



Minutes - March 7, 2022

Call to Order: Chair Beaver called the virtual meeting of the Public Safety & Justice Committee to order at 5:31 P.M. on March 7, 2022.

Committee Members Present: Supervisors Knudson, Beaver, Bomkamp Taylor, Rynes (5:32 P.M.)

Committee Members Absent: None.

Staff Members Present: Belem Regan, Mediation & Family Court Services Manager; Terri Carlson, Risk Manager; Kathy Sukus, Communications Center Director; Richard Greenlee, Corporation Counsel; David O'Leary, District Attorney; Captain Fell; Shena Kohler, Emergency Management Director; Josh Smith, County Administrator; Melissa Wittwer, Child Support Director; and Randy Terronez, Assistant to the Administrator.

Others Present: Randy Pickering, Fire Chief Edgerton Fire; Jeff Klenz, Town of Harmony Town Chair; Tim Tollefson, Town of Harmony Clerk; Robert Mawhinney, Town of Johnstown Town Chair; Mary Mawhinney, Town of Johnstown Clerk, County Board Supervisor; Scott Fleming, Town of Johnstown Board Supervisor; and Brad Mair, Town of Johnstown Board Supervisor.

Approve Agenda: Supervisor Taylor moved approval of the agenda as presented, second by Supervisor Knudson. ADOPTED.

Citizen Participation, Communications and Announcements: Tim Tollefson, Town of Harmony Clerk, submitted a letter of support for the resolution Requesting American Rescue Plan Funding from the County of Rock to Support Fire and EMS Protection Across North Central and Northeastern Rock County on behalf of Christopher Lund, Mayor City of Edgerton, Evan Sayre, Chairman Town of Fulton, Jeff Klenz, Chairman Town of Harmony, Robert Mawhinney, Chairman Town of Johnstown, David Kyle, Chairman Town of Lima, Anissa Welch, Mayor City of Milton, Bryan Meyer, Chairman Town of Milton, and David Viney, Chairman Town of Porter.

Jeff Klenz, Chairman Town of Harmony, submitted a letter of support for the resolution Requesting American Rescue Plan Funding from the County of Rock to Support Fire and EMS Protection Across North Central and Northeastern Rock County.

Approval of Minutes:

February 21, 2022 Minutes: Supervisor Bomkamp moved approval of the February 21, 2022 minutes as presented, second by Supervisor Taylor. ADOPTED.

Consent Calendar:

Approval of Transfers: None.

Review of Payments: The committee reviewed the payments.

Review and Approval of Resolutions:

Recognizing Linda Williams: "NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Rock County Board of Supervisors duly assembled this _____ day of _____, 2022, does hereby recognize Linda Williams for her years of service and extends their best wishes to her in her future endeavors; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County Clerk be authorized and directed to furnish a copy of this resolution to Linda Williams."

Supervisor Knudson moved approval of the above resolution, second by Supervisor Taylor.
ADOPTED.

Requesting American Rescue Plan Funding from the County of Rock to Support Fire and EMS Protection Across North Central and Northeastern Rock County: "NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE Rock County Board of Supervisors, duly assembled this ____ day of ____, 2022, does hereby allocate a total sum of \$3,000,000 (three-million dollars) from the County of Rock's ARPA fund allocation to support the significant improvements being made in fire and EMS services across these communities in north central and northeastern Rock County

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, funds provided to these eight municipalities shall be shared equitably based on the equalized value of the total real properties of each municipality that is a party to this resolution, divided by the total equalized value of all real properties within these eight municipalities. The percentage share calculated shall be the percentage of County ARPA funds that each municipality receives.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, funds provided by the County of Rock shall be earmarked and only spent by each respective municipality to pay for improvements related to the provision of improved fire and EMS protection services within these eight municipalities and the broader critical county and state infrastructure across north central and northeastern Rock County. Any funds provided will help ease the tax burden of all residents within these eight municipalities related to such improvements."

Supervisor Rynes moved approval of the above resolution, second by Supervisor Taylor.

Supervisor Taylor asked whether this was an eligible use of ARPA funds. Richard Greenlee stated that his opinion is that it is not, but more research may be necessary.

The committee discussed these interpretations and the benefit of further research.

Supervisor Bomkamp motioned to postpone action on this resolution pending further research for 30

days/April 11, second by Supervisor Taylor. NO - Supervisor Rynes. YES - Supervisors Taylor, Knudson, Bomkamp, and Beaver. ADOPTED.

Review, Discussion and Possible Action: None.

Committee Requests and Motions: None.

Next meeting date and time: March 21, 2022 at 5:30 P.M.

