

WINNEBAGO COUNTY  
ARPA Strategy and Outcomes  
Commission Minutes

DATE: Thursday, February 15, 2024

TIME: 1:00 p.m.

PLACE: David W. Albrecht Administration Building  
112 Otter Avenue  
Oshkosh WI 54901  
Susan T. Ertmer Conference Room 120

PRESENT: Co-Chair Tom Egan, County Board Chairman  
Co-Chair Jon Doemel, County Executive  
Morris Cox, Personnel and Finance Chair  
Chuck Farrey, County Board Vice-chair  
Tom Borchart, County Board Member  
Andy Buck, County Board Member  
Tom Belter, Public Member  
Tim Galloway, Public Member  
Paul Kaiser, Director of Finance (non-voting member)

ABSENT: Beth Oswald, Public Member

ALSO PRESENT: Cassie Smith-Gregor, Deputy County Clerk  
Catherine Scherer, Corporation Counsel  
Mary Anne Mueller, Corporation Counsel  
Victoria Kinderman, Corporation Counsel  
Adam BellCorelli  
Sheriff John Matz  
Lara Vendola, Sheriff's Office  
Doug Gieryn, Public Health Director  
Supervisor Shanah Zastera  
Barb Tengesdal  
Scott Sawinski, Jake's Network of Hope  
Dan Kesselmayer, USI Fiber

via **ZOOM**  
Supervisor Conley Hanson  
Adam Breest, Parks Director  
Alana Erickson, Public Health  
Deb Martin  
Deondria Ward  
Beth Clay  
Wendy Harris  
Robert Keller  
Ellen Skerke  
Sandy Drexler  
Beth G.  
Alona Boots

## 1. Call to Order

Co-Chair Jon Doemel called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Co-Chair Jon Doemel reported that Beth Oswald is excused from today's meeting.

## 2. Public Comments

Dan Kesselmayer, owner of USI Fiber, spoke to the commission regarding their product. They deliver fiber to residents and businesses who want a high-speed reliable internet. He stated they have worked with the Village of Winneconne last year to connect 14 of their buildings around the village and is working with the City of Omro right now to connect 19 assets around their city. Mr. Kesselmayer spoke with the police chief in Omro, and he had asked him if there was a possibility of getting a fiber back into the Winnebago County network. Mr. Kesselmayer provided information to the commission in the event the commission wanted to utilize any Spirit Funds for fiber services from his organization. He thanked the commission for their time and consideration.

Scott Sawinski, Executive Director of Jake's Network of Hope, spoke today in support of his organization. They are a diaper bank and carry period and adult incontinence supplies. They provide these much-needed items to residents here in Winnebago county. Mr. Sawinski came today to see if there was any Spirit Funds available to help his organization help the residents of Winnebago County. The price of product is going up but the need is not going down. He thanked the commission for their time and consideration.

Barb Tengesdal, First 5 Fox Valley (F5FV), voiced her appreciation to the commission for considering Spirit Funds for their

project. Ms. Tengesdal briefly highlighted some of the services First 5 Fox Valley provides. She stated she was there to answer any questions that the commission may have. Ms. Tengesdal thanked the commission for their time.

Shanah Zastera, Winnebago County Board Supervisor and a resident of the Town of Nekimi informed the commission about resources available in Winnebago County. She passed a Senior Resource Directory, Health & Wellness Book around for the members to view. Ms. Zastera hoped the commission is looking at these projects closely so they aren't duplicating any services as they decide on funding. She spoke in support for agenda item #8, the Tri-County Dental Clinic. Ms. Zastera commented on her concern for the childcare providers.

County Board Supervisor Conley Hanson voiced his concerns regarding fiduciary responsibility to the county. Mr. Hanson

stated the original intent of the ARPA funds was to replace lost revenue to the county. He also commented on agenda item #8 and #9, those projects have partnerships with other counties and would like to know what those other counties are contributing towards these organizations.

