The Wright County Board met in regular session at 9:00 A.M. with Husom, Vetsch, Potter and Daleiden present. Commissioner Borrell joined the meeting remotely.

COUNTY BOARD MINUTES 6-16-20
Vetsch moved to approve the 6-16-20 Wright County Board Minutes. The motion was seconded by Potter and carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

AGENDA
Vetsch moved to approve the Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Potter and carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

CONSENT AGENDA
Daleiden moved to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Borrell. Bob Hiivala, Auditor/Treasurer, referenced the budget amendments included in the Consent Agenda. Previously when the County had large construction projects, bonds were issued but it was not incorporated into the budget system. The process has changed where a budget will be created to allow review of the project status. Daleiden questioned whether this will be a part of the ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) System as the numbers look different. Lee Kelly, County Administrator, said the information will be updated at the time of transition. It will reflect whatever the statement balances are at that time. Hiivala said when an operating budget is adopted, action is taken to approve a CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) which is budgeted. These projects are now going to be treated like a CIP and will be budgeted. Vetsch extended appreciation for bringing more transparency to the CIP. The motion carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

A. ADMINISTRATION
   1. Refer To The 7-14-20 County Board Workshop: Office Space Evaluation Due To COVID-19
B. AUDITOR/TREASURER
   1. Approve The Budget Amendment To Carryover Expenditures For The Four Building Projects:
      - 34-162-000-0000-6602 BUILDING CONSTRUCTION - Justice Center $18,821,126
      - 34-163-000-0000-6602 BUILDING CONSTRUCTION - Government Center 48,278,452
      - 34-164-000-0000-6602 BUILDING CONSTRUCTION - Tactical Training Center 5,304,307
      - 34-166-000-0000-6602 BUILDING CONSTRUCTION - Trailblazer 2,006,392
   2. Approve The Budget Amendment To Move Remaining PCI Compliance Funds To Unallocated Projects Since The Project Has Now Been Completed:
      - 34-170-000-8000-6600 CIP Budget - Unallocated Fund 50.00
      - 34-170-100-8181-6600 CIP Budget - PCI Assessment (50.00)
   4. Approve Renewal Of Annual Off-Sale 3.2 Malt Liquor License For David Olson DBA Olson's Truck Stop In Silver Creek Township For The License Period July 1, 2020 Through June 30, 2021 Contingent Upon Wright County Sheriff Department And Wright County Attorney's Office Approval.
   5. Approve Renewal Of Annual On-Sale (Including Sunday) And Off-Sale Liquor License For Up The Creek Grill & Bar, Inc. (Silver Creek Township) For The License Period July 1, 2020 Through June 30, 2021 Contingent Upon Wright County Sheriff Department And Wright County Attorney's Office Approval.
   6. Approve Renewal Of Annual Seasonal On-Sale Liquor License For Cokato Town & Country Club (Cokato Township) For The License Period July 1, 2020 Through June 30, 2021 Contingent Upon Wright County Sheriff Department, Wright County Attorney's Office And Town Board Approval.
C. HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
   1. Approve Contract Renewal And Restructure For Kathy S. Michael D/B/A Northwoods Fraud Investigations, Inc To Combine FPI And Fraud Control Contracts Into One Contract Effective 07/01/20 Every Two Years
   2. Refer To Personnel Committee: Reclassify A Social Worker III To A Social Worker II
D. HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
TIMED AGENDA ITEMS

JOLENE FOSS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WRIGHT COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP (WCEDP)

COVID-19 Business Assistance Loan Application Approval Request
Foss was recently hired as the Executive Director of the WCEDP. Foss previously worked as a Licensed Daycare Provider, as the City Planner for the City of Princeton, and as the Executive Director of the St. Cloud Downtown Council.

Foss presented the following information:

On May 26, 2020 the County Board authorized the WCEDP to administer a $200,000 COVID-19 Loan Program to assist businesses located in Wright County. The loans are limited to $5,000 with 0% interest, and the first six months of loan payments are deferred.

