

**Walworth County Board of Supervisors  
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes  
Monday, May 20, 2019  
Walworth County Government Center, County Board Room 114  
100 West Walworth Street, Elkhorn, Wisconsin**

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Chair David Weber called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Roll call confirmed all members were present: Chair David Weber, Vice Chair Charlene Staples, and Supervisors Dan Kilkenny, Susan Pruessing and Nancy Russell. A quorum was declared.

**Others in Attendance**

County staff: County Administrator David Bretl; Deputy County Administrator-Finance Nicki Andersen; Lead Investigator/Deputy Medical Examiner Gina Carver; Sheriff Kurt Picknell; Captain of Communications Jamie Green; Director-Public Works Richard Hough; County Clerk Kim Bushey  
Members of the public: Elkhorn Fire Chief Rod Smith; Sharon Fire Chief Bruce Vander Veen; Lake Geneva Fire Chief John Peters

**Vice Chair Staples made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Russell, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.**

**On motion by Supervisor Russell, seconded by Vice Chair Staples, the minutes of the April 22, 2019 meeting were approved by voice vote.**

**Public Comment** – County Administrator David Bretl said members in the audience would be welcome to offer comment during discussion of the Emergency Communications project.

**Consent Items** – expense/mileage reimbursement claims submitted by:

- Richard Kuhnke, Sr., citizen representative on WRRTC, in the amount of \$125.40
- Allan Polyock, citizen representative on WRRTC, in the amount of \$137.00

**Vice Chair Staples made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Russell, to approve the expense/mileage reimbursement claims. Motion carried 5-0.**

**Unfinished Business**

- Update on Emergency Communications Project

County Administrator David Bretl said that at the last meeting, it was determined that the State of Wisconsin's upgrade project would not provide a viable solution to the County's aging communications infrastructure. Following the meeting, the Sheriff, his command staff and Bretl met with Richard Tuma, who implemented the communications model in Waukesha County. Mr. Tuma offered insight on the Milwaukee and Waukesha County system, and advised the group that an in-depth, independent second study on the project should be conducted. Excerpts from the 2017 study performed by Elert & Associates were included with the agenda packet. The study was updated to remove the option of participating in the State project. The original study limited options by specifying that Walworth County would have its own controller, which would preclude us from getting onto the Waukesha and Milwaukee system. Sheriff Kurt Picknell said given the large scope and expense of the project, the projected timeline is to obtain a second opinion this year to include the system in the 2021 capital improvement plan. Captain Jamie Green explained that the controller is the computer that controls the entire communications system. If the County joins with another system, that entity would house the controller, and flexibility and authority would be limited. Green said that there are at least 12 firms who would be qualified to perform the study. Bretl said one of the advantages of a second study is to obtain updated cost estimates for the project, since the 2017 study projections are outdated.

Supervisor Kilkenny asked if Whitewater, Delavan and Lake Geneva, who have their own systems, have been involved in the project discussions. Picknell said the original assessment includes those communities and that they are aware of the goal and potential expense to have everyone in the County on the same system. Bruce Vander Veen, Sharon Fire Chief/Chair of Walworth County Emergency Communications Advisory Committee, stated he fully supports the comprehensive study, emphasizing that integrated dispatch services are crucial to efficient service provisions by fire departments and EMS providers. Supervisor Russell asked how much the second study would cost, and Bretl estimated \$50,000-\$75,000. Picknell said his department would incorporate the funding into their 2019 budget in order to conclude the study by early 2020. Another update on the project process will be provided at the September 2019 committee meeting. **Supervisor Kilkenny made a motion, seconded by vice Chair Staples, to approve a second study on the communications project and to direct staff to proceed to develop and issue proposals for consultants to perform the study. Motion carried 5-0.**

- Ordinance Amending Section 2-144 of the Walworth County Code of Ordinances Relating to Hearing Time Limits at County Zoning Agency Meetings

Bretl said last month the Committee discussed the establishment of new rules by the County Zoning Agency concerning time limits for public presentations at their meetings. Consideration was given to imposing similar time limits at other County Board committee meetings. Bretl said committee procedures have become more uniform, which created more predictability. Recently, there have been a couple of instances where presentations ran too long at meetings and caused a backup in starting times for subsequent committee meetings. Bretl asked if the Committee wished to include time limits for committee meetings in this ordinance. Supervisor Russell said although committee Chairs have the authority to limit or extend presentations during their meetings, she feels uniform rules should be established so people have the opportunity to prepare ahead of time. She added that presentations requested of staff or county consultants should be exempt from any rule. Bretl suggested if the Committee wished, they could approve this ordinance and direct him to draft an amendment to include language that the Chair has the responsibility to ensure that meetings do not run beyond their allotted time slots. Supervisor Staples said she does not feel that presentations or comments by the public should be limited; as a government official, she feels it is her responsibility to allow individuals to present issues that affect their well-being and livelihood. Supervisor Pruessing stated the 15-minute time limitation established by the Zoning Agency is not sufficient to allow individuals to properly present complicated cases. Bretl said the Zoning Agency has the authority to establish time limits, even if they are not codified. **Supervisor Kilkenny made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Russell, to approve the ordinance, and to direct staff to draft an ordinance to address time limits for other committee meetings.** Discussion ensued. **Supervisor Kilkenny withdrew his original motion, seconded by Russell, and directed staff to hold consideration/approval of the ordinance until the next meeting, consistent with committee discussion on the issue concerning time limits at committee meetings. Motion carried 5-0.**

