

MEETING OF ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
MAY 19, 2022
Minutes

Committee members present: Chairman Billy Fried, Ted Cushing, Tom Kelly, Russ Fisher and Steven Schreier.

Call to order: Chairman Fried called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. in the County Board Room of the Oneida County Courthouse. The meeting has been properly posted and mailed in accordance with the Wisconsin Open Meeting law and the facility is handicap accessible.

Approve agenda: Motion by Kelly/Schreier to approve today's agenda with the order of items at the Chair's discretion. All aye; motion carried.

Approve minutes: Motion by Schreier/Cushing to approve the minutes of May 9, 2022 with changes as discussed. All aye; motion carried.

Out-of-state / out-of-county travel request(s)

- a. **Health Department – Shelby Moore – National Conference on Tobacco or Health (NCTOH) – New Orleans, Louisiana – June 28 – 30, 2022** - Conlon stated that this is a request for Moore to attend this conference. Per Conlon, this is approved though the state budget tobacco program. Motion/Second: Kelly/Fisher to attend allow Shelby Moore to attend the conference on Tobacco and Health. All "Aye", motion passes.

Broadband Presentation – Jeff Verdoorn and Mitch Schults Bug Tussel Wireless, LLC Representative - Fried gave some background of the initial Broadband project and stated that 1.5 million has been set aside to match with PSC (Public Service Commission) funding for broadband expansion. Verdoorn stated that Bug Tussle purchased Northwoods Connect. The plan is for this to be an \$18 million project with 6 new cell towers and this will utilize fiber to the home. Fried questioned the application and if this was similar to the prior contract with Northwoods Connect. Mitch Schults from Bug Tussle gave background on the Northwoods Connect purchase by Bug Tussle. Hilbert communications is the parent company. The towers are more robust than the towers that were created by Northwoods Connect. Discussion regarding the debt service that would be required to complete this project. Discussion regarding the impact this could have on the emergency management towers. Jake Simkus, Sheriff's Office, stated that there could be a benefit to the county if we are allowed to put equipment on the Bug Tussel towers. Discussion regarding timelines and Schults stated that once this is approved and grants are received work should begin next year with fiber going live within six months of the work starting. Verdoorn and Fisher reported that there is a broadband committee at the OCEDC and this is being recommended by the committee. Discussion regarding how Bug Tussle became involved and why other internet service providers aren't being sought out. Verdoorn stated that he reached out to all other internet providers during this process and the others did not wish to work with the county on broadband. Verdoorn reported that he did work with Charter on their grant application. Discussion regarding the tower locations and what space the county will be able to use for radio equipment. Discussion regarding the county having a consultant that knows the broadband, tower and fiber technology and will be able to help guide the county on what the best options are. Simkus expressed a request for the County to consider John Sweeney as the consultant as he is aware of the current equipment the county uses and he has knowledge of the process. Discussion regarding the fiber that is being proposed to be installed. Discussion regarding

what would be covered for \$18 million (24 miles, 5000 to home connections, connecting to existing towers, etc) Discussion regarding debt service, anticipated revenues, anticipated expenses and bonds being taxable. Discussion regarding who owns the bonds and who would be responsible if Bug Tussle One would go out of business.

Resolution to use CLFRF funds for Broadband Consulting Assistance – Smigielski expressed concern with the lack of a contract attached to the resolution and with the lack of an RFP to locate the consultant. Smigielski stated that the County should also look at hiring a financial advisor to work with the county on the bonds. Discussion regarding what the financial advisor would do. Discussion regarding bond counsel. Discussion regarding when to move this forward and what should be considered in the resolution. Fried would like to see this committee give direction to Fugle and Smigielski to work on an Independent Financial Advisor and Bond Counsel Resolution to bring forward at the next administration committee. Discussion regarding the consultant for the technical aspect of the broadband project. Verdoorn stated that he would also recommend Sweeney as a consultant with Russell Berg to be called upon if Sweeney isn't able to answer a question. Motion by Fried/Cushing to have Smigielski and Fugle as well as working with Rhodes to put together resolutions and proposals for the Independent Financial Consultant, Bond Consultant and Broadband consultant to be brought back to a future meeting. Schults, Bug Tussle, recommended passing a resolution approving the notice for the bonds so that if that is the route the county opts to take it will move forward in a timely manner. All aye; motion carried.

Public comment/communications: None

Dates and items for future agenda/meetings: The next administration committee meeting will be held on June 13, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. Future topics: Broadband Resolutions for the above mentioned resolutions.

Adjourn – Fried adjourned the meeting at 12:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Tracy Hartman, Recording Secretary
Oneida County Clerk