

## PERSONNEL 2022

Bayfield County's goal is to offer competitive and attractive wages and benefits. Employees are Bayfield County Government's greatest asset. The County has proposed a budget of \$14.9 million for employee wages and benefits in 2022 across all county departments. This is up 1.4% over 2021 budgeted amounts. This represents 40.3% of county expenditures for the year. Attention to personnel management, policies, procedures and benefits is paramount.

The proposed 2022 breakdown for wages & benefits for the past five years is shown below:

	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Budgeted	2022 Budgeted
Wages	\$8,962,987	\$9,258,561	\$9,713,794	\$10,003,375	\$10,472,623
WRS	\$667,682	\$672,670	\$764,614	\$731,672	\$756,613
Health Insurance	\$2,324,832	\$2,548,065	\$3,068,214	\$3,119,790	\$2,784,322
HRA	\$661,635	\$656,467	\$73,120	\$139,100	\$139,100
Other	\$658,902	\$682,555	\$763,513	\$769,393	\$801,351
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$13,276,038</b>	<b>\$13,818,318</b>	<b>\$14,383,255</b>	<b>\$14,747,130</b>	<b>\$14,954,009</b>

- Wages include full and part-time employees.
- Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) will be 6.5% of wages for employees who work 1200 hours or more a year. This amount is matched by employees. A reduction of .25% from 2021.
- Health Insurance represents county costs across all departments. Employees generally pay 12-18% of the total health premiums. Health insurance is budgeted at a 6% increase.
- HRA stands for Health Reimbursement Account, this is provided to Teamster Health Fund employees at \$5350 per employee and covers deductible and otherwise uncovered costs.
- The Other category includes Social Security, Unemployment, Workers Comp, Life insurance.

The 2022 proposal is \$206,879 over the 2021 budgeted amount. This includes new positions in the jail, forestry, land conservation and some part time hour adjustments in Tourism, Land Records and Clerk of Court. The increase is due in part to new staff. The elimination of the 20% surcharge (x) for the State Health Plan helped to offset some of the cost increase.

Currently, 170 full-time, and 25 part-time employees make up the compliment of permanent staff. In addition, the county employs 30-40 Seasonal or Limited Term Employees throughout the year.

*Committees have discussed multiple staffing adjustments in 2022. The following recommendations are proposed.*

## **FULL TIME POSITIONS:**

- The Sheriff's Office has proposed three new full-time positions and wage grade changes for two others:
  - Two new positions are requested in the jail. The jail currently operates with a compliment of 14 full-time and 4 part-time jailers. Recruitment and retention of part time jailers is difficult although they serve a critical role in maintaining flexibility for short notice and temporary absences.

**The proposed 2022 Budget includes one new full-time jailer and \$25,000 in funding for part-time jailers in addition to continuation of occasional jailer funding.**

- One new Sheriff Deputy position is requested by the Sheriff's Office to help ensure that three deputies are on duty at most times and a minimum of two during off-peak hours. This is a result of the scheduling change begun in early 2021, moving to both a 24-hour schedule and conversion to 12-hours shifts. In 2022 there will be a total of four retirements/new employees. Many of these individuals have maximum annual vacation (200 hours a year) and sick leave accruals. New employees will help create some additional scheduling opportunities because they will not have as much paid leave time available. Estimated reductions the first year are 500 hours.

**The Proposed 2022 Budget maintains existing staffing levels for Sheriff Deputies. Continued review of deputy staffing options are warranted.**

- The Sheriff's Office has requested that two Confidential Secretary positions be re-evaluated for placement on the wage schedule.

**The Proposed 2022 Budget maintains existing wage grades for Confidential Secretaries.**

- The Forestry Department is proposing to add a new Recreational Technician (currently called Recreation Forester) position. This would increase full time recreation positions from one to two. As County Forest Recreation grows with the addition of trails, yurts and other recreational opportunities, the time demand and expectation has increased dramatically. Local government, business and non-profit interest groups are united in the need for more planning and attention to these resources. The additional position would oversee/coordinate the Trails and Parks program in addition to providing future planning and visioning, integrating with area interest groups, volunteers and researching funding assistance.