- Provision of Medical Examiner Service in 2019

Bretl reminded the Committee that our five-year contract for Medical Examiner services with Waukesha County will expire at the end of the year. Per committee directive, notice was given to Waukesha County of the intent not to renew the contract to allow the County to explore other options for service provision. The Waukesha County model provides Medical Examiner services to Walworth County from their Medical Examiner, and autopsies are provided by Waukesha County and death certificates are signed by their Medical Examiner. Their service includes file maintenance and phone services at their site. When the County's long-term Coroner John Griebel passed away, Waukesha County provided a turnkey operation which was essential as the County transitioned from a coroner system to a medical examiner's office. With the addition of Lead Investigator/Deputy Medical Examiner Gina Carver and the addition of

hiring qualified investigators, the office has evolved and grown professionally. A study group, including Bretl, Carver, Deputy County Administrator-Finance Nicki Andersen, Sheriff Picknell and District Attorney Zeke Wiedenfeld, was formed to investigate options to best suit Walworth County. The group discovered that there are not a lot of options for autopsy/medical examiner services because pathologists are in short supply in this region. The best models are Waukesha County and Milwaukee County, and the study group developed pros and cons for each option. Ultimately, the conclusion of the group is that Milwaukee County would be the best provider if our County is to offer more of a local presence. Under this system, Walworth County would need to appoint its own Medical Examiner, who need not be a physician but be highly experienced in death investigation. The pathologist would perform the autopsy and provide a report to Walworth County, and the County's Medical Examiner would sign death certificates. Phones would be answered locally and files would be maintained in our office. The County's current Medical Examiner budget is \$664,731, which includes \$387,810 for Waukesha County's contract. If we extended our agreement with Waukesha County, they have offered a reduction in price in 2020. Carver summarized the map showing how coroner/medical examiner services are provided throughout Wisconsin. She noted that Jefferson, Fond du Lac, Kenosha, Racine, Ozaukee and Sheboygan Counties all contract with Milwaukee County. Bretl said contracting with Milwaukee County could generate \$80,000 in savings. Choosing this model would require enhancing the County's office, by designating a Chief Deputy Medical Examiner and hiring clerical assistance. Bretl concluded by saying that Carver has done an outstanding job in improving and organizing the County system, bringing in expertise in death investigations. Supervisor Russell added that Carver has also shared her insight and experience with other county organizations, such as the Traffic Safety Commission. **Supervisor Russell made a motion, seconded by Vice Chair Staples, to recommend approval of entering into a contract with Milwaukee County for services. Motion carried 5-0.**

**Reports/announcements by Chairperson** – There were none.

**Confirmation of next meeting date and time:** The next business meeting was confirmed for Monday, June 17, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.

### **Claims and Litigation**

The Committee convened in closed session at approximately 11:04 a.m. on motion and second by Supervisor Kilkenny and Vice Chair Staples pursuant to the exemption contained in Section 19.85(1) (g) of the Wisconsin Statutes, "conferring with legal counsel for the governmental body who is rendering oral or written advice concerning strategy to be adopted by the body with respect to litigation in which it is or is likely to become involved," relative to the items listed below. A roll call vote was conducted and all members present voted "aye." County Administrator David Bretl, Deputy County Administrator-Finance Nicki Andersen and County Clerk Kim Bushey remained in closed session.

- a) Claim for Vehicle Damage – Lindsey Mauer
- b) Claim for Lost Property – Emmanuel Ocasio
- c) Summons and Complaint – Stephen Phelps and Leslie Phelps vs. David Hughes and Rebecca Hughes, Walworth County, Walworth County Clerk of Circuit Court and Lake Como Beach Property Owners Association
- d) Order – Scott R. Schmidt, Plaintiff, v. Walworth County, et al., Defendants

**The committee reconvened in open session at 11:31 a.m. on motion and second by Supervisor Kilkenny and Vice Chair Staples.**

**Supervisor Kilkenny made a motion, seconded by Vice Chair Staples, to direct staff to proceed as discussed in closed session on items a., b., c. and d., above. Motion carried 5-0.**

**Adjournment**

**On motion and second by Supervisor Kilkenny and Vice Chair Staples, Chair Weber adjourned the meeting at 11:32 a.m.**