The goals and objectives include:
- Provide emergency financing for businesses that are experiencing financial hardships due to the executive orders related to COVID-19 business restrictions
- Allocate up to $200,000 in WCEDP resources for this program
- Ensure that these short-term loans will be beneficial to Wright County and are paid back in a timely manner
- Facilitate business survival, especially for small businesses, during this pandemic
- Enhance, to the greatest extent possible, the retention of jobs throughout the County

Foss said six applications were received. The WCEDP Board of Directors recommends approval for all six loans. If approved by the County Board, Foss will work with the County Auditor/Treasurer to distribute funding to these businesses by July 1, 2020.

- Jules’ Café – Annandale
- Tom & Gary’s Bowling – Annandale
- Lillian’s – Buffalo
- Lee Nails – Montrose
- Cornerstone Café – Monticello
- Dear Lake Orchard – Buffalo.

Daleiden moved to approve the $5,000 loans with the terms specified to the six businesses listed. The motion was seconded by Potter. Discussion followed on the number of applicants. Potter said a few business owners indicated that the loan amount was not sufficient to help them with their businesses. Others thought the process may have been cumbersome, but he explained it was not. He suggested a second round of loans to assist those that didn’t know about the loan, or to possibly look into increasing the loan amount. Foss understands there is a limited time that the State allows use of the Minnesota Investment Funds (MIF) for retail and that is only through July 1, 2020. She thought it may be a challenge to create a second round of loans from the revolving loan fund in that time frame.

Foss encouraged business owners to apply as soon as possible for the DEED (MN Employment and Economic Development) grant funding that is available. Foss suggested that a workshop meeting be held with the County Board to discuss the remaining $170,000 in revolving loan funds.

Foss said the WCEDP will help business owners with these processes, and they should reach out for assistance. Foss thanked the County Board for their support to the WCEDP. The motion to approve the loans to the six businesses presented today carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

SHAWNA ATHMAN, BUSINESS MANAGER, SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Resolution To Accept 2020 DNR Annual County Boat And Water Safety Grant
Athman requested approval of a resolution to accept $21,224 in DNR grant funding for the period of 1-01-20 through 6-30-21. The funds will be used for wages related to boat and water safety duties.

Vetsch moved to adopt Resolution #20-40 accepting the 2020 DNR Annual County Boat and Water Safety Grant in the amount of $21,224. The motion was seconded by Daleiden and carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.
Resolution To Accept A Grant From The Bureau Of Justice Assistance (BJA) Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding Program
Athman requested approval of a grant from the BJA Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding Program to be utilized in recovering costs related to COVID-19 response. It is a two-year grant totaling $39,098, and will cover both the Jail and Sheriff’s Office as one unit. They have purchased $25,000 in PPE (personal protective equipment) so far this year. The funds can also be used for backfilling shifts for deputies.

Daleiden moved to adopt Resolution #20-41 accepting the BJA Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding Program Grant in the amount of $39,098. The motion was seconded by Potter and carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

BOB HIIVALA, AUDITOR/TREASURER

Approve A Plat "Registered Land Survey No. 48" (Albion Township)
At the recommendation of Hiivala, Daleiden moved to approve the Plat, Registered Land Survey No. 48 in Albion Township. The motion was seconded by Potter and carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

Approve Resolution Performance Management And Accept The Performance Management Grant Application
Ryan Kotila, Fiscal Officer, requested approval of a resolution for a Performance Management Grant Application. The grant is per capita which equates to approximately $10,000. The resolution will set at least ten performance measures throughout the County. The Auditor's Office will work with departments to report annually on these performance measurements.

Daleiden made a motion to adopt Resolution 20-42 for the Performance Management Grant Application. The motion was seconded by Vetsch and carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

Schedule Committee Of The Whole (COTW) To Set The Audit Exit Meeting With CliftonLarsonAllen
Hiivala said the audit firm has requested to meet with the County Board to present the findings and recommendations of the audit.

