

IRON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Meeting Minutes for August 27, 2024
Approved

1. Meeting called to order:

Youngs called the meeting to order at 6:00pm in the County Board Room.

2. Pledge of Allegiance:

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. Roll Call:

Present was Hiller, Wolff, Mullard, Loreti, Francis, Youngs, Thomas, Haeger, Swartz, Krall, Hanson, Erickson, Lauer and Lutgen. Absent Boes.

4. Acknowledge that the meeting was properly noticed and posted:

The clerk certified the meeting was properly noticed.

5. Approve minutes of July 30, 2024 as presented:

Motion to approve the minutes as presented made by Lutgen, seconded by Mullard. All yes, carried.

6. Communications:

The clerk noted that the new Green Book was out and has supplied each member with a copy. Youngs noted the nice article that was done on the Iron County Extension office in the WCA magazine.

7. Committee, Department Heads and Chairman's Report:

Wolff noted that Finance met, and many items are on the agenda and that we are still projected to lose \$850,000.00. Lutgen noted that UW Extension reviewed their budget and did more modifications, noted that they were able to make \$6,000 on the silent auction and \$15,000 on the Pie Auction at the Fair, the Memorial Committee now has everything on QuickBooks thanks to Brea and the reviewed the rental agreements as well as looking to rent out the bowling alley. Krall noted that in Law enforcement the Sheriff was still looking to fill positions, Hanson noted that the recycling attendant is retiring in Hurley, Zoning is looking to change the size limits for structures, Lauer Board of Health reviewed their budget with some changes to fees to increase revenue, Human Services reviewed their budget, they also have a resolution to present this evening for the Behavioral Health facility. Foster Care is needed so if anyone is interested, we have a new brochure out and Carol Mattson retired from the Committee after 22 years of service. Erickson noted that in Forestry stumpage was at \$995,442 and last year it was at \$1,056,483. Thomas noted that Highway did a few annual evaluations, and posted a position for a patrolman, they also took purchasing the skid steer out of the budget. Haeger noted that Zach turned in his resignation from LCC and his last day will be August 30th. Broadband meeting Nervado is hoping to expand in the area and will be at the next board meeting. Francis noted that Economic Development met, and the home project is still moving forward and should be completed in summer of 2025. Loreti noted that there is an electronic recycle drop off on September 7th. Mullard noted that he thought it was wrong to get rid of Kelly Klein.

8. Public comment pursuant to Resolution #2341:

None

9. Veteran Service Office and Emergency Management to give Presentation of Department Overview:

Erick Nasi the Veteran Service Officer and Stacy Ofstad from Emergency Management each gave a presentation on their department and what they do.

IRON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Meeting Minutes for August 27, 2024
Approved

10. Discuss/Action to use \$20,000.00 of Tribal Funds under Infrastructure Improvements to pay for County Park Road:

Motion to use the Tribal Funds of \$20,000 to pay for the paving of County Park Road made by Lutgen, seconded by Lauer. All yes, carried.

11. Discuss/Action Resolution 2024-3071 Jailer Protective Status Retirement

IRON COUNTY RESOLUTION 2024-3071

JAILER PROTECTIVE STATUS WISCONSIN RETIREMENT

WHEREAS, in 2023 the Wisconsin State legislature passed administrative rules classifying all Jailer employees as Protective Status employees throughout the State of Wisconsin;

WHEREAS, the administrative rules required each Jailer to increase their retirement contributions from 6.9% of wages to 14.32% of wages effective January 1, 2024;

WHEREAS, the administrative rules automatically classified the Jailers as Protective Status employees unless the Jailer made an election to individually opt out by March 1, 2024;

WHEREAS, the Jailers decision to remain a Protective Status employee or opt out as a General employee was irrevocable as of March 1, 2024;

WHEREAS, All Iron County Jailers chose to remain classified as Protective Status employees by the March 1, 2024 deadline;

WHEREAS, Protective Status is a significant benefit, allowing employees so classified to retire at age 54 (or 53 with 25 years of service) and also provides duty disability coverage in the event of an on-the-job injury;

WHEREAS, sometime around mid-May, an error was discovered in calculating the retirement contribution each Jailer was making to the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) for the first ten pay periods of 2024;

WHEREAS, the calculation error, when corrected, resulted in additional contributions to WRS and a reduction in take home pay for each of the seven Jailers;

WHEREAS, each Jailer has indicated that correction of this clerical error has caused an undue burden and had paychecks been calculated correctly at the beginning of 2024, each jailer would have opted out as a Protective Status employee;

WHEREAS, the Jailers did not independently calculate or verify changes to their WRS contributions, relying solely on the County's calculation as provided in the bi-weekly paycheck;

WHEREAS, the Jailers perform a valuable service to the County and the County desires to rectify the error:

WHEREAS, the seven Jailers are requesting the County cover the underpayment of WRS contributions (\$476.26 to \$669.34) already paid on the employee's behalf by the County totaling \$3,805.51 to offset the impact of this clerical error;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,

1. Said underpayment totaling \$3,805.51 is paid on behalf of only the seven affected Jailer employees: Thomas Schellinger, Scott Kuklenski, Johnathan Gwyn, Samantha Kussard, Quentin Hoffmeister, Tiffany Mullen, and Eryn Kirtland.
2. Said underpayment is not paid on behalf of new Jailer employees hired after January 1, 2024.

