



BOARD MINUTES
BOARD OF WRIGHT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Tuesday, September 5, 2023
DATE APPROVED: September 19, 2023

Tina Diedrick, District 1
Darek Vetsch, District 2
Jeanne Holland, District 3
Nadine Schoen, District 4
Michael Kaczmarek, District 5

The Wright County Board met in regular session at 9:00 A.M. with Diedrick, Vetsch, Holland, Schoen, and Kaczmarek present.

Present and responding to roll call were the following:

Board of Commissioners:	Tina Diedrick
	Jeanne Holland
	Michael Kaczmarek
	Darek Vetsch
	Nadine Schoen

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. MINUTES - DISPENSE WITH READING, APPROVE AS WRITTEN/REVISED

A. Approve Minutes from the County Board Meeting (08-15-2023)

Commissioner Michael Kaczmarek asked to make two updates, add the specific dollar amount to the Expedition Services paid claim amount and include that County Attorney Brian Lutes advised the board that if an attorney was needed for an evening meeting, the Attorney's Office would be able to provide one.

Kaczmarek moved to approve the Tuesday, August 15 County Board Meeting minutes with the provided updates. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nadine Schoen. The motion passed 5-0.

Aye: 5; Nay: 0; Abstain: 0; Absent: 0; Recused: 0

B. Approve Minutes from the Committee of the Whole - Wright County Economic Development Partnership and Wright County Historical Society (08-22-2023)

Commissioner Jeanne Holland asked to include that Albertville does not have internal economic development.

Holland moved to approve the Tuesday, August 22 Committee of the Whole minutes with the provided update. The motion was seconded by Schoen. The motion passed 5-0.

Aye: 5; Nay: 0; Abstain: 0; Absent:0; Recused: 0

C. Approve Minutes from the Committee of the Whole - Budget (08-29-2023)

Kaczmarek asked to include the following statements:

He would like to see existing positions being utilized more such as the Telecom Specialist.

The Sheriff has agreed to show the County Board the Expedition Services contract once it is complete.

The Cokato Museum does good work and we have a Historical Society that the county is mandated to have and give money to, but the county doesn't give money to the Cokato museum.

Holland asked to include that Albertville was aware that it was receiving public safety funds and it wanted to spend it elsewhere.

Kaczmarek moved to approve the Tuesday, August 29 Committee of the Whole minutes with the provided updates. The motion was seconded by Holland. The motion passed 5-0.

Aye: 5; Nay: 0; Abstain: 0; Absent:0; Recused: 0

III. REVIEW & APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Darek Vetsch said that a Budget Committee of the Whole (COTW) and a Special Board Meeting will need to be scheduled. Both items were added to items for consideration.

Kaczmarek moved to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Holland. The motion passed 5-0.

Aye: 5; Nay: 0; Abstain: 0; Absent:0; Recused: 0

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Tina Diedrick moved to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Holland. The motion passed 5-0.

Aye: 5; Nay: 0; Abstain: 0; Absent:0; Recused: 0

A. ADMINISTRATION

1. Authorize Signatures on City Law Enforcement Contracts with Clearwater, Montrose and Saint Michael.

B. ATTORNEY

1. Request Chairperson sign Joint Powers Agreements with the Townships of Albion, Buffalo, Woodland and Clearwater for the Enforcement and Regulation of Cannabis.

C. FINANCE & TAXPAYER SERVICES

1. Motion to approve the reimbursement of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) Funds as Follows:
County ARP Funds:
Approval of County Reimbursement of \$1,500,226.14 from 01-099-493.6910 Transfer Out into 01-100-493.5910 Transfer In as follows:
\$226.14 for Administrative Expenses-Staff Costs and \$1,500,000 for Sheriff Employee Retention
Approval of use of ARP Funds from 01-099-493
\$104.40 2.34 Aid to Nonprofit Organizations- 4-H
\$2,011.61 1.7 Capital Investment-Customer Flow Management System
2. Motion to Approve Attached Budget Amendments for August.
3. Acknowledge Warrants Issued Between August 9, 2023 and August 29, 2023.

D. HIGHWAY

1. Authorize Final Acceptance and Final Payment for the Otsego Highway Maintenance Facility Expansion Building Project. Final payment in the Amount of \$75,885.23 is Due to Rochon Corporation of Osseo, MN.

E. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

1. Approve ARP Grant Agreements for the Following Projects:
BB-004-001: 2023 Border-to-Border Broadband – Local Contribution – Meeker Coop, French Lake Township - \$776,192
BB-005: 2023 Broadband – Cokato Township Project – Meeker Coop - \$204,000

V. TIMED AGENDA ITEMS

A. 9:05 AM- VIRGIL HAWKINS, HIGHWAY

1. Schedule a Public Hearing on Tuesday, October 3, 2023 to Update the List for the Local Options Sales Tax (LOST) for Transportation.

Assistant County Engineer Chad Hausmann said that a public hearing needs to be scheduled to update the LOST list to generalize highway maintenance facilities that are eligible for LOST funds. This is a recommendation from the Transportation COTW.

A LOST public hearing has been scheduled during the Tuesday, October 3 County Board meeting at 9:30 a.m.

Diedrick moved to approve scheduling a public hearing at 9:30 a.m. Tuesday, October 3 to update the list for the LOST projects. The motion was seconded by Schoen. The motion passed 5-0.

Aye: 5; Nay: 0; Abstain: 0; Absent:0; Recused: 0

B. 9:10 AM- ROSS DEMANT, PARKS & RECREATION

1. Authorize the Director of Parks & Recreation To Execute The Notice To Proceed To Phase 3 For The Schroeder Park and Campground Redevelopment Project Including The Acceptance Of The Guaranteed Maximum Price.

Parks & Recreation Director Ross Demant said that the Schroeder Park and Campground redevelopment is ready to proceed to Phase Three with a guaranteed maximum price of \$1,791,284. If approved, construction is looking to begin on September 17, 2023.

Diedrick moved to authorize the Director of Parks & Recreation to execute the notice to proceed to Phase Three for the Schroeder Park and Campground redevelopment project, including the acceptance of the guaranteed maximum price. The motion was seconded by Schoen. The motion passed 5-0.

Aye: 5; Nay: 0; Abstain: 0; Absent:0; Recused: 0

C. 9:15 AM- BRIAN LUTES, ATTORNEY

1. Provide an Update on School Resource Officer Legislation

Lutes said that in his opinion, this is a misguided piece of legislation that is ambiguous. It has created negative public sentiment and has become a political issue. Lutes said that he met with the School Resource Officer (SRO) Command Staff from the Sheriff's Office to discuss the legislation, prior to the Attorney General's Office advisory opinion. Lutes was impressed with the thoughtfulness of the Sheriff's Office Command Staff about this issue and the level of training and education that they already did in connection with the legislation. The Sheriff's Office had already gathered historical data and there were only three instances from the last school year that an SRO had any physical contact with a student.

Lutes said that Wright County Safe School meetings are illustrative of the relationships that Wright County has with its schools, and the importance of keeping the schools safe, with the SROs at the heart of the safety and relationships. Lutes understands why agencies across the state are pulling their SROs but thinks that it is a bad idea. He stands behind the decision of the Wright County Sheriff's Office to keep SROs in the schools. Lutes said there is obvious risk, as there is with any part of an officer's job, but the benefit received from having SROs in schools far outweighs the potential for risk because of the legislation.

Lutes referred to Minnesota State Statutes 121A, that governs regular education and 125A, that governs special education and highlighted the changes. Lutes said that the ambiguity is in the prone restraint and

nothing in either statute precludes the use of reasonable force, despite restrictions on prone restraint.

Lutes clarified that the old law said use of reasonable force could be used to restrain a student *or* to prevent imminent bodily harm. The new legislation removed the word “or”, so restraint is only allowed to prevent bodily harm or death to the student or another.

The Minnesota Attorney General’s summary of conclusion for the updated legislation states, “The amendment does not limit the types of reasonable force that may be used by school staff and agents to prevent bodily harm or death. The test for reasonable force remains unchanged and is highly fact-specific.” Lutes said that Wright County’s historical data is comforting, being that there were only three instances of physical contact last year and is a testament to how well-trained and educated Wright County’s SROs are.

Lutes said that he is very comfortable with SROs remaining in Wright County schools. There is risk every day with their job, but the benefit of having SROs in the school far outweighs the potential for risk and he is strongly advocating for SROs to remain in Wright County schools.

Holland thanked Lutes for coming and said that she is a large supporter of the SRO program. Holland met with the superintendent of Saint Michael-Albertville schools and superintendents around the state are concerned about the fact that the SROs can be criminally and civilly charged with the new legislation. She wants to make sure that the officers are safe and told Lutes that his feedback was very good information.

