

Finance & Economic Development Committee
June 22, 2023 at 9:00 am
County Board Room

Present: Mike Berlin, Laura Nagro, Blake Ellefson (9:20 am), Pat Kinney, Ron Sztynodor

Others: Dan Grady, Lori Schmidt, Dick Pufall, Mike Konecny, Mary McPhetridge, Sue Misun,
Gary Mertig

Mike Berlin called the meeting to order at 9:00 am. and roll call was taken. Motion by Ron Sztynodor to approve the agenda as presented, 2nd by Pat Kinney. Motion carried.

There were no public comments.

Motion by Pat Kinney, 2nd by Ron Sztynodor to approve the May 25, 2023 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Financial Constants update: Mike Konecny presented the budget status report as of May 31, 2023. Mike stated that in his opinion nothing jumps out at him as being out of line. Discussion followed regarding revenues/expenditures. Mike then reviewed the 2024 capital improvement plan with the Committee as informational items only.

Dan Grady held discussion regarding the 2024 budgets. Dan informed the Committee that regarding shared revenue the County will be receiving an additional \$620,000 however, this money can only be used for law enforcement, highway or dispatch. This increase is tied to the State sales tax.

Economic Development: Mary McPhetridge gave the Committee some handouts and reviewed them. Mary stated that it is her opinion that tourism is the purest form of economic development. Reports showed that the State overall has seen a huge comeback since Covid. Discussion followed regarding a snowmobile trail continuous thru the Reservation, and housing in the southern part of the County.

Uniquely Wisconsin: Dan Grady stated that this is only for informational purposes at this time, however the it will come to the full Board at some point. Dan would like the Committee to go to the WCA website and research Uniquely WI. This program highlights people, culture and history and that Ashland County has a lot to showcase. Discover Wisconsin does the taping and storyline and we could also consider asking Bayfield County to split the cost of \$50,000 and showcase both Counties together. Discussion followed.

Joint Dispatch: Dan Grady stated that the agreement will be ready to be voted on at the next Board meeting and handed out copies for the Committee to review. This agreement has been reviewed by the Corp. Counsel for both Counties and also by WCA attorney's. The grant we received was just shy of \$700,000 and we are now eligible to apply for a 2nd grant. Discussion.

Health Insurance update: Dan Grady stated that we are running just below even. There is a possible need for an increase for next year and Dan told departments to budget for 2024 a 5% increase. Prescription drugs has drooped a lot, M3 will be back here perhaps in July/August to give another update. Dan informed the Committee and we have not had to borrow from the General Fund to pay claims.

Admin updates: Dan Grady stated that things are going pretty well and really does not have much to update.

The next meeting was scheduled for July 27, 2023 at 9:00 am. Motion to adjourn by Ron Sztynodor with a 2nd by Pat Kinney. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 10:57 am.

Lori Schmidt,
Administrative Assistant