



Bayfield County Administrator

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Mark Abeles-Allison, *County Administrator*
Kristine Kavajecz, *Human Resource Director*
Paige Terry, *Clerk III*

MINUTES OF THE: Bayfield County Tribal Relations Committee Meeting 10:00am, Thursday, April 27, 2023

Meeting was held at VFW Building 8329 at the Bottom of Bresette Hill Road in Red Cliff, WI

Members Present: *Supervisor Jeff Silbert, Supervisor Steve Sandstrom, Tribal Chairman Chris Boyd, Tribal Vice-Chair Rick Peterson (arrived late)*

Members Excused:

Others Present: *UW Extension Housing Educator Kelly Westlund, Bayfield County Public Health Nurse Michelle Crowell, Bayfield County Public Health Nurse Holly Weber, Bayfield County Emergency Management Director Meagan Quaderer, Red Cliff Community Health Center Operations Manager Michael Lang, Red Cliff Planning Administrator Nicole Boyd, Representative for Senator Quinn's Office Stacey Hessel, Bayfield County Administrator Mark Abeles-Allison, Bayfield County Sheriff Tony Williams, Assistant Tribal Attorney Wade Williams, and Bayfield County Clerk III Paige Terry.*

Called to order at 10:00 a.m. by *Tribal Chair Chris Boyd*

Introductions:

Steve Sandstrom – Bayfield County Board Supervisor, District 1
Kelly Westlund – UW Extension Housing Educator
Jeff Silbert – Bayfield County Board Supervisor, District 6
Paige Terry – Bayfield County Clerk and Administrator Offices Clerk III
Michelle Crowell – Bayfield County Public Health Nurse
Holly Weber – Bayfield County Public Health Nurse
Meagan Quaderer – Bayfield County Emergency Management Director
Michael Lang – Red Cliff Community Health Center Operations Manager
Nicole Boyd – Red Cliff Planning Administrator
Stacey Hessel – Representative for Senator Quinn's Office
Mark Abeles-Allison – Bayfield County Administrator
Tony Williams – Bayfield County Sheriff
Wade Williams – Assistant Tribal Attorney
Chris Boyd – Red Cliff Tribal Chairman

Minutes of February 2, 2023, County-Tribal Relations Committee Meeting: *Motion by Silbert, seconded by Sandstrom to approve the minutes of the February 2, 2023, County-Tribal Relations Committee Meeting. Motion carried, 3-0, 1 absent.*

Public Comment: None.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Resolution: Silbert read Bayfield County Resolution 2023-36; In Recognition of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Awareness Day to the committee. Chairman Boyd reported that the Tribal Council will be presenting a similar resolution at the May 1, 2023, Tribal Council meeting; however, the tribe will be recognizing the entire month of May as Missing and Murdered Indigenous Person Awareness month. Chairman Boyd stated that the tribe has had discussions with legislators in Madison asking that a task force be created in Wisconsin to deal with the issues presented in the resolution and explained that a task force has been created but is in its early stages.

Tribal Lands and Taxation Update: Abeles-Allison reported that all county lands have successfully been repatriated back to the Red Cliff Tribe and stated that the county is interested in pursuing future repatriation efforts with the tribe. Abeles-Allison gave the example of tax foreclosed properties and explained that properties that fail to pay their taxes are surrendered to the county after five years and the county is interested in looking for a way for the tribe to acquire the properties and avoid the in-rem process particularly due to the fact that the LCO v Evers settlement may lead to more properties going up for public auction. Chairman Boyd explained that the tribe has experienced issues with non-tribal members attempting to use tribal members to get out of paying property taxes. The committee discussed the two options that have been proposed by legislation which include a 10-year proposal included in the Governor's budget to gradually reduce tax reimbursements to counties and a distribution of approximately \$5.5-6 million dollars to counties affected by the new taxation laws to recoup some of the settlements of improper taxes. Extensive discussion took place regarding the two proposed options, the impact that the taxation laws have had on the local communities, and possible options for acquiring funds aside from property taxes. Assistant Tribal Attorney, Wade Williams recommended that Abeles-Allison reach out to Menominee County for possible guidance on revenue solutions.

