

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ST. LOUIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

November 30, 2021

Location: Buhl Senior Center, Buhl, Minnesota

Present: Commissioners Jewell, Boyle, Grimm, McDonald, Musolf, Nelson and Chair Jugovich

Absent: None

Convened: Chair Jugovich called the meeting to order at 9:55 a.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

McDonald/Jewell moved to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed. (7-0)

- Minutes of November 16, 2021
- CY 2022 Host County Contract with Lutheran Social Services for Emergency Shelter Services [21-515]
- CY 2022 Host County Contract for Northwood Children's Home Society, Inc., d/b/a Northwood Children's Services [21-516]
- CY 2022 Host County Contract for Life House, Inc. – Safe Harbor/Sol House & The Loft [21-517]
- Sourcewell Purchase of Two Compact Track Loaders [21-518]
- Arrowhead Counties Association Lobbying Services Agreement [21-519]
- Withdrawal of State Tax Forfeited Land from Memorial Forest Status [21-520]
- Special Sale to the City of Ely [21-521]
- Special Sale to Vance in Kugler Twp (410-0024-00561) [21-522]

Health & Human Services Committee

Boyle/Musolf moved that the St. Louis County Board authorizes the reallocation of a 1.0 FTE Information Specialist III position (Position code 0432-049, Civil Service Basic Unit Pay Plan, Pay Grade B14) to a 1.0 FTE Accountant (Civil Service Basic Unit Pay Plan, Pay Grade B21) in the Public Health and Human Services department, resulting in a total increase of approximately \$10,608. [21-523]. The motion passed. (7-0)

Finance & Budget Committee

Nelson/Jewell moved that the St. Louis County Board authorizes the application and acceptance of the Voting Equipment Grant Account (VEGA-3) grant in the amount of up to \$860,000 to be accounted for in Fund 100, Agency 127999, Grant 12702, Year 2022. [21-524]. County Auditor Nancy Nilsen commented that the last election took a significant amount of effort to administer due to the pandemic and said that she was proud of the community for their teamwork. Clerk Phil Chapman noted the grant application deadline is December 17, 2021; grant funds are expected to be awarded in February of 2022. After further discussion, the motion passed. (7-0)

Musolf/Boyle moved that the St. Louis County Board, based on the considerations set forth in the amendment and overall plan and as set forth herein, approves the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), as amended for the years 2022 through 2026. [21-525]. Commissioner Nelson requested that the Board consider waiting until 2022 to approve the plan due to uncertainty of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, state bonding, and passage of the infrastructure bill. County Administrator Kevin Gray commented that best practice is the Board approves the plan at the same time as the budget; however, it is not required. After further discussion, Commissioner Musolf withdrew his motion, and the item was sent back to county administration to bring forward in the first or second quarter of 2022.

Jugovich/Jewell moved that the St. Louis County Board approves a financial grant contribution to Upper Midwest Film Office (UMFO) in the amount of up to \$150,000; that county staff develop and identify special performance measures to be accomplished by UMFO to be included in the grant/funding agreement; and further, that if necessary, appropriate county officials are authorized to negotiate the terms and conditions and execute appropriate grant/funding agreement(s) with the UMFO, payable from Fund 178, Object 311008 or its designated fund. [21-526]. Commissioner Nelson indicated that he was not comfortable with funding \$150,000 annually but would be willing to fund \$150,000 for the next two years. Shari Marshik, Executive Director of Upper Midwest Film Office, commented that the organization has applied for 501C3 status; many grants are not available until an organization has filed Form 990 for at least two years. After further discussion, the motion passed. (7-0)

Jugovich/Jewell moved that the St. Louis County Board approves a transfer of \$386,663 from the County's Economic Development Fund (Fund 178, Object 311008) to the Film Production Incentive Program (Fund 178 Agency 178007) or its designated fund and all program expenditures will be paid therefrom; approves the updates to the Film Production Incentive Program Guidelines; and further, authorizes county officials to enter an agreement with an appropriate Minnesota development organization to act under the county's direction as the program administrator, which will disburse such available funds in accordance with program requirements. [21-527]. Ms. Marshik distributed a UMFO Production Report that summarized projects through November 30, 2021. Project costs have increased by 25%-30% which have slowed down projects. The ability to stack incentives from the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB) and St. Louis County have been successful in bringing projects to the area. Joshua Frederick, of Leedrick Studios, commented that the incentives and the work done by UMFO has been beneficial for Leedrick Studios. They have seen an increase in out of state businesses looking to do filming in St. Louis County. Jim Lee, of Leedrick Studios, said that businesses as far away as Florida are filming in the area because of the efforts of UMFA. Donovan Strong, of Art Unlimited, said that their company has a strong national presence; approximately 90% of their money is made nationally. Most of the money the company makes supports communities in St. Louis County. After further discussion, the motion passed. (7-0)

A Point of Personal Privilege was requested at 11:25 a.m. At 11:36 a.m., the Committee reconvened with all members present.

