

## **Buffalo County Minutes**

**Committee:** Committee of the Board

**Meeting Date:** Monday, February 21, 2022

Chair Dennis Bork called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

**Members Present:** Mr. Dennis Bork, Mr. Larry Grisen, Ms. Mary Anne McMillan Urell, Mr. Dwight Ruff, and Mr. Mike Taylor. Mr. Max Weiss joined the meeting at 8:44 a.m. Mr. Don Hillert was absent.

**Others Present for All or Portions of the Meeting:** Mr. Ryan VanDeWalle, Ms. Roxann Halverson, Mr. Lee Engfer, Mr. Steve Nelson, Ms. Carol McDonough, Mr. Logan Olson, Mr. Matthew Prieur, and Sheriff Mike Schmidtknecht. Ms. Carol Burmeister, Mr. David Danzinger, Mr. David Brommerich, Ms. Brenda Berning, Ms. Lisa Schuh, Ms. Tina Anibas, Mr. Marvin Rieck, and Mr. Mike Owecke appeared via Teams.

**Minutes of the Previous Meeting:** Ms. Mary Anne McMillan Urell made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Taylor. Carried.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding Allocation of funds from the American Rescue Plan Funding (ARPA):** A discussion was held on compensation for employees resulting from COVID efforts. The Committee of the Board originally set a max of \$55,000.00 to be allocated to employee compensation. The Finance Committee reviewed the additional expense of payroll taxes and voted in favor of \$60,000.00 cap. Since this time, it was discovered that two employees were promised compensation that were not in the original figures. Committee members discussed a different tiered system so that all employees receive compensation or not paying any compensation. Employees that no longer work for Buffalo County will not be eligible for this pay. Ms. McMillan Urell made a motion to set Tier 1 at \$1,500.00 or \$71.43 per month for employees that were not employed with Buffalo County the full 21 months, Tier 2 will be set at \$750.00 or \$35.71 per month for employees not employed with Buffalo County the full 21 months, and Tier 3 will be \$100.00 or \$4.76 per month for employees not employed with Buffalo County the full 21 months, seconded by Mr. Ruff. A roll call vote was taken. All in favor. Carried.

The Western Buffalo County Ambulance Service requested \$11,885.00 of ARPA funds to help with equipment purchases and training of new EMR staff. A discussion was held on helping them obtain grants rather than using ARPA funds. Mr. Ruff made a motion to table this item, seconded by Ms. McMillan Urell. Carried.

A resolution will need to be drafted and presented to County Board in March for the employee compensation, Highway signs, financial system, and radio towers.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding Administrative Coordinator Goals:** Mr. VanDeWalle explained some items he has seen so far that need attention. The financial system is the number one item that needs to be addressed. Once a new system is up and running it will save money and staff time. He would also like to work on more cross training of staff so in the event someone leaves employment there is not a gap of the work being

completed while someone new learns the job. He would like to see written details of job duties so that someone could step in and follow those instructions to get the work completed. He will also be continuing to work on communication between himself and employees and Supervisors and retention of employees.

The Committee Members discussed integrating Land Conservation, Zoning and GIS. They would like more cross training in departments and sharing resources with other counties.

Mr. VanDeWalle discussed a recent Administrator's meeting he attended. At the meeting combining resources with other counties was discussed as a way to help counties save money, as well as a reduction in hours the courthouse is open.

**The Committee May Go into Closed Session to Discuss Employee Performance:** Ms. McMillan Urell was not sure closed session was needed at this time as she would like more time to discuss some issues with the department. She would also like HR to look at a hiring policy and establishing who is on an interview committee.

Mr. Weiss made a motion to go into closed session, seconded by Mr. Ruff. Mr. Bork-yes, Mr. Weiss-yes, Mr. Ruff-yes, Ms. McMillan Urell-yes, Mr. Grisen-yes, and Mr. Taylor-yes. Carried.

Mr. Taylor made a motion to return to open session, seconded by Mr. Weiss. Mr. Ruff-yes, Mr. Grisen-yes, Mr. Weiss-yes, Mr. Bork-yes, Mr. Taylor-yes, and Ms. McMillan Urell -yes. Carried.

**Chair Report:** Chair Bork has reached out to area counties to discuss combining resources. He is meeting with Pepin County soon and Jackson County has returned his call, but nothing is set up yet.

**Administrative Coordinator Report:** Mr. VanDeWalle has been reviewing invoices as they come in and reaching out to vendors to better determine if the services are needed or are being obtained by another vendor. He does see some savings with legal counsel and will be looking into this more.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Adjournment:** Mr. Weiss made a motion to adjourn at 11:01 a.m., seconded by Mr. Ruff. Carried.

Respectfully Submitted:

Roxann Halverson  
Buffalo County Clerk