Law Enforcement: Joint Dispatch, 2024 Tribal County Agreements: Bayfield County Emergency Management Director, Meagan Quaderer, reported that the Ashland and Bayfield County dispatch centers have been facing similar issues regarding staffing, specifically the inability to staff the centers with two dispatchers for 24 hours a day. Additionally, Bayfield County is unable to fulfill the Emergency Medical Dispatch qualification that would require dispatch staff to remain on the line with a caller in a medical emergency and provide instructions until EMS personnel arrive on scene. It has been proposed that the Ashland and Bayfield County dispatch centers combine and be housed at the Bayfield County dispatch center in Washburn. Chairman Boyd asked if the budgets for the two centers would combine. Quaderer replied yes, the budgets would combine and there would be a group of stakeholders to represent each county when important decisions need to be made. Sheriff Williams summarized the difficulties and limitations of having one dispatcher on at a time. Crowell asked if there was a possibility for dispatchers to work remotely. Quaderer explained that there would be an issue with the confidential nature of the work as well as difficulties getting all the necessary equipment needed to do the job remotely. Discussion took place regarding the options for staff to work off-site if necessary. Chairman Boyd asked for the timeline for the project. Abeles-Allison reported that May 1, 2023, is the deadline to submit the grant for funding and the consolidation would be anticipated to begin January 21, 2025.

10:53 a.m. – Rick Peterson joined the meeting.

Abeles-Allison informed the committee that the due date to complete the Tribal-County Law Enforcement Agreement is September 2023. Silbert explained that the state receives \$45,000 on average that is distributed to the 11 tribes across the state and funds are expected to be similar this year. Sheriff Williams reported that he has assigned officers to different regions and municipalities throughout the county to act as a liaison for these areas. The deputies have until mid-May to contact their designated areas. W. Williams informed the committee that the tribe has recently agreed to provide a key/fob to Bayfield County deputies that would allow them to access government buildings in cases of emergency without having to search for a person to let them in or an alternate way in.

Emergency Management Topics: Discussion Regarding County Wide EMS, Community Notification System, Household Hazardous Waste, Sept 23. 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., GLVC: Quaderer informed the

committee that the Ad Hoc EMS Advisory Committee met numerous times from 2021-2022 to review issues that EMS services are currently facing and to identify possible solutions. One of the larger issues that was identified was a lack of funding. While towns are statutorily required to provide EMS services, they are limited in terms of raising the town's taxes to increase funding for the services. Quaderer explained that the EMS Committee discovered that Bayfield County would be able to utilize a tax levy exemption for EMS services if a countywide EMS service was created. Bayfield County has become an EMS agency that does not function as a transporting agency but focuses more on mass casualty response. The establishment of the countywide EMS service allowed Bayfield County to receive an additional \$180,000 in funds that were distributed in equal \$20,000 payments to each of the nine EMS agencies that serve Bayfield County. Quaderer stated that she has requested each of the nine agencies to report to her office on the impact the funds had on the agency by August 2023. Lang reported that the Red Cliff EMS agency received their allocation the previous week and have placed the funds in a restricted fund account that will be later utilized to help build a bunkhouse for EMS staff that would have overnight sleeping quarters and will be able to house 6 ambulances. Lang explained that Red Cliff can utilize any EMT in the state of Wisconsin because they are able to provide a place for the staff to sleep. Red Cliff is also in the process of becoming an EMS training facility.

Quaderer reported that Bayfield County is working towards implementing a mass notification system that would allow the dispatch center, Sheriff's Office, and Emergency Management Department to send out mass notifications for emergencies. Quaderer stated that the county had purchased Genasys, a mass notification system, in the Fall of 2022 and training is underway for the system users. Quaderer reviewed the process for sending out a notification and how the notifications are received by citizens. A registration link to the system is available on the Bayfield County website that will allow citizens to choose their preferences for notifications they will receive. Quaderer informed the committee that an application for funding has been put into FEMA and Emergency Management is awaiting approval.

Quaderer informed the committee that Bayfield County is working with Northwest Cleansweep to host a household hazardous waste collection event at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center on September 23, 2023, from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. The event will be completely free and Emergency Management hopes to continue these events annually.

Housing Efforts: N. Boyd reported that Red Cliff has allocated \$13 million for a housing development that would contain 46-50 combination housing units. The preliminary site plans for the project have gone out to the community and positive feedback has been received. Another housing proposal to develop two elderly housing buildings has been submitted for HUD dollars and the tribe has allocated \$2.5 million in funds. No site has been selected for the second project yet. Chairman Boyd asked if the tribe had expressed interest in purchasing some units from the Cinnaire Development that is being proposed in Red Cliff. N. Boyd replied that the tribe has not received a response from Cinnaire yet. Abeles-Allison informed the committee that Cinnaire should hear back in the next 60 days if they will be receiving funding from WHEDA.

