

REGULAR MEETING OF THE PRICE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

February 16, 2021

County Board Room 101, 126 Cherry St, Phillips, WI 54555

1. Meeting called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Robert Kopisch, County Board Chairperson.
2. Invocation: Pastor John Trewyn.
3. Pledge of Allegiance recited by those in attendance.
4. Roll Call: Present (11): Alan Barkstrom, Jeff Hallstrand, James Hintz, Paula Houdek, Robert Kopisch, Mark Kyle, Waldemar Madsen, Larry Palecek, Jordan Spacek, Ginny Strobl, Dennis Wartgow. Also present: Nick Trimner.
Due to COVID protocol, the public was given the opportunity to attend via teleconference.
5. Approval of Minutes – November 10, 2020 and January 19, 2021: Motion Hintz/Barkstrom to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2020 and January 19, 2021 meetings as presented with changes as noted. Motion carried.
6. Communications and Announcements: Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) is sponsoring a series on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. WCA is also facilitating weekly leadership conference calls. OpenMeeting RollCall will be installed with training at the April Board meeting and implementation at the May Board meeting. New federal aid package could include \$2.6 million for Price County. Mr. Hallstrand requested future discussion of a Second Amendment Sanctuary County resolution. Mr. Madsen requested consideration of a Constitution Sanctuary County resolution.
7. Public Comments: David Schmidt (remotely) from Town of Lake commended the County Board for having electronic meeting attendance.
8. Presentation:
 - a. Board Room Enhancements – Nick Trimner. Reviewed the new technology available in the County Board Room allowing for a better electronic meeting attendance experience.
 - i. Use of New Board Room Technology in Board and Committee Meetings: Administration Committee will need to discuss and develop any necessary policies. WCA put out a Q&A on electronic meeting protocol.
9. Resolutions:

Resolution 7-21

Approve Price County Fairgrounds Electrical Service Project to be Funded
with Money Transferred from the Capital Improvement Fund

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the Price County Buildings and Grounds Department to keep and maintain all County properties and buildings for the safe use by County residents; and
WHEREAS, it has been determined that the Open Class Building at the Price County Fairgrounds has deteriorated to a point that it is a public danger and no longer fit for public use; and
WHEREAS, it has further been determined that the only option for the current state of the Open Class Building is demolition of said building; and
WHEREAS, since the electric service for the Fairgrounds complex has been housed in the Open Class Building, an alternative location for said electric service is needed; and
WHEREAS, the anticipated cost of the project, consisting of new electric service and an outbuilding for housing the equipment, is approximately \$35,000; and
WHEREAS, to fund the project, it has been deemed necessary and in the best interest of the County that such funds be transferred from the Capital Improvement Fund.
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Price County Board of Supervisors approve the project to provide new electric service to the Price County Fairgrounds in the amount of \$35,000 with funds to be transferred from the Capital Improvement Fund.

Submitted by the Price County Executive Committee. s/Robert D. Kopisch, Chair; James Hintz; Paula Houdek, Larry Palecek. Reviewed by County Administrator: s/Nicholas Trimner. Adopted by the Price County Board of Supervisors this 16th day of February 2021. s/Robert D. Kopisch, County Board Chair; Jean Gottwald, County Clerk. For: 11, Against: 0.

Motion Spacek/Wartgow to consider resolution for adoption. Roll call vote on resolution adoption: Yes (11): Barkstrom, Hallstrand, Hintz, Houdek, Kopisch, Kyle, Madsen, Palecek, Spacek, Strobl, Wartgow. No (0). Motion carried.

Resolution 8-21

Request Elimination of the 0% Levy Cap Imposed on Wisconsin Counties

WHEREAS, in 2012, the State of Wisconsin imposed limits on town, village, city and county property tax levies under Wis. Stat. §66.0602; and

WHEREAS, Wis. Stat. §66.0602 limits that increase to the local property tax levy to no more than the greater of (a) 0% of last year's actual levy or (b) a percentage equal to the percentage change in equalized value due to new construction less improvements removed; and
WHEREAS, the percentage of net new construction in Price County used to calculate the increase in the operating levy allowance has significantly lagged the CPI-U over this period; and
WHEREAS, as a result, Price County has been forced to absorb inflationary increases in normal operating expenditures with no offsetting increase in revenues; and
WHEREAS, unexpected increases in the expenditures for certain items, particularly unfunded mandates such as the cost of Child Protective Services, has compounded this issue; and
WHEREAS, Price County has taken measures to curb spending by cutting costs, eliminating positions, limiting employee wage increases, reducing program offerings and postponing necessary work on highway infrastructure; and
WHEREAS, to continue to provide essential services to county citizens, Price County has resorted to using debt to fund qualified expenditures previously funded in its operating levy resulting in a higher cost to Price County taxpayers; and
WHEREAS, Price County will soon be unable to continue to fund operating levy by using debt; and
WHEREAS, the use of the referendum process to exceed the levy limit for normal operating and mandated costs presents an unacceptable risk for counties to be able to fund operations should such a referendum fail.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Price County Board of Supervisors requests complete elimination of the current 0% tax levy cap or replacing it with a levy allowance that adequately reflects annual inflationary increases and the continual escalating cost of state mandated services; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County Clerk is directed to send a copy of this resolution to Governor Evers, the Joint Finance Committee of the Wisconsin Legislature, the state legislators for Price County and the Wisconsin Counties Association for consideration at the WCA annual business meeting to become part of the WCA platform.