Central Management & Intergovernmental Committee

McDonald/Nelson moved that the St. Louis County Board reappoints Ms. Karen Baxter to the Cook-Orr Healthcare District Board of Directors to represent unorganized townships in the Cook Hospital Healthcare District for a four (4) year term beginning January 1, 2022, and ending December 31, 2025. [21-529]. The motion passed. (7-0)

Jewell/Grimm moved that the St. Louis County Board approves the “2022 St. Louis County Legislative Priorities” and directs its Intergovernmental Relations Director to work to achieve these outcomes and report progress on other initiatives during the 2022 Legislative Session. [21-530]. St. Louis County Intergovernmental Relations Director John Ongaro gave the Board a brief overview of the 2022 legislative priorities. Director Ongaro noted that a request to increase county programming aid will be added as a legislative priority. The motion passed. (7-0)

Jewell/Nelson moved that the St. Louis County Board adopts the revised St. Louis County Family Medical Leave Act Policy; and further, that the previous St. Louis County Family Medical Leave Act Policy adopted on December 21, 1993, by Board Resolution No. 93-918, is hereby rescinded. [21-531]. Jim Gottschald, Director of Human Resources and Administration, said that policy updates are consistent with federal law. The updates include clarification that an employee must work 1,250 hours to be eligible and the look forward method will be used when calculating hours rather than the rolling method. The motion passed. (7-0)

Public Safety & Corrections Committee

Grimm/McDonald moved that the St. Louis County Board authorizes the purchase of a body worn camera bundle from Axon Enterprises, Inc., in the amount of \$790,049.99 over 5 years including the authorization to transfer \$600,000.00 from the Information Technology Fund (Fund 100, Object 311139) to the Sheriff’s Office Capital Equipment Account (Fund 100, Agency 129003, Object 666900) to assist in this purchase. [21-532]. St. Louis County Sheriff Ross Litman said that there is a greater expectation from the public that technology is used by the department to be more transparent with the work they do. Sheriff Litman indicated that state statute requires the opportunity for the public to provide feedback. The public will be given the opportunity to provide feedback at the Board meeting, website correspondence, and in writing. A draft of the body worn camera policy will be on the county website by the end of the week. The motion passed. (7-0)

Environment & Natural Resources Committee

McDonald/Nelson moved that the St. Louis County Board approves a \$237,500 advance from the Environmental Trust Fund to the Ash River Sanitary District as local match for a \$950,000 FY 2020/2021 Minnesota Clean Water Fund grant for the development of the Ash River Community Sanitary Sewer Project, Fund 864, Agency 864999, Grant 86401, Grant Year 2021; and further, that the appropriate county officials are authorized to enter into an agreement with the Ash River Sanitary District for the amount and purpose identified above. [21-533]. Commissioner McDonald questioned the wording of the resolution if “advance” should be changed to “grant” funding. Administrator Gray responded that he would provide clarification to the Board prior to the next meeting. After further discussion, the motion passed. (7-0)

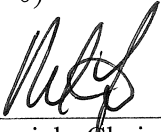
Finance & Budget Committee

Nelson/Jugovich moved that the St. Louis County Board review the 2022 Budget Resolution and narrative for eventual adoption at the December 14, 2021 County Board meeting. [21-528]. St. Louis County Budget and Business Improvement Manager BreAnn Graber gave the Board an overview of the 2022 Budget and said that there will be a 5.94% increase in the levy. The motion passed. (7-0)


COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION ITEMS AND REPORTS

Commissioner Nelson said that he will be bringing forward two separate resolutions to the next Board meeting. The first resolution is to give the required one-year notice of St. Louis County's intent to withdraw from the Community Health Board. This will provide St. Louis County an opportunity to evaluate the role of the agency and make sure they are supporting the community at an appropriate level. The second resolution is to provide property tax aid to Veterans of Foreign War (VFW) and Legion clubs. Commissioner Nelson commented that these clubs are important because they provide support for veterans. Approximately 10-11 clubs are located throughout St. Louis County; they pay approximately \$10,000 annually in property taxes.

At 12:52 p.m., Jewell/Nelson moved to adjourn the Committee of the Whole meeting. The motion passed. (7-0)



Mike Jugovich, Chair of the County Board



Phil Chapman, Clerk of the County Board