

MINUTES

Eau Claire County
Committee on Finance & Budget
Monday, February 7, 2022
4:30 p.m.
Webex Conference Call

Committee on Finance & Budget Members present: Supervisors Steve Chilson, Jim Dunning, Robin Leary, Stella Pagonis, Gerald Wilkie

Staff present: Norb Kirk, Finance Director; Amy Weiss, Senior Accounting Manager

Others present: Sean Lentz, Ehlers; Mindy Dale, Von Briesen; Ryan Patterson, Leader Telegram; an unidentified call-in user

Chair Pagonis called the Committee on Finance & Budget to order at 4:30 pm and confirmed compliance with open meetings law.

The committee clerk took roll call. Members present are indicated above.

No members of the public wished to speak.

Proposed Resolution 21-22/092 “Initial Resolution Authorizing the Borrowing of Not to Exceed \$5,625,000; and Providing for the Issuance and Sale of General Obligation Highway Facility Bonds Therefore”

Sean Lentz from Ehlers was present to explain the proposed bond issue for remaining costs on the Highway facility. The board made a commitment to borrowing these additional funds when it became known that the highway facility was going to be over budget. The funds from this borrowing can be diverted to other capital projects, such as the courthouse chillers, should they not be needed for the completion of the Highway facility. ADRC should hear back in mid-February about the status of the grant award for the Meals on Wheels kitchen construction.

Motion: Dunning move approval as presented

Vote: 5-0 via roll call vote

Department Legal Services and Expenditures (2020, 2021, 2022)

The current accounting structure is not setup to pull only legal services expenditures. Legal expenditures are mostly recorded under professional services or other contracted services. The committee reviewed expenditures in total for Weld Riley. Most of the county’s legal expenditures are in the courts. Human Resources does also pay for employment related items.

Supervisor Chilson would requested to know which department budgeted for outside legal counsel for Von Briesen, and how much money was budgeted. Supervisor Wilkie believes that the county should have and follow a process for determining when and how outside counsel is attained.

Supervisor Dunning would like a fiscal report from the Sheriff’s department on the forensic audit.

Grant Application and Award Policy

The committee began discussions on department application, presentation, and incorporation of new grant awards into the budget. The policy should address when the oversight committee and the board need to be involved. The committee desires uniformity, but not so much restriction that efforts are stifled. Norb will draft a policy for committee review.

Debt Strategy

Norb Kirk reviewed the current debt management policy. The county is currently out of compliance with the percentage of the levy metric. Norb will draft an updated policy for committee review.

2023 Budget Calendar

Pagonis asked several questions. Pagonis feels that March may be a bit early to request departments return capital requests to administration. The proposed budget calendar combines all budget items, instead of maintaining separate lists for all interested parties. Chilson would like F&B to have a budget presentation to the board in October to allow for board member education and questions.

Budget Process

The committee would like more board involvement in deliberations. The committee believes that the rules should be changed back to a committee of the whole, and/or other board rules should be changed to allow for better discussion.

Review of Meeting Minutes

Motion: Leary moves approval as presented

Vote: 5-0 via voice vote

Future Meetings: Joint Highway meeting February 24, 8 am (ARPA presentation, annual borrow for infrastructure and Pacer rating); regular F&B March 7, 4:30 pm; March 15, 2022 just prior to board meeting for bond sale approval

Agenda Items: bond sale approval, report back on DHS legal fees, forensic audit costs

The committee adjourned at 6:34 pm.



Amy Weiss
Committee Clerk