

The Florence County Board of Supervisors met pursuant to adjournment on September 17, 2019. The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 7:00 p.m. A quorum of members was present.

County Board Supervisors present: Bomberg, Johnson, Theer, Steber, Dzekute, Neuens, Kelley, Mills, Stratton and Modschiedler. Absent and excused: Hedmark and Davis.

Others present: Financial Manager Joe Bestor, Public Health Officer/Director Annette Seibold, and Economic Development Coordinator Wendy Gehlhoff.

Agenda

Moved by Supervisor Kelley to approve the agenda as posted.

Motion seconded by Supervisor Stratton.

Motion carried, with all voting "Aye" on a voice vote.

Minutes

Moved by Supervisor Johnson to approve the minutes of the last meeting.

Motion seconded by Supervisor Theer.

Motion carried, with all voting "Aye" on a voice vote.

Those wishing to address the Board - None

2018 Final Audit Report

Financial Manager Joe Bestor addressed the board explaining that the report was basically the draft report discussed at last month's meeting with Auditor Scott Sternhagen in final format. No action was needed.

CDBG CL PFED Grant Administration Firm and Contract

Economic Development Coordinator Wendy Gehlhoff updated the Board on the project.

Moved by Supervisor Kelley to approve the grant administration firm of MSA Professional Services, Inc. (MSA) and contract.

Motion seconded by Supervisor Steber.

Motion carried, with all voting "Aye" on a voice vote.

Resolutions

Resolution #2019-20 Support Requiring Minimum Legal Sale Age (MLSA) which prohibits retailers from selling tobacco products to anyone under the age of 21 to Protect the Health of Youth. Supervisor Neuens discussed concerns mentioned to him by Supervisor Hedmark who was unable to attend the meeting.

Moved by Supervisor Stratton to approve Resolution #2019-20.

Motion seconded by Supervisor Kelley

Motion carried on a voice vote with eight "Aye" and two "Nay" Supervisors Bomberg and Neuens.

RESOLUTION #2019-20

WHEREAS, tobacco use is the foremost preventable cause of premature death in the United States, responsible for approximately 480,000 deaths in a year and 20.8 million premature deaths in the U.S. over the past 50 years since the first Surgeon General's report on smoking in 1964.

WHEREAS, the annual economic impact of smoking in the U.S. is more than \$300 billion in health care and lost worker productivity costs;

WHEREAS, national data show that about 95 percent of adult smokers begin smoking before they turn 21, and that the ages of 18 to 21 are a critical period when many smokers move from experimental smoking to regular, daily use;

WHEREAS, the developing brains of young people are particularly susceptible to the addictive properties of nicotine, and as a result, approximately 3 out of 4 teen smokers end up smoking into adulthood.

WHEREAS, electronic smoking device use among minors has recently tripled;

WHEREAS, a 2015 Institute of Medicine report concludes that raising the minimum legal sales age for tobacco initiation particularly among adolescents aged 15 to 17, and that it will improve health across the lifespan and save lives; and that raising the minimum legal sales age for tobacco products to 21 nationwide would, over time, lead to a 12 percent decrease in smoking prevalence;

WHEREAS, the Institute of Medicine also predicts that raising the minimum legal sales age for tobacco products to 21 nationwide would result in 223,000 fewer premature deaths, 50,000 fewer deaths from lung cancer, and 4.2 million fewer years of life lost for those born between 2000 and 2019, and that it would result in near immediate reductions in preterm birth, low birth weight, and sudden infant death syndrome;

WHEREAS, a growing number of communities have enacted laws mandating a minimum legal sales age for tobacco products to 21, including eighteen states along with Washington DC and at least 480 localities;

WHEREAS, three-quarters of U.S. adults favor raising the MLSA for tobacco products to 21, including seven in ten smokers;

WHEREAS, the retail impact of ordinances mandating a minimum legal sales age of 21 for tobacco products is expected to be minimal in the first years of the policy because it works by reducing or delaying initiation of smoking, especially among younger populations:

WHEREAS, raising the legal drinking age to 21 led to reduced alcohol use and dependence among youth, and contributed to a decline in drunk driving fatalities;

WHEREAS, states that have passed Tobacco 21 law have found a decline in adolescent tobacco youth use. Youth frequently rely on getting cigarettes from the 18-20 year olds in their social circles. Raising the MLSA reduces access to legal buyers in their daily routine (especially at school) and limits store purchases.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Florence County Board of Supervisors does hereby request that the state of Wisconsin increase the minimum legal sale age (MLSA) of all tobacco, nicotine and vaping products to 21 to protect the health of youth.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to Governor Tony Evers, Department of Health Services Secretary Andrea Palm, Department of Health Services Secretary Julie Willms Van Dijk, Senator Tiffany, Representative Swearingen, and the Wisconsin Counties Association.