Daleiden moved to refer the Audit Exit Meeting with CliftonLarsonAllen to the 7-14-20 County Board Workshop Meeting at 9:00 AM. The motion was seconded by Borrell and carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

VIRGIL HAWKINS, HIGHWAY ENGINEER

Approve Resolution Of Final Acceptance For The CSAH 34/35/37 Sinusoidal Centerline Rumble Strips Project. Contract No. 1905, SP 086-070-017; With Surface Preparation Technologies Of Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania And Authorize Final Payment In The Amount Of $275.94. Final Value Of The Work Certified For The Project Is $102,608.70.
Hawkins stated that 90% of the project cost was through a safety grant from the State.

Vetsch moved to adopt Resolution #20-43, final acceptance for the CSAH 34/35/37 Sinusoidal Centerline Rumble Strips Project. Contract No, 1905, SP 086-070-017; With Surface Preparation Technologies Of Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania And Authorize Final Payment In The Amount Of $275.94. Final Value Of The Work Certified For The Project Is $102,608.70. The motion was seconded by Daleiden and carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

Hawkins said approval of the Annual Report will be placed on the 7-07-20 County Board Agenda.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

6-11-20 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES
At today’s County Board Meeting, Potter moved to approve the minutes. The motion was second by Vetsch. Vetsch said there was value realized with the study. It identifies the partnership between the County and municipalities relating to law enforcement and the need to grow. Husom said bringing in an independent group with no connection to the County was beneficial, as it is easier to evaluate. Potter said the report brings transparency and a roadmap for the future to help municipalities understand their roles in the partnership. Daleiden asked whether Baker Tilly reached out to municipalities. Matt Treichler, Chief Deputy Sheriff, did not think so. The intent is to send the study to cities once approved by the County Board. The study may also be sent to comparison agencies who were asked for data. The motion to approve the minutes carried 5-0 on a roll call vote. The minutes follow:
I. Baker Tilly Final Presentation For Sheriff’s Office Study

Nick Dragisich, P.E., Firm Director, Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP (Baker Tilly) and David Eisenlohr, Managing Director, Baker Tilly, gave the Final Report Presentation, Organization & Management Study of the Wright County Sheriff’s Office (Study). The presentation is attached.

Dragisich outlined the objectives of the Study:

- Strengthen the organizational structure, lines of authority and accountability
- Assess the adequacy of both sworn and civilian staffing and, especially, the allocation of patrol resources to support the needs of both contract cities and the unincorporated areas of the County
- Develop specific recommendations for adoption of best practices for efficiencies, workflow rules for reporting and alternative schedules for the Patrol division

Dragisich said Baker Tilly is an independent organization and does many studies for public entities across the country. Their recommendations are made objectively, without influence from the client, and with their best interests in mind.

Dragisich described the five stages of the Project approach, the Organizational Profile, the Sheriff’s Office Mission Statement, and Key Organizational Statistics as of 2019.

Dragisich said the Sheriff’s Office serves a broad geography. It is important to balance between serving unincorporated areas and the thirteen contract cities. They studied calls for service and the workload that emanates from contract cities.

The Staffing Benchmark Research compared the Wright County Sheriff’s Office with Sherburne, Carver, Olmsted, Stearns, Washington, and Anoka Counties. In 2017, Wright County reported more total criminal incidents than did any of the comparison counties and reported more serious crimes per sworn law enforcement officer than its peers.

Key findings Office-wide include:

- Across the Sheriff’s Office, a sense of optimism and confidence for the future is evident
- The Wright County Sheriff's Office does not have a formally developed and adopted Strategic Plan
- Across the Sheriff’s Office, multiple rotating shift schedules are employed
- Specialized functional assignments and projects tend to follow individuals vs alignment with the optimal organizational placement
- The Sheriff’s Office lacks a full-time position focused on the planning, management, delivery and documentation of employee training and development
- Lines of communication throughout the Sheriff’s Office can be strengthened

Key Recommendations Office-wide include:

- Develop a comprehensive strategic plan for the Sheriff’s Office
- Establish processes and tools for the tracking and reporting of progress and performance
- Maintain the current 8-hour, 6/3 shift pattern.
- Align the specialized Deputy assignments based on their functional relationship to the Sheriff Office’s divisions and supervisory structure
- Establish a full-time training position within the Sheriff’s Office
- Create opportunities for regular, direct and unfiltered communication between the rank and file personnel and the Sheriff

Eisenlohr and Dragisich were told that the Sheriff’s Office now operates on 10-hour shifts. Eisenlohr said the Patrol Staffing Analysis would have to be recalculated. This would require the most recent years ‘ worth of data.

