

## BUFFALO COUNTY MINUTES

Committee of the Board: Finance Committee

Date of the Meeting: September 21, 2023

Chair Dennis Bork called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

**Members Present:** Mr. Dennis Bork, Mr. Max Weiss, Mr. William Bruegger, Mr. Brian Michaels, and Mr. Chris Lindstrom.

**Others Present for All or Parts of the Meeting in Person:** Mr. Lee Engfer, Ms. Lisa Schmitt, Ms. Tina Anibas, Ms. Julie Vollmer, Mr. Dave Rynders, and Ms. Diane Rieck. Ms Lisa Schuh attended virtually, via TEAMS.

**Public Comments regarding Agenda Items:** None.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding the Previous Meeting Minutes:** Mr. Bruegger made a motion to approve the August 17, 2023, minutes as presented, second by Mr. Lindstrom. Carried. Mr. Weiss made a motion to approve the September 5, 2023, minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Michaels. Carried.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding A Resolution to Ratify the Buffalo County Law Enforcement Officers WPPA/LEER Collective Bargaining Agreement:** Mr. Engfer explained that this Agreement needs to be re-negotiated every few years. Contract negotiations were held in August and this Agreement is the outcome of a successful resolution for both parties. The Human Resources Committee has already approved the new two-year contract for the patrol deputies. Mr. Lindstrom made a motion to approve the Agreement as written, seconded by Mr. Weiss. A roll call vote was taken. All were in favor. Carried.

**Review/Discussion regarding Highway Equipment Expenditures:** This item is being addressed as a purchase made by the Highway Department for some truck attachments was \$5,000 over the initial approved amount. According to the purchasing policy, the Finance Committee needs to be apprised of the action taken. This item is for the Finance Committee's information only and the money came out of the machinery fund. There was no further discussion on the matter.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding the Courthouse Water Softener Replacement/Repair:** Mr. Engfer informed the Committee Members that the current water softener in the courthouse recently malfunctioned and there were several inches of water on the basement floor in that area. The equipment is over 20 years old. A discussion was held on replacing the malfunctioning piston and overhauling the current unit for a cost of \$2,239.00 or replacing it with a new unit which would cost \$7,250.00. An add-on to the new water softener to save 25% on

salt usage was also mentioned, which would be an additional \$2,640.00. Given the age and limited parts available for future repairs, the new equipment was decided to be the best option. The new unit will have a bypass to shut the water off. Mr. Weiss made a motion to purchase a new water softener in the amount of \$7,250.00 with the funds coming out of the Maintenance Department's budget, seconded by Mr. Lindstrom. A roll call vote was taken. All were in favor. Carried.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding A Resolution to Identify Delinquent 2020 Real Estate Taxes:** Ms. Anibas, County Treasurer, introduced Ms. Diane Rieck, who is currently delinquent in payment of her 2020 real estate taxes. Ms. Rieck spoke about her financial hardship and would like an extension to pay the delinquent taxes until mid-October. The amount currently due is \$1,787.26. A discussion was held on this matter. Mr. Bruegger made a motion to extend the date for full payment of the delinquent taxes to October 31, 2023, seconded by Mr. Michaels. Carried. The additional properties with delinquent 2020 real estate taxes were addressed by Ms. Anibas. Mr. Bradley Nilles has just recently paid in full. The Treasurer's Office is waiting for his check to be approved at the bank for the payment to be finalized so this property will stay on the resolution for now. Mr. Steven Donner and Ms. Constance Donner have recently paid \$2,000.00 towards the delinquent amount they owe, with \$2,142.87 still due. Ms. Anibas has been unable to reach them to discuss the remaining amount due. Mr. Weiss made a motion to give the Donners until October 31, 2023, to pay the remainder of the delinquent 2020 taxes due, seconded by Mr. Bruegger. Carried. Mr. Weiss made a motion to accept the payment made by Mr. Nilles pending the payment clearing at the bank, seconded by Mr. Lindstrom. Carried.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding Employee Service Awards:** Mr. Engfer spoke on this matter and said that after meeting with the Human Resources Committee, there are new proposals being discussed. It was previously presented as compensating employees with a monetary amount, in addition to adding hours to their paid time off (PTO). The new proposal removes the PTO hours and makes the compensation amounts in \$500 increments. This would only be for the full-time employees. These employees would be rewarded upon completion of a certain number of continuous years of service, based on their anniversary date of employment. Currently, it is being proposed to compensate full-time employees as follows: 5 years - \$500, 10 years - \$1,000, 15 years - \$1,500, 20 years - \$2,000, 25 years - \$2,500, 30 years - \$3,000 and 35 years - \$3,500. The annual cost of this compensation for the next several years ranges from approximately \$19,000.00-\$23,500.00. A discussion was held on waiting to act on this until after the end of the year. Mr. Weiss made a motion to table this matter until the January, 2024 Finance Meeting, seconded by Mr. Bruegger. Carried.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding 2024 Budget Preparations:** All of the financial budget amounts needed will not be available until the end of September. He suggested scheduling a meeting at the beginning of October on this matter. The committee is currently scheduled to meet on October 19, 2023. After

discussion, the date of the meeting will be changed to October 12, 2023. This will not affect the newspaper publication of the proposed budget draft.

**Review/Discussion/Action regarding Monthly Vendor Invoices/Vouchers/ Employment Payroll and Investment Report:** The new accounting system gives more detailed reporting, which the committee members commented positively on. The format of the report seems to be easier to read. It was decided to have a future discussion on paying bills up to a certain dollar amount without approval in advance of providing the report to the committee. Mr. Weiss made a motion to approve the invoices and vouchers presented, seconded by Mr. Bruegger. Carried.

**The Committee May Go Into Closed Session to Discuss Employee Performance/Possible Litigation:** Mr. Weiss made a motion to go into closed session, seconded by Mr. Michaels. Mr. Bruegger – yes, Mr. Weiss- yes, Mr. Michaels – yes, Mr. Bork – yes, and Mr. Lindstrom – yes. Carried.

**The Committee May Return to Open Session:** Mr. Bruegger made a motion to return to open session, seconded by Mr. Michaels. Mr. Bork -yes, Mr. Weiss- yes, Mr. Lindstrom – yes, Mr. Michaels – yes, and Mr. Bruegger – yes. Carried.

**Chairperson Report:** Nothing to report.

**Administrative Coordinator Report:** Mr. Engfer discussed Xcel Energy requesting an easement along CTH J that impacts less than ¼ acre of property. Mr. Engfer stated that pricing is being obtained for potential window replacements on the courthouse for worn out windows. Mr. Engfer also stated that Ricky Pax has been accepted an offer for the Maintenance Technician and will be starting September 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Public Comment Unrelated to Agenda Items:** None.

**Next Date and Time:** The next regular meeting will be Thursday, October 12<sup>th</sup>, at 8:30 a.m.

**Adjournment:** Mr. Bruegger made a motion to adjourn at 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Schmitt  
Buffalo County Deputy Clerk