

IRON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Meeting Minutes for September 24, 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 were Mullard, Loreti, Francis, Youngs, Thomas, Haeger, Swartz, Krall, Hanson, Erickson, Boes, Lauer, Lutgen, Hiller, Wolff.

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

Clerk Brandt certified the meeting was properly noticed and posted.

5. Approve minutes of August 27, 2024 as presented:

Motion to approve the minutes as presented made by Lutgen, seconded by Swartz. 15 yes 0 no, Carried.

6. Communications:

Clerk Brandt noted that she had received 5 letters from employees about ways to cut the budget deficit. Many noted UW Extension not being a mandated service, sell the ARDC building and move the four employees to the senior center and Human services, cut overtime, flex and comp time should be monitored more closely, Freeze Human Service employees who received pay increases that were snuck in 2022, Eliminate positions created during COVID, IT expenses when it was just Computer Doctors, cut newly created positions, look at year to date vacation, sick, flex and comp taken and if the employee can use all their time off in 6 months then is that position necessary.

Brandt also stated that Niel Klemme was here and has new high school students here that are interested in being part of the Iron County Youth Leadership Program.

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

Wolff noted that Finance met, and an agreement was made with Sheriff Deputies, this will go to final approval in October, Scott with CLA gave an overview of the 2023 Audit.

Lutgen noted Extension went over program updates and USDA has grants to help homeowners, Memorial Building is looking for someone to take over the finances and they are working on some maintenance items. She also noted that she attended the WCA conference in Lacrosse and it was very informative, and she learned a lot.

Boes noted that Economic Development will have a meeting on October 1st and he also attended the conference and that all the classes that were offered will be online next week.

Hanson noted that Recycle is working on budget issues and has gone to cutting one day per week. The Hurley position will be filled by a Hurley employee.

Lauer noted that HS board welcomed their new member, Jennifer Rye, she also noted that she went to the conference and that she spoke to Ashland and Bayfield Counties and there is an Innovation grant and that maybe we can all combine to apply and use those funds. The Mercer Clinic will reopen the second quarter of 2025.

Swatz noted that the Fair board is now winterizing the grounds and working on storage and planning for next year. They are also working in the stage. Cortney Ofstad noted that the fair had 135 attendees this year and so far, their net income was \$33,632.00

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Erickson noted that stoppage was \$1,221,222.00 and last year \$1,195,768.00. They have bid openings on October 10th. Log-a-load for kids will be at Pence Filed on October 3 and 4, they welcome all board members to stop and see the process.

Thomas noted that Hwy did 3 evaluations and interviewed 3 people for the patrol job and hired one pending the employee physical.

Haeger noted that LCC noted that Zach was done last month but all his reports are completed and ready to go. Completed a culver in the Town of Anderson and worked with lace associations.

Francis noted that the aging met and reviewed meal site updates as there is not cook in Mercer, there will be a Flu Shot Clinic October 23rd.

8. Public comment pursuant to Resolution #2341:

Niel Klemme noted that he had gone to Hurley School to reach out to the kids to see if any would be interested in the Youth Leadership program and over 20 kids came. They will go through training next month and will reach out for mentors.

9. Discuss/Action on Norvado Presentation on Broadband in Iron County and Resolution presented:

Chad Young CEO with Norvado gave a presentation on the areas that his company would come in and service with broadband should they get the BEAD Grant. They would like our support by completing the resolution. There is a section that states we would pledge funds, and the board stated that they would support them, but that section would need to be taken out. Motion to approve the resolution with striking paragraph 8 and changing wording in paragraph 6 made by Lutgen, seconded by Haeger. 14 yes 1 no (Hanson) Carried. A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF NORVADO'S APPLICATION FOR THE BROADBAND EQUITY, ACCESS, AND DEPLOYMENT (BEAD)

PROGRAM GRANT AND PLEDGING MATCHING FUNDS

Resolution # 2024- 3073

WHEREAS, reliable high-speed internet access is essential for economic development, educational opportunities, public safety, healthcare services, and overall quality of life for the residents and businesses in Iron County; and WHEREAS, many areas within Iron County lack adequate access to reliable, high-speed broadband internet services, creating a significant digital divide that negatively impacts the community's growth and development; and WHEREAS, Norvado, a trusted telecommunications provider, has demonstrated a commitment to expanding broadband access to underserved areas, including those within Iron County; and

WHEREAS, Norvado is preparing an application for funding under the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program, which seeks to provide federal funding to support broadband infrastructure projects in unserved and underserved communities; and provide to its residents, businesses, and public institutions; and

WHEREAS, Iron County is committed to supporting Norvado's efforts and recognizes the importance of local letters of support to strengthen the competitiveness of the BEAD application and maximize the potential for success in securing grant funding; NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of Iron County, as follows: Iron County fully supports Norvado's application for funding under the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program to expand high-speed broadband services to unserved and underserved areas within the County. Iron County will work collaboratively with Norvado to ensure the timely and efficient completion of the broadband expansion project, should the BEAD funding be awarded.

