

WORK MEETING MINUTES

Beltrami County Board of Commissioners

April 19, 2022

3:00 pm

Meeting to be held in the County Board Room
County Administration Building, 701 Minnesota Avenue NW
Bemidji, MN

A link to the livestream will be available on the Board Meeting Agendas and Minutes page of the County Website.

Present: Commissioner Craig Gaasvig, Commissioner Jim Lucachick, Commissioner Tim Sumner, Commissioner Richard Anderson, Commissioner Reed Olson.

1. Call to Order

Tim Sumner called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm

2. CLOSED SESSION

A motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Olson to begin the closed session at 3:01 pm. Unanimously carried.

A motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Olson to return to the Regular Work Agenda at 3:35 pm. Unanimously carried.

3. Introduction of New Employees

New HHS Finance Manager, Joshua Burnham and two new MIS Computer Specialists, Terri Mayer and Ryan Hargett, were introduced to the Board.

4. Identify Future Work Meeting Topics

- Auditor update on election preparation and equipment testing.
- Assessor update on property assessments for 2023

5. Greater Bemidji Annual Update

Executive Director, Dave Hengel presented the 2021 Greater Bemidji Annual Report and provided updates on other activities and initiatives.

All indicators are positive on the economic growth and development in our area.

- Retail sales, construction activity, lodging sales and economic ranking as a regional center are all up.
- Biggest concern is long-term unemployment

Key initiatives and activities include:

- Continue to identify opportunities to impact access to workforce
- Increase commitment to small, local-owned business
- Increase recruitment efforts
- Increase efforts to support entrepreneurs
- Push forward on the rail corridor development

Greater Bemidji Strategic Action Plan is on how to be more effective and best support our region from a multitude of perspectives.

6. Jail Budget Overview

Chief Deputy Jarrett Walton reviewed the reasons and cause of the projected \$507,831 budget shortfall for out-of-county housing costs in the jail.

Key reasons for housing inmates in other jails include:

- Staffing levels/shortages
- Facility Design
- Available housing and cost of housing

2022 budget is \$120,000. As of March 31, 43% of the total budget has been invoiced. The Jail has between 35-45 inmates housed out of county on a daily basis.

Cost savings can be used to offset shortage for the year 2022:

- Retirements replaced with staff lower on the pay scale
- Not replacing 2 decommissioned squad cars
- Unfilled positions for 3 months of wage savings.

Future funding concerns are still serious.

7. Child Placement

Social Services Division Director, Jeff Lind along with Social Services Managers Lisa Monsrud and Carissa Golden, discussed the child placement process and reviewed the past 12 placement cases. Chemical use was the primary issue in all cases.

On a more positive note: Ms Monsrud stated that in most cases, placements are made with a relative, which is less stress full for both the child and the parent. Ms Golden also discussed a newer approach being taken in the first 72 hours of a situation to gain the cooperation of the parent(s) to get voluntary help and to develop a safety plan and keep their child(ren) in the home.

8. Out of State Travel for Health & Human Services Director

Health and Human Services Director, Becky Secore presented a request for Out-of-State Travel to attend the National Association of Counties Annual Conference in Colorado July 21-24, 2022. All expenses would be paid by the MN Association of Social Services Administrators. Commissioners were in support.

9. April Timber Sale Results

Natural Resource Management Director, Richard Moore, presented the April 2022 timber sale auction results. All 17 tracks, both oral and sealed bid, were sold and prices are up over the previous 3-4 years.

10. PILT Resolution of Support

Natural Resource Manager, Richard Moore discussed that the Northern Counties Land Use Coordinating Board (NCLUCB) has been researching the inequities in the distribution of PILT to all Minnesota Counties. NCLUCB has developed a detailed study of these inequities. They have requested that impacted counties sign a resolution of support for the legislation. If approved it could result in an increase in revenue to the County of about \$500,000 annually.

Commissioner Olson suggested a future discussion on joining the NCLUCB organization as PILT is very important to Beltrami County.

11. Administrator's Report

- Personnel Committee has been meeting and preparing for union negotiations
- AWCL School will be vacating the CSC in June/July and are actively looking for replacement tenants.
- Jail Project is on schedule. The entire assessment report should be ready in Mid-August.
- Staff had a very productive meeting with Representative Fischbach staff on a broad range of topics.
- Newsletter meeting coming up – any suggestions from the Board for topics are welcomed
- Irvine Avenue Project Open House will be April 28 in the Board Room.

12. Other Business Items

a) Review Bills

b)

13. Review Agenda for the April 19, 2022 Regular Board Meeting

No additions or corrections were made to the Agendas.

14. Adjourn

The Work Session was adjourned at 4:46 p.m.