Adjournment: Supervisor Bomkamp motioned to adjourn at 6:13 P.M., second by Supervisor Taylor. ADOPTED.

Respectfully submitted,

Haley Hoffman
Office Coordinator

NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED BY COMMITTEE.

TOWN OF HARMONY

Rock County Wisconsin

Office of the Chairman

Hello my name is Jeff Klenz. I am the Chairman for the Town of Harmony. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to state my case concerning why the Town of Harmony along with the other seven municipalities have requested three million dollars of the American Rescue Plan Funding from the County of Rock.

For the last 20+ years the Town of Harmony, have contracted with the City of Janesville (20%) and the City of Milton/Town of Milton (80%) Fire departments for their Fire/EMS services. In 2021 our total cost for those services was \$136,685.00. For reasons beyond our control, in the year 2023 our total cost will be \$800,000.00 a year. A 585 % increase in cost. If we had had contracted with Janesville Fire, alone our cost would have been over 1.2 million dollars a year. As a result, Harmony Township joined forces with Johnstown, Lima, Milton and the City of Milton to establish a plan joining with the Edgerton Fire District to establish the largest Fire/EMS service in Rock County. A total cost of this project will be \$17-\$24 million which includes adding three new fire stations, refurbishing one station and hiring more firefighters and Paramedics.

It has come to my attention that County Administrator Josh Smith in his Administrative Note stated that *"Because Rock County is not engaged in providing fire service, my conclusion is that this is not an eligible expenditure for Rock County's ARPA funds"*.

I would have to disagree, While Rock County does not own any fire trucks or ambulances, they are certainly involved with fire services. Every fire call, traffic accident, call for an ambulance or water rescue call, first comes into the Rock County Communication Center.

Those calls are answered by Rock County employees, not Town of Harmony employees. Those Rock County employees take that information from the caller and they decide/assign who should be the responding department, not the departments themselves.

The Rock County Communication Center, logs and keeps all pertinent (call times, dispatch times, department arrival times etc.) information from those calls. Next the Rock County Sheriff's Office almost always responds to those calls, often arriving before ambulances or fire trucks. They assist however they can.

It should be noted that the Rock County Sheriff's Office does have at least one detective assigned as an Arson Investigator for major fires or fires with fatalities. The Rock County Sheriff's Office also have several Deputies assigned to the Water rescue team and boat patrol which could be considered a part of fire service.

On major calls such as a bad accident or house fires it is not uncommon for the Rock County Public Works to get involved with posting and directing traffic away or around the scenes of those calls. Again, Rock County employees.

Finally in all extended emergencies such as flooding, tornados, interstate closings etc. The Town of Harmony relies on the Rock County Emergency Government which is operated by the Rock County Sheriff's Office.

So, I believe that it could be argued that Rock County is indeed providing Fire/EMS service in many ways. Thus, ARPA Funds could be transferred to the eight Municipalities requesting those funds.

Other questions fielded by a few of the Rock County Board of Supervisors concerning our request for ARPA funds have been

- 1) Isn't this double dipping asking for funds from the County when the Towns and Cities are getting their own ARPA funds.

Answer no not really. Yes, the asking municipalities are getting ARPA funds and will be using these funds for this fire project, but it is no different than Rock County getting ARPA funds and using \$6 million of them for Broadband and then asking the Municipalities to use their ARPA funds for Broadband.

- 2) How would giving the ARPA funds to these eight Municipalities be fair to the other municipalities who will not be getting ARPA funds from the county.

Answer, the funds given to these municipalities will certainly assist over 23,000 citizens living in those towns and cities. However, once the completion of this fire project other towns and cities will also benefit from it. Due to the way mutual aid is set up and the number of requests for assistance in the past and in the future. As there will be two new fire stations, more equipment and more fire personnel to respond to those other towns and cities. Remember when there is a house fire or major fire/medical call often the Edgerton/Milton fire stations responds even to Beloit, Clinton and Evansville to assist.

Once again, I would like to thank you for your time and assistance in this matter.

Jeff Klenz, Chairman Town of Harmony



Edgerton



Fulton



Harmony



Johnstown



Lima



City of Milton



Town of Milton



Porter

Comments in support of multi-municipality (Edgerton, Fulton, Harmony, Johnstown, Lima, Milton-City, Milton-Town, and Porter) Request for American Rescue Plan Funding from the County of Rock to Support Fire and EMS Protection Across North Central and Northeastern Rock County

What do the municipalities propose to use the funding for:

The 8 municipalities are not asking for funding to support, offset or replace local tax funding of operating or personnel costs, or to support the local responsibilities of each.