Submitted by the Price County Executive Committee. s/Robert D. Kopisch, Chair; James Hintz; Paula Houdek, Larry Palecek. Reviewed by County Administrator: s/Nicholas Trimner. Adopted by the Price County Board of Supervisors this 16th day of February 2021. s/Robert D. Kopisch, County Board Chair; Jean Gottwald, County Clerk. For: 10, Against: 1.

Motion Hintz/Palecek to consider resolution for adoption. Motion Strobl to postpone. Failed due to lack of a second. Roll call vote on resolution adoption: Yes (10): Barkstrom, Hallstrand, Hintz, Houdek, Kopisch, Kyle, Madsen, Palecek, Spacek, Wartgow. No (1): Strobl. Motion carried.

Resolution 9-21

Establish a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) Assigned Fund

WHEREAS, Price County has created a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) as part of the employee benefit package; and

WHEREAS, an HRA is designed to offset a portion of the high deductible the plan enrollees realize as a part of the County's current plan structure; and

WHEREAS, the Fund will be subsidized by amounts budgeted to each individual department, based on plan design and usage; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the County to establish an Unrestricted Net Position Fund to facilitate the County's Health Reimbursement Account.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Price County Board of Supervisors hereby establish the Health Reimbursement Account Unrestricted Net Position Fund to be assigned as 175-00-34290.

Fiscal Impact: To be determined based on the usage of the County's health insurance program.

Submitted by the Price County Executive Committee. s/Robert D. Kopisch, Chair; James Hintz; Paula Houdek, Larry Palecek, Dennis Wartgow. Reviewed by County Administrator: s/Nicholas Trimner.

Adopted by the Price County Board of Supervisors this 16th day of February 2021. s/Robert D. Kopisch, County Board Chair; Jean Gottwald, County Clerk. For: 11, Against: 0.

Motion Wartgow/Hintz to consider resolution for adoption. Roll call vote on resolution adoption: Yes (11): Barkstrom, Hallstrand, Hintz, Houdek, Kopisch, Kyle, Madsen, Palecek, Spacek, Strobl, Wartgow. No (0). Motion carried.

Resolution 10-21

Establish a Highway Department Debt Assigned Fund

WHEREAS, Price County has decided it to be in the best interest of county taxpayers to, when needed, utilize borrowing to fund a portion of the Highway Department construction projects; and

WHEREAS, it is determined in any given year what level of debt, if any, will be obtained for the following year's construction projects; and

WHEREAS, depending on various circumstances, the debt obtained in any particular year may, or may not, be completely spent for the proposed projects for that year; and

WHEREAS, development of a Highway Department Debt Assigned Fund will give the County a mechanism for tracking debt received and associated expenses incurred; and

WHEREAS the assigned fund will also identify required carryover of any unused debt revenue to be designated for future Highway Department construction projects.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Price County Board of Supervisors hereby establish the Highway Department Debt Assigned Fund to be assigned as 700-00-34190.

Submitted by the Price County Executive Committee. s/Robert D. Kopisch, Chair; James Hintz; Paula Houdek, Larry Palecek, Dennis Wartgow. Reviewed by County Administrator: s/Nicholas Trimner.

Adopted by the Price County Board of Supervisors this 16th day of February 2021. s/Robert D. Kopisch, County Board Chair; Jean Gottwald, County Clerk. For: 11, Against: 0.

Motion Palecek/Houdek to consider resolution for adoption. Roll call vote on resolution adoption: Yes (11): Barkstrom, Hallstrand, Hintz, Houdek, Kopisch, Kyle, Madsen, Palecek, Spacek, Strobl, Wartgow. No (0). Motion carried.

Amend Resolution 10-20

Price County Administration Emergency Administrative Flexibility for COVID-19

WHEREAS, the United States is experiencing an expanding COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin has had confirmed cases of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, Price County desires to be as strategic as possible to ensure the health and safety of Price County staff, residents and those traveling throughout Price County; and

WHEREAS, Price County desires to maintain the highest level of services related to the general public, such as Public Safety, Health and Human Services, Emergency Management and those departments directly related to the general welfare of all residents; and

WHEREAS, Price County desires flexibility to manage operations throughout this national pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Price County is providing administrative flexibility to allow the County Administrator, in consultation with Public Health and the County Board Chair, the ability to, but not limited to:

- Close Price County government buildings as necessary,
- Implement strategic staffing and policy changes to ensure enough healthy staff are in place to carry out necessary and critical services, and
- Maintain employee benefit status regardless of hours worked; and

WHEREAS, the County Administrator and County Board Chair shall, within reasonable time, but no later than 24 hours after implementing necessary decisions, inform the Price County Board of Supervisors of the situation at hand by email and/or phone.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Price County Board of Supervisors does hereby acknowledge, accept and support the County Administrator and County Board Chair to strategically implement necessary plans to ensure the safety and health of the Price County staff, residents and those traveling throughout the county; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution will remain in effect ~~for one hundred (100) one hundred sixty (160) days, until repealed through November 30, 2020, February 28, 2021~~ August 31, 2021 unless extended by the Price County Board of Supervisors.