Westlund reported that she has met with WHEDA to discuss three primary housing projects: the reformation of the Bayfield County zoning code, the BOBI land trust model, and small-scale development within Bayfield County. The land trust model will put housing properties into the land trust that would create a subsidy to be used each time the property sells. Westlund has been in contact with other communities to form an Ad Hoc Housing Committee that will be tasked with determining the housing needs within each community. Westlund will also assist small scale developers to help them complete their readiness paperwork for desired projects. Discussion took place regarding the housing needs of Red Cliff and Bayfield and the demographics in each community. N. Boyd reported that the tribe is working to address the issue of homeownership by creating assistance programs designed to help owners with repairs to their homes. The tribe has also received federal funding to put towards cleaning abandoned homes and potentially polluted sites throughout the reservation. Westlund, lack of individuals to do the work, backlog for workers.

Pigeon Lake Camp: Sandstrom informed the committee that the Pigeon Lake Camp property, located in the

Town of Drummond, is owned by the Bureau of Public Lands but is not being used and the owners are interested in selling the land to a local government agency. Chairman Boyd asked for the listing price of the property. Sandstrom answered that the property was listed for sale at \$1.3 million five years prior. Abeles-Allison added that the price should have gone down on the property and explained that the property owners are very flexible on their terms. Chairman Boyd stated that the lake is listed as one of the lakes that the tribe harvests Walleye Trout. Red Cliff would need to visit the site before making any serious considerations in purchasing the property. Discussion took place regarding the property location and its accommodations.

11:39 a.m. – The committee took a short recess.

11:42 a.m. – Steve Sandstrom left the meeting.

11:45 a.m. – The committee reconvened.

Grant Opportunities: Chairman Boyd dispensed with the item as no specific topics were prepared.

Items for Next Agenda: The committee discussed adding the following topics to the next agenda:

- Taxation Discussion
- Lands Updates
- Tourism Updates

Reports:

- Joint Full Tribal Council / County Board Meeting Date, February 27, 6:00 p.m., Bayfield County Board Room:** Abeles-Allison mentioned that the County Board is up for re-election the following April and there may be new members by May 2024. Chairman Boyd suggested holding a joint meeting at the end of Fall as it would better fit the tribe's schedule. The committee agreed to set the tentative date of February 27, 2024, for the next joint Tribal Council / County Board meeting.
- Comprehensive Plan Update:** Abeles-Allison reported that Bayfield County is looking to hold public input sessions in June 2023 and that the Comprehensive Plan update process is going well. Chairman Boyd asked if the county utilizes the national census numbers to assist with their updates and stated that Red Cliff attempts to conduct its own census every 5 years. Abeles-Allison replied that the county does utilize the census numbers. N. Boyd reported that Red Cliff completed its first ever Comprehensive Plan in February 2023.
- Mental Health / Substance Abuse / Opioid Settlement Funds:** Crowell reported that the Health Department is facing two major obstacles, fulfilling the needs of the younger generations and the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Health Department is working towards transitioning to digital records and charts for clients. A need for community outreach has been identified and the department is responding by using the emergency response trailer to travel throughout the county to provide a variety of services to citizens which include, but are not limited to, lab testing, water testing, reproductive health clinics, harm reduction clinics, drug take backs, sharps disposal, and more. N. Boyd suggested the department include Narcan distribution and training. The committee discussed the impact that substance abuse has had on the Bayfield County and Red Cliff communities. Crowell informed the committee that Public Health Nurse, Holly Weber, is revitalizing the Health Department's coalition to assist with the mental health and substance abuse issues the communities are facing.

N. Boyd reported that the tribe is in the process of attempting to reopen the Mishomis house and has received funds from the Department of Justice to do so. The Noojimo'iwewin Center is open and functions as a drop-in center for those needing support during their recovery process. Red Cliff was originally notified of a \$170,000 award from the Opioid settlement, but the tribe will now be receiving a total of \$555,000 in funds. Opioid settlement funds will be put towards expanding the medication assisted treatment program as well as the peer specialist programs. Additionally, the tribe received \$2.6 million in funds from a SAMHSA Grant that will be used to expand methadone clinics. Discussion took place regarding the obstacles that tribal members face to get the treatment that they need. Chairman

Boyd informed the committee that Red Cliff is looking to develop their own probation department that would allow a state certified probation agent to be on-site in Red Cliff. Abeles-Allison reviewed the Bayfield County supervision options with the committee.

d) County Newsletter: Abeles-Allison reviewed the link with the committee.

Proposed Next Meeting Time and Date: Thursday, June 22, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. at the Bayfield County Highway Department.

Silbert stated that he enjoyed the choice of venue for the meeting and that he would pick one photo off the wall of a veteran to thank them for their service.

Adjournment: There being no further business to discuss, *motion by Silbert, seconded by Peterson to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried, 3-0, 1 absent.* Meeting adjourned at **12:22 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

PAIGE A. TERRY,

Clerk III, Bayfield County Administrator's & Clerk's Offices

On behalf of the Bayfield County-Tribal Relations Committee

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