

FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

COMMITTEE:	FINANCE
DATE:	MARCH 22, 2022
TIME:	9:00 A.M.
PLACE:	FOREST COUNTY BOARDROOM

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Lukas called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and read the agenda.

ROLL CALL

Present: Campbell, Chaney, Collins(phone), Gretzinger, Lukas

Absent:

Others Present: Nora Matuszewski, Christy Conley, Ron Skallerud

APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Campbell to approve the agenda as presented, second by Chaney. All present voting (AYE). Motion carried.

APPROVE MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 16, 2022 FINANCE MEETING

Motion by Chaney to approve the minutes from March 16, 2022 Finance meeting, second by Campbell. All present voting (AYE). Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Introductions – Mary Felzkowski

DISCUSSION WITH SENATOR FELZKOWSKI ON FINANCIAL ISSUES OF FOREST COUNTY; POSSIBLE ACTION

The committee brought up several issues that the county is facing for budget shortfalls and the reasons for them.

- Levy cap on the county, municipalities, city

The committee asked her if the levy cap was something ever being discussed to help out. They explained the county has never employed people that were not needed to run the operation, so, eliminating employees is not an option. Forest County is 19% taxable lands because of the two tribes and the Nicolet Chequamegon National Forest. The crime ratio in Forest County is comparable to Milwaukee County and if it were not for the Potawatomi helping us pay for 4-drug officers and a Youth Prevention officer, the County would be in trouble. She told the committee there is no talks to lift the cap because the tax payers do not want their taxes raised. There was discussion with on the PILT payments. Felzkowski said PILT payments range .50 to 8,000 an acre across the state, she was able to get Forest County raised to 3.50 last year, but, Conley explained that most of that money goes to the towns.

- PRATT Tax

The committee asked about a ½% sales tax increase and if the state is responsible to approve it. She explained that the ½% sales tax would have to go the tax payers by referendum and then be approved by the state. If approved it would “sunset” after 4 or 5 years and need to be approved again.

- Senate Bill 829

Conley asked about Senate Bill 829 which was introduced by Felzkowski and others that changed what happens when properties that were delinquent were handled.

- Real Estate Transfer Fees

There are several resolutions out there from other counties attempting to change the structure of Real Estate Transfer Fees. Right now, 80% of the fees are remitted to the State and 20% retained by the counties. The smaller counties who do not bring in fees up to \$100,000 are brought up to \$100,000 by a base budget grant through the state and then all counties are able to apply for two additional grants up to \$50,000 each in each year. Some counties are asking to go back to the 50/50 split which was originally in place before 1981. This change could possibly impact Forest County and the programs the money from the transfer fees is funding.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON PAYMENT OF INVOICES PERTAINING TO THE 911 EMERGENCY SYSTEM UPGRADE

Walrath brought in two invoices from Central Square that fall under the 911 System Upgrade. There is a reserve account that was set up to cover remaining costs that were not paid yet. The account still has a remaining balance of \$72,132.50 which will cover the two bills which amount to \$42,225.51.

Motion by Gretzinger to pay both invoices out of the 911 reserve account, second by Chaney. All present voting (AYE). Motion carried.

POSSIBLE FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND SETTING DATE FOR NEXT MEETING

- Cortney Cleereman -Real Estate Transfer Fees
- Broadband Agreement
- Tower Contract renewal
- General Obligation Debt Borrowing
- Economic Development Coordinator
- James Whiteaker – Yubi Keys/Firewall/WiscNet renewal end-of life
- Maintenance Laptop for boiler system
- Bill Anderson – Bi-partisan Infrastructure
- Highway Shop Supervisor Wage funding

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, motion by Chaney to adjourn, second by Campbell. All present voting (AYE). Motion carried. Meeting Adjourned at 10:34 a.m.