

PERSONNEL/FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

COMMITTEE:	PERSONNEL/FINANCE
DATE:	JUNE 25, 2025
TIME:	9:00 A.M.
PLACE:	FOREST COUNTY BOARDROOM

CALL TO ORDER

Skallerud called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M. and read the agenda.

ROLL CALL

Present: Decorah, Goode, Lukas, Marvin, Skallerud, Weber

Absent: Landru, Wirtz

Others Present: Nora Matuszewski, Penny Carter, Stephanie Montgomery

APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Lukas to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Goode. All present voting AYE. Motion carried.

APPROVE MINUTES FROM THE JUNE 3, 2025, BUILDING/PROPERTY FINANCE/PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING

Motion by Goode to approve the minutes, seconded by Lukas. All present voting AYE. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

None

DISCUSSION/ACTION WITH SCOTT FELDT ON BUG TUSSEL PROJECTS

Feldt updated the committee on the projects and brought in a document with the progression of the projects; find sheet at the end of this document.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ON PITNEY BOWES CONTRACT CHANGE

The Clerk brought in the Pitney Bowes contract with one change. The agreement was increased slightly from the previous contract, which was missed at the last meeting.

Motion by Lukas to approve the contract with increase, second by Marvin. All present voting AYE. Motion carried.

CLOSED SESSION

The committee may consider a motion to convene into closed session pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 19.85(1) (c) “considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction responsibility, considering financial, medical, social, or personal histories or disciplinary data of specific persons, preliminary consideration of specific personnel problems or the investigation of specific charges, which, if discussed in public would likely have an adverse effect on the reputation of the person referred to in such data and conferring with legal counsel concerning strategy to be adopted by the governmental body with respect to litigation in which it is or is likely to become involved. Sec. 19.85(1) (g).” This closed session relates to:

- a) Judge request to increase employee hours from 35 to 40 hours per week

- b) Complaint – Human Services Department – Investigation
- c) Bug Tussel

Motion by Weber to convene to closed session, seconded by Goode. Roll Call vote was taken, and all present voting: Decorah AYE, Goode AYE, Lukas AYE, Marvin AYE, Skallerud AYE, Weber AYE. Motion Carried.

RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION TO TAKE ACTION, IF APPROPRIATE, ON MATTERS DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION

Motion by Lukas to reconvene to open session, second by Marvin. All present voting AYE. Motion carried. The committee reconvened in open session at 12:35 p.m.

- a) Motion by Weber to deny the Judge's request to increase employees to 40 hours per week, second by Goode. All present voting AYE. Motion carried.

Motion by Marvin, if the Judge would like to move one employee to 40 hours per week and one employee to 20 hours per week, one person could be at 40 hours; permanently change the positions (one part-time and one full-time), second by Weber. All present voting AYE. Motion carried.

- b) No Action
- c) No Action

DISCUSSION/ACTION ON CHAIN OF COMMAND AND WHISTLE BLOWER POLICY RESOLUTION

Skallerud noted the resolution attached was the Chain of Command and non-interference.

Motion by Goode to approve the Chain of Command and non-interference resolution and forward to full County Board for approval, second by Marvin. All present voting AYE. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ON CHAIN OF COMMAND STRUCTURE POLICY RESOLUTION

Skallerud noted the resolution was the Chain of Command Whistleblower.

Motion by Weber to approve the Chain of Command and Whistleblower resolution and forward to the full County Board for approval, second by Marvin. All present voting AYE. Motion carried.

WORKGROUPS; REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

The Highway had some hirings.

UPDATE ON SALES TAX

Sales tax was down for the current month.

UPDATE OF PAYMENT FROM ADRC OF THE NORTHWOODS

The amount owed to the county from the formation of the ADRC of the Northwoods was \$75,000. The amount that was able to be recouped was \$52,835.69. This will be brought back to the next meeting for future use of the funds.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Health Insurance discussion for renewal
- Budget process
- Bug Tussel – dark strands contract discussion
- ADRC funds

PERSONNEL/FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

- Next meetings tentative – July 8th and July 22nd at 9:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Lukas to adjourn, second by Marvin. All present voting (AYE). Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

FOREST COUNTY
Project Status Report
June 25, 2025

Fixed Wireless

Five new wireless towers near Argonne, Cavour, Nelma, Newald, and Richardson Lake (Harter) are now live, giving residents in nearly 1,000 homes and businesses the opportunity to connect. The new fixed wireless sites require line-of-sight connectivity and provide speeds of up to 50 megabits per second to residents in the communities of Cavour, Nelma, Newald, and Wabeno. Speeds at the Richardson Lake tower reach up to 25 megabits per second.

These five fixed wireless sites represent Bug Tussel's ongoing infrastructure expansion project with Forest County. The project has installed 17 fixed wireless sites across the county and approximately 30 miles of fiber infrastructure surrounding Metonga Lake. Nearly 7,100 homes can access high-speed internet with live fiber and fixed wireless service. Work is currently underway to install an additional 80 miles of fiber, with further fiber expansion work expected in 2026 and beyond.

Fiber

Construction permits were submitted to the US Forest Service for fiber route segments Hiles and Laona. Unfortunately, the anticipated approval date from the Forest Service is October. Depending on the weather and ground conditions in October, the permitting delay will likely push back the majority of construction in those sections until spring.

We experienced permitting delays in relation to Highway 8 for fiber route segment Crandon Addition. We met with the WI Department of Transportation on this and have received an anticipated date of permit approval for late Q3 of this year. Again, pending weather and ground conditions, this may push back construction in this area until the spring. This segment is the network starting point for several other fiber route segments, which means the Hiles and Laona, segments won't be able to go live until this specific leg of the Crandon Addition segment goes live.

Still, there are a couple of fiber segment legs that may go live this year. Our fiber team believes they may be able to turn up a leg of the Crandon Addition before the end of the year, which would allow us to turn up Nashville N segment as well. They are also hopeful that the southern leg of the Hiles might go live this year as well.

Municipal Connections

According to our billing records, the following townships are connected and receiving service: Armstrong Creek Town Hall, Hiles Town Garage, Town of Crandon, Nashville South Community Center.

With the recent activation of the five additional fixed wireless sites, our field technicians are verifying the addresses of the other town halls to facilitate service connection. They are: Alvin, Argonne, Blackwell, Caswell, Freedom, Laona, Lincoln, Popple River, Ross, Wabeno, City of Crandon, Forest County.