The 8 municipalities are actively working together to expand and improve the delivery of fire, emergency medical, and water rescue services that will benefit both the 8 municipalities, Rock County, and Wisconsin as a whole; and are seeking a portion of the County's ARPA funding in acknowledgement that the improvements being made will directly augment and benefit Rock County in meeting its responsibilities and obligations under Wis. Stats. 2.04, jurisdiction of counties on boundary lakes and state boundary waters.

Wis. Stats. Chapter 2.04 states in part, "*counties shall have jurisdiction in common of all offenses committed on any part of the inland water*", and as described in greater detail below, the 8 municipalities and their two Fire Departments provide first-response water rescue service to 40.3% of the County's inland waterways and bodies (by acreage), 6 of 8 named inland bodies of water, 32.3% of the Rock River waterway, and 100% of the Yahara River and Badfish Creek in the County.

The 8 municipalities have already upgraded emergency medical services to the Paramedic level, and spent more than \$50,700 of local taxpayer money to study and develop a plan to increase fire, emergency medical, and water rescue coverage across 207 square miles of coverage area. The municipalities are currently reviewing and vetting plans for both new and expanded facilities to meet the needs of the region, county, and communities for the next 50-75 years.

Together the 8 municipalities have received a total ARPA allocation of \$2,471,429. The plans for the new and upgraded facilities range between \$17 and \$24 million. Even if the 8 municipalities put 100% of their ARPA funding towards this single initiative, that would be 10.2 to 14.7 percent of the total funding needed.

The request in front of the County Board is for \$3 million in ARPA funding that would be put towards these new and upgraded facilities the infrastructure, the facilities themselves, not the ongoing operating costs associated with staffing and maintaining the new facilities; with the balance of the funding needed coming from local tax levies.

The 8 municipalities are seeking to collaborate with the County to provide a portion of the one-time funding needed to accelerate the envisioned improvements.

The 8 municipalities operate out of 2 fire/EMS stations today, and have been working with an Architect over the last two years who has completed needs assessments and developed conceptual plans for both new and expanded facilities strategically located to address gaps in current coverage as well as serve the areas expected to develop over the next decade. Part of that assessment included how to improve our support to the County by cutting response times and increasing the speed of our first-response water rescue capabilities.

Another part of the needs assessment included an analysis of how to improve fire and emergency medical protection to 18.7 miles of the Interstate corridor; a vital economic engine for Rock County. While critical to Rock County's and Wisconsin's economic vitality, Edgerton and Milton Fire Departments receive no tax support from the County or State for the specialized equipment and training required to deal with the volume, severity, and complexity of incidents we respond to on the Interstate; the burden of which falls in part on our smaller municipalities like Johnstown, Lima, and Porter who do not benefit from any of the economic value the Interstate generates for the County.

Our transportation infrastructure and the waterways of northern and northeastern Rock County are a critical economic engine for the County, bringing significant tourism dollars into the County year-round, which contributed to the County's ability to generate \$18.1 million in 2021 County Sales Tax revenue. The 8 municipalities are working hard to enhance and grow the region's tourism engine, and want to be sure as tourism grows the visitors to our region are safe and well protected on both our roadways and waterways. Our ask is simply that the County join us in that effort.

Specifically, the \$3m in County support would help the municipalities move forward with final design and engineering for the new and upgraded facilities.

Direct benefit to Rock County, and all Rock County communities:

Value to Rock County itself:

By State Statute, as noted above, counties have statutory responsibility and have authority over inland waters. In the Edgerton and Milton areas that includes:

Inland lakes and bodies of water including Clear, Gibbs, Koshkonong, Spaulding, Storrs, and Willies.

Rivers/creeks including the Rock, Yahara and Badfish.

Edgerton and Milton Fire have 6 of the 12 water rescue boats in Rock County. Beloit, Town of Beloit, Janesville, and Rock County Sheriff's Office have the remaining 6. Edgerton and Milton have 4 different types of rescue boats because of the unique challenges of providing first-response service to small, almost unnavigable creeks, to the fifth largest lake in Wisconsin, Lake Koshkonong.

The Rock County Sheriff's Office has ultimate responsibility for water emergencies on these inland waterways, and Edgerton and Milton Fire train and work very closely and collaboratively with the Sheriff's Office to add a valuable first-response component to that responsibility. Specifically, Edgerton and Milton Fire are the only entities with rescue boats on Lake Koshkonong and ready to respond immediately 24x7 when the water is not frozen. The same is true for ice rescue when the water is frozen.

A case in point was February 20th when Edgerton and Milton Ice Rescue teams assisted the Rock County Sheriff's Department for 3 late night hours looking for a reported pick-up truck that was believed to have gone through the ice on Lake Koshkonong.