Eisenlohr reviewed Patrol Division findings. Seventy-one percent of citizen calls for service originate in contract cities and represent 70 percent of service call time. The highest citizen service call volume is found in the County’s larger cities, including Monticello, Otsego, St. Michael, and Albertville. The analysis was based on the shift model of 8-hour shifts on a 6/3 shift pattern rotation. Fifty percent of total activity for calls for service by type are deputy-initiated. Two-thirds are traffic reports. Other activity is self-initiated, such as making citizen contacts, engaging the community, and proactive crime prevention activities. Eisenlohr said the Patrol staffing level is sufficient to meet current workload demands, but could be better aligned to service demand by hour of day.

Eisenlohr said the average response times to citizen-initiated calls for service are within acceptable ranges for the County as a whole, with faster response times in the contract cities of Albertville, Clearwater, Cokato, Delano, Hanover, Maple Lake,
6-11-20 COTW Minutes (cont.):

Monticello, Montrose, Otsego, Rockford, South Haven, St. Michael, and Waverly. Eisenlohr said findings showed significant imbalances between workload demand and contracted service hours among the contract cities.

Patrol Recommendations include:
- Adopt a workload-driven approach to patrol staffing needs analysis
- Increase the number of Patrol Sergeants from 11 to 14
- Maintain the current authorization of Patrol Deputies to meet current call volumes
- Establish an internal task force of Deputies and Sergeants to review and recommend opportunities to mitigate rising patrol workload
- Over time, move toward a target staffing level sufficient to provide 45% to 50% proactive time
- Initiate discussion with the contract cities to align service delivery costs and contract hours
- Provide adequate staffing in the non-contract areas to ensure county-wide coverage

Eisenlohr reviewed the Findings and Recommendations of the Criminal Division:

Key Findings include:
- The Criminal Division is adequately staffed, but opportunities for improved efficiency exist
- The span of control for the CID Sergeant is excessive
- No standardized method is in place for field personnel to forward a case to Criminal Investigations
- Reported case clearance rates are unusually high
- Special Investigations Unit staffing is insufficient to make meaningful impacts on the illicit drug activity within the County
- There is growing workload pressure on the Computer Forensics Unit

Eisenlohr said the following recommendations for the Criminal Division were made:
- Establish an official field case closure policy and train Patrol Deputies on its application
- Implement a solvability factor analysis for investigative case assignments
- Add an additional CID Sergeant to supervise the Computer Forensics, Major Crimes Investigation and Evidence units
- Explore the benefits and costs of automating the report submission process
- Ensure that Wright County is applying a clearance rate calculation methodology that conforms to industry norms and standards
- Make a management decision as to the relative priority the Sheriff’s Office attaches to narcotics enforcement
- Explore future options and alternatives to the provision of certain technical support services to the investigative teams

Key Findings for the Corrections Division include:
- Recruitment and retention of Correctional Officers is a persistent challenge
- Currently authorized strength of the Jail staff is adequate to support the present operational requirements of the Jail

Recommendations related to these findings are:
- Lessen the impact of Correctional Officer attrition by balancing those vacancies across all Jail programs/units
- Ensure the market competitiveness of the Sheriff’s Office compensation program, including the inclusion of Metro Area counties in the compensation survey market
- Maintain the currently authorized strength for the Jail, based on the staffing analysis
- Evaluate the benefits and costs of adding one Correctional Officer position to the Booking Unit

Eisenlohr said the Jail Administrator took the correct steps to concentrate the prisoner population when there were several Correctional Officer vacancies.

