

**Minutes of the December 19, 2024, meeting of the Sawyer County
Board of Supervisors Special Meeting
Sawyer County Courthouse/Virtual**



Voting Committee

Roll Call

Members Present (X)

District

Wards

☒ Steve Kariainen	01	T Lenroot W-1, T Hayward W-7, C Hayward W-5
☒ Kay Wilson	02	T Lenroot W-2, T Round Lake W-1
☒ Tweed Shuman	03	T Hayward W-1 & 2
☒ Stacey Hessel	04	T Hayward W-3 & 4
☒ Randy Neumann	05	T Hayward W-5 & 6
☒ Marc D. Helwig	06	C Hayward W-1 & 2
☒ Thomas W. Duffy	07	C Hayward W-3 & 4
☒ Marshal Savitski	08	T Bass Lake W-1 & 2
☒ Jim Evans	09	T Bass Lake W-3 & 4
☒ Chuck Van Etten	10	T Sand Lake, T Edgewater W-1
☒ Jeff Hoehne	11	T Edgewater W-2, T Bass Lake W-5, T Meteor, T Couderay, V Couderay
☒ John Righeimer	12	T Spider Lake, T Round Lake W-2, T Winter W-1
☒ Ron Kinsley	13	T Hunter, T Radisson W-1, T-Ojibwa W-1, V Radisson
☒ Ron Buckholtz	14	T Radisson W-2, T Ojibwa W-2, T Weirgor, V Exeland, T Meadowbrook
☐ Vacant	15	T Winter W-2, T Draper, V Winter

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance— Chair Kinsley called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Roll call was taken; quorum was met.

Certification of Compliance with the open meeting law was met.

Meeting Agenda –

Public Comments – David Greene, Robert Palumbi, Renee Brown, Ben Kurtzweil, Steve Beining

Appointment of New District 9 Supervisor – A motion was made to appoint Jim Evans to the vacant District 9 Sawyer County Board of Supervisor position by Mr. Buckholtz; second by Ms. Hessel. Motion carried without negative vote. Honorable Judge Yackel presented the Oath of Office for Mr. Evans and Mr. Evans took his place on the Board. A motion was made by Mr. Buckholtz; second by Ms. Hessel to add Mr. Evans to Public Works and LWFRM Committees. Motion carried without negative vote.

Elected Officials and Staff Recognition – Mr. Kinsley announced the retirements of Paula Chisser, Register of Deeds; Janeen Abric, Treasurer; County Clerk, Lynn Fitch; and Health and Human Services SUD mental health coordinator, Joe Bodo. Plaques of recognition were provided.

Minutes from the previous meeting dated: November 12, 2024

Motion to approve made by: Mr. Duffy Second by: Mr. Buckholtz
Motion carried without negative vote.

Access to Minutes – Clerk Fitch provided a demonstration over Zoom regarding accessing the new Agenda and Minutes page along with the recordings and minutes.

Zoning Committee -

Chair Report – Mr. Buckholtz presented a review of the December Zoning Meeting. Mr. Kozlowski presented a request for Case #24-012, owner Ronald and Laura Zook for a rezone approximately 1.85 acres from Ag-1 to Commercial-1. This was approved at the zoning meeting in November. A motion was made by Mr. Shuman; second by Mr. Buckholtz. Motion carried without negative vote.

Ad Hoc Committee Formation -

Mr. Kozlowski presented a Resolution to Establish an Ad Hoc Committee Called “Sawyer County Multi-Dwelling Development Committee”. Its purpose is to address inconsistencies and ensure clear, coherent guidelines for development of language within the existing ordinance. This Committee would report to the Zoning Committee. A motion was made by Ms. Hessel to approve the formation of the Ad Hoc Committee; second by Mr. Shuman. The motion was amended by Hessel; seconded by Shuman to add Mr. Buckholtz as a non-voting member to the Ad Hoc Committee. Motion carried without negative vote. A voice vote was taken for the original motion and carried without negative vote.

