



Kewaunee County
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES

June 6, 2019 9:30 a.m., Human Services Training Room
Public Health/Human Services Building, 810 Lincoln Street, Kewaunee, WI 54216

Call to Order: Chair Weidner called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.

Roll Call: Members present – Robert Weidner, Charles Wagner, Tom Romdenne, Gary Paape, Virginia Haske, Kaye Shillin, Mary Ellen Dobbins. Members Excused – Scott Jahnke, John Mastalir. Others present – Tom Cretney, Sheriff Matt Joski, Rebecca Deterville, Jamie Annoye, Germaine Bertrand, Scott Feldt, Jeff Wisnicky, David Cornelius, Tracy Nollenberg, Cindy Kinnard, Greg Gabriel, Davina Bonness, Cindy Kudick, Julie Schleis, Steve Hanson, Jennifer Gonzalez, Dana Johnson, Sue Norton, Paul Kunesh, Jane Babcock, Corrine Konkel, Todd Every, Dave Myers, Rob Burke.

Approve June 6, 2019 Agenda: Wagner moved and Haske seconded to approve the agenda with the change of Discussion of the WCA/Forward Analytics Report being taken up following approval of the minutes. Motion carried.

Approve May 9, 2019 Meeting Minutes: Wagner moved and Paape seconded to approve the May 9, 2019 minutes. Motion carried.

Discussion of WCA/Forward Analytics Report: Falling Behind: Weidner gave a general summary as to the findings of the WCA/Forward Analytics report. The report indicates that the state of Wisconsin faces a labor shortage as the number of working age adults continues to decline. Kewaunee County needs to identify ways to attract and retain workers. Discussion followed as to whose role it is to lead this effort. Feldt indicated it will take everyone, (the county, private businesses, and local municipalities) to make the county an attractive place for people to live and work. Some discussion followed related to the proposed countywide housing study. Weidner indicated that the lack of workers also result in the lack of construction of new homes and in turn, the lack of new property tax revenue. Feldt indicated that discussions will be taking place with developers and Kewaunee County Economic Development Corporation and the County to identify initiatives to address the issue.

Public Comment: Bonness asked that before the Committee looks to reduce employee wages, the county look at ways to increase revenues. Bonness asked the Committee to consider what the action may do to employee morale. The County should consider a trade off where some additional benefit could be increased to reduce the impact of a reduced salary increase (e.g. vacation, time off).

Joski reviewed with the Committee that elected officials sent a letter to the Board indicating the pay plan was unsustainable. Joski expressed his belief that taking this action would be taking a pound of flesh from the employees and that those who did receive pay increases were at the top of the pay scale instead of the bottom. Joski expressed his view that the issue is a revenue problem and not an expense problem. Joski urged the Board to approve a referendum to exceed the levy limit.



Joski expressed that decisions like these are part of leadership and challenged the Committee and the Board to lead.

Weidner responded that the County has regularly levied to the limit and has made budgetary decisions by weighing the different needs and priorities as they arise each year. Weidner expressed caution as to going to referendum as the County will need to make the case as to why exceeding the levy limit is necessary.

Every expressed his belief that the county pay plan and the personnel policies that outline benefits are not mutually exclusive. Impacts from changing the pay plan can be lessened by potential changes in personnel policies. Every stated that tweaks can be made and there are ways to address sustainability but still recognize employees and their contributions.

Babcock indicated that under the various proposals employees are asked to make a sacrifice. What sacrifice is the Board willing to make toward the budget issue?

Johnson asked that the Committee look at dollars versus percentages with regards to the pay plan. Johnson indicated that the Human Services department does not support any of the proposals that have been offered to date. Johnson asked if other revenue ideas have been reviewed and considered to address the budget concerns.

Wagner reminded the audience that the County Board changes every two years with new supervisors. Wagner addressed the audience that the county must continue to look at fees and it must be done every year. Fees for service affect those who receive the service.

Discussion of County Pay Plan: Weidner reviewed some of the major issues facing the county: workforce attraction, broadband, housing, levy limits, net new construction, health costs and state mandated services. These along with annual funding requests are items that administration and the county board must consider for the annual budget and for future budgets. Weidner reviewed that he asked the county administrator and finance director to look forward five years and provide a picture of what that would look like. Weidner agrees that making small changes now lessens the impacts of changes in future years.

