



## MARATHON COUNTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Thursday, September 9, 2021, at 4:00 p.m.

WebEx/Courthouse Assembly Room, B-105, 500 Forest Street, Wausau WI

Members	Present/Web-Phone	Absent
Chair Kurt Gibbs	X	
Vice Chair Craig McEwen	X	
Matt Bootz		X
Tim Buttke	X	
Sara Guild	X	
Jacob Langenhahn	X	
Alyson Leahy	X	
John Robinson	X	
Jean Maszk	X	
Vacant		

**Also present:** Sandi Cihlar, Lance Leonhard, Michael Puerner, Jessica Blahnik, Steve Schneider, Toshia Ranallo and a member of the public.

**WebEx/Phone:** Randy Fifrick, Kim Trueblood, and Mitch Olson.

**1. Call Meeting to Order**

Chair Gibbs called the meeting to order at 4:02. p.m.

**2. Public Comment – None**

**3. MOTION BY BUTTKE; SECOND LANGENHAHN TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 12, 2021 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES. MOTION CARRIED.**

**4. Policy Issues for Discussion and Possible Action**

**A. Discuss Options for Filling District 15 Vacancy**

**Discussion:**

Chair Gibbs explained Randy Fifrick resigned as County Supervisor District 15 due to a requirement for an employment opportunity. However, the position is no longer available and Fifrick requests to be reinstated to the County Board. After options were given by Chair Gibbs, it was the consensus of committee members to follow the traditional appointment process written in the board rules in order to be consistent and transparent.

**Action:**

**MOTION BY ROBINSON; SECOND BY LANGENHAHN TO FOLLOW THE PROCESS OUTLINED IN THE BOARD RULES TO APPOINT AN INDIVIDUAL TO FILL THE VACANCY FOR DISTRICT 15. MOTION CARRIED.**

**Follow Up:**

Chair Gibbs and Vice Chair McEwen will initiate the appointment process and bring forward a candidate.

**B. Discuss Redistricting Tentative Plan**

**Discussion:**

Chair Gibbs explained the Redistricting Committee met and approved a tentative redistricting plan and no need for further discussion. The Redistricting Committee and the Executive Committee consist of the same members. Agenda item 4B suspended.

**Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance, or Resolution – None**

**5. Educational Presentations and Committee Discussion**

**A. Regional Morgue Task Force Update**

**Discussion:**

Vice Chair Craig McEwen and Medical Examiner Jessica Blahnik gave an update on the Task Force's progress made over the last 5 years. The task force was established in August of 2017 to study the needs and make

recommendations for the development of a regional morgue to serve the needs for Marathon County and other counties in Northern WI. Membership includes McEwen, representation from Marathon and Langlade Sheriffs Depts., medical examiners, our Emergency Management Director, doctors, funeral director, and MCDEVCO.

Autopsies conducted by a forensic pathologist have been provided to Marathon County and other northern counties by morgues in Fond Du Lac, Milwaukee, and Dane counties. Due to recent changes, Marathon County can no longer rely on Milwaukee and Dane county for these services.

The task force conducted interviews with existing morgues and pathologists to gather information on operations and staffing needs to assist with developing a business plan. They identified project goals, outlined construction costs, and conducted studies to determine why Marathon County is a prime location for a Forensic Science Center, and why it is important to address the shortages of forensic pathologists in this area. A survey was completed and as a result, there is interest from several WI and Upper Michigan counties who would benefit from utilizing this facility.

The Task Force is working toward partnering opportunities and exploring potential land sites with Aspirus and Marshfield Clinic. West Street has been identified as a potential county owned site. After a thorough analysis performed by Somerville Architects & Engineers, it was determined to focus on new construction rather than an existing site. The space needed is approximately 14,000 sq. ft. and an estimated 6.8 million dollars. In the near future they will select the location and have a confirmed agreement with a medical organization. They have been in contact with state and federal representatives to see if there are any state and federal grants. A meeting is to be scheduled in October with Senator Jerry Petrowski and Representative Patrick Snyder.

## **B. Strategic Plan Update**

### ***Discussion:***

Vice Chair Craig McEwen reported we are at the end of our fourth year of the five year Strategic Plan. Each committee has reviewed their designated objectives, reported their accomplishments, and identified future tasks. McEwen will meet with all the committee chairs to review the strategies and update outcome measures. McEwen thanked all the committees for their hard work and dedication to helping make the strategic plan successful so that Marathon County is the healthiest safest and most prosperous county in the state.

## **C. NCHC Update**

### ***Discussion:***

Chair Gibbs gave a NCHC update including the following:

- Warm water therapy pool is open
- Construction of the 4-story Mount View Tower is complete and currently working on getting it occupied
- There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony for the pool and the Mount View Tower soon
- Nursing Home Committee, NCHC Board and the Health Board will be making recommendations for the old Mount View Nursing Home
- Youth hospital is licensed and in operation
- Remodeling the Inpatient Adult Behavioral Health Hospital
- Chief Financial Officer Jill Meschke has been appointed as Interim Chief Executive Officer and the process for recruitment for the next CEO is being reviewed

## **D. Bug Tussel Broadband Expansion Update**

### ***Discussion:***

Supervisor Robinson gave an update and reported the Public Service Commission (PSC) grant with Bug Tussel Wireless, LLC applied for last fall was not funded. Currently, Bug Tussel is working on another PSC grant application proposing to use ARPA dollars. However, Steve Schneider from Bug Tussel Wireless LLC, reported they are moving forward with or without the PSC grant on 10 sites that do not have towers.

They increased cell coverage in Little Chicago and installed broadband equipment there and on two other sites. There are five sites that have signed leases and two sites are being negotiated with willing land owners. 10 sites are estimated to cost 3.25 million dollars. Bug Tussel's financial institute has approved moving forward based on revenue projections and the understanding they would be reimbursed by grant or bond dollars. A

meeting has been scheduled for September 15, 2021 with the PSC to address assets.

Bug Tussel met with Marathon County's IT and Sheriff's communication depts. to discuss connecting to the county's existing fiber to accommodate the needs of town halls and schools. Schneider will be reaching out to the townships to schedule informational meetings.

They have had discussions with bond counsels who are guiding them and making suggestions for the initial resolution. Drafts have been circulated to the county's financial advisor and corporation counsel. The Infrastructure Committee endorsed the plan earlier today subject to bond counsel and financial advisor review and approval. The HR Finance & Property and the full County Board will discuss the consideration of the Initial resolution approving revenue bond financing for Bug Tussel Wireless, LLC at their meetings scheduled for Thursday, September 16<sup>th</sup>.

**6. Next Meeting Date & Time, Location, Announcements and Future Agenda Items:**

**A.** Announcement – Former County Board Supervisor Bill Miller has past away and his funeral will be at Helke Funeral Home on September 14, 2021. Visitation from 10am-12pm and funeral service at 12pm. service.

**B.** Next Meeting: **Thursday, October 14, 2021, at 4:00 p.m.**

**7. Adjournment**

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO DISCUSS, MOTION BY MCEWEN; SECOND BY LANGENHAHN TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 5:00 P.M. MOTION CARRIED.**

The recorded meeting can be viewed here: <https://tinyurl.com/MarathonCountyBoard>

Respectfully submitted by,  
Toshia Ranallo