

Buffalo County Minutes

Committee: Committee of the Board

Meeting Date: Thursday, January 6, 2022

Chair Dennis Bork called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Members Present: Mr. Dennis Bork, Mr. Max Weiss, Mr. Larry Grisen, Ms. Mary Anne McMillan Urell, and Mr. Dwight Ruff. Mr. Mike Taylor and Mr. Don Hillert were absent.

Others Present for All or Portions of the Meeting: Mr. Ryan VanDeWalle, Ms. Roxann Halverson, Mr. Lee Engfer, Mr. Dave Rynders, Mr. Mike Owecke, Ms. Carol Burmeister (Teams), Mr. David Danzinger (Teams), Mr. Dave Brommerich (Teams), Ms. Tina Anibas (Teams), and Ms. Lisa Schuh (Teams).

Minutes of the Previous Meeting: Ms. Mary Anne McMillan Urell made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Ruff. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding Allocation of funds from the American Rescue Plan Funding (ARPA): Buffalo County was allocated \$2,531,119.00 of ARPA funds. \$1.3 million has been allocated to broadband and \$138,000 has already been spent.

Mr. Owecke spoke to the committee regarding allocating approximately \$50,000 to the well water testing project that has been in the works since 2016 or 2017. A group of Department Managers have been working on doing random testing of wells for different chemical levels. UW Stevens Point would be assisting with this project and would write the findings of the testing and present the report to the full board. The committee discussed having an action plan in place to address the results when they come in.

Mr. Engfer discussed the need for the radio tower equipment upgrades. The south tower has been causing some issues and needs to be replaced very soon. These radio towers are used to send notifications to officers, EMS, and fire. The quote received recently is for \$135,526.30 and is good for 30 days. Once approved it will take approximately 6 months to get them all installed. He would also like the committee to consider hazard pay for employees in the Sheriff's Office. Many had to use their own time off when on quarantine for an exposure during the line of duty. He explained he used a \$100 per month over a 21 month time period for the hazard pay with a total amount of \$39,100. Individuals who no longer work for Buffalo County will not be eligible and those employees who are eligible will receive an amount equal to the months of employment during that 21 month period. An example would be if an employee worked 5 months during the pandemic and is still currently employed in the Sheriff's Office, they would receive \$500. Not all staff is eligible, only those who had a high risk of exposure.

Mr. Rynders discussed the Nurse/Family Partnership program. He has revised the cost estimate to be \$91,155 annually over the next three years. There are some revenue sources, but the amount of revenue from some is unknown. A discussion was held regarding hiring a full-time nurse versus contracting with Eau Claire County for a part-time nurse. It is estimated this program would serve ten mothers per year. Mr. Rynders also discussed hazard pay for those employees in his department that had the most risk of exposure.

Mr. Ruff left the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

A discussion was held on how to allocate hazard pay and the issues it may cause. Mr. Grisen made a motion to have all Department Managers work together to discuss hazard pay and submit a plan to the Finance Committee in January, seconded by Ms. McMillan Urell. Carried.

The committee discussed how to prioritize the requests with the funds available. Some items would not be eligible for the ARPA due to restrictions of how funds could be used, but they could then fall under loss of revenue that has fewer restrictions.

Requests are as follows:

Department	Item(s) Requested	Cost
Highway	Electronic sign and emergency sign trailer	\$40,000.00
Law Enforcement	Radio tower equipment	\$136,000.00
DHHS	Lead testing	\$39,600
DHHS	AODA program	\$43,000.00
DHHS	Nurse/Family Partnership	\$92,000.00
DHHS	COVID	\$157,000.00
Economic Development	Broadband	\$1,300,000.00
Administration	Generator	\$60,000.00
Administration	Financial System	\$193,000.00
Administration	Phone System	\$80,000.00
Administration	Computer Upgrades	\$68,000.00
Zoning	Water Well Testing	\$50,000.00
Already spent	Electronic signs and broadband	\$138,000.00
Total		\$2,396,600

Ms. McMillan Urell made a motion to use CAPX funds for the financial system and pay it back when the loss of revenue funds can be realized from the ARPA funds, seconded by Mr. Grisen. Carried.

Ms. McMillan Urell made a motion to approve up to \$55,000.00 for hazard pay, seconded by Mr. Weiss. Mr. Grisen voting no. Carried.

Ms. McMillan Urell made a motion to approve the Highway request of the electronic sign board and emergency sign trailer in the amount of \$40,000.00, seconded by Mr. Weiss. Carried.

Ms. McMillan Urell made a motion to approve the Law Enforcement request for radio tower equipment replacement in the amount of \$136,000.00, seconded by Mr. Weiss. Carried.

Ms. McMillan Urell made a motion to approve the DHHS request for lead testing in the amount of \$39,600.00, seconded by Mr. Grisen. Carried.

Ms. McMillan Urell made a motion to approve the Administration request for a generator, seconded by Mr. Weiss. Carried.

COVID Protocol: Chair Bork reported that no action can be taken on this item since the amended agenda was not posted in time. The CDC has shortened the isolation time from 10 days to 5 days and then the individual would wear a mask for days 6 through 10. The Employee Return to Work Guidelines will have to be reviewed and amended if it is the wishes to change the isolation timeframe.

Chairperson Report: None.

Administrative Coordinator's Report: None.

Public Comment Not Related to Agenda Items: Ms. McMillan Urell asked if a County Board Supervisor can be appointed to the EOC Team meetings. DHHS would like to open the Emergency Operations Center again due to the increase in cases and the scarcity of hospital beds. They are meeting Monday at 3:00 p.m. Mr. Grisen will attend the meeting.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding the Date and Time of the Next Meeting: The next meeting will be February 21st at 8:30 a.m. Guidelines for the Administrative Coordinator will be discussed.

Adjournment: Mr. Grisen made a motion to adjourn at 12:03 p.m., seconded by Ms. McMillan Urell. Carried.

Respectfully Submitted:

Roxann Halverson
Buffalo County Clerk