Feldt reviewed the information he distributed during the employee information sessions. This included the five year financial projections and the methodology utilized when making those projections. Feldt also summarized the current percentage and dollar increases from the previous three years of the county pay plan and the belief that current percentage increases are unsustainable. Feldt then reviewed the three proposals presented for discussion, and there variations.

Wagner informed the committee that he has researched the amount of per diem and travel compensation received by board supervisors. The total is approximately \$7,600 per month. Wagner suggested the board supervisors relinquish a portion of the compensation to assist in addressing the budgetary concerns. Wisnicky explained that from a legal perspective, the committee cannot, nor can the County Board, require supervisors to give up a portion of their



compensation. The Committee and the Board may put such changes in place for the next term of Board supervisors but not the current term.

A ten minute recess was held.

Cretney offered the idea of installing a solar energy system as a potential revenue source. Cretney indicated that his research projects a \$500,000 would generate \$40,000 annually.

Feldt provided the committee the "takeaways" from the five employee information meetings that were held: Courthouse- 1) feeling that employees are being penalized because we did not ask for raises from the Personnel Committee, 2) Is enough being done to cut costs, 3) these decreases will affect employee morale. How can this be improved; Highway – 1) how will the changes affect employee attraction and morale, would like to see some changes in the personnel policies regarding vacation and overtime; Administration – 1) pay plan is unsustainable, 2) budget problems are being placed on the backs of the employees, 3) pay plan has benefitted a chosen few, 4) County Board needs to support exceeding the levy limits; Luxemburg – 1) budget problems are being placed on the backs of the employees, 2) changes will negatively affect employee morale and retention, 3) there were no other alternatives presented; Public Health/Human Services – 1) changes will negatively affect employee recruitment and retention, 2) employees being held responsible for a countywide issue, 3) concern that life decisions were made based on the pay plan. Feldt indicated that approximately 75-77 employees attended the meetings and 5 board supervisors did as well.

Wagner asked the hypothetical question of where does it say that a pay plan stays the same forever. Wagner indicated his preference that the plan be reviewed every few years. It is unrealistic to assume that a plan will remain unchanged for 10 years. Wisnicky indicated that employees look at the pay plan and see the impacts 15 years out and with the proposed changes they are concerned.

Discussion followed about what services are mandated, what services are essential and what services the county provides but are not reimbursed for.

Additional discussion took place regarding the proposed changes to the pay plan and how cost of living and step increases are factored into the total percentage wage increase. Should the committee consider decreasing the cost of living increase versus the step increase. What would be the right percentage decrease. Discussion also touched on a possible referendum and what information the public would need to make an informed decision..

Administrator's Report

Personnel Report- Feldt reviewed the personnel report. No items for discussion.

Administrator's Report – Feldt informed the committee that Broadband Study Group is looking at the idea of a "wi-fi mesh" system that could allow for better internet access. Meetings are being scheduled to discuss the feasibility of the idea and potential partners in implementation.



Feldt reviewed the progress to date with the Jail Study Group. Venture Architects is finishing up the final draft of the Phase 1 Report that will be presented to the County Board. The recommendation is for the County to construct a new facility with an initial estimation of 74 beds. General discussion followed as to size and the need for programming space.

Approval to Fill Vacant Positions – Dispatcher/Jailer & Sergeant position: Paape moved and Wagner seconded to authorize the filling of the Jailer/Dispatcher position and the Jail Sergeant position. Motion carried.

Approval of Revised Committee Rules and Duties: Feldt reviewed the Committee Rules and Duties with the committee. Each of the standing committees reviewed and approved the minutes prior to being presented to the Executive Committee for approval. Weidner asked for a small change in the Executive Committee rules and duties. He requested that the duty of “reviewing ordinances as needed” be added. No other concerns or amendments to any of the committee rules and duties were expressed. Haske moved and Dobbins seconded to approve all standing committee rules and duties as drafted with the amendment to the Executive Committee. If approved by the County Board these rules and duties would take effect in 2020 as part of the new county board. Motion carried.

Chairman's Report: Weidner provided a summary of a meeting held with State Representative Joel Kitchens. Kitchens indicated that he expects there to be an increase in county highway aid, an increase in funding for land and water conservation programs, but there will be no change to the current levy limits. The state prison is still being discussed and if the state were to own the prison, there would be a payment in lieu of taxes to the county and municipality.

Next Meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for July 10 at 7:30 a.m.

Adjournment: Wagner moved and Dobbins seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 12:25 p.m.