**The Proposed 2022 Budget includes one new Recreational Technician.**

- The Land Conservation Department has proposed to convert the current *contracted* Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) / Land Conservation Tech position to a full-time county-employee position. While State AIS grant funding has declined dramatically, the need and interest in the County remains strong. In the current employee environment, making this a full time position is in the county's interest. Potential cost difference between a contracted position and a county position is \$15,000.

**The Proposed 2022 Budget includes making the AIS / Land Records Technician a County Employee.**

#### **PART TIME POSITIONS:**

- Oversight/coordination of 911 Addressing moved from the Emergency Management Office to the Land Records Department in 2021 as staffing changes occurred. The Part Time Addressing Tech was budgeted at 200 hours in 2021. The request is for a half time position to be created increasing the annual hours to 975. The proposal is to create a part-time position that would be able to oversee the addressing process including assigning addresses, updating databases and installing the signs. Revenues from signage will cover all costs of this position.

**The 2022 Proposed Budget includes funding this as a half time position at 975 hours.**

- Fairground's Maintenance: 2020 and 2021 were odd years for the fair as COVID cancelled an in-person event and sudden staffing changes in 2021 led to a mad scramble. A request for a permanent maintenance position was made. Current facility maintenance staffing is spread between three seasonal workers for a total of 1725 hours. The Tourism Department is having discussions with Highway regarding increased assistance on specific tasks in 2022.

**The 2022 Proposed Budget includes 1725 hours of seasonal fairgrounds maintenance assistance, no change from 2021 is proposed. Additional funds are included in the Highway Work line item for assistance.**

#### **INTERNS**

The County encourages departments to work with seasonal interns. This can help with future position recruitment and replacement in addition to providing critical assistance during busy times of the year. Interns are proposed and included in multiple departments in 2022 including:

- Maintenance
- Human Services
- Veterans
- Highway
- Land Records

**AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT STAFFING:**

The County Board has approved several ARPA staff members in 2022 including:

- Aging Services Coordinator position in Human Services funded by the ARPA program in the years 2022 through 2025. The position will help the Aging and Disability Section address growing numbers of Seniors in Bayfield County.
- COVID Nurse in the Health Department, 1 year funding and appointment.

**2022 PERSONNEL HIGHLIGHTS :**

- Department budgets were prepared assuming a step increase and wage schedule indexing. This was made up of a 2.5% step increase (most all employees). Funding for a 2% increase/indexing of the wage schedule is included for General Fund employees. Employees that reach step 11(the highest step of the wage scale) are eligible for cost-of-living adjustments as determined by the Personnel Committee and County Board. Exceptions to this include union employees in the Sheriff’s Office and Highway Department.
- Employees are the single most important asset of Bayfield County. In 2016 the county adopted a new wage scale. Today, five years later the economy has gone through enormous change with the aging of our community as well as the impact of COVID on the globe.

An updated wage scale is included in the proposed 2022 budget for implementation in 2023. This will help ensure the county is competitive in attracting and retaining staff. In 2021 the Personnel Committee authorized six individual market analysis. Individual market analysis cost about four times (\$250 per employee) what a group study would cost (\$60 per employee). Small group assessments also may create equity concerns amongst those not reviewed.

- Wisconsin Retirement: All county employees except law enforcement officers hired prior to July 2011 pay the employee share of retirement. In 2022 the WRS contribution rates will decrease by .25% to 6.5% for general employees. County Contribution for Protective employees (Sheriff Deputies) will increase by .25%. The county pays 12% for these employees.

Employee Category	General, Executive and Elected Officials		Protective with Social Security	
	2022	2021	2022	2021
Employer Cost	6.50%	6.75%	12.00%	11.75%
Employee Cost	6.50%	6.75%	6.50%	6.75%
Total Cost	13.0%	13.5%	18.5%	18.5%

- Bayfield County began offering a pilot “Telecommuting” Policy in 2017. Prior to 2020 and the COVID pandemic, very few employees requested to participate in a telecommuting arrangement. In March, 2020, telecommuting became mandatory for many staff in an effort to reduce the spread of COVID and to ensure that county government services could continue if an outbreak were to occur within the workplace. Most staff returned to on-site work in July, 2020. Since that time, telecommuting has been used consistently for several purposes:
  - It allows employees to continue to work off-site if they are quarantined, but not ill.
  - In some instances it has been used to accommodate employees that need to be home to care for family members.
  - It has been used to accommodate parents that need to provide oversight of dependents while schooling remotely (if feasible).