The County Clerk is hereby directed to forward a copy of this resolution to Norvado.

Adopted this 24th day of September, 2024, by the Iron County Board of Supervisors

10. Discuss/Action for Bicycle Path Presentation County J:

Becher Hoppe gave a presentation on the Expansion of the Bike Path down County J in Mercer that would connect to the Windman Trail in Winchester. The trail would be completed in 3 phases. They are here to get permission from the County as it needs to be decided if they will allow the trail on the right of way along J that would be approximately 2.8 miles. Kasey Krall, Iron County Highway Commissioner

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stated that they had no concerns where located. Motion to approve made by Hiller, seconded by Lutgen. 15 yes, 0 no. Carried.

11. Rezone from an F-1 (Forestry) to C-1 (Commercial) in accordance with the Asset Based Community Development Plan in the Town of Mercer at 4362N US Hwy 51, Lake County Storage Solutions LLC, Owner:

Motion to approve the rezone made by Lauer, seconded by Hanson. All yes, Carried.

12. Discuss/Action allow New Register of Deeds to come in for training:

This was in Finance and Dan the Register of Deeds noted that he would like the incoming Deeds to come in for some training prior to taking over. Finance approved no more than 128 hours at 90% of the current wage. Motion to approve made by Thomas, seconded by Erickson. Lutgen stated that at the conference they noted that the roll of elected offices there is not transition between former and new. Most go to training that is offered and other resources. They would not get paid prior to this. Roll Call taken. 9 yes (Mullard, Youngs, Thomas, Haeger, Swartz, Krall, Hanson, Erickson, Wolff.) 6 no (Loreti, Francis, Boes, Lauer, Lutgen, Hiller). Carried.

13. Discuss/Action on 2024 and 2025 Budget:

a. **Increase 2024 payable in 2025 Levy by \$375,000:** Wolff noted that we cannot vote on this but that he would like to know thoughts on this as we need to move forward with punching in numbers for budget purposes and after looking more at the numbers that dollar amount is closer to \$415,000.00.

b. **Place Saxon Harbor Loan on 20-year amortization and rework bank documents with Chippewa Valley Bank:**

We can borrow for 20 years, and we are already 5 to 6 years into it. The Recommendation is to take out as of January 1st to amortize the loan for Saxon Harbor to start making a dent in paying it down. Motion to modify the Saxon Harbor Loan for 366 days to Pay interest and Principal over 20-year amortization period with Chippewa Valley Bank with a 3.79% interest rate with authorized signers Larry Youngs, Chairman; Christan Brandt, Clerk; and Clara Maki, Treasurer made by Wolff, seconded by Loreti. 15yes 0 no, carried.

c. **Borrow approximately \$1,020,000 to pay 2024 Capital Expenditures, Property Liability Insurance, County Road Work and Court Ordered Placement Costs:** Motion to borrow an amount not to exceed \$1.1 million form Chippewa Valley bank for 2024 cost of Capital Improvements, Property Liability Insurance, Court ordered placements and County highway repaving for 366 day prepayment at 3.79% ,authorized signers Larry Youngs, Chairman; Christan Brandt, Clerk; and Clara Maki, Treasurer made by Wolff, seconded by Lutgen. 15 yes, 0 no, carried.

14. Discuss/Action to approve Consulting Contract with Government Solutions LLC:

Wolff noted that we need to use the firm to help on expenditures and revenues that he has done all he can, they will be able to help with audit issues and what we can and cannot do. The cost is \$130 an hour and this went to finance and was approved. Motion to approve made by Lauer, seconded by Francis. All yes, carried.

15. Discuss/Action to Create/Hire a County Administrator Type Position:

The board felt that this is way overdue and that we need this position. Motion to look into the position and what we would ask and what they would perform as administrator made by Francis, seconded by Lauer.

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Lutgen stated that Price County administrator had to come in and find where the money would come from to pay his salary. All yes, Carried.

16. Discuss/Action to form Referendum Committee:

Youngs stated that the full County Board would have to be the committee as we are only allowed to sit on so many committees. Motion to approve made by Mullard, seconded by Boes. Motion was not finished, failed.

17. Adjournment:

Youngs adjourned the meeting at 8:07pm.

Approved: October 29, 2024

Respectfully submitted,
Christan Brandt, Iron County Clerk