



# Department Updates

June 2020

## Finance

**Jodi Busch**  
**Finance Director**

The last few months have been like a whirlwind in the Finance Department. With Covid-19, some staff have opted to work from home on a rotating basis. This has proven to work well for our department and we have been able to function remotely without a loss of productivity.

Due to Covid-19, CliftonLarsonAllen had to perform their fieldwork remotely this year. Luckily, over the past two years, we have been working to submit information electronically into a shared portal, so when the decision to audit remotely came down, we didn't miss a beat and were able to provide everything they needed without a hitch. Areas of focus included auditing various accounts in all Barron County funds, grant testing, fixed assets, payroll, treasurer's cash, investments, and segregation of duties in the payroll area.

Even though CLA's fieldwork is completed, the audit finalization will continue in July, with CLA compiling our Financial Statements and preparing reports to be filed with the State and Federal Governments. Once the compilation of the data is completed, drafts of the Financial Statements will be sent to Barron County for our review. When our review is completed, reports will be filed and the final Financial Statements will be printed. The final deadline for completion and filing is July 31<sup>st</sup>.

Once the Financial Statements are released, they are sent to a variety of agencies and borrowers that service Barron County. These Statements affect grant funding, bond ratings, interest rates, and bonding, so it is extremely important that we have as clean of an audit as possible, especially as we look to build a new Highway Facility.

With the 2021 Budget season right around the corner, our focus will shift again. New budget spreadsheets will be created, and wage projections will be calculated and distributed to the departments with the budget worksheets the second week of July. Then it is full speed ahead to build a balanced budget over the summer, with final County Board approval in early November. Because we don't yet know the full impact that Covid-19 will have on our financials in 2020 or 2021, this may prove to be a challenging budget cycle.

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## Veterans Service Office

**Scott Bachowski**  
Veterans Service Officer

**Scanning Project** – The Veterans Service Office began scanning our veterans’ files in August 2017 and to date we have scanned approximately 4900 files of the 7500 paper files that we currently store in filing cabinets. We have a couple filing cabinets available; if interested, please let us know if you would like the cabinets. We estimate the project will be completed in mid to late 2021.

**Work Volume** – Although we are not seeing veterans face-to-face, our workload has remained steady. Even with no face-to-face appointments, we continue to serve our veterans and have kept pace with past years for completing disability and pension claims. We owe a huge “thank you” to our Information Technology department for helping us to continue services. Our veterans have been highly supportive and understanding during this time; thus, we are grateful to them and their families. We are hopeful the Veteran Affairs medical centers begin normal operations very soon. We have many veterans that have had medical procedures canceled or postponed. Because of these procedures being limited, our ridership program has seen a dramatic drop in use. I have asked the Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs to adjust our transportation grant for 2021 to reflect a “normal” year of usage as our share is based on mileage. They were receptive to this idea; however, they have not released an official statement.

**Veteran’s Park Campground** – In early May, we were able to erect the nautical flagpole at Veteran’s Park and Campground. This project has been supported by community volunteers to clear trees, run electrical power, prepare ground for grass seed, and plant some new trees. We are hopeful to have a ceremony for Veteran’s Day or Memorial Day 2021.

## Forestry

**John Cisek**  
Forest Administrator

Hauling and payment is complete on Sale # 372 (Missed Tornado Sale). Revenue generated was \$ 14, 061.68.00. Hauling was completed on Sale # 357. Road repair is continuing, and should be completed this summer. Revenue generated was \$ 175,530.50.

The final storm related salvage sale located in Arland Township is being negotiated.

The DNR Audit took place on March 12, 2020. Twenty sales closed out between 2017 and 2019 were reviewed. Results were provided to Jeff French.



## Health & Human Services

### Stacey Frolik Director

For the last several months the Department of Health and Human Services has been busy adapting to and planning for issues related to COVID-19. The Public Health Unit has been on the frontlines of planning for and responding to cases in our County. A lot of time and effort has gone into working with our agency and community partners. We have worked to identify isolation beds for people who are positive for the virus and for one reason or another cannot isolate at home. A large collaborative effort was made to prepare the old Heritage Manor Nursing Home in Rice Lake to be used as a triage or overflow center if need be in a situation where our hospital systems were nearing their surge capacity. Thankfully, we have not had to use that facility and hope to not have to. It can however be open and operational in 2-3 days if the need does arise. To date, we have had 25 people test positive for COVID 19 with no deaths. We continue to encourage everyone to stay home when they are sick, limit travel outside of their immediate community, wash hands frequently or use hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available and continue to practice good physical distancing when interacting with individuals who do not reside in your home.

The virus has affected every other aspect of work we do within DHHS as well. The State Departments (the Department of Children and Families and the Department of Health Services) which guide our practices have issued temporary/emergency rules which outline the use of telehealth and other virtual technology as a means to provide services. There are very few program areas in which we are having direct contact with those who receive services from our Department. The consumers we do have face to face contact with are mainly those in our Child Protective Services program and our Community Support Program. We continue to administer all programs we always have, just in a different manner. Many of our workers are looking forward to getting back to the “old” way of doing business and having personal interaction with the individuals and families they work with.

Family Drug Treatment Court is in the late stages of planning and we will be operationalizing those plans in late summer/early fall just as planned. The number of families working with our child protective services team remains stable when compared with 2019. It is exciting to see this additional resource come to fruition as we have had a severe Meth issue in Barron County for several years and this will be one more program to help support families through recovery of a Meth addiction or other substance addiction. In 2018 DHHS spent about \$2.3 million on services to individuals and families related to Methamphetamine and that stayed steady in 2019 at about \$2.4 million. We are hopeful that with the addition of Family Drug Treatment Court we will be able to see the dollars spent on addiction decrease because we will be able to better support people in recovery.

The Health and Human Services Committee looks a little different after the most recent election. One of our board members who served for several years, did not run for the County Board of Supervisors this year. Andrew Mommsen, who served as the committee vice chair most recently was replaced by Stacy Wenzel. Andrew will be missed on the committee. Eric Pannier was elected vice-chair to replace Andrew in that position. Karolynn Bartlett, a long term committee and County Board member was re-elected as the committee chairperson. Karolyn will also continue to represent DHHS on the Executive committee. Dr. Richard Sampson has replaced Dr. Amy Mumumovic as our Public Health Medical Advisor and we hope to have him join our committee as well. We thank our entire committee for providing us policy direction and supporting us in the work we do within the Department.

Have a safe and healthy summer!