The County desktop computer replacement program continues in 2022 with the goal of nearly all offices having access to laptop computers, enabling staff to work remotely with less shared laptop reconfiguration and downtime by the IT department. Laptops are equipped with software that provides phone and county network access. Part shortages in computer assembly have delayed deliveries in 2021.

Health Insurance: Bayfield County has two separate health insurance plans.

- Highway Department employees are *required* to enroll in the Teamster Health Fund. Coverage is through Blue Cross/Blue Shield.
- All other eligible employees may enroll in the Wisconsin Employee Trust Fund Local Deductible Health Plan. The county changed to this health plan in 2020. This decision was made because it allows the county to participate in a larger pool, lessening the impact of large claims.
- When the county enrolled in 2020, the county was assessed a 40% surcharge because of high claims experience. The surcharge was reduced to 20% in 2021 and there will be *no* surcharge in 2022. Surcharge reduction from 2021 to 2022 equates to
- The 2022 budget includes an estimated 6% increase for Health Insurance rates for courthouse and law enforcement employees. Exact increases for the State plan will be released mid-September.
- Teamster rate adjustments for 2022 are not anticipated until November.
- With the state health plan, employees have the choice of sixteen difference health provider networks. Each network includes a separate group of providers and have a separate premium. Four of the state’s plans/networks include local providers.
- By converting to the state health plan, with a low deductible, the county was able to eliminate the need for an HRA in 2020. The HRA was offered in the past to offset the cost of the high deductible. The deductible for a single person was reduced from \$4,000 to \$500 for medical costs. An HRA remains in place for Teamster Health Plan participants.

## **DEPARTMENT BREAKDOWN**

The Human Services Department, Highway Department and Sheriff’s Department are the county’s three largest departments and comprise approximately 61% of all full-time staff.

In 2022 there are two collective bargaining units, the Wisconsin Professional Police Association (WPPA), which represents all full-time Sheriff's Department staff in the Patrol Division as protective employees, and the Teamsters, which represents non-management staff in the Highway Department.

## **BENEFIT PACKAGE DETAIL**

Full-time county employees are offered multiple benefit options. Below is a detailed list of benefits many county employees receive. WPPA and Teamster employees receive slightly different benefits as identified in the collective bargaining agreement.

**Vacation:** The county's vacation schedule was re-evaluated in 2020. It was determined that the schedule was less competitive in comparison with other county non-union employee groups. As a result, the schedule was modified providing employees a week of vacation upon hire, two weeks after a year, and then an additional week after 5, 10 and 15 years of service. Vacation benefits are outlined in the County Personnel Manual and WPPA contract. During the first year of employment accrued sick leave may also be used as vacation.

**Holidays:** Employees are granted paid holiday leave as outlined in the County Personnel Manual, or in the WPPA Contract. Employees receive 11 paid holidays each year.

**Sick Leave:** Full-time employees are granted sick leave with pay for illness or injury as indicated in the County Personnel Manual. Each employee is allocated the equivalent of eight days of paid sick leave each year (thirteen during the first year). If eligible for Wisconsin Retirement benefits upon retirement, disability or death, employees are paid for one-half of the unused sick leave they had accumulated prior to 2013. Any sick leave earned as of 2013 may be used for sick purposes but will not be eligible for payout upon retirement. New employees may accumulate up to 60 days of sick leave. The sick leave policy for WPPA is outlined in the union contract.

**Social Security:** Per statute, all employees are enrolled in the Social Security Act and Medicare Program. 7.65% of gross wages for each employee is contributed to this program.

**Retirement:** The County contributes to the Wisconsin Retirement Fund on behalf of eligible employees. In 2022 this amount is 6.5% for general employees and 12% for Protective status employees.

**Deferred Compensation:** Employees are also offered the opportunity to participate in a deferred compensation program. These programs are entirely employee funded and provide an additional supplement to the employee's retirement.

**Health:** In 2022, the County will contribute 83% of health insurance premiums for all employees. If the employee participates in the wellness program, the county then pays 88% of health insurance premiums.

