

**JANUARY COUNTY BOARD SESSION**  
**Monday, January 24, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.**

The Board met. Mr. Dennis Bork in the Chair.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

The roll was called, and all members were present, except Mr. David Danzinger and Mr. Nathan Nelson (both viewed meeting on Teams). Others in attendance for all or portions of the meeting were Ms. Roxann Halverson, Mr. Ryan VanDeWalle, Ms. Trisha Rud, Ms. Heather Schultz, Sheriff Mike Schmidtknecht, Mr. Cale Severson, and Mr. Joe Krumrie. Those joining via Teams were Ms. Lisa Schuh, Ms. Carol Burmeister, Mr. David Brommerich, Ms. Brenda Berning, Ms. Josie Knauber, and Mr. Steve Schiffli.

**Public Comments:** None.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding Previous Meeting Minutes:** Ms. McMillan Urell made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Taylor. Carried.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding Resolution #22-01-01 A Resolution to Accept a Monetary Donation and Distribute with Local Fire Department:** Sheriff Schmidtknecht explained the donation they will be receiving and sharing with a local fire department. Mr. Hillert made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Ms. McMillan Urell. Carried.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding Resolution #22-01-02 A Resolution to Rescind the Allocation of Funds to Support Funding for the Great River State Trail – Winona Connector from Resolution #19-12-08:** Mr. VanDeWalle indicated this resolution will rescind the allocation of funds to the Winona Connector Trail and allow them to be used in other projects. The funds were originally designated to help with matching funds for grants for Phase 1 of the project. That has now been completed. Ms. McMillan Urell made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Mr. Schmidtknecht. Carried.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding the Return to Workplace Guidelines Policy:** Mr. VanDeWalle explained he worked on the revisions of the policy with the assistance of the County Clerk's Office. Some of the changes are as follow:

- Employees are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings when leaving their office or when social distancing is not able to be done.
- The explanation of fully vaccinated was updated to include booster shot language.
- Isolation time for someone that tests positive is 5 days and then they may return to work if they are asymptomatic, or symptoms have significantly reduced. The employee will be required to wear a mask for days 6 through 10 and they need to closely monitor for symptoms.
- Close contacts do not have to quarantine if they are fully vaccinated but should monitor themselves for symptoms.
- References for quarantine or isolation time changed from 14 days to 10 days.
- Reference to the emergency paid sick leave under the Expansion Act was deleted as that is no longer available.

- Vendors are encouraged to wear face coverings in the courthouse.
- The Executive committee can make changes to the policy in an emergency. Those changes will be in effect until the next County Board meeting when the full Board will decide on the changes.

Mr. Ruff made a motion to approve the policy, seconded by Mr. Taylor. Mr. Bork voting no. Carried.

**Review/Discussion regarding Compensation Resulting from COVID-19 Efforts:** Mr. Grisen indicated that he has received a couple employee changes and would like to bring this back at a later time. Mr. Grisen made a motion to table this item, seconded by Mr. Taylor. Carried.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding Buffalo County Maintenance Updates:** Mr. VanDeWalle has been looking at the number of county fleet vehicles and assessing the need. He will look at usage prior to the pandemic to see if having the current number of fleet vehicles is feasible for the county to maintain.

He also looked at the Facility Dude program used by departments to enter maintenance issues into. Mr. Rieck indicated that the usage of the program has dropped over the years. It was originally used to track when issues were entered and completed and to review the work that needed to be done. The cost of the program in 2021 was \$1906 and in 2022 has gone up to \$2654 with a projected 30%-40% increase each year thereafter. He will look at this more closely during budgeting time as an item that may not be needed any longer.

Mr. Krumrie gave a presentation on the PL-566 and CCC structures in Buffalo County and the history behind them. There is some maintenance and cleanup that needs to be done to the PL-566 structures, but overall, they are still in good shape. Money that was left from the Rose Valley Dam project could be transferred and used for cleanup of the structures.

**County Board Chair Report:** None.

**Committee Chair Reports:** Recycling - Mr. Weiss reported that Mr. Cyrus was denied his conditional use permit for a transfer facility.

Human Resources – Mr. Grisen reported that the committee will be hearing appeals of classification and step increases at the next meeting. The Administration Office will soon be fully staffed.

DHHS- Ms. McMillan Urell reported that Public Health will be doing some public hearings on COVID. Ms. Knauber explained she will be sending out a press release for those meetings.

Highway – Mr. Hillert reported the crews are working on snow plowing. Employees had a chainsaw training day, and it is recommended to have it again next year as it was very informative.

Land Conservation- Mr. Ruff reported that the department will soon be fully staffed.

Zoning – Mr. Weiss reported they are working on the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance and will be holding public hearings on that.

Committee of the Board- Mr. Bork reported that the next meeting will be February 21<sup>st</sup> and they will be working on a review and goal setting for the Administrative Coordinator.

**Administrative Coordinator Report:** Mr. VanDeWalle reported the new Personnel Advisor will be starting Monday, January 31<sup>st</sup>. She has a background in employee benefits and so will be focused on that. The Administrative Assistant position has also been filled and that new employee will begin February 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Public Comments:** Ms. Heather Schultz expressed concerns she has for the Orders Ms. Knauber has placed on the Mondovi School and feels they are stricter than other schools or businesses. She would like to know how Ms. Knauber has authority over the School Board in making decisions for the students and families.

Ms. Trisha Rud indicated she is representing a group of concerned parents from Mondovi. She explained she has asked for the Order from Ms. Knauber but only gets a template letter that is sent to families with close contact, but no official Order. She feels there has been an overreach of power by Ms. Knauber.

Ms. Knauber discussed the rise in cases of COVID and concerns with hospital capacity. She would recommend that Buffalo County employees be required to wear masks, socially distance, telecommute, and have meetings held virtually. She expressed the need to keep the workforce safe so that the courthouse could remain open, and services provided.

Ms. Knauber discussed the actions she took with the Mondovi School and the need to keep the students safe. She indicated once the school comes into compliance with quarantine guidelines the Order can be taken off. Ms. Rud and Ms. Schultz expressed concerns with her authority and overruling the School Board. Ms. Knauber indicated that she has the authority by statute but would like to have another meeting with Corp. Counsel Bilski present to assist with legal questions.

**Adjournment:** Mr. Weiss made a motion to adjourn at 8:27 p.m., seconded by Mr. Taylor. Carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Roxann M. Halverson  
Buffalo County Clerk