

JANUARY COUNTY BOARD MEETING
Monday, January 25, 2016, 7:00 P.M.

The Board met. Mr. Douglas Kane in the Chair.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

The roll was called and all members were present except Mr. Dennis Youngbauer and Mr. Allen Carothers, who was excused. Others in attendance for all or portions of the meeting were Mr. Bob Platteter, Mr. David Brevick, Mr. Steve Schiffli, Sheriff Mike Schmidtknecht, Mr. Scott Smith, Mr. Bryan Gibbs, Mr. James Goss, Ms. Tammy Huber, Ms. Debra Ambruso, Mr. Ron Olson, Mr. Al Kochenderfer, Ms. LeAnne Loesel, Mr. Tom Hentges, Mr. John Losinski, Ms. Mary Lou Dienger, Mr. Jerry Miller, and Mr. Matt Biesterveld.

Public Comments regarding Agenda Items: Sheriff Schmidtknecht read an email he received from Mr. Jeff Halvorsen, Arcadia/Glencoe Fire Chief, indicating he is in favor of replacing the E-911 system and believes it is needed to keep communication going between the fire fighters and dispatch.

There were emails received from the following individuals: Ms. Kim Pronschinske, Waumandee Town Clerk and Waumandee First Responder, is in favor of upgrading the 911 system and not risking lives with a failing system. Ms. Janet Olson, Mondovi Ambulance, Dover First Responder and Waumandee First Responder, stated she is in favor of the replacement of the 911 system and asks the Board to not put lives at stake. Mr. Jeremiah Bauer, Dover First Responder and EMT with Mondovi Ambulance Service, explains that he develops electronic devices and understands what "end-of-life" means. He urges the Board to replace the 911 system. Ms. Lolly Thompson, Dover/Gilmanton First Responder, believes it is very important to replace the E911 system and not take chances on a failing system. Ms. Jackie Spoo, Mondovi Ambulance Service, believes a working 911 system is essential because a delayed page could cost a life. Ms. Judy Winsand, First Responder, wrote in appreciation of what the Board does for the County and urges them to move forward with the upgrade of the 911 system as long as the funds are available.

Mr. Schiffli, Emergency Management Director, believes there is a professional responsibility to continuously reevaluate the response capability and identify single points of failure, and correct them. The Law Enforcement and Emergency Management Committee has done this and is asking the County Board to approve the resolution and update the E-911 system to ensure the safety of the residents.

Mr. Gibbs, Director of the Mondovi Ambulance Service and Captain of the Mondovi Fire Department, spoke regarding the E-911 system. He has over 30-years experience in EMS and was previously on County Board for 3 years, so he understands both sides of this issue. The E-911 system is critical to Buffalo County and the money is set aside already. If the system goes down it would be a minimum of 4 months to get that back up and running. He does not feel we have that amount of time and strongly urges the Board to use the money already set aside to update the 911 system.

Ms. Debra Ambruso, AT&T 911 Public Safety Representative, came today to allow the County Board to ask any questions they may have. She explained that the system will come with 4 years of support as was requested by the Sheriff's Department. The Vesta system is the best system available and has Next Gen Technology. The RescueStar system has reached its end of life, which means the manufacturer is no longer making parts for it. There may be parts available, but they are not guaranteed as this system is used by many other counties. The old system will be used while new system is being installed, data is transferred, and employees are being trained to use it. Currently if there is a system failure in Buffalo County all 911 calls would be routed to Dunn County, but they will not take calls for 4-6 months if we do not upgrade our system now and the old system fails. The cost of the system has been reviewed with Sheriff Schmidtke and there have been discounts given that were contingent on the purchase prior to the end of 2015, but were extended to the end of January.

Mr. Hentges, Fountain City Fire Chief and member of the LEPC Committee, spoke asking the Board to approve upgrading the system for the citizens of the County.

Mr. Olson, member of the Waumandee/Montana/Lincoln Fire Department and President of the Buffalo County Fire Association, feels it's critical to upgrade the 911 system at this time.