Resolution #2019-21 Request Elimination of the 0% Levy Cap Imposed on Wisconsin Counties
Moved by Supervisor Kelley to adopt Resolution #2019-21.
Motion seconded by Supervisor Neuens.
Motion carried, with all voting "Aye" on a voice vote.

Resolution #2019-21

Request Elimination of the 0% Levy Cap Imposed on Wisconsin Counties

WHEREAS, in 2012, the State of Wisconsin imposed limits on town, village, city and county property tax levies under Wis. Stat. 66.0602; and

WHEREAS, Wis. Stat. 66.0602 limits that increase to the local property tax levy to no more than the greater of (a) 0% of last year's actual levy or (b) a percentage equal to the percentage change in equalized value due to new construction less improvements removed; and

WHEREAS, the percentage of net new construction in Florence County used to calculate the increase in the operating levy allowance has significantly lagged the CPI-U over this period; and

WHEREAS, as a result, Florence County has been forced to absorb inflationary increases in normal operating expenditures with no offsetting increase in revenues; and

WHEREAS, unexpected increases in expenditures for certain items, particularly unfunded mandates, has compounded the issue; and

WHEREAS, Florence County has taken measures to curb spending by cutting costs, limiting employee wage increases, and postponing necessary projects; and

WHEREAS, to continue to provide essential services to county citizens, Florence County has resorted to using debt to fund qualified expenditures previously funded in its operating levy resulting in a higher cost to Florence County taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, Florence County does not desire to continue to use debt to raise revenues

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Florence County Board of Supervisors requests complete elimination of the current 0% tax levy cap or replacing it with a levy allowance that adequately reflects the increases in everyday costs incurred by Wisconsin Counties; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County Clerk is directed to send a copy of this resolution to Governor Evers, the joint Finance Committee of the Wisconsin Legislature, the state legislators for Florence County and the Wisconsin Counties Association for consideration at the WCA annual business meeting to become part of the WCA platform.

2020 Preliminary Budget Projections including health insurance benefit

Financial Manager Joe Bestor discussed information distributed on the draft 2020 budget as submitted by the various departments and the impact of a possible 32.7% increase in health insurance premiums. Levy limits imposed on the County by State Statute and the deficit between the levy limit and budget requests were discussed. Board members expressed gratitude for County employees and their hard work to serve the taxpayers while at the same time expressing concern for task at hand. It was emphasized that all Supervisors and County staff need to know that this will be a very tough budget year and that we will all need to work together and understand what we are facing. Supervisor Bomberg commended Financial Manager Joe Bestor for his hard work and perspective which has been key to Audit and Budget. Supervisor Neuens asked that the Board continue to be updated on the budget process.

Committee Reports

Supervisor Neuens reported on the visitor center and the "Friends of the Interpretive Center" including the interest in the waterfalls brochures with 20000 printed this year and over 13,000 distributed to date and the donation of wildlife mounts from a person from Illinois.

Supervisor Stratton reported that the Director of the Bay Area Workforce Development Board has hired counsel with regard to the matter of how \$12,000 was appropriated/spent.

Board Members Concerns for Future Agenda Items

Supervisor Neuens said he and Supervisor Kelley heard a presentation given at a Bay Lake Regional Planning Commission meeting on getting grants for recreational and other projects. He would like to have the person attend a future County Board meeting to discuss how they could possibly assist the County with seeking grant funds for various projects.

Adjourn

Moved by Supervisor Kelley to adjourn.

Motion seconded by Supervisor Steber.

Motion carried with all voting "Aye" on a voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Bauer
Deputy County Clerk