

Vermillion County Council

Meeting Minutes

February 14, 2022

6:30 P.M.

Commissioner's Court, 2nd Floor Courthouse

- I. **Call to Order.** The Council convened in a regular meeting on February 14, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. in the Commissioner's Courtroom.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.**
- III. **Roll Call.** Members present were President Ashley James, William Rennels, Rick Weir, Kelly Summerville, William Brent Bush, Randy Dreher, Martin Brown, Auditor Brenda Furry, Deputy Auditor Annie Wickens, and County Council Attorney, Scott Craig.
- IV. **Approval of Minutes.** A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes from January 10, 2022 by Dreher and seconded by Brown. All in favor, motion carried.
- V. **Treasurer's Report.** President, James acknowledged receipt of the Treasurer's Report.
- VI. **Comp Time Report.** President, James acknowledged receipt of the Comp Time Report.
- VII. **Transfers-Reporting only**
- **From General Fund 1000-148**
 - ♦ 30261 Printing & Advertising \$ 300.00
 - ♦ 30270 Publication \$ 100.00
 - ♦ 30273 Annual Meeting \$ 800.00
 - ♦ 32200 Postage \$ 200.00
 - ♦ 34202 Burglary Ins \$ 350.00
 - ♦ 35100 Training/Conference \$ 250.00
 - ♦ **Transferred to 1000-30254-148 Internet/Telephone \$2000.00**
- VIII. **Additional Appropriations**
- Health Depart 1159-31000- Attorney Fees/Legal Fees-\$5000.00-tabled
Explanation: this is for Attorney Fees/this will come out of the cash balance in the Health Dept Fund. 1159

Discussion: Summerville questioned why the Health Department felt it necessary to hire an attorney. President of VCHB, Kay Smith stated they needed guidance for appointing a new Health Officer. The Health Dept requested a meeting with the County Attorney but was not successful in getting that to happen. The Health Department felt they needed guidance on appointing a Health Officer. Summerville stated he felt it was not necessary. Smith stated they felt it necessary due to they wanted to make sure they were following the statute. Summerville stated so that's your answer to the taxpayers. You hired someone for \$5000 because you needed guidance to hire a health officer. Smith stated we are just asking for \$5000, we do not know what the attorney will ask for. The attorney they used stated he would charge the same amount of what the County Attorney charges. Weir questioned what the attorney was charging per hour. Wendy Farley stated it was \$60 hr same as the County Attorney charges. Summerville asked how many hours has he worked. Farley stated we have not received a bill yet. Summerville stated he felt the Health Dept was being a little premature on this. Farley stated that they were setting up the budget and this was an amount that they came up with. It wasn't the bill for one

attorney. Farley stated this was coming out of the Cash in Fund 1159. Summerville stated this was tax payer money. Farley stated she understands that but this was something the board felt they needed to do. Summerville stated that nobody else felt that, right? Farley stated that was the boards actions, so they felt they needed it. Summerville, questioned who the Health Board answers to in the County. Farley stated that the Commissioners are the ones who appoint the board so the Commissioners would be who they answer to. Summerville stated he has a problem with the Health board requesting \$5,000 for an attorney. Summerville stated he didn't believe the Health Department needed to hire an attorney to go up against your own Commissioners to appoint someone. Summerville stated I guess we will see how the tax payers feel about it and go from there. James questioned if they were just wanting a blanket amount until they find out what they really need. Farley stated yes. Summerville asked if Attorney Jon Spurr was not able to answer these questions that the health department had. Farley stated that they had called on Mr. Spurr, and he did not answer the questions they had. Farley stated she reached out to Spurr on another issue with a county employee and she was informed to contact the Health Departments attorney and the Health board. Summerville stated that you don't have an attorney. Farley stated that was what Spurr responded back to her. James wanted to know if they had questions like this before answered and Farley stated yes that Spurr has answered all of their questions prior to this. This issue was actually prior to the issues we have had lately. (October 2021) Summerville stated that everyone knows why they hired this attorney but he wasn't going to say because it could get him in trouble. He also stated that the taxpayers also know why you hired an attorney. Dreher asked if the Health department would be opposed to tabling this appropriation until they receive the bill for the services rendered. Farley stated that she didn't have an issue. Brown questioned if the Health Department felt they would be using this attorney for further issues or go back to the way it was before. Farley stated they have to have some guidance so she said yes, they would need this in their budget. Dreher questioned if they wanted to use the attorney they have now or use Jon Spurr like before. Farley stated she doesn't have the authority to make that decision. She just knows they have to have legal representation on different issues. James stated you guys could still use Jon Spurr going forward. Wendy stated yes that she didn't have an issue with that, but she reached out to HR and Spurr and Spurr told her via email to talk to their attorney and the board. Craig stated that ethically an attorney is not supposed to talk to someone who has an attorney. So that could have been the reasoning behind Spurr's response. James stated that going forward we need to clarify with Spurr on the issues at hand. Weir asked if the Health Department is waiting for an itemized bill from the attorney? Farley stated yes. Summerville asked if the attorney was helpful to them. Smith stated that the attorney didn't help us select someone he just guided us on what the statue said and what our role was to do it. James asked if the State had any advice on the issues. Farley stated the State would not give them any advice. A motion to table the appropriations for \$5000 for Attorney fees for the Health Department was made by Dreher and seconded by Brown. All in favor, motion carried.