Key findings related to the Jail Staffing Analysis include:
- Acceptance of border inmates affords the County the opportunity to scale the Jail population to respond to staffing fluctuations
- The Jail is experiencing intermittent difficulties with the responsiveness of the contracted medical service provider

The following recommendations were made:
- The County should reconsider the acceptance of additional boarders until the Correctional Officer staffing is restored to authorized levels
- Confer with County legal staff to assess options to enforce the terms of the contract
- Consider increasing the number of EMT certified Correctional Officers available in the Jail
Eisenlohr said another dynamic in the Jail is the recruitment and retention issue of female Correctional Officers. Some reported doing lots of callback and overtime and risking burnout. He suggested overfilling shifts if necessary.

Regarding the change in shift pattern, Eisenlohr said the most efficient manpower or staffing model is a traditional 5-day/8-hour work schedule to allow for regular weekends off and better hours. Dragisich said the younger generation is not inclined to give everything up for their job, and want to find a better work/life balance.

The meeting recessed at 2:43 P.M. and reconvened at 2:52 P.M.

Key Findings related to the Operations Division include:

- The Operations Division Lieutenant’s span of control may be excessive
- The Communications Division is understaffed

Recommendations for the Operations Division include:

- Evaluate the feasibility and functionality of organizational changes to reduce the Operations span of control and to improve functional alignment across the Sheriff’s Office
  - Transfer Community Services to the Patrol Division
  - Transfer Technical Applications Specialists and Equipment and Supply Specialist to the Business Management Division
  - Reassign Property and Evidence Unit from the Criminal Division to the Operations Division

- Increase Communications staffing to achieve the State of Minnesota’s recommended coverage levels
- Assign newly hired Deputies to spend several shifts observing Dispatch operations
- Implement a dispatcher/call-taker ride along program with Deputies to achieve better communication and understanding of job demands

Dragisich reviewed the Business Management Division Findings & Recommendations. The Key Findings include:

- Clerical staff cannot take on additional work without review and adjustment of tasks
- The County-wide ERP system replacement currently in process is badly needed
- The absence of a full-time position dedicated to revenue management and recapture risks unrecoverable revenue losses
- There is evident tension between the TAS staff and the County Information Technology staff

Key Recommendations for the Business Management Division include:

- Continue the Division’s ongoing efforts to find additional efficiencies to manage the workload of this Division
- Complete installation of the ERP system and provide training to Sheriff’s Office personnel
- Evaluate the feasibility of adding a Collections Officer position
- Establish a TAS/Sheriff’s Office working group to establish a mutual understanding of the service needs, requirements and expectations of each party
- Develop written Service Level Agreements between the Sheriff’s Office and all County internal service providers

Eisenlohr said the changes coming to law enforcement in the future are unknown. This uncertainty will place an even greater need for an excellent training program. Dragisich said a number of recommended changes could be done quickly with great benefit. He suggested that the Sheriff’s Office create a matrix that includes changes that cost little to determine funding for staff increases.

Eisenlohr said a training officer should be at least a sergeant, but not a captain. As the training function grows, it would not be unusual to see training units with multiple staff. Dragisich recommended forming a task force between the Technical Application Specialists and the Information Technology Department.

Sheriff Sean Deringer said he would like to meet at a Committee Of The Whole in the near future to discuss timelines and to allow time for the Commissioners to review the Study.

Eisenlohr said the Sheriff’s Office was very cooperative and collaborative regarding providing information to the Baker Tilly team.

Recommendation: Informational only.

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 PM.
Minutes submitted by Deb Schreiner, Administrative Specialists
(End of 6-11-20 COTW Minutes)
At today’s County Board Meeting, Daleiden moved to approve the 6-17-20 COTW minutes and recommendations. The motion was seconded by Borrell and carried 5-0 on a roll call vote. The COTW Minutes follow:

I. CHILD PROTECTION

Christine Husom, County Board Chair, said this topic was referred to the Committee Of The Whole by the Health and Human Services Board. Commissioner Michael Potter was not present at the start of the meeting, but arrived shortly thereafter.

