

Berrien County Board of Commissioners

Virtual Finance Committee Minutes

Thursday, August 27, 2020

Board of Commissioner's Room

Finance Committee Attendance:

Commissioner Mamie L. Yarbrough – Chairperson	Present
Commissioner Robert P. Harrison – Vice-Chairman	Present
Commissioner Jon Hinkelman	Present
Commissioner Ezra Scott	Present

Others Present: County Administrator Brian Dissette, Secretary Stephanie Carlson, Executive Assistant to Administrator Annette Christie, Accounting Analyst Jake Litaker, Building & Grounds Superintendent Todd Johnson, Undersheriff Chuck Heit, and Trial Court Administrator Carrie Smietanka-Haney via zoom.

Meeting was called to order at 9:11am.

Public Comments: Tony Benhart, Sodus – Stated there may be some of the Reserve Deputies that could handle the job or door security. I would rather see county money spent on our own employees rather than an outside firm.

Appointments:

Jake Litaker – Bid 2020-063 – Administration Building Security. Jake stated the bid was only advertised on the county website. Before he opened the bid, Administrator Dissette gave some background on the bid. He said the Administration Committee met about a month ago and said they would like to continue to use Lange Investigation. Commissioner Meeks stated he would like to see it competitively bid out. The bid was posted on the county website and there was an inquiry from a competing firm, however, there was only one bid submitted from Lange Investigation. Commissioner Scott questioned the hours for their service. Administrator Dissette stated that county staff is covering the one hour lunch break. Commissioner Scott stated that the HR Director, in a previous meeting, said the reason we hired an outside security firm was because no employee of the county could do that job because they weren't properly trained and it wasn't in their job description, so shouldn't Lange Security be providing that 8th hour and not our staff because if our staff can provide the 8th hour, why can't they provide the rest of the time? Brian stated he wasn't sure what was said to the committee or the board prior to the decision being made, but for every hour staff is providing security services it's an hour they aren't working on HR, Finance or Administration, because these are the individuals being pulled in to cover, which can be high wage individuals. Annette stated the company was watching on YouTube and stated the bid was for 7 hours and 45 minutes and that they are available to cover the entire time if that is needed. Administrator Dissette said he felt Lange is doing a very good job and his recommendation is, if you're going to keep the building open to the public, to continue having Lange provide the service until the Governor's orders are rescinded and we are no longer requiring masks or limiting the number of people in the building at a time. The Sheriff's Department has many other things to do and

pulling one of their people in would be at a higher rate of pay and it's robbing them of their resources. Brian stated that whatever costs are being spent on this, he believes it will be recovered via the Cares Act, so his thought is to continue to provide the service. Commissioner Harrison motioned to approve the Lange proposal, supported by Commissioner Scott. Roll call vote: 4 yays, 0 nays. Motion carried.

Chuck Heit stated there's an ongoing issue with wireless communications in the courts, jail and other areas of the building. He briefed the committee on the proposal from Tele-Rad for communications upgrade, which consisted of a replacement of the existing BDA (Bi Directional Amplifier) at a cost of \$22,190 for installation and replacement. Chuck said he has met with Doug James and Brian Dissette, and stated it needs to be done immediately because it is an issue of safety with radios working. Chuck's recommendation is to get the BDA replaced and then they can still do the study for finding problems. Carrie confirmed Chuck's statement that the BDA was bad, as they had Tele-Rad come in last year because of the issue they were having and they did a walk through and said the greatest problem with creating the down spots was with the BDA. She also mentioned they have talked with Chris in I. S. and they are on board with the recommendation from Tele-Rad. Commissioner Scott motioned due to this being an emergency, accept the proposal from Tele-Rad. Roll call vote: 4 yays, 0 nays. Motion carried. Commissioner Scott questioned whether Finance had the authority for an emergency expenditure and it was confirmed that they do.

Todd Johnson briefed the committee on two bids, **2020-013** and **2020-014**, that were sent out for proposals for the Jail and Courthouse roof projects back in March around the time the "Stay at home orders" were issued and identifying what businesses were considered essential and non-essential. Only one bid was received for each bid from the same vendor out of Grand Rapids and no local vendors. Todd was concerned whether it was fair putting these out for bid at a time when company's had to close. He was looking for direction from the committee as to whether he did the right thing and whether he should move forward with the bid received. Administrator Dissette said this is a unique situation and after talking with Todd he felt getting a second opinion from the Finance Committee was needed. There was a brief discussion. Commissioner Scott motioned to have Todd move forward with the bid received for the Jail, supported by Commissioner Hinkelman. Roll call vote: 4 yays, 0 nays. Motion carried.

A discussion was held on a boat motor that needed an emergency repair. The Finance Committee will get an update on that at their next meeting.

Minutes Approval:

Commissioner Harrison motioned to approve the virtual minutes from Thursday, August 20, 2020, supported by Commissioner Scott. Roll call vote: 4 yays, 0 nays. Motion carried.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:49

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Carlson
Financial Services