Vetsch thanked Lutes and said that the information provided will help to better educate the general public. This information helps to better articulate that the Wright County Board, Attorney’s Office and Sheriff’s Office still welcome and support SROs in Wright County school.

Kaczmarek asked if the deputies union has had any thoughts or concerns on the county’s decision to keep SROs in schools. Lutes said that the union has weighed in with a very cautious message that it may be wise to remove the SROs.

Kaczmarek asked if a non-contracted deputy working on school grounds would be held accountable to the same standard as a contracted SRO. Lutes said that in his opinion, yes the deputy would.

Kaczmarek asked about a situation that is property-damage only. Lutes clarified the difference between imminent bodily harm or death, and that it is different for school officials and command staff. Lutes said that his advice would be to call a patrol deputy if an instance would arise.

D. 9:30 AM- HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

1. HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES CONSENT AGENDA

Holland moved to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Schoen. The motion passed 5-0.

Aye: 5; Nay: 0; Abstain: 0; Absent: 0; Recused: 0

- i. Approve 09-29-2023 Child Protection Team (1 & 2) Retreat, Ney Park, Maple Lake.
- ii. Approve 10-06-2023 Intake & Intervention Team Retreat, Ney Park, Maple Lake
- iii. Approve 10-27-2023 Assessment Services Team Retreat, Wright County Historical Society.
- iv. Approve HHS Advisory Committee (HHSAC) Two-Year Term Reappointment:
 1. Bradley Gangnon, District 2 - First Term Ends 2023-11-08

2. HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES TIMED AGENDA

- i. Recognize the HHS Employee of the Month for September

Laurie Davis was recognized as the Health and Human Services (HHS) Employee of the Month for September.

- ii. Approve 2022 Debt Write-Off

HHS Director Jami Goodrum said that the debt write-off is an annual exercise where the county has deemed debt uncollectable and introduced Revenue and Debt Coordinator Christina Klaphake.

Klaphake gave background on the types of debt collected, county debts, based on the county fee scale, and state debts. Klaphake said that out-of-home placement is disproportionate in comparison to the other debt categories. This is because there were three cases where the amount owed was more than \$17,000 each, for a combined amount of \$95,000. These debts date back to the early 2000s and the fee schedule has changed over the years. All three cases have been deemed uncollectable based on the inability to locate and serve a judgement.

Vetsch asked if a 1099 is sent when debt is written off. Goodrum said that it is not. These are typically cases that do not have tax assets being received and a lot of the point of the write-off is so HHS is spending its limited staff time pursuing debts that can be collected. Goodrum said sending a 1099 is not a request that has been asked before but can be looked into if the board advises.

Diedrick moved to approve writing off the 2022 Debt. The motion was seconded by Schoen. The motion passed 5-0.

Aye: 5; Nay: 0; Abstain: 0; Absent:0; Recused: 0

iii. HHS Director Comments

Goodrum introduced Social Services Manager Michelle Miller. Miller presented a performance report for the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) for the percent of children discharged from out of home placement to permanency in less than 12 months. The state's threshold is 40.5 percent and Wright County went from 31.5 percent to 54.22 percent currently.

Goodrum said that HHS has been awarded a \$50,000 grant for the responder program, and it still waiting to hear on the Medica grant.

The State of Minnesota has announced that another month will be granted to get paperwork submitted for healthcare renewals, and each month through the end of 2023 will continue to be granted an additional month.

HHS hosted two laundry events with a \$10,000 grant from Medica. The event hosted in Buffalo served 29 people and the event in Monticello did not have attendance numbers to report yet.

Goodrum thanked the board for their support of the SRO program and keeping them in the schools.

VI. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

A. ADMINISTRATION

1. Motion to Approve the Delegation of Department, Fund, and Levy Neutral Budget Adjustments in Oracle Fusion to the County Administrator, Finance Director and Assistant Finance Director. (All Budget Adjustments Made Under this Authority Will be Reported to the County Board as Items for Acknowledgment. The Original Approval on October 18, 2022 has Expired. Requesting an Extension to the Original Approval.)

Assistant Finance Director Heather Lemieux said that the board requested to revisit this once new commissioners were onboarded and that the Finance Department is asking for perpetuity.

Vetsch said that he does not have any concerns with that and that he is open to perpetuity or revisiting again at a later date. Lemieux said that a benefit of Oracle is that Oracle will give notice to the board when an adjustment is made.