The following documents were distributed to the County Board (see attachments):

1) Random Drug Testing – Health & Human Services (HHS) Policy and Procedures
2) General Child Welfare Statistics (draft) – Summary data for Wright through the third week of May 2020
3) General Child Welfare Statistics (draft) – Summary data for Minnesota through the third week of May 2020
4) Alia – Wright County Health & Human Services Project Proposal Service Array Options
5) Wright County Child Welfare Performance Measures

Charles Borrell, County Commissioner, said he wanted to make sure the County has the best policy on child protection and keeping children in the home. He suggested creating a review board that could look at some cases to see if the policies and procedures could be improved. He did not favor allowing child protection workers the authority to require a drug test to which the parent or client would have to submit. Darek Vetsch, County Commissioner, said the drug testing policy was vague.

Jami Goodrum Schwartz, Health & Human Services Director, said this policy is a tool of the trade. Drug testing is a gray area. HHS drug testing frequency and budget have been cut by almost half since this was first brought up three years ago. Setting up situational criteria would be difficult as there are so many variables. She is willing to listen to suggestions from the County Board regarding the Drug Testing policy.

John Bowen, Attorney with the County Attorney’s Office, said he has been an attorney for 15 years and has worked with chemical dependency cases in court. Drug testing is a great tool for people who want to get sober. People often want to be tested to prove that they are not on drugs. Child protection workers often utilize the test to determine whether someone is still using, or whether the drug levels are going down, or are gone. Drug test results provide valuable information that the Attorney’s Office uses to determine when to close cases.

Bowen said State Statute 260C.007, Subdivision 6 has multiple subdivisions. Those must be alleged in a child protection case in order to prove the petition. A common charge would be a “dangerous environment.” Bowen said when he is looking at removal of children and filing a child protection petition, the question he asks is, “What’s the impact on the child?” Often, even though a parent tested positive for methamphetamine, Child Protection will not necessarily remove the children from the home for that reason alone. They will look at the entire history. Often there is a history of education neglect, medical needs not being met, or needs in the home not being met. Many times when people are using meth, they are not properly caring for their children. Child Protection looks at the whole picture.

Discussion continued regarding how to determine the right time to remove a child from his or her home, and then turned to incidents of abuse by foster parents.

Michelle Miller, Social Services Manager, said Rapid Response is one method that provides support for the family of a child protection case, as well as for the child. Husom said the Safe Families program is also successful.

Miller said the goal of HHS with Child Protection or any other Social Services area has always been to do the best for the community. HHS staff reviews and makes corrections as needed.

Discussion continued regarding the merits of a review panel, who would be on it, and how to maintain client confidentiality in light of Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) laws.

Schwartz said the Social Worker II position that the County Board approved during the last budget session, once hired, would potentially provide a better training element in the area of Child Protection. This should improve how HHS delivers services. The goal is to make sure citizens get the same services no matter which social worker shows up. Schwartz said HHS is very cognizant of parental rights. The Agency goes beyond other counties to ensure parental rights are upheld.

Schwartz moved to the Alia proposal. Vetsch said the price tag was too high. Schwartz said it was higher than she felt comfortable spending.

Vetsch asked whether the children that are placed out of the home are categorized and quantified. Schwartz said the State keeps a dashboard of “Primary Reasons for Removal.” She will share obtain a copy of the dashboard with the Commissioners.
6-17-20 COTW Minutes (cont.):

said HHS tracks the primary and secondary reasons for removal. She listed statistics from April 2020: Caretaker drug abuse was number 1, and alleged neglect was second.