Sandy Drexler, Executive Director for Tri-County Dental thanked the commission for considering their project request. She discussed the services they provide, how important the need for dental care is for the population that they serve, and what this project request all entailed. They are working hard to provide care to the people and to the kids who are in our community that qualify or need dental care. Ms. Drexler thanked the commission for their time and consideration.

### **3. Approval of January 31, 2024, meeting minutes.**

Motion by Farrey, seconded by Cox, to approve the January 31, 2024, meeting minutes. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

### **4. Update/Discussion: Status of Funding for Airboats Housed at Winneconne Poygan Fire Department, Oshkosh Fire Department and Neenah/Menasha Fire Departments**

Sheriff John Matz updated the commission on the status of funding for the new airboats for the current ones that are housed at Winneconne Poygan Fire Department, Oshkosh Fire Department and the Neenah/Menasha Fire Department. The Sheriff's Office has put the Request for Purchase (RFP) in for the three boats and are waiting for a response. It is due March 8, and they will know then what the exact cost is. Sheriff Matz is hopeful that the House will pass the budget when they come back in session and then the Sheriff's Office will be able to move forward with the direct congressional funding for the three boats. Sheriff Matz stated they will be fine this year with the boats they currently have. He hopes that once the RFP comes back, it is almost the same time that they would receive the funding from Congress, if passed, and then they could order the boats. Sheriff Matz didn't know the exact Bill number, but it is the Direct Congressional Spending Bill.

County Executive Doemel reiterated that the Sheriff stated they are good for this year and that they have time to wait and see what happens. If the Direct Congressional Spending Bill is not passed, County Executive Doemel and Sheriff Matz would most likely discuss a backup plan. Since the Sheriff would be owning these boats, the funds would come out of that Administrative 50%, County Government Projects category/bucket.

### **5. Update/Discussion: Status of where Municipalities stand regarding the \$145,000 Spirit Funds distribution.**

Finance Director Paul Kaiser gave an update on the status of the \$145,000 Spirit Funds distribution for all the municipalities. Mr. Kaiser stated all municipalities have received their \$145,000 except for the Town of Wolf River and Town of Vinland. The Town of Vinland received \$37,000 that they had put in for. They are also going to let him know what other road projects they are going to be doing.

Supervisor Farrey attended the Town of Vinland's Town Board meeting and explained to the commission their position regarding these Spirit Funds. The Town has approved an addition to the fire department to have more trucks. Mr. Farrey believes that is probably where the Town of Vinland would apply those funds. Supervisor Farrey mentioned there will still be a time commitment there so even if this commission decided to approve a project, the Town would still need to bid it out and go through that process. If there are some time constraints/deadlines, the Town would need to be aware of that. Mr. Farrey believes that the Town is looking at several months before a decision will be made.

Mr. Kaiser clarified the deadline for spending the money. He stated the Town could put in for an advance which was the whole purpose of this \$145,000 distribution of Spirit Funds to the municipalities. Then they could spend it on what they wanted to; but then the follow up was to make sure how it was spent within 5 years of receiving the funds.

Mr. Kaiser also confirmed that the Town of Nekimi has received their funds.

**6. Update/Discussion: Review of interest earned on the Spirit Funds.**

Finance Director Paul Kaiser put together a spreadsheet based on Supervisor Farrey's earlier request. Mr. Kaiser split the interest between the County Government Projects versus the Government Identified Community Projects. That interest is based on what funds have been spent versus what funds have not been spent so that is what was being shown on the handout he provided to the members prior to the meeting. There was not a lot of difference between the two. It is about a million dollars of interest for the Government Identified Community Projects and about \$993,000 for the County Government Projects. Those figures will change as more money starts coming out; as more things have been authorized through the ARPA Strategy and Outcomes Commission; and finally, as more monies are being approved by the board to spend from the ARPA Commission. As of right now, the county has actually spent 6.3 million out of the 33.3 million that was received. A lot of it has been approved but it hasn't been spent yet.

