom Renz-Coroner, Sara Wartman-Health Director, Gail Reha (virtual), Frances Johnson (virtual), Maria Renz (virtual), Meagan Quaderer (virtual)

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

*Motion Silbert, Strand to approve minutes of the June 8, 2023 Executive Committee meeting.  
Motion Carried (5-0).*

**Public Comment:** None Received

**Elected Official and Department Budget Presentations to Executive Committee:**  
Jenna Stephenson-County Treasurer reported that the office will not have advertising costs in 2024, but she would like to include some funds to allow scanning of historic tax records. The cost is estimated at approximately \$12,000. This would be a one-time expense. Interest revenues for 2023 are expected to be over double what was budgeted.

Paul Houck-IT Director reviewed possible capital expenditures planned for 2024: new Firewall \$130,000 (5-years), replacing video recorders-by statute must be retained for 120 days \$75,000, Storage Network/Host, County Board Room technology upgrades, IT Service Management tool for efficiency, Land Records solution. Houck reported that the additional staff member added in 2023 is working out very well.

Deidre Zifko-Clerk of Courts and Judge Anderson reported that the new office location is working well. Resolutions are being implemented to address sound and writing surface issues. Bullet-proof glass has been installed around the Court Security desk. State debt collection service is working well.

Tom Renz-Coroner reported that there are 2 part-time Coroners that were hired. Department will be requesting additional electronic devices/laptops to complete work in the field. Request that the County Board consider converting the position to a Medical Examiner position rather than an elected position. Medical Examiner would be an

employment relationship. Coroner, by statute, must step in for the Sheriff if the county does not have an Undersheriff.

**Opening County Highways to ATVs:** This topic was discussed at the recent Highway Committee meeting. Approximately 40% of county highways are currently open to ATVs, about 77 miles. A public hearing is being planned for this topic in August.

**NWRPC Iron River Incubator Proceeds:** Bayfield County's interest in the Business Incubator was sold to NWRPC. Abeles-Allison suggested allocating the revenue toward the Business Park Infrastructure improvements, such as a road.

*Motion Strand, Silbert to recommend allocation of the proceeds from the Business Incubator sale toward the Business Park road development. Motion Carried (5-0).*

**Public Input Process:** The committee reviewed a draft public input proposal shared by a group of citizens recommending that additional public input or additional public notification be done for high profile topics.

**Housing Development Extension Agreement with Cinnaire Solutions:** Cinnaire has developed revised plans for a housing development in Washburn. The full county board would need to approve a final agreement.

**Supporting 2023 Consolidated Dispatch Grant Application:** The first joint dispatch board meeting was held with another being scheduled in 2 weeks. A second grant application is being submitted to assist with the consolidation effort.

**State Budget Decisions and Impact on Bayfield County as it Relates to Taxation Issues in the Town of Russel:** The state budget includes \$3.6 million for counties that made tax settlements to municipalities for properties impacted by the tribal taxation issue.

**2024 Superior Days Contribution:** Strand reported on the importance of participating in the Superior Days effort. 2023 budget is \$1500. Recommendation was made to increase the contribution to \$5000 with the difference coming from contingency.

*Motion Silbert, Strand to increase the 2023 contribution for Superior Days to \$5,000. Motion Carried (5-0)*

**Finance Director Position:** County Administrator and County Clerk have been discussing a plan to transfer Finance functions from the County Clerk to the County Administrator offices and create the position of Finance Director with the intent of placing the current Accountant in the Finance Director position. A final proposal will be presented to the County Board for consideration yet in 2023.

- a. Reports:
  - a. Housing Update: Northland College Intern will be presenting housing concepts and information to the general community. Investigation of various housing concepts continues.
  - b. Squad Fund Budget: Several squads that were ordered for 2024 have arrived early and will reflect a large budget impact.
  - c. Red Cliff Election Results: Nicole Boyd was elected as Tribal Chairperson.
  - d. July 25 County Board Meeting Planning, Veteran and DOA Secretary's Visit:
  - e. 2023-2024 State Budget Review: Nothing on this topic yet.
  - f. Financial Reports end of June 2023: Revenues down slightly. Expenditures \$3million over 2022.
  - g. Treasurer's Report, end of June 2023: Major project expenditures reflect the lowest balance in several years.
  - h. Carbon Offset Reserve Funds: CCOR applications have not been announced because revenues have not yet been received to allocate.

County Administrator Budget Request: A list of possible items to include in the 2024 budget was reviewed.

*Motion Strand, Silbert to move into Closed Session pursuant to §19.85(1) (e) Deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session: June 8, 2023 Minutes, Land Sales at Business Park. Motion Carried (5-0). Entered Closed Session at 5:25 pm*

*Motion Dougherty, Pocernich to return to open session. Motion Carried (5-0). Returned to open session at 5:30 pm*

Meeting adjourned at 6:00p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by Kristine Kavajecz, transcribed from recording.*