Bowen said he evaluates every child protection case that is referred to him. If there is insufficient evidence, he will not file it in court. The court system is another opportunity for checks and balances. Schwartz said HHS has screening teams that review 8-12 cases daily. There is a review process in place. The County contracts with Cathleen Gabriel, a highly experienced Child Protection attorney. Schwartz referred to page 2 of the Wright County Child Welfare Performance Measures related to Maltreatment Recurrence. There were zero cases of observed maltreatment recurrence in Wright County in 2019.

Discussion moved to whether private attorneys or public defenders provide the best representation.

Recommendation: Continue this discussion at a future Health & Human Services Board meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 A.M.

Minutes submitted by Deb Schreiner, Administrative Specialist
(End of 6-17-20 Committee Of The Whole Minutes)

SCHEDULE COUNTY BOARD RETREAT IN JULY

Lee Kelly, County Administrator, said they have been working through the next phase of strategic planning with the Board and department heads. Prior to budget discussions for 2021, he suggested a retreat to review the process and to react to other topics identified through the strategic planning session.

Potter moved to set a County Board Retreat for 7-06-20 at 11:30 AM at Ney Park. The motion was seconded by Daleiden and carried 5-0.

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Kelly stated there are no major updates relating to COVID-19. He mentioned the CARES Act federal funding, and said discussions at the legislative sessions stalled out. He is unsure whether another special session will occur or whether Governor Walz will take executive action to disperse the funds. Vetsch said it is unlikely there will be a special session, as the Governor is given statutory authority to delegate any federal funds that come in post legislative sessions. Sarah Grosshuesch, Public Health Director, said the Governor asked for feedback during a State Communities Health Advisory Committee Meeting held via WebEx. The overwhelming response was a request that the Governor distribute the funds. Grosshuesch said Senator Paul Gazelka relayed on MPR radio this morning that there may be a one-day special session to resolve the bonding bill. He wants to have agreement to only address issues they have on the table. Based on the meeting held yesterday, she felt there was general agreement on distribution of the CARES Act funding distribution plan. Grosshuesch said the funds have to be spent and information sent to the State, as the federal government has to be invoiced by December. She believes the County’s deadline in statute is November 15, 2020.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE / ADVISORY BOARD UPDATES

1. State Communities Health Advisory Committee. Husom said at the meeting, they heard from the State Health Commissioner, Governor Walz, and Commissioner Harlan Madsen. Discussion included that there may be less incidence of COVID-19 during summer months. The number of cases in this area seems to be plateauing. In southern states, more case are being seen possibly due to people being inside because of the heat.

Grosshuesch said similar conversations have been held in emergency operations as well. They are watching the southern hemisphere as they move into their fall and winter period. Australia is monitored for the flu, and they track progression as it moves across the globe.

Grosshuesch said there is not a lot of social distancing occurring in open, outdoor spaces. There is still the possibility of transmission when a person is in close proximity to another and especially when physical activity is involved.

Grosshuesch said they continue to monitor access to testing. At the meeting, they were provided with information on no barriers testing that occurred in Mower County this past weekend. Testing was unrelated to health insurance or documentation status. She hopes to obtain information from the state on the rate of incidence near testing locations. She said testing positive clusters around testing sites.

Vetsch said the public was initially told to stay home with symptoms and now they are told to get tested. People may not understand that change. Grosshuesch said Isanti County mentioned receiving a lot of feedback from the public and desired more transparency. She said people want data and it has been difficult to obtain it. In Wright County, weekly reports are available and
include information on the number of people tested. Wright County has a testing rate of less than 5% of the population, and the positivity rate is between 6.5-7%. Compared to state and national metrics, the goal is a positivity rate under 2%.

Husom said the State Health Commissioner said COVID-19 was present months before it was identified, and it came from all parts of the world. Grosshuesch said that a large community spread did not occur at that time potentially because people stayed home or did not have a large social network. Without testing, there is a risk of exposing others if people move ahead with their daily activities. There are cases where people have followed the guidance and are unsure where they were exposed. Grosshuesch said they encourage staff and community members to be gracious with others, not knowing what other people’s lives are about or assuming their risk tolerance is the same.