Tom Belter brought up the Land & Water Conservation Project that was previously approved for \$3,030,300 for a project which spreads out over a long timeline. Mr. Belter questioned and wondered, since that project was approved, that would be their money, so shouldn't that projects money be earning its own interests segregated from the big chunk of interest. That would turn out to be about \$150,000 a year.

Mr. Kaiser's opinion is interest rates are going down and they're going to continue to go down, probably drastically in the next year or two. It is going to be up to the commission and the board but Mr. Kaiser feels that the county needs to look at where their unassigned general fund is. He will know more after they are done with this year's audit. Mr. Kaiser would like to hold off on spending the interest until he knows where they are at with their unassigned general fund for our county health going forward.

**7. Discussion/Action: Resolution – Approving \$75,000 from the Spirit Fund's Government Identified Community Projects Category to NEW Mental Health Connection to Implement Innovative Features in the Service Directory and Update Technology and Website Content (Request \$90,000)**

Motion by Cox, seconded by Farrey, to adopt the request to Implement Innovative Features in the Service Directory and Update Technology and Website Content at an amount of \$75,000.

Vote on the resolution. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

Supervisor Cox requested the remainder of the resolutions have a roll call vote.

**8. Discussion/Action: Resolution – Approving \$403,625 from the Spirit Fund's Government Identified Community Projects Category for the Tri-County Dental Clinic, Inc. to Purchase Equipment to Provide Better Dental Care to Those People in Need (Request \$403,625)**

Motion by Farrey, seconded by Cox, to adopt the request for the Tri-County Dental Clinic, Inc. to Purchase Equipment to Provide Better Dental Care to Those People in Need.

Vote on resolution: AYES: 8; NAYES: 0; ABSTAIN: 0; ABSENT: 1 – Oswald. PASSED.

**9. Discussion/Action: Resolution – Approving \$350,000 from the Spirit Fund's Government Identified Community Projects Category for Child Care Resource and Referral to Support Child Care Providers with Training and Mentoring and In Turn Provide Increased Available Child Care Openings in Winnebago County (Request \$450,000)**

Motion by Buck, seconded by Belter, to adopt the request for Child Care Resource and Referral to Support Child Care Providers with Training and Mentoring and In Turn Provide Increased Available Child Care Openings in Winnebago County.

Vote on resolution: AYES: 8; NAYES: 0; ABSTAIN: 0; ABSENT: 1 – Oswald. PASSED.

**10. Discussion/Action: Resolution – Approving \$50,000 from the Spirit Fund's Government Identified Community Projects Category for Pillars, Inc. Ascend Program (Request \$50,000)**

Motion by Farrey, seconded by Cox, to adopt the request for Pillars, Inc. Ascend Program.

Vote on resolution: AYES: 8; NAYES: 0; ABSTAIN: 0; ABSENT: 1 – Oswald. PASSED.

**11. Discussion/Possible Action: Continue process prioritizing, selection, and determining funding amounts for projects for Spirit Funding with the remaining amount to allocate.**

County Executive Doemel asked Adam BellCorelli what the remaining balance would be after this portion is presented and hopefully passed by the county board. Mr. BellCorelli stated today's resolutions total \$878,625. The figure that he had come up with for the remaining balance was \$2,269,118 for the Government Identified Community Projects Category.

County Executive Doemel stated he believed it was this commissions will to get the rest of this Government

Identified Community Projects Category wrapped up by the next meeting in March. Mr. Doemel mentioned the commission still needs to address both of the YMCA Spirit Fund requests, and the First 5 Fox Valley which was tabled until the March meeting.

Supervisor Farrey figured there's roughly about \$900,000 left plus the interest to allocate.

