

REGULAR MEETING OF THE PRICE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

March 15, 2022

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

Meeting called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Robert Kopisch, County Board Chairperson.

Invocation: Pastor Larry Tenut.

Pledge of Allegiance recited by those in attendance.

Roll Call: Present (12): Alan Barkstrom, Doug Erickson, Brian Ernst, Jeff Hallstrand, Paula Houdek, Robert Kopisch, Mark Kyle, Waldemar Madsen, Larry Palecek, Jordan Spacek, Ginny Strobl, Dennis Wartgow. Excused (1): James Hintz. Also present: Nick Trimner.

Instructions were given to any members of the public attending electronically.

Approval of Minutes December 14, 2021: Motion Barkstrom/Kyle to approve the minutes of the meeting as presented. Motion carried.

Communications and Announcements: Offering video attendance started with this meeting.

Public Comments: Lyn Ludwig, Town of Worcester .

Joe Fox, Town of Worcester criticism of County leadership.

David Schmidt, Town of Lake regarding sound issues.

David Valliquette, SRC America regarding the process they used to locate in Phillips.

Resolutions:

Resolution 12-22

Request State to Revise the Current Real Estate Transfer Fees Revenue Sharing Formula WHEREAS, the collection of a real estate transfer fee by counties was mandated by the State of Wisconsin in 1969, and included a requirement that counties remit 50% of all transfer fees collected to the State; and

WHEREAS, in 1981 the State changed the transfer fee formula to require counties to remit 80% of all transfer fees collected to the State; and

WHEREAS, the County, through the Register of Deeds Office, assumes the annual operating costs of recording all real estate transfers occurring in each County, including the collection of real estate transfer fees; and

WHEREAS, Price County real estate transfer fee collections over the past five years totaled \$1,134,608, of which the County retained \$227,460 and \$907,148 was remitted to the State; and

WHEREAS, using a 50/50 split, the County's share of fees collected on local real estate transfers during that same five year period would have provided an additional \$339,844 in support of local government; and

WHEREAS, in 2021 the State of Wisconsin has built up a budget surplus of approximately \$2.5 billion dollars, while many Wisconsin counties continue to struggle financially due to the ever-increasing costs of providing county government services in an inflationary economy and providing services for increasing unfunded State mandated programs along with the financial restrictions imposed by State imposed levy limits.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Price County Board of Supervisors that in an effort to assist all Wisconsin Counties, the State of Wisconsin revise the real estate transfer fee share formula to again allow Wisconsin Counties to retain 50% of all real estate transfer fees collected, with 50% to be remitted to the State.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be sent to Governor Tony Evers, all members of the State Legislature representing Price County, the Wisconsin Counties Association and all other Wisconsin Counties.

Submitted by the Price County Executive Committee. s/Robert D. Kopisch, Chair; Paula Houdek, Larry Palecek, Dennis Wartgow. Reviewed by County Administrator: s/Nicholas Trimner. Adopted by the Price County Board of Supervisors this 15th day of March 2022. s/Robert D. Kopisch, County Board Chair; Jean Gottwald, County Clerk. For: 12, Against: 0.

Motion Ernst/Wartgow to consider resolution for adoption. Roll call vote on resolution adoption: Yes (12): Barkstrom, Erickson, Ernst, Hallstrand, Houdek, Kopisch, Kyle, Madsen, Palecek, Spacek, Strobl, Wartgow. No (0). Motion carried.