Original signatures on initially adopted resolution.

Spacek/Hintz to consider resolution for amendment – to extend to August 31, 2021. Roll call vote on resolution amendment: Yes (10): Barkstrom, Hallstrand, Hintz, Houdek, Kopisch, Kyle, Madsen, Palecek, Spacek, Wartgow. No (1): Strobl. Motion carried.

10. Elections and Appointments

- a. Local Emergency Planning Committee: Motion Palecek/Hintz to approve the membership list as provided. Motion carried.
- b. Emergency Fire Wardens: Motion Houdek/Spacek to approve the list as presented. Motion carried.
- c. Reappointment of Highway Commissioner: Motion Hintz/Palecek to approve the reappointment of Joseph Baratka as Price County Highway Commissioner. Motion carried.
- d. Land Information Council: Motion Madsen/Strobl to appoint Sylvia Kerner and Joseph Grapa to the Land Information Council. Motion carried.

11. Reports on File

- a. 2019 Forestry & Parks

- b. 2020 Register of Deeds
12. Convene to Committee of the Whole at 10:20 a.m.
- a. County Administrator Report – Nick Trimmer
 - i. 2020 Financial Summary Report as of 12/31/20: Need to do budget amendments for COVID funds and grants. Year will end in the positive.
 - ii. 2021 Budget Report: Good start. Has been a quiet winter.
 - iii. COVID-19 Pandemic Update: Will continue with internal policies with some rollbacks expected. Averaging one positive case per day. Phase 1A vaccinations going well. 1B expected in early March.
 - b. Board Chair Report – Robert Kopisch
 - i. 2021 Redistricting: Census is not coming out until September 30th. Redistricting will not be established by December 1st, the first day to circulate nomination papers for Spring Elections.
 - ii. NW ITBEC Report: 12 county group to promote regional tourism.
 - iii. Park Falls Area Community Development Corporation restructuring status: They are attempting to raise more revenue to expand their services. Not getting a good response from some municipalities.
 - iv. NW CEP update: Work needed to promote all of their services.
 - v. April 6, 2021 Election Update: Three County Board Supervisor contest: Districts 3, 11 and 12.
 - c. Committee Chair Reports:
 - i. Administration – Wartgow: Working on retention and recruitment plan. Several vacancies need filling.
 - ii. Executive – Kopisch: Review of Books-by-Mail program. County Administrator performance review and contract renewal.
 - iii. Forestry & Parks – Hallstrand: Eric Holm retired as the Forest and Parks Administrator. Interim replacement is Joe Grapa. Applied for DNR and NRA grants for the shooting range updates. 15 active timber sales. Spring timber sales. Potential campground expansion.
 - iv. Health and Human Services – Houdek: COVID updates. Senior nutrition sites are operating with pick-up or home delivery. Unit quarterly reports. Several staff updates.
 - v. Highway & Transportation – Palecek: Has been a mild winter for road maintenance. Full staff. Received new broom from insurance claim. New Truck expected March 1st. Planning 2021 construction projects. DNR dam grant projects on schedule. Airport traffic has been seasonally slow. Prebid meeting for Airport Improvement Project. 2021 Air Show has been cancelled.
 - vi. Land Use & UW-Extension – Barkstrom: Several conditional use permits, special exemptions and land divisions. 11 properties for land sale in May or June. UW Extension meetings and programming is being done virtually and online.
 - vii. Law Enforcement – Hintz: Meeting scheduled March 12th. Sheriff and Jail budgets did well – no extraordinary events. Karl Kelz, the new District Attorney, started in January.
 - viii. Ad Hoc Committee on Damage to Fairground Buildings – Houdek: Committee met for a general update. Open Class Building demolished, with a lot of the materials being reclaimed. Damaged barn wing removed. Questionable state of remaining barn structure and pavilion. New electric service being installed at a cost of \$35,000.

Date of Next Meeting: April 20, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. in the County Board Room

Reconvened from Committee of the Whole and meeting adjourned at 11:28 a.m.

STATE OF WISCONSIN, COUNTY OF PRICE. I, Jean Gottwald, County Clerk in and for Price County do hereby certify that the within and foregoing is a true and correct record of all the proceedings held by and before the Price County Board of Supervisors at the meeting held on February 16, 2021 and the whole thereof.



Jean Gottwald, County Clerk