## **12. Discussion of a housing fund for the remaining Government Identified Community Projects Category 50%**

### **o Veteran Housing**

County Executive Doemel would like to see the commission try to find money to do a veteran housing piece in Winnebago County. Jeffery Bucholz, Veterans Service Director, doesn't have the capacity to run a veteran housing piece but there are organizations out there that will. If you look at Veteran Village up at Outagamie County, that is not run by the government, that is run by separate organizations. There are organizations in Winnebago County that would partner with the county to run a facility if the county could find a match for us to build it. Mr. Bucholz's list of veterans that need housing is always a long list. The Day-by-Day Shelter mentioned to the County Board that there were four veterans that were staying at the homeless shelter. Mr. Bucholtz's envision is to work with the state for a project that would do a transitional housing piece. They want to be able to partner with the state who is looking to build a new facility for veteran housing transitional housing in the state of Wisconsin. Mr. Doemel would like to see if there is money left over that the commission could commit a chunk to that. It would not necessarily be the counties building but it would be a partnership with either the state or with the service organization within Winnebago County. Mr. Doemel asked the commission members for their thoughts. Mr. Doemel would like something that he can go to the state and say they have a match, and they want to further these talks and figure this out and find a service organization.

### **o Housing Resource Exchange**

County Executive Doemel stated they've been talking to government officials, private sector builders, contractors, housing authority and others. They've had a few meetings to figure out what the hold up is in Winnebago County. One of the things that he had heard is builders are frustrated because they don't really understand how to go about permitting. It's different in every city, municipality, and some places want to, some places don't. So, the question becomes can we create a housing exchange in Winnebago County through the GIS and Planning and Zoning Department. Can they have a resource out there for builders, for contractors, basically a one stop shot to let them know what permits they need, what are the setbacks, and what is the retention issues that they might fall into.

Supervisor Farrey stated that Winnebago County has one of the best GIS systems giving this information in the state so all that information is available. A contractor that wants to know something about permits, processes, or procedures could contact the county and get all those answers.

County Executive Doemel stated we keep getting all these people here, and there is no place to house them. The question becomes how do we help those that are trying to be in this industry and what is the resource they really need to really get them going. Mr. Doemel asked the commission if they could entertain whatever funds are left in this Government Identified Community Projects to go toward housing, a majority of it for a veteran project and maybe something else, whatever Lu Scheer wants to ask us for and would the commission consider that.

## **13. Discussion on developing a plan for the County Government Projects Category - Administrative 50%**

County Executive Doemel stated they have been taking this slow and taking this slow for a reason. They have a lot of challenges ahead of them. The facility condition assessment showed them that the county built a lot of things at the same time. We're in a lot of buildings and there is a lot of choices to make. Everything needs to be maintained when there is that much square footage.

Mike Elder has been asked to prepare a master plan study space use for the next commission meeting. This will identify where are we; are we effectively using all the space we have; are we not effectively using all the space we have, and does it make sense where things are where they are.

Mr. Doemel would really like to buy time for Mike Elder, Paul Kaiser, Mike Collard and whoever the next Director of Administration is, to really come up with a long-term plan on how we can get over these bubbles. The roof and the boilers at both Parkview and the Sheriff's department need to be replaced at the same time. Those are both very big projects. We really need to figure out how to navigate this the best way to make sure that we're doing this in the most economical way. Mr. Doemel asked the commission to give them time to really develop a

lot of that. They are prepared to come forward with the Master Plan Study and the Outdoor Recreation Spirit request.

Supervisor Buck appreciates the sentiment of being patient and taking it slow and getting our ducks in a row. He stated the Parks Department Plan is done, if the commission would go and decide let's wait for 6 or 9 months, to pass that, that's just going to increase the cost to do that so his question is why wait for that. It's done. Let's bring it forward, let's vote it up or down and be done with it and get that moving forward so we can get those contractors in place and it's going to be cheaper at the end of the day. We know we want to do it so why are we going to wait for it.

**14. Set next meeting date and time.**

The next meeting will be Thursday, February 15, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. at the David W. Albrecht Administration Building in the Admin Fourth Floor Training Room.

**15. Adjournment.**

Motion made by Supervisor Cox, seconded by Belter, to adjourn at 3:08 p.m. MOTION CARRIES.

Submitted by:  
Cassie Smith-Gregor  
Winnebago County Deputy Clerk