

July 15, 2024

The board met in regular session at 8:30 a.m. Members present Diana Dawley, Jason Roudabush and Jeff Tindle. Also present: Brenda Sutfin & Megan Tindle.

Moved by Roudabush, 2nd by Tindle to approve agenda. 3 ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Tindle, 2nd by Roudabush to approve July 11, 2024 board minutes. 3 ayes. Motion carried.

8:34 a.m. Laura Tish joined the meeting.

Moved by Roudabush, 2nd by Tindle to approve service agreement with Nyhart for GASB 75 full valuation report for FY24 and authorize chair to sign. 3 ayes. Motion carried.

8:35 a.m. Board placed a phone call to Renee VonBokern, VonBokern & Associates to discuss county policy regarding sick leave as stated in the county employee handbook. Supervisors were approached by a couple employees about being allowed to use more of their sick leave bank for family illnesses. Renee stated the county currently has policy in place regarding sick leave and the question for the board is if they want to modify policy. Renee further stated sick leave is not like vacation leave because certain eligibility requirements need to be met for the use of sick leave. Employees do not need a reason to take vacation and it does not affect attendance and is cost neutral. Renee stated certain leaves kick in when certain events happen. The county has a sick leave policy for employees and has carved out some of it for use of sick family. Renee stated the county may modify policy but needs to take into consideration using taxpayer monies.

Sutfin stated she has 120 sick days sitting not being used and she has used all of her allocated family sick and all but 5 days of her vacation and she just wants to use some of the 120 days of sick leave, which has been earned. Renee stated it's not just sitting there and employees must meet eligibility requirements of the policy, which is why the county has policy, otherwise why have a policy. Renee stated she is providing the HR perspective, and it is the county's decision if they want to modify policy.

8:59 a.m. Lyle Brehm, Engineer joined the meeting.

Tish stated some people keep vacation for cases if family is sick. She stated she always keeps back some vacation to use if her child is sick. She offered a suggestion of increasing the number of sick days employees may use for family sicknesses.

Renee also stated the county has a policy regarding catastrophic leave and employees may choose to donate up to a maximum of 5 days of their vacation to another employee that has exhausted their paid leave to help them during a difficult illness situation. It was brought up that a lot of the employees with the county are relatively new and don't have that much vacation built up to probably want to donate. Roudabush stated employees don't have to donate all 5 days, they could even donate 1 or 2 days. It is an option that falls within the county handbook.

Jeff Tindle stated the county converts amounts over the 120-day maximum sick leave to vacation and wondered if there was a way to pre-convert some of those days and then build the bank back up.

Brehm updated the board that he had a blade operator give his notice, so Brehm has posted the job opening and is currently taking applications to fill this position. Brehm also stated that the road department has been doing some mowing and removing of saplings along the Lake Ponderosa Dam and also brought dirt to fill in the ruts, which were created by UTV/ATV driving along there and will also re-seed that area.

Moved by Tindle, 2nd by Roudabush to approve 28E Agreement between Poweshiek County and City of Montezuma for law enforcement services for FY25. 3 ayes. Motion carried.

9:44 a.m. Kay Latcham joined the meeting. Latcham wanted to state that she is in favor of allowing more use of employee sick leave bank for family illnesses. Latcham stated she feels this is important and has always been proud to work for the county but lately she has been disappointed in the lack of empathy and sympathy. Latcham stated

she is an employee that would be happy to donate some of her vacation to help those in need dealing with major family illnesses.

Dawley stated there is a policy for the catastrophic leave and she would like to reach out to employees to see if anyone would want to donate any of their vacation if the need would arise. Latcham stated these are catastrophic cases. Dawley stated she would like to look at possibly implementing another bank of leave just specific for sick family and have that be up to 10 days per fiscal year. There would then be a sick bank for employee illness and then a separate bank for employees to use for sick family.

Roudabush stated he would either leave the current policy with the carve out of 5 family sick days from the employee sick leave bank and add a different bank for catastrophic sickness of 5 days, or modify the current policy from carving out the 5 days to an increase of 10 days.

Dawley asked what procedure would work best when it comes to payroll and tracking the leave.

Auditor Eilander stated if there was a separate bank for sick family, it would be easier to track the usage as it would show on the payroll leave reports generated as well as show on the employee's paystub. Leaving it carved out of the sick leave, would be a manual tracking for each employee's supervisor/department head but there would be a report which could be run to show the sick family usage pay code. It is just not automatic with each payroll. For tracking purposes, Eilander felt the separate bank would be better.

Supervisors discussed adding a new bank for sick family, which would create more paid leave available and be an additional cost to the county. Whereas if they amend the current policy from allowing 5 days to 10 days from within the sick leave bank, this would not be an additional cost.

Supervisors would like to put this on the next board meeting agenda as an approval item to modify the current sick leave from allowing 5 days to 10 days for family illness.

Sutfin, Megan Tindle & Latcham thanked the supervisions for listening and recognizing there is a need.

10:54 a.m. Moved by Roudabush, 2nd by Tindle to adjourn. 3 ayes. Motion carried.

Melissa Eilander, Poweshiek County Auditor

Diana Dawley, Chairman