Resolution 13-22

Expanding Broadband Services in Price County (North Project)

WHEREAS, Price County has established itself as a Broadband Forward! Community per Ordinance #2019-02, Chapter 492 and a Telecommuter Forward! Community per Resolution #24-19, and

WHEREAS, the County Board of Supervisors realizes the importance of improved broadband to serve our businesses and residents and to promote area economic development and the growing interest in telecommuting, along with easing access to health care services and educational opportunities from home; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of Price County citizens to expand broadband services within the County, especially to its underserved areas, and
WHEREAS, the ability to receive grant funding to expand broadband services is enhanced when there are local partners participating financially in the grant application, and
WHEREAS, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) allocates funding directly to the State of Wisconsin and separately to Wisconsin counties for broadband infrastructure; and
WHEREAS, per Resolution 21-21 Expanding Broadband Services in Price County, the County Board gave express authority to the Price County Executive Committee to allocate up to \$150,000 for any future broadband expansion projects from the above funding sources, directly from ARPA or State of Wisconsin funding, as a partner in any additional applications for funding to expand broadband services within Price County.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Price County Board of Supervisors hereby gives express authority to the Price County Executive Committee to allocate up to ~~\$75,000~~ \$25,000 for the Northern Price County broadband expansion project, which could provide updated service to 826 homes, from the above funding sources, directly from ARPA or State of Wisconsin funding, as a partner with Charter Communications in any application for funding to expand broadband services within Price County; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the underserved areas of Price County shall be a priority for any such grant applications.

Fiscal Impact: ~~\$75,000~~ \$25,000 (ARPA Funds)

Submitted by the Price County Executive Committee. s/Robert D. Kopisch, Chair; Paula Houdek, Larry Palecek, Dennis Wartgow. Reviewed by County Administrator: s/Nicholas Trimner. Adopted by the Price County Board of Supervisors this 15th day of March 2022. s/Robert D. Kopisch, County Board Chair; Jean Gottwald, County Clerk. For: 9, Against: 3.

Motion Houdek/Madsen to consider resolution for adoption. Motion Hallstrand/Barkstrom to amend resolution to change \$75,000 to \$25,000. Roll call vote on amendment: Yes (8): Barkstrom, Erickson, Ernst, Hallstrand, Kopisch, Madsen, Spacek, Strobl. No (4): Houdek, Kyle, Palecek, Wartgow. Motion carried. Roll call vote on resolution adoption: Yes (9): Barkstrom, Erickson, Ernst, Hallstrand, Houdek, Kopisch, Kyle, Madsen, Spacek. No (3): Palecek, Strobl, Wartgow. Motion carried.

Resolution 14-22

Request Elimination of the Badger Care Plus Eligibility Cliff

WHEREAS, in addition to Medicaid, the State of Wisconsin also administers Badger Care Plus (Badger Care), a similar program for groups of people who need healthcare coverage but may not qualify for Medicaid or need different kinds of services; and

WHEREAS, those individuals who go beyond qualifying for Badger Care face a benefits cliff, which can occur when a public support program is designed in such a way that at a certain level of income, a small increase in earnings can result in significant ineligibility for benefits; and

WHEREAS, this benefit cliff, in some instances, becomes a barrier for individuals seeking employment, or seeking better employment; and

WHEREAS, allowing individuals to work productively without harming their health benefits, not only reduces the cost of a benefit program, but also simultaneously improves the overall economic activity of a region.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Price County Board of Supervisors does hereby request the Wisconsin State Legislature and Governor Tony Evers work cooperatively to eliminate the Badger Care benefit cliff.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Badger Care benefit cliff be eliminated with a proportionate sliding fee scale, that as individuals and families earn additional dollars, there is a corresponding but smaller contribution amount toward their health insurance coverage.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be forwarded to Governor Evers, federal and state legislative representatives for Price County, the Wisconsin Counties Association and other Wisconsin Counties.

Submitted by the Price County Health and Human Services Board: s/Paula Houdek, Chair; Peter Dahlie; Brian Ernst; Mark Kyle; Jeffrey Hallstrand; Sally Huml; Suzanne Ocker; Gerald Swenson; Dennis Wartgow. Reviewed by County Administrator: s/Nicholas Trimner. Adopted by the Price County Board of Supervisors this 15th day of March 2022. s/Robert D. Kopisch, County Board Chair; Jean Gottwald, County Clerk. For 12, Against: 0.