Over the last five-years Edgerton and Milton Fire have worked very closely with the Rock County Sheriff's Office in joint training and joint operations, including several high-profile rescue efforts where Edgerton and Milton have been the first response entity until County assets arrive.

In 2017 Edgerton and Milton boats located two boaters who had drifted away from their overturned water craft at night on Lake Koshkonong, rescued them and provided care until Rock County Sheriff's Office units were able to deploy and arrive.

In 2018 Edgerton water rescue crews were successful in reviving a 7-year-old juvenile who had drown in a beach related swimming incident, and was pulseless and not breathing upon our arrival. An event which was topped off by the 7-year-old walking into the Fire Station 6-months later to thank the crews that helped save her life.

In 2019 Edgerton boats were first on scene, and were involved with locating and rescuing 11 paddlers that had been swept away by swollen currents on the Yahara River. Sadly a 12th victim did drown in the incident.

In 2020 Edgerton boats located and rescued two near-drowning teenagers on Lake Koshkonong. Both teens told rescuers they were no longer able to stay above water, and were seconds from drowning.

In 2020 Edgerton boats located and rescued three paddlers who had capsized and were swept down river in the Yahara River.

In 2021 Edgerton and Milton crews responded and worked with Jefferson County crews who saved three family members (father and two children) who had gone overboard and drifted away from their boat on Lake Koshkonong.

From a funding standpoint, Rock County is eligible and does receive water rescue boats under a grant program from the State of Wisconsin because of their jurisdictional responsibilities, but local Fire/EMS services do not, so the 6 boats used to support Rock County, two of which are equipped with advanced side sonar technology, have been paid for by local taxpayers and businesses.

Value provided beyond just water rescue to Rock County as a whole:

Edgerton and Milton are active participants in Rock County's mutual aid system. In 2021 Edgerton and Milton responded to 262 requests for assistance from other communities; all provided at no cost to the requesting community.

Why are Edgerton and Milton relied on so much for aid? Several reasons:

First, Edgerton and Milton both have specialized, and very costly, firefighting and rescue assets that smaller communities do not have, and larger communities do not have multiples of. Specifically, Edgerton and Milton have 2 of the 5 aerial ladders available in the county. The other 3 are in Beloit, Footville and Janesville. Therefore, smaller communities rely on the 5 to provide aerial ladder protection which has saved those communities taxpayer's significant expense. Further, Milton as an example provides their aerial ladder to Janesville at no charge when Janesville's aerial ladder is out of service for repair, knowing that Edgerton's aerial ladder can then back them up; thus ensuring Janesville has a functioning aerial ladder in the city and eliminating the need for Janesville taxpayers to pay for two expensive aerial ladder resources. In addition, Edgerton's aerial ladder is the first mutual aid aerial requested by Janesville citywide on larger or multiple simultaneous incidents.

Second, Edgerton and Milton have been fortunate enough to be able to fund on-duty staffing making mutual aid requests for Paramedic-level ambulances, firefighting, and water rescue resources an immediate response. Therefore, Edgerton and Milton are requested early on when aid is needed by smaller and larger communities across the majority of Rock County. We routinely respond to aid requests from Beloit, Town of Beloit, Clinton, Evansville, Janesville, and the Town of Turtle Fire Departments.

And finally, third, all the specialized water rescue resources noted above.

Demographics of our request:

The 8 municipality's request represents an estimated 8.7% of Rock County's ARPA funding. How does that compare with the area in Rock County represented by the 8 municipalities:

The 8 municipalities and Edgerton and Milton Fire Departments cover 207.4 square miles of Rock County, 28.6% of the total land mass of the County.

The 8 municipalities have a total population of 23,073. This is 14.1% of the County's 2020 population.

The 8 municipalities have an equalized value of \$2.4b. This is 16.7% of the County's 2021 equalized value.

The 8 municipalities provide first-response water and ice rescue support to:

- 40.3% of the County's inland waterways and bodies (by acreage),

- 6 of 8 named inland bodies of water,

- 32.3% of the Rock River waterway in the County, and

- 100% of the Yahara River and Badfish Creek in the County.

Respectfully Yours,

Christopher Lund
Mayor City of Edgerton

Jeff Klenz
Chairman Town of Harmony

David Kyle
Chairman Town of Lima

Bryan Meyer
Chairman Town of Milton

Evan Sayre
Chairman Town of Fulton

Robert Mawhinney
Chairman Town of Johnstown

Anissa Welch
Mayor City of Milton

David Viney
Chairman Town of Porter