

**Minutes of the  
Bayfield County Executive Committee Meeting  
4:00pm, July 14, 2022**

**Meeting was held Remotely through Microsoft Teams and in person in the  
Bayfield County Board Room, Washburn, WI**

**Members Present:** Jeff Silbert, Dennis Pocerlich, Fred Strand, Brett Rondeau, Jeremy Oswald

**Members Excused:** Mary Dougherty

**Others Present:** Mark Abeles-Allison-County Administrator, Paige Terry-Clerk III, Marty Milanowski, Larry Fickbohm, Madelaine Rekemeyer, Sara Wartman-Public Health Director, Elizabeth Skulan-Human Services Director, Lynn Divine-County Clerk, Kim Mattson-Accountant, Jim Kelly-Northwoods Resort Representative, James Bolen-Northwoods Resort Representative, Cole Rabska-Bayfield County Economic Development Corporation, Pauline Darling-Northern Lights Services, Inc. CEO, Kellie Pederson-UW Extension Community Development Educator, Scott Kluver-City of Washburn Administrator, Joe Schick-Mason Ambulance Service Director, Dan Vaillancourt-Mason Ambulance Finance Council

Called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chairman Rondeau.

**Approval of Minutes of June 9, 2022:** *Motion Strand, Silbert to approve minutes of the June 9, 2022 Executive Committee meeting. Motion carried, 5-0, 1 absent.*

**Public Comment:** Charles Babineau, Russell, expressed concern regarding clear cutting and the impact it may have on the surrounding area.

Analisa Bermel, Bayfield, introduced herself to the committee and explained that she has acquired a property located at 211 Rittenhouse Ave. in the City of Bayfield and is attempting to undertake a historic rehabilitation project for the property to convert into an 8-room boutique hotel. She will be attempting to complete a Community Development Investment Grant application through the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, which will require a pass-through fiscal agent.

Sheri Eggleston, Bayview, commended the County Board of Supervisors and Red Cliff Tribal Council on the recent passing of a joint proclamation between the two entities to protect the water in Bayfield County. Eggleston read a clean water referendum question to the committee as follows: "Should the State of Wisconsin establish a right to clean water to protect, human health, the environment, and the diverse cultural and natural heritage of Wisconsin?" Eggleston continued by stating numerous Wisconsin counties have already approved the question to be added to their fall ballots and ask that Bayfield County consider adding the referendum to its fall ballot.

**Northwoods Resort Presentation:** Northwoods Resort Representative, Jim Kelly, informed the committee that the portion of the project that is located in Bayfield County is fully under contract and they are able to move forward with the purchase of the former Telemark Golf Course.

BCEDC Executive Director, Cole Rabska, reported that the corporation unanimously voted to approve pass-through funding for the project and reviewed the potential funding options that may now be available. James Bolen, Northwoods Resort Representative, further explained that the portion of the project that is located in Sawyer County will be finalized later in the year, but they intend to move forward with the Bayfield County portion of the project as soon as possible. Board Supervisor, Marty Milanowski, asked how difficult the permitting process has been. Bolen replied that they have been working with Zoning to complete the permits and have been in communications with the department for a long time.

**Mason Area Ambulance Building Funding Request:** Mason Ambulance Service Director, Joe Schick, reported that the number of runs for the service has tripled over the past two years, during the COVID-19 pandemic. This has put an enormous strain on the department. Consequently, the service is planning on expanding the facility to upgrade the current meeting room and to add amenities that will enable full- or part-time staff to stay at the facility in the future. The project is anticipated to be complete by the end of 2023. Total costs are estimated to be between \$250,000 to \$300,000. Schick requested that the County consider matching funds to a \$50,000 grant they have applied for. Dan Vaillancourt, Mason Ambulance Finance Council, stated that the municipalities within the service area are planning on contributing their unused ARPA funds to the project. Abeles-Allison stated that the County will look to see what funds may be available. No action was taken on this item.

**40-Unit Residential Housing RFP Release on 10-Acre Parcel Adjacent to Nursing Home, City of Washburn:** Abeles-Allison informed the committee that Bayfield County has experience an increased need for affordable housing. A 10-acre parcel adjacent to the Northern Lights Nursing Home in the City of Washburn is being considered for a project that could house up to 40 units. Following conversation including Northern Lights CEO, Pauline Darling, Kellie Pederson, UW Extension educator, City of Washburn Administrator, Scott Kluver and Abeles-Allison, it was decided that the project should be pursued further.

*Motion by Silbert, seconded by Oswald to forward the Housing Request for Proposal packet on to the County Board, along with the list of project specifics previously discussed, with the intention to support the project. Motion carried, 5-0, 1 absent.*

**Opioid Settlement Funds:** Abeles-Allison explained that Bayfield County will receive a total of \$348,803 from the opioid settlement funds with 20% going to attorney fees. Bayfield County has two options to receive these funds, either as a lump sum payment or as annual payments over the next 18 years. Human Services Director, Elizabeth Skulan, spoke on behalf of the Human Services Department and stated that lump sums over a number of years can be used to fund public health/preventive programs on an ongoing basis. Discussion regarding the payment options.

*Motion by Pocernich, seconded by Rondeau to recommend to support accepting the opioid settlement funds as a lump sum and placing the funds in a designated account to distribute on an annual basis. Motion carried, 5-0, 1 absent.*

**Clean Water Referendum Resolution:** Divine reviewed the process to include a referendum on the ballot and recommended waiting to get the referendum added to the fall ballot rather than the primary. Discussion regarding the wording of the referendum question included in the resolution and the possibility of the question needing to be changed.

*After discussion and amendment, a motion was made by Silbert, seconded by Oswald to forward the resolution to the full board for consideration. Motion carried, 4-1, 1 absent (Pocernich opposed.)*

**Courthouse Unleaded Gas Pump Pedestal and Software Upgrade:** Abeles-Allison delivered a summary of the current issues with the existing fuel pedestal.

*Motion by Pocernich, seconded by Strand to upgrade and replace the current unleaded pedestal software. Motion carried, 5-0, 1 absent.*

**Budget 2023 Review Topics:** A list of potential 2023 budget topics were reviewed:

- Bidding out Worker's Comp Insurance
- Include \$30,000 for grant consulting in 2023
- Increase County Highway Department work for County
- Moving County Bridge Aid to Highway Department
- Changing the funding of the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center
- Increasing the funds available for the Youth Government Scholarship
- 40-hour payroll changes in the Administrator Department
- Potential new business at the Business Park after Xcel leaves
- Fuel Pump and CNG Compressor upgrades in the fleet fund
- Increase animal control response expenses

**Reports:**

- a. ARPA Project Review: Abeles-Allison reviewed all the projects as well as their progress.
- b. Sales Tax Chart, Revenues Still Strong: Sales tax is up 8.8% from the previous year.
- c. Financial Report, End of June 2022: Full report was provided in the meeting packet. General Fund expenditures are at 50%, Humans Services expenses are at 37%, and Highway expenditures are at 26%.
- d. Treasurer's Report, End of June 2022: The report was provided in the packet.
- e. Comprehensive Planning Meeting, July 20, 2022, at 10:00 AM
- f. EMS Advisory Committee Update: Abeles-Allison explained that the County Board received and placed on file the committee's final report at their previous meeting.

**Next Meeting Dates:**

- a. Executive Committee: Thursday, July 28, 2022 at 4:00 PM
- b. Personnel Committee: Thursday, July 28, 2022 at 5:00 PM
- c. September 22, 2022 at 4:00 PM

Meeting adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by Paige Terry.*