

WEXFORD COUNTY  
**FINANCE & APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
March 9, 2023

The Finance and Appropriations Committee regular meeting was called to order by Chairman Michael Musta at 4:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Room, Third Floor, Historic Courthouse, 437 E. Division St. in Cadillac, Michigan.

Members Present: Michael Musta, Chair; Brian Potter, Gary Taylor, and Julie Theobald  
Members Absent: None  
Also Present: Jami Bigger, Deputy Administrator/HR Director; Bob Champion, Chief Public Defender; Megan Kujawa, Sr. Executive Assistant; Lt. Micheal McDaniel, Jail Administrator; Kristi Nottingham, Treasurer; Alaina Nyman, Clerk; Joe Porterfield, Administrator & Equalization Director; Judge Edward Van Alst, Probate Court/Family Court; Corey Wiggins, Prosecutor

**ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Added: G.3. Advanced Correctional Healthcare Agreement

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**A motion was made by Comm. Taylor and supported by Comm. Potter to approve the agenda, as amended. A vote was called, all in favor. Motion passed, 4-0.**

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**A motion was made by Comm. Theobald and supported by Comm. Taylor to approve the February 22, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes. A vote was called, all in favor. Motion passed, 4-0.**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**AGENDA ITEMS**

***G.1. Approval of Claims***

**A motion was made by Comm. Potter and supported by Comm. Theobald to approve paying the bills in the amount of \$1,167,212.80. A vote was called, all in favor. Motion passed, 4-0.**

***G.2. Prosecutor's Office Discussion***

Commissioner Potter requested this to be added to the agenda to discuss how changes from Standard 8 from the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission (MIDC) in the Public Defender's Office will also affect the Prosecutor's Office and even the family court.

Chief Public Defender, Bob Champion, explained that Standard 8 from the MIDC will be mandatory within the next year. Standard 8 will increase attorney pay and limit case loads and limit case types to those with the necessary experience. Mr. Champion noted that Wexford/Missaukee is one of the only ones left in the State that is not already complying with Standard 8. He also discussed the state-wide shortage of attorneys in the State and especially Northern Michigan.

Prosecutor Wiggins informed the Committee that he has had an attorney vacancy since November 2022 and has not received any applications. Mr. Wiggins provided a handout to the committee. The recording secretary was not provided a copy of that handout. Mr. Wiggins discussed the caseload in his office and the struggle of being short-staffed and handling such a large caseload. Mr. Wiggins also informed the committee of the expert witness fees that are expected to greatly increase.

A discussion took place regarding the State's assistance to the public defender's office and not the prosecutor's office. Further discussion took place on the attorney shortage, crime lab testing, witness fees and the conflict attorney shortages in the county. The Prosecutor's Office will continue to reach out to their association for assistance with the issues discussed.

**G.3. Advance Correctional Healthcare Agreement**

**A motion was made by Comm. Taylor and supported by Comm. Theobald to forward a recommendation to the full board to approve the Advanced Correctional Healthcare Inc. Agreement and the corresponding Business Associate Agreement.**

Lt. McDaniel reached out to other Jail Administrators to see what other options there were for correctional healthcare and aside from private care contracting, there were no other options. The provided contract will provide health care seven days per week.

**A vote was called, all in favor. Motion passed, 4-0.**

**CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

**ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS**

Administrator Porterfield informed the committee that he also checked for other options for correctional healthcare, and this is our only option at this time.

He briefly discussed the many increasing costs the county is facing and shared that he has sent his concerns to legislators.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**COMMITTEE COMMENTS**


None.

**CHAIR COMMENTS**

Chair Musta thanked everyone for attending.

**ADJOURN**

**A motion was made by Comm. Taylor and supported by Comm. Potter to adjourn the meeting at 4:44 p.m.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Musta, Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jami Bigger, Recording Secretary