Vetsch said the severity varies in different pockets of the nation. There are places where they may have a lot of outbreaks, but the severity of the outbreaks is mild. In other areas, such as the southern states, the cases may be more severe. Grosshuesch responded that there is a lot of research being done as to whether there is a correlation to blood type or similar genes that are close to a blood type. Levels of comorbidity vary, and some states have high levels of comorbidity (i.e., diabetes obesity), much more than Minnesota. Locally, there is more incidence with long-term care.

Potter said the models used for COVID-19 were not based on science. In Minnesota, the death rate was projected at 40,000 but that did not occur. He hopes they come up with better modeling in the future. He understands Governor Walz was called by a congressman asking why this was a “one size fits all” scenario. Restrictions are hurting small town businesses, and different criteria could be applied based on number of cases.

2. I-94 Coalition. Potter attended a recent meeting where an update was provided on a BUILD (Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development) Grant from last year and the potential for an infrastructure bill. Not much has progressed but it has been introduced in the House. Regarding the bonding bill, he said they hope to get that addressed separate from other issues. Also, MnDOT is starting a freight corridor study running from 6-23-20 through 7-15-20. Potter said I-94 and Highways 55, 12 and 25 are freight corridors. Potter plans to discuss response on the I-94 corridor with Administrator Steve Bot, St. Michael. He will contact SRF and the County’s Highway Engineer on response as it relates to the other corridors.

3. Vetsch testified last week before the House Transportation Committee on the road and written testing that is completed by the State Department of Public Safety. Vetsch was surprised to learn that many were unaware of the backlog problem prior to COVID-19. Discussion included the efficiency model, moving from 93 to 14 testing stations. The number of tests/day went from 600 to 705. Vetsch said the backlog works out to about 81,000 by the end of October. Using 705 tests/day will not make up that backlog. Without ramping up to over 900/day, Vetsch said they won’t be able to catch up to pre COVID-19 (February). Daleiden said it does not make sense to reduce to 14 stations because of social distancing requirements.

Vetsch asked the Department of Public Safety if they requested more test proctors and they did not. He said it is frustrating that people have to wait 2-6 months to make appointments. People in rural settings are forced to travel to urban settings for testing. People are driving 2+ hours each way. He said the Commissioner of Transportation is allowing online permit testing to be rolled out within the next 6 weeks. He said there is a level of integrity that must be met to make sure the person testing has read the material and answered the questions themselves.

Vetsch said a no-show fee has been implemented by the State because of the number of no shows. Many people make multiple appointments and those may not get cancelled. Vetsch stated that the County does not operate the testing facilities but some members of the public think that is the case. Potter said the committee that deals with this issue has many urban legislators. There is not a good cross section of people serving. Potter encouraged Vetsch to discuss this issue with John Howe who is the committee chair. Commissioners thanked Vetsch for testifying on this issue.

4. Wellness Committee. Daleiden attended a meeting last week via WebEx. Planned Wellness events include a summer virtual Poker Walk, Paths to Positivity, Mindful Matters Bingo, Make A Move, and the fall Poker Walk. The Wellness Committee has been offering online activities to keep employees engaged and active. Face coverings provided by the Wellness Committee have been distributed. Daleiden said funding for Wellness is through Administration and HealthPartners. He suggested future discussion could include an increase in the budget, so more things can be done.

5. Administrator Updates:
   A. Kelly reported that Strategic Planning Sessions are wrapping up. This topic has been referred to the County Board’s retreat. Budget preparations have started which include impacts of the transition to ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning). He said ERP is progressing, and they are working through the data information in preparation for the systems integration testing that will take place in July. They are also working on the change management portion of ERP which includes getting more information and visuals to employees.
6. **Turn Graduation.** Husom said there will be a parade for the three graduates of the Turn program on 6-24-20 at 1:30 PM in front of the Government Center. It is a way to recognize their accomplishments in lieu of holding the graduation in person. She extended congratulations to the graduates.

The meeting adjourned at 10:27 AM.

County Board Minutes submitted by Susan Backes, Clerk to the County Board