Mr. Kochenderfer, Director of Scenic Valley Emergency Medical Service, is disappointed that he and all emergency service representatives are at the meeting because they were lead to believe that there was a possible delay of the upgrade of the 911 system. He wants the Board to make the right choice and buy the system.

Mr. Losinski, Fountain City First Responders, asks the Board to invest in the system because a timely response is critical.

Ms. Dienger, Fountain City First Responders, supports the purchase of the system. She does not believe the option of calling the administrative lines in an emergency instead of 911 is a viable option as it would cause a delay in response time.

Mr. Miller, Waumandee/Montana/Lincoln Fire Department, urges the Board to push forward with the 911 system. The Fire Department looks to the dispatch to keep them informed of the emergencies and keep everyone safe.

Mr. Biesterveld, Fire Chief of Tri-Community Fire Department, encourages the Board to move forward because the faster they get the calls the faster they can respond to the emergency.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding the December 14, 2015 County Board Minutes:

Mr. Eddy made a motion to waive the reading of the minutes and approve them as presented, seconded by Mr. Kriesel. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding Resolution #16-01-01 "A Resolution Recognizing and Honoring the Retirement of Ms. LeAnne Loesel": Mr. Goss

presented Ms. Loesel with a Certificate of Appreciation for her service to Buffalo County. Mr. Goss spoke regarding how much Ms. Loesel will be missed and how much her tenacious service has meant to the veterans. Ms. Loesel explained that it has been an honor and a privilege to help the veterans and that it's really more a privilege than a job because they are so deserving. Mr. Kriesel made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Ms. McMillan Urell. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding Resolution #16-01-02 “A Resolution Recognizing and Honoring the Retirement of Mrs. Joan Langhorst” and Resolution #16-01-03 “A Resolution Recognizing and Honoring the Retirement of Mr. Vern Langhorst”: Vern and Joan were unable to be at the meeting tonight, but Sheriff Schmidtknecht spoke regarding the work they have done in the court system. He expressed how thankful he is for their service to Buffalo County. Ms. McMillan Urell made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Mr. Mork. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding #16-01-04 “A Resolution Recognizing and Honoring the Retirement of Mr. Dave Brevick”: Mr. Danzinger presented Mr. Brevick with the Certificate of Appreciation for his 29 years and 11 months of service as the Buffalo County Highway Commissioner and thanked him for his service. Mr. Brevick thanked the Board and recapped the changes that have happened in the Highway Department in the 29 years he has been in the office. Mr. Danzinger made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Mr. Grisen. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding the Appointment of Mr. Allen Carothers to the Veterans Service Commission: Mr. Carothers would fill a vacancy and his term would end September of 2018. Mr. Kriesel made a motion to approve the appointment, seconded by Ms. McMillan Urell. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding the Veterans Service Office Contract with Pepin County: Mr. Goss explained the research he has done since he found out about Ms. Loesel's retirement. He reviewed the possibility of hiring an assistant and what the costs would be associated with that. He also reviewed ending the contract and being the sole employee in Buffalo County and having Pepin County replace his services with a part-time Veterans Service Officer. Mr. Goss indicated that in a 2002 report Buffalo County had 1,440 veterans that were being served and in 2014 the report shows that there are 1,112 veterans being served. The number of veterans in each county is decreasing as there is no jobs to attract young veterans to the area. Mr. Goss recommends ending the contract with Pepin County and he would remain a full-time employee of Buffalo County, with a mutual assistance agreement with Pepin County to help out when needed. Ms. McMillan Urell made the motion to end the contract with Pepin County, but maintain a mutual assistance agreement, seconded by Mr. Kriesel. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding #16-01-06 “A Resolution to Purchase New PSAP E-911 Answering System”: A discussion was held on the need for the equipment if dispatch/jail is consolidated with another county, if the system would work with other systems that dispatch currently has, and where the funds would come from. The funds have been put aside in an E-911 Fund by a prior County Board. This money was a reimbursement grant for the installation of the 911 system and the Board felt the