Public Works Committee --

Mr. Helwig advised that the Maintenance Dept. is still trying to fill the vacancy in staff and the bedroom for the EMS garage has been completed so another full-time crew can be started. A new airport planning commission manager has been appointed and the plan continues to move forward. The tax allocation for each airport hangar owner has been completed and invoicing has been sent out. A new simplified mailbox policy has been established and approved.

Public Safety Committee --

Chair Report – Mr. Buckholtz advised that the recovery court is going well. Committee reports were reviewed and written reports were provided. Dog licenses became available for sale in December. The animal control ordinance was approved to be amended to not include cats going forward. Child Support is receiving more calls regarding paternity issues involving undocumented migrants. A joint meeting between Public Safety and Economic Development Committees to review proposed options from Bug Tussel.

Land, Water, and Forest Resources Committee -

Chair Report – They will be meeting on 12/20/24.

Health and Human Services Board --

Chair Report – Ms. Wilson provided an update advising there has been an increase in cases for Adult Long-term Care. The department is in discussions with a new private transport service to see if there are ways to reduce these transport costs which keep rising. Several program developments and case load statistics were shared. Teen birth rates are the lowest in the State at this time. The department continues to develop procedures to address and handle the new requirements of Tourist Rooming Houses under the new ordinance.

Finance Report -

Mr. Righimer provided an update of the December committee activity. Sawyer County received the highest possible audit rating in our recent audit. Sawyer County will soon begin the REM process. Sales tax dipped a bit in November but remains on pace for our year-end goals. The new billing company for the ambulance service is beginning to see the aging report improve with better collections.

Administration

Signed Offer to Purchase US Hwy 63 Property – Mr. Albarado provided a review of the Offer to Purchase for the US Highway 63 property which has been signed by the proposed seller. The updates in the OTP were highlighted with a

closing date of December 30th but that date does not appear possible. The resolution would outline the change and extension of the closing date to 2025.

Resolution Approving Offer to Purchase – Presented by Mr. Albarado. Mr. Shuman made a motion to deny the offer of purchase; second by Mr. Helwig. An electronic vote was taken and carried 10:4 to deny the Resolution. "Nay votes from Kinsley, Righeimer, Hessel and Kariainen; "yes" votes from Hoehne, VanEtten, Evans, Savitski, Shuman, Buckholtz, Neuman, Wilson, Duffy, and Helwig.

Economic Development & UW Extension Committee --

Chair Report – Mr. Righeimer provided a review of the Committee highlights. The EDC reported that the incubator project is moving forward and have several workforce training sessions about to begin. There are over 10,000 skiers registered for this year's Birkie. The County Connectivity discussion continues.

BEAD Endorsement – Mr. Albarado presented a Resolution to grant an endorsement to Mosaic Technologies so that they may apply for funding. This would involve no County funding outlay. A motion was made by Ms. Hessel to approve the Resolution; second by Ms. Wilson. Motion carried without negative vote.

County Administrator Report -

A written report was provided and reviewed by Mr. Albarado. We are having good results in filling vacant staff positions. We continue to work on the Lake District formation project. The current status of ambulance rigs and crews was reviewed. Response times were reviewed by staff. There is a lot of activity on the CJCC; our CJCC is one of eight around the country that has been selected by NACO to participate in a peer exchange. He is arranging a joint meeting (possibly January 2nd) with Public Safety and Economic Development to review the developments in the radio communication project. Transitions are in process for the outgoing and newly elected officials. Plans are in place to convert all County email domain names to the same government domain this coming spring.

Outside Committee Updates -

Mr. Kariainen reported on the Indianhead Community Action Agency and CEP committee developments.

Other Topics for Discussion Only –

Adjournment – 7:59 pm

Next Meeting: January 16, 2025

Time: 6:30 pm

Location: Board Room

Minutes recorded by Lynn Fitch, County Clerk