

Finance & Economic Development Committee
January 18, 2024 at 3:00 pm
County Board Room

Present: Mike Berlin, Laura Nagro (3:13 pm), Blake Ellefson, Ron Sztynodor, Pat Kinney

Others: Dan Grady, Lori Schmidt, Steve Corbeille, Nate Delegan, Brian Zupke, Tom Stankard
(Ashland Daily Press)

Mike Berlin called the meeting to order at 3:03 pm and roll call was taken. Motion by Blake Ellefson to approve the agenda as presented with a 2nd by Ron Sztynodor. Motion carried.

There were no public comments.

Motion by Pat Kinney to approve the October 17, 2023 meeting minutes as presented with a 2nd by Ron Sztynodor. Motion carried.

Item 5: Financial Consultants Update: Steve Corbeille presented the 2023 budget summary to the Committee. Steve stated that it is 99.9% complete as we are still waiting for some revenues and expenditures to come in. Overall things are looking good according to Steve. Review along with explanations for departments were given and discussion followed.

Item 6: Applying for EPA Grant: Dan Grady stated that they are applying for an EPA grant in the amount of approximately \$20 million. This grant if received, it would be used for solar panels at the HHS building, Sheriffs Dept., and Highway Dept. along with micro grids, 4 EV trucks – 3 for the Highway Dept. and 1 for Emergency Management along with charging stations at the Highway Dept. and 4 at the Bad River Casino. The grant was opened up to all Townships, the City, Tamarack Health and Northland College. The draft for this grant is almost completed. This will also be presented to the full County Board. Motion by Laura Nagro to approve applying for this EPA grant with a 2nd by Ron Sztynodor. Motion carried.

Item 7: WCA/NACO Request: Dan Grady explained the recent request that we received from NACO asking for a \$11,540.55 donation and discussion followed. Motion by Laura Nagro, 2nd by Pat Kinney to table this until the next meeting. Motion carried.

Item 8: Healthcare for Inmates: Dan Grady, Nate Delegan and Brian Zupke explained that the cost of healthcare for inmates is born 100% by the County while they are incarcerated and that for 2023 we fell short in the budget by \$66,953.33 and that we need to do something about this. Right now, Ashland County has a contract for a minimum level of healthcare in the Jail for 20 hrs./week. They are currently looking and doing some research on other companies to provide this service. For the present time, they are asking to increase the hours to 30 hrs./week which would cost an additional \$40,000. Discussion followed. Motion by Laura Nagro to approve going from 20 hrs./wk. to 30 hrs./wk. with the additional \$40,000 to come from the 2024 Contingency Fund, 2nd by Blake Ellefson. Motion carried.

Item 9: Purchasing Card and Policy: Dan Grady explained that the Policy presented was drafted by the Financial Consultants and exactly how these cards would help the County streamline the process of ordering/bill paying. The HHS Department is willing to be the 1st department to put this process to the test. Discussion followed and a few minor changes were made to the Policy. Motion by Pat Kinney, 2nd by Laura Nagro to approve the Policy with the changes made today. Motion carried.

Item 10: Fraudulent Activity: Dan Grady explained to the Committee that a check that was sent to a Vendor for payment was stolen. The check was modified and a mobile deposit was made. The check

was just shy of \$5,000. This happened in October, however, the County was just made aware of it. Dan stated that we will probably get the money back from the Bank, but in the event that we don't, our insurance company was made aware of the situation. Discussion followed.

Motion by Laura Nagro to move Item 11 Closed Session to the end of the agenda.

Items 13 and 14: Dan Grady proceeded with the investment and sales tax reports. We generated way more revenue in sales tax than anticipated in 2023 and is not sure why a huge increase was generated. Dan did state that sales tax is actually 2 months behind when we get it from the State, so that money received in December is actually collected in October. Discussion followed.

Item 15: Administrator Updates: Dan stated that our health insurance finished off in the black this year, not by much tho. Dan feels that this is due to Scout Rx and prescriptions. Dan also stated that Joint Finance finally released our money regarding the taxes and the Town of Sanborn. We will not be getting the full amount as the Tech School and School District will be paid directly to make them whole and another \$400,000 is being withheld for possible chargebacks next year. Discussion followed.

Motion by Ron Sztynodor, 2nd by Blake Ellefson to convene in closed session. Roll call: all yes. Motion carried and the meeting convened in closed session at 4:45 pm.

Motion by Pat Kinney, 2nd by Blake Ellefson to reconvene in open session. Roll call: all yes. Motion carried and the meeting reconvened in open session at 5:01 pm.

The next meeting was scheduled for February 15, 2024 at 3:30 pm in the County Board Room.

Motion to adjourn by Ron Sztynodor, 2nd by Pat Kinney. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 5:03 pm.

Lori Schmidt,
Administrative Assistant