- **Health Depart 8111 -Emergency Preparedness grant -\$26,577.87-APPROVED**
 Explanation: To set up Emergency Preparedness Grant for 21/22 June 30, 2021- June 30, 2022 This sets up fund for the last six months of grant.
 Discussion: A motion was made by Bush to approve the appropriation in the amount of \$26,577.87 and seconded by Brown. All in favor, motion carried.
- **Health Depart 8133- Covid-19 Testing Grant -\$87,676.33-Approved**
 Explanation: To set up Community Testing Grant fund for 2022. This is grant money left over from year 2021 to be carried forward.

Discussion: Dreher makes a motion to allow the appropriation, and was seconded by Weir. Summerville asks if the Health Department is always available for testing? Farley states we are available 3 days a week. Summerville states if you are sick in between the days you test what is someone suppose to do? Farley states there are several other places they can go to get tested (Walmart, CVS or the doctor's office). Summerville states that the country is in debt 30 trillion dollars and this is one of the reasons why. Summerville states everyone wants to call it free money but it is not. James questioned if this is federal or state funded? Farley states this is coming directly from the State. Summerville states that they got it from the Federal. Farley states I assume but I am not sure. Bush states that if we don't take it someone else will. James stated that in previous discussion that State has pretty much stated you have to do this. Farley states yes, we have to do this This is not an option. Farley states that the Health Department has people coming in testing and still getting the vaccine. Summerville stated that he doesn't mind if you were open more for testing. Farley states that they can't find the staffing for that. All in favor, motion carried.

- **Health Depart 8134- Covid-19 Vaccine Grant -~~\$87,463.00~~ approved**
Explanation: To set up Covid-19 Vaccine Grant fund for 2022, this is grant money left over from year 2021 to carried forward. A motion was made by Bush to approve the additional and was seconded by Rennels. No discussion. All in favor, motion carried.
- **Solid Waste-County Cleanup-4901-~~\$230.00~~ approved**
Explanation: This is to cover an invoice for 2021 tox-a-way advertising in the amount of \$230.00. A motion to approve the appropriation was made by Brown and seconded by Bush.
Discussion: Weir questioned what was being spent. James explained no that was the balance in the account as of 1.31.2022. All in favor, motion carried.
- **Solid Waste-County Cleanup-4901-~~\$5000.00~~ approved**
Explanation: donation was received for tox-a-way and it needs to be appropriated before it can be spent. A motion was made by Brown and seconded by Weir. Dreher was opposed. Everyone else in favor, motion carried.

IX. New Business

- a. Bonds for County Employees-blanket or individual- Craig spoke to the Council about having a blanket bond for the county as a whole instead of having individual bonds for each different individual. Craig also stated that our insurance may cover some of this also. He is doing some look up on the issue and once he gets more information we can present to the Council for approval. This will be something we can do for next year. Dreher states he would like to definitely look into this, especially if it would help cut cost for the County.

X. Public Comment: None

XI. Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn made by Dreher and 2nd by Brown. All in favor.
Meeting Adjourned.

AYE

Nay

Ashley James
Ashley James

Randy Dreher
Randy Dreher

William Brent Bush
William Brent Bush

Rick Weir
Rick Weir

Martin Brown
Martin Brown

William Rennels
William Rennels

Kelly Summerville
Kelly Summerville

Attest:

Brenda Furry 3/14/2022
Brenda Furry, Auditor