money should be set aside for when a new system is needed. Ms. Hansen checked with the Auditors to see if there were restrictions on the use of the money and there is not. In the last 2 years the money was used to pay the AT&T 911 bill. Ms. McMillan Urell made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Mr. Mork. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding Resolution #16-01-07 “A Resolution to relocate and Remodel Highway Administration Office”: Mr. Danzinger explained the ongoing process that Highway has been doing in the remodel of the Alma Highway Shop and the construction of the Mondovi Highway Shop. \$309,445.93 has been spent so far on the Alma Highway Shop including the purchase of land for the sewer system. Mr. Bob Platteter explained that there is no longer a parts shop employee since the reduction of highway employees has been taking place. The Highway Office employees have been doing parts inventory since this reduction and it would be easier if the office staff was located at the shop. The offices would be located in the upper level of the shop where the sign storage was. The desks in the current office will be taken with to save on expenses. It is estimated that the project will be \$120,000.00 under what was requested from the bond. Mr. Danzinger made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Mr. Grisen. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action in regard to the Recycling/Emergency Management/Solid Waste Director Position Description: The solid waste duties were eliminated in 2007 and this change would bring the reporting function of the duties back to this position not any management functions. Questions were raised as to why this was not addressed at the Recycling Committee. Ms. Hansen indicated a letter was sent to the Chair of the Recycling Committee and asked him to come and discuss it with the Finance Committee. She also noted that the Resolution that dissolved Solid Waste was not run through the Recycling Committee back in 2007. Mr. Schiffli requested this to be sent to the Recycling Committee since the hours will need to come from the Recycling side of his position. The Emergency Management position is a .5 position that is grant funded. He also wanted to note that the Recycling Chair did indicate that he did not like the addition of the job duties but felt there was nothing he could do to stop it. Mr. Eddy made a motion to approve the job description, seconded by Mr. Danzinger. Ms. McMillan Urell voting no. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding Resolution #16-01-05 “A Resolution to Consolidate Solid Waste Management Duties with the Emergency Management and Recycling Director Duties”: Chair Kane proposed an amendment to strike the word “Management” from the title, then reading “Solid Waste Duties...”. Mr. Danzinger made a motion to approve that amendment, seconded by Mr. Sendelbach. Carried. Mr. Hillert made a motion to approve the amended resolution, seconded by Mr. Eddy. Ms. McMillan Urell voting no. Carried.

Public Comments: None.

Reports/Discussion from Administrative Coordinator Sonya Hansen: Ms. Hansen reported that a draft policy is being developed to help employees determine what to do in different types of emergencies. The handicap rail will be installed this week. A tool is being developed to help HR Committee with making determinations in the step placement appeals process. There are approximately 20 appeals that will be reviewed. Gunderson

Lutheran will be presenting on the Employee Assistance Program at the Department Head meeting. ADRC is continuing to explore regionalization and possibly adding in the Aging Department. Ms. Hansen attended a Public Information Officer training that helps keep the public informed in the event of a disaster. The Law Enforcement Consultant hopes to have the consolidated dispatch/jail report ready by the end of next week. A preliminary budget was distributed on the desks. This report shows the expenses and revenues for 2015, but this is preliminary as there are some revenues that may come in as late as March.

Reports/Discussion from Committee Chairs: None.

Report from County Board Chair: Work is still being done on the plan for support services to reduce incarceration. There has been preliminary discussion on what HHS wants to put in the plan. There will be another round table discussion with affected parties and the committee chairs on February 18th with a preliminary plan to be presented to HHS, Law Enforcement and Finance around the first week in March. Rules of Government need to be reviewed. If you have changes please get them to Ms. Hansen for the March County Board meeting.

Adjourned: Mr. Sendelbach made a motion to adjourn at 9:05 p.m., seconded by Mr. Kriesel. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxann M. Halverson
Buffalo County Clerk