Motion to approve Resolution 2024-3071 made by Hiller, seconded by Thomas. All yes, Carried.

12. Resolution 2024-3072 Advocating for an Inpatient Behavioral Health Facility for Northern Wisconsin:

Resolution No. 2024-3072

RESOLUTION ADVOCATING FOR AN INPATIENT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH FACILITY FOR
NORTHERN WISCONSIN

TO THE IRON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

WHEREAS, Northern Wisconsin has limited resources when it comes to in-patient crisis care for individuals with mental illness; and

IRON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Meeting Minutes for August 27, 2024
Approved

WHEREAS, recent closures of facilities place a higher burden on the facilities that remain; and
WHEREAS, local law enforcement are tasked with providing transportation of individuals experiencing a mental health crisis and they often spend hours waiting for facilities to respond to requests for in-patient beds; and

WHEREAS, a significant number of individuals experiencing a mental health crisis end up being transported by law enforcement to the State facility in Winnebago; and

WHEREAS, the great distance traveled puts a financial strain on counties and local municipal law enforcement agencies, not to mention the emotional strain experienced by the individuals being transported for several hours, often in hand cuffs; and

WHEREAS, Iron County would like to work with other counties in the Northern part of the State to lobby for State funding to establish an in-patient crisis facility to serve this underserved area; and

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, THAT The Iron County Board of Supervisors urges the State Legislature and the Governor to provide funding (either another State facility or subsidies for private, not-for-profit organizations) to establish an in-patient acute behavioral health unit to serve the Northern counties; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT the Iron County Board of Supervisors encourages other counties in the Northern region of the State to join in the lobbying efforts and pass a similar resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT the County Clerk is directed to send this Resolution to the Governor, State Legislators, the Wisconsin Counties Association, and other Northern County Clerks upon passage.
Submitted by the Iron County Human Services Board.

Motion to approve Resolution 2024-3072 made by Lauer, seconded by Loreti. All yes, carried.

13. Discuss/Action for Health Insurance Renewal with no change to Plan:

There was no change to the premium for the health insurance for the county. Motion to approve made by Mullard, seconded by Hanson. All yes, carried.

14. Discuss/Action New Hire Pay Structure:

Motion to allow department heads to bring new hires in at 100% based on skill set and experience and then the department head would have to state their case to the full Finance Committee for review and approval made by Erickson, seconded by Francis. All yes, carried.

15. Discussion on New Draft for Employee Handbook:

Youngs noted that a while back we had formed a sub-committee of the finance to go over the handbook. The first few were posted, and the one took over 2 hours to get through the first 3 pages. Kurt was busy with budget, so Roxanne and Karen were left to get the handbook together. The book was presented last Tuesday and was just a draft and not approved. There was discussion that open meeting laws were violated, and we contacted the Counties Association and spoke to Andy Phillips and Sarah. He wanted everyone to be aware that nothing was done wrong, and we need to move forward.

16. Discuss/Action on 2025 Budget:

Wolff reviewed the information for the budget and explained base levy and debt levy. He presented some preliminary figures for the 2025 budget and a sheet on options for reducing a million-dollar deficit to cut the budget.

1. Departments were asked to budget 5% for health insurance increase. After discussion the agent for the health insurance came back with a zero percent increase for 2025. Motion to make that change in the budget made by Lutgen, seconded by Loreti. All yes, Carried.
2. Motion to approve 2a. single/family deductibles increased from 100/300 to 500/1000, 2b Employee share of premiums increased from 10% to 13% and 2c In Lieu of payment for not taking health insurance is reduced 20% made by Lutgen, seconded by Loreti. 13yes 1no (Mullard). Carried.

IRON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Meeting Minutes for August 27, 2024
Approved

3. Board members were asked about eliminating all budgeted overtime except for highway, sheriff, and emergency human services. Register of Deeds and DA office has a combined \$22,000 budgeted overtime. Motion to stop all the overtime noted made by Erickson, seconded by Lutgen. All yes, Carried.
4. Reduce funding allocation to UW Extension to eliminate the Horticulturist position – potential savings \$40,000.00 motion to eliminate the position made by Hiller, seconded by Lauer. 13 yes, 1 no (Mullard) Carried.
5. Reduce funding allocation to Economic Development and provide those services in an alternative manner. Potential savings \$100,000.00. Motion to reduce allocation to economic development made by Francis, seconded by Hiller. 12 yes, 2 no (Erickson, Mullard) Carried.
6. Eliminate one position potential savings \$80,000.00 Motion to eliminate one position made by Lauer, seconded by Loreti. 13 yes 1no (Mullard) carried.

17. Adjournment:

Youngs adjourned the meeting at 7:50pm.

Approved: September 24, 2024

Respectfully submitted,
Christan Brandt, Iron County Clerk