

Draft Minutes of the meeting of the Economic Development and UW-Extension Committee
Sawyer County Board of Supervisors
October 7, 2019; 8:30 a.m.; Assembly Room; Sawyer County Courthouse

Members present: Tom Duffy, Troy Morgan, Elaine Nyberg, James Schlender

Others present: Carol Williamson, Tom Hoff, Sherry Beckman, John Saunders, Don Mrotek, Mike Keefe, Bruce Paulsen, Lori Baltrusis, Sky Holt, Ben Popp, Kevin Schoessow, Linda Graham, Janice Snider, Linda Zillmer

Chair Tom Duffy called the meeting to order 8:32 am

Motion by Nyberg, 2nd by Morgan, to approve the minutes of the September 9, 2019 meeting. Motion carried

Janice Snider provided a Sawyer County Fair update. Next year's fair dates are August 13-15, 2020.

County Administrator Tom Hoff reviewed outside organization 2020 budget requests and recommendations.

Area Extension Director Lori Baltrusis reported to the Committee. 2020 budget request is \$70,000.

Agriculture Development Educator Kevin Schoessow provided the Committee with a brief review of services he provides to Sawyer County. Schoessow is involved with the Master Gardeners, grazing events, watershed practices, farmers market, partners with FoodWise and food shelves, educational classes and workshops, research, teaching and display garden, soil quality, and more.

Sherry Beckman, Executive Director for the Hayward Lakes Visitors and Convention Bureau reported to the Committee. Beckman provided information on ITBEC's (International Trade, Business, and Economic Development Council) structure, purpose and the 2019 Marketing Plan. She also gave the Committee copies of the Outdoor & Trail Guide, and the ATV & Snowmobile Trail Map that ITBEC supports.

The current 2020 budget recommends reducing county funding for the Hayward Lakes Visitors and Convention Bureau from the \$50,000 in 2019 to \$25,000 in 2020. The Committee discussed the history of support. For two years, funding has come out of the Resource Development Fund. Initially the county thought this funding would be temporary until Room Tax could support the HLVCB. The County Board has a standing resolution to support Room Tax. The County recognizes the importance of tourism and the work done by the HLVCB. Discussion on moving funding back to the operating levy, which would mean cutting services somewhere else.

Bruce Paulsen provided a hand out on what the county gets for its investment in the Sawyer County/Lac Courte Oreilles Economic Development Corporation. The SC/LCO EDC requested \$30,000 in 2020, up from \$25,000 in 2019. \$25,000 included in the current 2020 budget.

John Saunders reported to the Committee. Grant letters going out soon for work in 2023.

Ben Poppe addressed the Committee regarding the economic impact of the American Birkenbeiner. 90% of the revenues collected come from over 50 miles away. 88%-89% of expenditures are within 50 miles. The Birkie Foundation spends \$400,000 on trail maintenance annually. Trail pass funds are \$100,000.

Committee discussed options to allow for funding for the HLVCB by working with the Birkie Foundation.

Adjourned 9:56

Minutes prepared by Carol Williamson