Motion Houdek/Wartgow to consider resolution for adoption. Roll call vote on resolution adoption: Yes (12): Barkstrom, Erickson, Ernst, Hallstrand, Houdek, Kopisch, Kyle, Madsen, Palecek, Spacek, Strobl, Wartgow. No (0). Motion carried.

Miscellaneous:

1. Sale/Lease of Fairgrounds Property: No more information.

a. Closed Session: Announcement and motion Madsen/Houdek to adjourn to closed session at

9:43 a.m. pursuant to the exemption in Wis. State Statute 19.85(1)(e) Deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session. For the purpose of:

- i. Negotiation on Sale/Lease of Fairgrounds Property
- ii. Motion to return to Open Session

Roll call vote: Yes (11): Barkstrom, Ernst, Hallstrand, Houdek, Kopisch, Kyle, Madsen, Palecek, Spacek, Strobl, Wartgow. No (1): Erickson. Motion carried.

Motion Wartgow/Madsen in closed session to return to open session at 11:14 a.m. Roll call vote: Yes (12): Barkstrom, Erickson, Ernst, Hallstrand, Houdek, Kopisch, Kyle, Madsen, Palecek, Spacek, Strobl, Wartgow. No (0). Motion carried.

Resolutions (continued):

Resolution 15-22

Approve Sale of Price County Fairgrounds Property

WHEREAS, per Wisconsin State Statute §59.52(6)(c), the County Board may: "Direct the Clerk to lease, sell or convey or contract to sell or convey any county property...on terms that the board approves; and WHEREAS, per County Board Resolution 57-21, the Price County Board of Supervisors authorized the Price County Executive Committee to arrange for the sale or lease of property, referred to as Price County Fairgrounds property, and negotiate the terms and conditions for its sale or lease, with final approval of any proposed transaction to be presented to the County Board for their consideration; and WHEREAS, the County has worked very closely with legal counsel to define the specifications of the transaction to guarantee continued access and operations of current users, while at the same time preserving the historic significance of the buildings and grounds; and WHEREAS, the County has developed a term list with potential buyer, Price County Productions, Inc.;

and WHEREAS, such list contains terms and conditions on buyer and seller that must be met upon implementation of said term list by the County Administrator; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Price County Board of Supervisors hereby issues final approval of the term list presented to the County Board for their consideration for the sale of the Price County Fairgrounds Property, provided that all contingencies set forth therein have been met; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Price County Administrator be authorized to prepare any documents necessary for the Price County Clerk's execution of the final purchase agreement for the sale of the Price County Fairgrounds.

Submitted by the Price County Executive Committee. s/Robert D. Kopisch, Chair; Paula Houdek, Larry Palecek, Dennis Wartgow. Reviewed by County Administrator: s/Nicholas Trimner. Adopted by the Price County Board of Supervisors this 15th day of March 2022. s/Robert D. Kopisch, County Board Chair; Jean Gottwald, County Clerk. For: 10, Against: 2.

Motion Kyle/Madsen to consider resolution for adoption. Roll call vote on resolution adoption: Yes (10): Barkstrom, Ernst, Hallstrand, Houdek, Kopisch, Kyle, Madsen, Palecek, Spacek, Wartgow. No (2): Erickson, Strobl. Motion carried.

Committee of the Whole:

1. Fairground Discussion: No further information.
2. Administrator Report: Road posting weight restrictions issued discussion with Joe Baratka, Highway Commissioner. Milk hauler permits were settled. Will continue to work with parties involved to maintain integrity of the county roads. Buildings & Grounds Committee approved HVAC projects for Courthouse and Safety Buildings. Also, approved Courthouse landscaping project.
3. Board Chair Report: Public attendance and supervisor seating at meetings will return to pre-COVID at the next meeting.
4. Committee Chair Comments: \$2.3 million Forestry & Parks revenue in 2021.

Date of Next Meeting: April 19, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. in the County Board Room

Meeting adjourned at 11:46 a.m.

Respectfully submitted: Jean Gottwald, County Clerk