

**Finance & Economic Development
Committee Meeting
Wednesday September 27, 2023 9:00 A.M.
County Board Room**

Present: Michael Berlin, Laura Negro, Blake Ellefson, Pat Kinney, and Ron Szyndor

Excused: None

Absent: None

Others: Dan Grady, Keresha Flint, Gary Mertig, Brian Zupke, Terry Barningham, Tracey Hoglund, Julie Gleeson, Amber Ericksen, Rachel Lipka, Mike Konecny, Tom Stankard, Amy Picchiatti, Matt Erickson, Joe Eder, and Bruce Blakeman

01. Mike Berlin called the meeting to order at 9:01 am and roll call was taken.

02. Motion by Pat Kinney to approve the amended agenda as presented. Motion was seconded by Blake Ellefson, motion carried.

03. Public comments: None.

04. Motion to approve the Finance & Economic Development Committee Meeting Minutes from August 30, 2023 was made by Pat Kinney and seconded by Ron Szyndor, motion carried.

05. Mike Konecny went into discussion in regards to the budget status report through the end of August. He stated that amendments can be made but Ashland County has not done so in the past. The ARPA funds that were budgeted for 2023 were budgeted for building repairs and the county has not received any bids and will not affect the budget.

06. Mike Konecny updated the committee on the 2024 budget. Went into discussion about different department changes for the 2024 budget. Dan Grady stated that there will be a County Board meeting held on October 9, 2023 to discuss any final changes to the 2024 budget.

07. Dan Grady went into discussion in regards to the possibility of adding HSA plan to the current health plan. This plan would affect all employees, whether they contribute to the plan or not. After discussing with the Wellness Committee and the Executive Committee decided that, table the HSA plan until next year.

08. Terry Barningham presented the committee the proposal of using the opioid settlement money to create an adult family home to support opioid users in recovery. The vision is to utilize current 1-2 bedroom homes and have licensed staff through the state and contracted with Health and Human Services. Pat Kinney made a motion to accept the request and to accept the request from the Sheriff's Department for the use of the opioid settlement money. Blake Ellefson seconded the motion. Motion was then withdrawn.

09. Dan Grady went into discussion in regards to any updates with the Town of Sanborn. He stated that both Bayfield and Ashland Counties were the most affected counties in the state of Wisconsin and that a solution is in the works. He will meet with the WCA in Madison, WI in the middle of October. No motion was made.

10. Uniquely Wisconsin – Discussion in regards to how to use ARPA funds to promote tourism to Ashland County. Blake Ellefson made a motion for \$60,000 with an option of asking support from the Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce to spend on Uniquely Wisconsin project. Motion was seconded by Laura Negro, motion carried.

11. Dan Grady presented the Town of LaPointe's requests for Ashland County to the committee. Motion was made by Pat Kinney to deny Town of LaPointe's requests. Motion was seconded by Ron Szyndor, motion carried.

14. Investments – Discussion.

15. Sales Tax Report – Discussion.

16. Updates: Should know the Town of Sanborn solution later in the week and will bring before the WCA. The budget is almost complete and would like to schedule board meeting prior to budget set to print. Dan Grady also presented to the committee the new dashboard for the health plan due to receiving document day prior.

17. County Board Meeting – October 9, 2023, Finance Committee Meeting – October 17, 2023, Executive Committee Meeting – October 31, 2023, County Board Meeting – November 7, 2023.

18. Meeting adjourned at 11:03 A.M.

Keresha Flint
Zoning Office Assistant

