

**MEETING OF THE IRON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
JUNE 30, 2020**

Meeting called to order by Chairman Pinardi at 6:00 PM at the Memorial Building in Hurley.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll call taken, present: Thomas, Saari, Snyder, Hanson, Erickson, Sendra, Roberts, Thompson, Hiller, McComas, Byrns and Pinardi. Absent: Francis, Youngs and Krall. Francis appeared at 6:35 PM, he was attending the City of Hurley Board of Review.

Clerk Michael Saari certified that the meeting was properly called and posted.

A moment of silence was observed for former County Clerk George Reed and former Board Chairman Paul Gottwald.

Motion by Saari, seconded by Hanson to approve minutes of May 26, 2020 with correction presented and fixed. Supervisor Byrns noted that an error was recorded in a Highway Ordinance from last month. Terms of a fine were written as up to \$1,500 per day. The correct amount is \$1,000 per day. Clerk will make correction to official minutes book. All aye. Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Clerk told board that the July meeting of the board will be held at Saxon Harbor at 6 PM. A tour of the new harbor and campground will be conducted at 5 PM for all supervisors.

COMMITTEE, DEPARTMENT HEADS AND CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Thompson reported that the closing of the Wisconsin Rapids Paper Mill will affect our stumpage revenues in the future.

Thompson told the board that the trees and shrubs have been planted within the campground at Saxon Harbor.

Thompson reported that the Highway Department has been doing bridge work for the State of Wisconsin and crack sealing many miles of State Highways. Question arose if the county was doing any construction on County Road FF this year. 1.7 miles are left to be reconstructed but no work will be done this year, the garage in Mercer is this year's project.

Sendra told board that a nursing home is needed in the Town of Mercer but prospects are not good.

Sendra also reported that septic permits are picking up for the Zoning Department which means construction season is in full swing.

Sendra also reported that Recycling will be holding a tire pickup and electronics sweep at the end of August in both Mercer and Hurley.

Roberts reported that the county will be losing some state aid in 2020 and 2021 to make up for taxes already collected for interest on a loan that the State of Wisconsin said the county is not entitled to.

Roberts reported that the county is doing asbestos abatements on 2 tax deeded houses in the City of Hurley so they can be torn down.

Roberts reported that the County Clerk needs to have a hip replaced and is stalling it as long as he can because of the 2 upcoming elections this fall. Pat Stever, former deputy clerk has offered to work in the office until Clerk Mike Saari can return to work. Clerk told Finance Committee he will be off at least 3 weeks. Roberts also reported that the dredging contract for Saxon Harbor is completed and submitted for payment of \$1.3 million dollars. County officials say the check from the State of Wisconsin should be arriving very soon. (Over \$700,000 arrived in the mail on July 2nd.)

Roberts reported that she was elected chairperson of Human Services board with Vic Ouimette elected vice-chairman.

Roberts reported that a juvenile that was placed in a group home in 2017 is still in same home with no movement in over 2 years, very expensive.

Snyder reported that there are 7 confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Iron County as of today. There will be no more news releases of new cases in Iron County just relayed over Facebook. County board members voiced there concerns that the people of Iron County do not know where the cases in Iron County are located at. Snyder told board that the Health Department is just following the State of Wisconsin guidelines on information that is being released to the public.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Steve Schurttter, Montreal told the board that he was very appreciative of the attention to detail the county board members show while doing their job.

Discussion held on percentage of people in Iron County responding to the census without being contacted by a census worker later on in the summer. The State of Wisconsin response rate is at 68% while Iron County is just 37%. The City of Hurley and Montreal are at 56% which is pretty good but Oma, Mercer and Sherman are at just 25%. Supervisors were asked to go back to their towns and encourage their citizens to respond by mail, phone or online.

Motion by Thomas, seconded by Saari to approve the Iron County Land & Water Resource Management Plan dated June 2020. All aye. Motion carried. Plan is very detailed with over 100 pages of material.

Discussion held on former employees who retained the county health insurance after retirement. Current language states that employees who elect to retire after age 55 may, at their option, remain in the group health insurance plan until such time they are eligible for Medicare insurance. Even though the employees had to pay 100% of their premiums a report was generated that stated that the county has a liability that they had to report in their audit report each year. The report generated by Milliman cost the county \$13,000 for 2 years. Clerk told board that each time a new report was needed the price increased in price. If the county requires all retirees to find other health insurance coverage then the county could eliminate this reporting requirement. Two former employees are still on our coverage and are grandfathered with no liability to the county. Both have medical issues and do not wish to try to get new coverage at this time.

Motion by Roberts, seconded by Hanson to change language in employee handbook to state that “employees must find other health insurance upon retirement regardless of retirement age.” All aye. Motion carried.

Motion by Erickson, seconded by Byrns to adjourn at 6:46 PM. All aye. Motion carried.

Michael Saari
Iron County Clerk