Kaczmarek said that he doesn't think that it is a large ask to come back annually and would like to have Finance bring this topic back to the board in the fall of 2024.

Kaczmarek moved to approve delegating the department fund levy-neutral budget amendments in Oracle Fusion to the County Administrator, Finance Director, and Assistant Finance Director through October 18, 2024. The motion was seconded by Diedrick. The motion passed 5-0.

Aye: 5; Nay: 0; Abstain: 0; Absent:0; Recused: 0

2. Schedule Meetings:

1. ARP Committee of the Whole

2. Closed Session, Labor Negotiations

American Rescue Plan (ARP) COTW has been scheduled for 9:30 a.m. Monday, September 18.

Kaczmarek moved to schedule an ARP COTW for 9:30 a.m. Monday, September 18. The motion was seconded by Schoen. The motion passed 5-0.

Aye: 5; Nay: 0; Abstain: 0; Absent:0; Recused: 0

Closed Session, Labor Negotiations has been scheduled for 10:30 a.m. Monday, September 18.

Kaczmarek moved to schedule a Closed Session, Labor Negotiations for 10:30 a.m. Monday, September 18. The motion was seconded by Schoen. The motion passed 5-0.

Aye: 5; Nay: 0; Abstain: 0; Absent:0; Recused: 0

3. Refer Items to County Board Workshop on September 12, 2023

HHS—AmeriCorps Presentation

Great River Regional Library systemwide budget update

Compost HHW updates:

•Release of RFP

•Compost Usage without loader

•City and Township Brush Acceptance Hauling and Grinding

•Expectations and Fees

Highway Event permits

Café Space

Kaczmarek asked to add the following topics to the agenda: use of fitness center by non-Wright County employees, large group assembly permit process, and policy for written contracts.

Kaczmarek moved to approve the items to refer to the County Board Workshop, with the additional three topics. The motion was seconded by Holland. The motion passed 5-0.

Aye: 5; Nay: 0; Abstain: 0; Absent:0; Recused: 0

B. COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Approve and Adopt Recommendations from the August 22, 2023 Committee of the Whole- Wright County Economic Development Partnership and Wright County Historical Society

Vetsch said that these recommendations are guidance towards the budget and can be adjusted for the final levy.

Diedrick moved to approve and adopt the recommendations from the August 22, 2023 COTW. The motion was seconded by Holland. The motion passed 4-1 with Kaczmarek opposing.

Aye: 4; Nay: 1; Abstain: 0; Absent:0; Recused: 0

2. Approve and Adopt Recommendations from the August 29, 2023 Committee of the Whole- Budget

Kaczmarek said that he was in favor of some positions and opposed to others and asked if the board would like to vote on the recommendations individually. It was consensus to vote on the recommendations all together.

Diedrick moved to approve and adopt the recommendations from the August 29, 2023 COTW. The motion was seconded by Holland. The motion passed 4-1 with Kaczmarek opposing.

Aye: 4; Nay: 1; Abstain: 0; Absent:0; Recused: 0

- 3.* Schedule a Budget Committee of the Whole

A Budget Committee of the Whole has been scheduled for 11:00 a.m. Tuesday, September 12.

Schoen moved to schedule a Budget Committee of the Whole for 11:00 a.m. Tuesday, September 12. The motion was seconded by Holland. The motion passed 5-0

Aye: 5; Nay: 0; Abstain: 0; Absent:0; Recused: 0

- 4.* Schedule a Special Board Meeting

A Special Board Meeting has been scheduled for 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, September 26.

Kaczmarek moved to schedule a Special Board Meeting for 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, September 26. The motion was seconded by Schoen. The motion passed 5-0

VII. ADVISORY COMMITTEE / ADVISORY BOARD UPDATES

Lee Kelly

Kelly gave a reminder that the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) has upcoming conferences.

Darek Vetsch

Vetsch said that he will give an update on the Central Mississippi Regional Partnership (CMRP) at the October Workshop. He asked if the board would be willing to write a letter of support for this application to continue serving on the State Energy Transition Advisory Panel. The board gave consensus.

Jeanne Holland

Holland said that the Public Health governing body, State Community Health Services Advisory Committee (SCHSAC), visited Wright County.

Tina Diedrick

Diedrick said that she visited the Wright County Community Action (WCCA) meeting and applauded all the work that WCCA does for the community.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:33 a.m.

IX. WARRANTS ISSUED

A. Warrants Issued