Employees enrolled in the Wisconsin Employee Trust Fund Insurance are offered two (2) premium options; Single or Family.

Highway employees participate in the Teamster Health Fund, which includes prescriptions, limited dental, life and disability benefits as part of the Health Insurance Plan. Only one premium option is available.

**Remote Work:** In 2018 Bayfield County began a pilot work from home policy. This program is available for certain positions with approval of the Department Head and County Administrator. Telecommuting was used extensively in 2020 to accommodate both illness and childcare related to the COVID-19 pandemic and continues to be used.

**Flexible Benefits:** This program offers employees the opportunity to have money payroll deducted from their paycheck, pre-tax, for the purpose of eligible medical expenses.

**Leaves of Absence:** The County offers several categories for leaves of absence. When necessary, leaves may be approved for the purposes of: funeral, educational training, Jury Duty, Military leave, Family and Medical Leave, and Unpaid leaves for personal reasons. Each category has requirements and guidelines and would be evaluated individually. Generally, no benefits accrue or are received during unpaid leaves of absence with the exception of those protected under the FMLA law. The county also allows employees to donate unused vacation to a fellow employee in Emergency Situations.

**Maternity/Paternity Leave:** This is a new policy adopted in 2020. Full and regular part-time employees may be allocated two weeks of paid maternity/paternity leave per year for birth or adoption. This is in addition to any other paid leave time they may have available to them.

**Income Continuation Insurance Program:** This plan is intended to cover both short and long-term disabilities (non-work related). The plan pays up to 70% of gross salary and is paid after an employee selected waiting period. The county provides a basic plan at no cost to the employee with a 180-day waiting period. A premium holiday has been in place for this insurance for the past several years. Employees may access this insurance once they have exhausted available sick leave and they have met their selected waiting period.

**Life Insurance:** Employees are entitled to enroll in the group life insurance program after one month of employment. The level of coverage varies depending on the option that the employee chooses. Supplemental life insurance is available for spouse and dependent children as well. Accidental Death and Dismemberment coverage is automatically included for the employee, but not the spouse or dependent children.

A Whole Life Insurance plan is also offered through Boston Mutual. This voluntary/optional coverage is paid 100% by the employee.

**Worker's Compensation:** Bayfield County provides Worker's Compensation insurance for work-related injuries. Worker's Compensation is paid by the employer.

**Direct Deposit:** This program allows employees to have their pay check deposited directly into up to three bank accounts of their choice.

**Health Reimbursement Arrangement:** The HRA was established to implement a higher health insurance deductible resulting in a lower premium. The HRA is offered to Teamster Health Plan participants. 25% of funds not used annually by the employee are placed into an account for the

employee to utilize upon retirement to pay for medical expenses including health insurance premiums.

**Employee Assistance Program:** This is a confidential service provided by Bayfield County. The County contracts with Sand Creek Group LTD. Employees and family members may contact this organization toll free for support or advice on personal or work-related issues. The program includes four counselor visits at no charge to the employee.

**Education Assistance Program:** The tuition assistance program provides 66% of continuing education/tuition costs for an employee, up to \$500 per semester, not to exceed \$1000 per year.

**Voluntary Insurances:** Employees are offered the option to purchase various insurances including: dental, whole life, disability, accident, critical care, and cancer care. The premiums are payroll deducted, but paid entirely by the employee.

## **CALCULATING YOUR RETIREMENT RETIREMENT SYSTEM BENEFITS FOR COUNTY EMPLOYEES**

Bayfield County participates in the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS). All qualifying employees are enrolled. To qualify for WRS, an employee must work in excess of 1200 hours in a rolling year.

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### **Calculating a Retirement Annuity:**

The Formula used by WRS for calculating a retirement annuity: Final Average Monthly Earnings for the last three years of service x Formula Multiplier x Years Creditable Service x any applicable Age Reduction Multiplier = "For Annuitant's Life Only" monthly annuity.

#### **EXAMPLE:**

Average annual earnings of \$45,000, \$3750 per month

- 25 years of service
- Retirement age is 65  
 $\$3,750 \times .016$  (for general employees) x 25 (years) x 1.00 (no reduction if retire at age 65) = \$1500 per month or \$18,000 per year.