**Wednesday April 12, 2023 1:00PM**

**Cass County Courthouse 211 9 St S, Fargo, ND Conference Room**

**AGENDA**

Present: Virtual:

RRRDC Director Mary Phillippi Finance Director Lori Johnson

Moorhead City Council Ryan Nelson

Fargo Commissioner Denise Kolpack

Cass Co Finance Director Brandy Madrigga

Clay Co Commissioner Kevin Campbell

Cass Co Commissioner Mary Scherling

**Called to order at 1300hrs by Madrigga**

1. **Approval of Agenda:** Motion made by Scherling, Nelson second. Approved.
2. **Approval of Minutes from March 8, 2023 meeting**
   1. Scherling requested to update minutes to last names instead of “Mary”

1st Scherling, 2nd Kolpack

1. **2022 Budget**

Phillippi distributed the YTD documents as well as 2022 revenue. A few changes – Fargo city employees pension. At the end of 2022 we should be near done with corrections. 100% thru year and 90% expended, $583,283 not expended. Over half that number is budget savings due to staffing. Less staff than what was budgeted, also includes saved benefits. Agencies part of consortium have all made payments and that’s all finalized.

* 1. No questions.

1. **2023 Year to Date Budget**

Phillippi distributed budget documents. On the Revenue Report – 3 agencies that pay funds into the Center. Actual cost is less than Estimated, haven’t been paid yet so there’s no issues with those numbers. Detail budget report – 25% thru the year, 23% expended. Typically, at this time of year some things have been paid forward. As the year goes by the different in percentage will be different. Life insurance benefit 135% - small budget item but the Center pays for employee and employer portion – has not yet been journaled out yet. Computer equipment repair – battery pack needed for uninterrupted power supply (UPS), scheduled for 2022 budget however it wasn’t put in until 2023 so was paid in 2023. Replacement every 5 years. Capital outlay – RRRDC Carryover amount. Was authorized by BOA for encrypted servers that were needed to meet regulations of ND and MN for NCIC data going through the lines. Approved after the FBI/BCA audit of the Center.

Campbell asked about staffing issues – what’s being done with recruiting? Phillippi explained that staffing shortages are not new to this center or to dispatch centers in general. For example, she has been at RRRDC for 35 years and have been at full staffing 1x. Phillipi explained some of the things being done: market surveys, approved retention bonus at end of 2022, increased shift differential for working employees. Recruiting included things from job fairs to ads on bathroom stall walls. Indeed has been where most applicants have come from. Agencies have posted on their social medias but they’re also dealing with hiring issues. Difficult to recruit for a 24/7 environment. In a perfect world the facility would have adequate number of consoles where part time or call taker position could be hired. Current facility wouldn’t accommodate that. Phillippi also discussed some issues other centers in the nation have faced and their drastic takes to correct them. Campbell ask and Phillippi explained what the criteria to be a dispatcher are. Campbell asked about employee referral incentive and Phillippi said RRRDC currently has that that benefits both the employee and the new hire. Scherling asked about retaining former employees part time. Currently have 2 employees doing this – one is part time and working 67% of a full time employee and another employee covering hours on the side of her other full time job. Biggest problem is retaining new employees and most leave because of stress and mental health related issues due to overwhelming job duties. Scherling asked about screening well enough when hiring. Phillippi explained the background investigation process that helps screen conditional offers. Those leaving due to stress leave between 30-45 days; Those who don’t like hours leave near the 100 day mark. Scherling suggests looking at the reason they’re leaving and look at why -maybe training adjustments, selection process needs to be addressed, more support for employees. Phillippi explained the training program, its flexibility and the resources the Center does provide. The 11 step pay scale was discussed and where new hires would or could fall on that scale. Market survey may causes adjustments. Campbell suggested looking at that cost of employee incentives vs the cost of spots sitting empty.

1. **2024 Budget progress**

Phillippi requested input from committee on how they want some budget items addressed in 2024. First involves IS expenses to be put into the budget under cash carryover so it doesn’t actually go into budget as its on a 5 year cycle where everything is replaced. Instead of putting $500,000 into budget for 1 year it gets set aside each year and documented as paid out of cash reserves. 2024 would be final year for setting that money aside and allocating to cash reserves. Cash reserves also includes allocations for 4 additional telecommunicators if we reach full staff. Previous committee didn’t want that in the budget and invoicing agencies when they haven’t and may not be hired during that year. Campbell had questions about where the numbers for the employees came from and Phillippi broke that number down. Madrigga, suggested to leave as is for 2024 to keep consistent. If any other suggestions address for 2025. Madrigga suggested discuss at next meeting. Phillippi mentioned this had been beneficial as it helped eliminate special assessments to citizens if there was a big budget expenditure.

1. **Fiscal agent transition status**

Madrigga – read JPA about fiscal agent. Said transition should be less than 6 months after effective date so no later than June 30, 2023. Cass just transitioned to new accounting software. Waiting on proposal to for RRRDC profile designated solely to them to not mix up funds. Proposal by end of week. Transition by June 30th is unlikely. Discussed that the transfer should be lined up with fiscal year end of Dec 31st – cleaner transfer from one system to the next. Also gives accounting time to set up. Attorney has been contacted to ask for advice on how to amend or tack on the change. Suggested motion to finance committee pending that recommendation from attorney that the committee recommend to the Authority Board that transition be completed on Dec 31st, 2023 or Jan 1, 2024. Kolpack asked if Fargo Finance was on board – checking on that. **Motion made by Campbell** that full board grants extension to Dec 31st subject to agreement by City of Fargo, **2nd by Kolpack**. **All in favor, motion passes.**

1. **Other Business**

Campbell asked about the total investment to bring in a new console. Phillippi did not have those numbers and Campbell would like that looked and passed along. Discussed again the cash carryover and having money set aside especially now that the boards are made of elected officials. Scherling agrees and Phllippi said it had been a discussion at previous finance committees didn’t want to do that although there were no elected officials on that board. Campbell would rather ask citizens for money small now instead of big later. Kolpack mentioned visiting the idea of reserves and having a policy about amount that should always be there. Luckily have reserve due to historical overages. If a range is established how do we keep that range. Madrigga discussed how to list the funds - matter of spreading cost vs utilizing cash reserves. A matter of planning for larger items. Phillippi said it’s a good time to do this with a new facility. New and additional equipment and will have a schedule on replacement. Will have lots of time to build fund so wouldn’t have to ask agencies for much. Phillippi mentioned the possibility that the current reserves could be allocated to start this new fund. Ultimately takes off pressure of levee or increases because it’s done gradually. Nelson asked about human capital in regards to the 4 positions. Could need an HR team or person later on, etc. Campbell said this would get built into a budget line item, too, and get looked at during budget time. Have we given you the appropriate tools to get what you need recruitment wise. Phillippi said studies have shown that once fully staffed you’re not overloading your current staff – makes happier employees!  
  
  
  
Meeting adjoined at 1358hrs by Madrigga.

Next Meeting Budget and Finance Committee: May 10, 2023