

THE MINNEHAHA COUNTY COMMISSION CONVENEED AT 8:00 A.M. December 14, 2021 pursuant to adjournment on December 7, 2021. Commissioners present were: Barth, Bender, Beninga, Heiberger, and Karsky. Also present was Kym Christiansen, Commission Recorder.

Ben Kyte, Auditor, provided an overview on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding and the requests from external organizations. A majority of the requests from external organizations consist of improvements to water and wastewater treatment systems. The total dollar amount from the external organization's request is estimated at \$66,000,000.00.

Susan Beaman, Finance and Budget Officer, presented internal funding uses that are eligible under the current ARPA guidelines and the estimated the dollar amount from the internal funding request is estimated at \$26,500,000.00.

The ARPA requests from the Sheriff's Office which include jail salaries for COVID management, Registered Nurse for Jail, upgrade to mobile communications equipment, additional mental health counselor, annual medical COVID expenses, COVID related Capital Investments, and Jail COVID supplies.

Potential ARPA requests from the Juvenile Detention Center include an additional mental health counselor, cameras & body protection for mental health holds, and substance abuse training.

The ARPA requests from the Facilities department were as follows: COVID mitigation facility improvements including an improved air exchange system for multiple buildings, redesign of the courthouse front entrance to improve social distancing, Human Services and Administration building improvements to improve social distancing and sanitation as well as security badge system upgrades to assist with contract tracing, COVID sanitation salary reimbursement and COVID supplies.

Human Resources Department presented the following requests: salary expenses for COVID management including contract tracing and employee COVID medical expenses.

Human Services requested ARPA funding for the following: rental, utility, and burial assistance to households that suffered negative economic impact, providing transportation for vulnerable populations to COVID testing sites, direct grants to businesses and non-profits (retail, service, child care) that suffered a COVID hardship or COVID mitigation, and job training assistance and apprenticeships through local community college in addition to potential training for case management.

The potential projects for the State Attorney's Office include the purchase of software to help reduce the backlog of court cases and a potential grant program for businesses to improve security systems. The Public Defender's Office requested funds for an additional contracted resource which would help reduce the backlog of public defender cases.

The Commission Office identified the following potential ARPA projects: annual contributions to The Link for mental health and substance abuse management, administrative software to improve electronic communication for social distancing, and select COVID mitigation equipment for use in the Administration Building.

There was one potential ARPA project from the Highway Department was submitted related to Highway shop water infrastructure improvements.

Upgrades to the Audio Video equipment to the Commission Chambers to improve electronic communication to help promote social distancing was identified by the Information Technology department.

Auditor's Office presented two uses for the ARPA funding to include administrative software to improve electronic communication for social distancing especially related to Freedom of Information Act date requests and administrative allocation for the administration of the funds.

Susan Beaman, Finance and Budget Officer, highlighted the expanded uses for internal Minnehaha County project if the proposed U.S. Congressional Legislation would pass and the funds could be used by Facilities for a JDC improvement/replacement project and/or fairground improvements, Highway Department for road/bridge infrastructure improvements, general services for use by Minnehaha County including Information Technology for various information technology projects. The known 2021 internal funding uses excluding the jail salaries eligible for ARPA funding would total \$1,100,500.00. Those expenses include the Sheriff's Office for a registered nurse for jail, annual medical COVID expenses, and Jail COVID Supplies; facilities for COVID sanitation salary reimbursement and supplies; employee COVID medical expenses paid by the County's health insurance fund; Human Services would use the funds to help with rental, utility, and burial assistance to households that suffered negative economic impact; and administrative consultation for the Auditor's Office.

Next steps for the potential use of the funding include potential action on the 2021 eligible expenses at the December 28, 2021 meeting as well as future work session to further discuss the various requests and identified uses for the American Rescue Plan Act funds.

In opportunity for public comment, Dave Baumeister with the Minnehaha Messenger spoke about resources that would allow for better media coverage.

The Commission adjourned until 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, December 21, 2021.

APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION:

Dean Karsky
Chair

ATTEST:

Kym Christiansen
Commission Recorder