

**FINANCE**  
**September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

<b>Call to order</b>	<p>The Finance Committee meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Finance Chairman Gary Koch. Committee members Gerry Krachey and Bruce Strnad were present. Greg Russell and Wayne Jerret were absent. Also present were Tom Cornford, County Board Chairman; Kyle Kozelka, Hwy Commissioner; Dan McWilliams, HHSD Director; Nate Bremmer, Jailer; Marc Myhre, Emergency Management; Laura Moore, Veterans Service Officer; Nicole Baumeister; ADRC Director; Dale Klemme, Community Development; and Roberta Fisher, County Clerk.</p>
<b>Verify posting</b>	<p>The Finance Chairman verified that the meeting notice was properly posted at the Courthouse, Administration Building and on the county website.</p>
<b>Approval of Minutes</b>	<p><b>Motion by Strnad, second by Krachey to approve the minutes from the August 20<sup>th</sup> Finance Committee meeting. The motion carried with no negative votes cast.</b></p>
<b>Approval of Bills and Proposals</b>	<p>The Clerk presented three invoices for approval today.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kraemer Brothers Payment App #12 - \$2,589,255.49</li><li>• Klein McCarthy - \$21,750.67</li><li>• Johnson Block - \$7,250.00</li></ul> <p><b>Motion by Krachey, second by Strnad to approve payment of the above invoices. The motion carried unanimously.</b></p>
<b>2026 Driftless Area Art Fest</b>	<p>Dale Klemme, Community Development, appeared before the Finance Committee today to request \$9,000 contribution for 2026 Crawford County Tourism and Driftless Art Fest.</p> <p>Gary Koch informed Klemme that this request will be considered when preparing the 2026 Budget and addressed at a future Finance Committee meeting.</p>
<b>Broadband - NEIT/County Funding</b>	<p>Klemme also updated the committee members today that the BEAD grant funding for broadband was revised, reducing the match from 70% to 30%. As a result, NEIT resubmitted their application for a smaller project area and received a reduced award. NEIT still plans to extend service into Wisconsin to address some areas of need. The hope is that once equipment is in place, additional grant opportunities may become</p>

available. The project award decreased from \$25.9 million for 1,552 service locations to \$4.1 million for 392 locations. Consequently, NEIT is requesting the county's original offer of support be adjusted from \$300,00 to \$110,000.

**Motion by Koch, second by Krachey to support the NEIT project with \$100,000 in county funding. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Cemetery –  
Veterans Graves  
Perpetual Care**

Laura Moore, Veterans Service Officer, informed the Finance Committee today that a cemetery in Crawford County missed the deadline for reporting their buried veterans and thus does not receive the county funding of perpetual care for these graves.

The cemetery is now requesting the \$3 reimbursement for the care of each of the 73 veteran's graves and annually moving forward. Moore discussed this with her committee, and they agreed it was a reasonable request. This adjustment would increase the perpetual care budget from \$4,600 to \$5,000. This would begin in 2026.

**HHSD 2026  
Budget  
Discussion**

Dan McWilliams, HHSD Director, presented his 2026 department budget to his committee last month and is sharing the highlights with the Finance Committee today.

McWilliams reported that the out-of-home placements budget is currently over by \$330,000, while payroll is a little under budget and should show a positive variance by year-end.

To stay within the 2026 allotted levy, McWilliams has eliminated a therapist position. The county will no longer offer the energy assistance program, and Couleecap will now provide that service. The mosquito abatement and substance abuse prevention programs were also cut. McWilliams noted that these reductions mean fewer services are available for Crawford County residents.

**Certified  
SW Pay Scale**

Last year, social work positions were reclassified as case management positions, which no longer require social work certification, though it remains preferred. McWilliams noted that the certification should still carry value and proposed adding a \$1.00 per hour increase for employees who hold it. This would help retain certified staff, encourage others to pursue certification, and improve recruitment for these positions. The change would impact eight employees in his department.

Koch explained to McWilliams that the committee will not act on this request today but will take it into consideration when the Draft 2026 Budget is presented to the Finance Committee in a couple of weeks.

**2026 Budget  
Progress  
Update**

The Finance Chairman updated the committee on the 2026 Proposed Budget.

The levy limit did increase a little over \$109,000, and the Shared Revenue increased by \$55,449. Sales Tax Revenue rose enough to allow a \$300,000 increase to the overall budget.

The proposed budget includes a 5% raise for the Sheriff's Union and a 2% raise for all other employees. Increasing that to 3% for everyone else would cost an additional \$100,000. The Human Resource Director position has been eliminated from this budget. Funding is included for four new jailers.

Health insurance costs for the county increased by more than \$400,000. The county will now pay \$27,400 per employee for family coverage and \$11,100 for single coverage. This reflects a change in cost-sharing to 80% county-paid and 20% employee-paid.

Capital borrowing will cover the purchase of new squad cars. A Draft copy of the proposed 2026 budget will be available for the October Finance meeting.

**County Treas  
Report**

Updated monthly Sales and Use and Wheel Tax reports were distributed and reviewed today. Sales & Use Tax in August increased by 6% from last year. Wheel Tax showed a decrease of 29.82% from last year in August.

Interest earned in August on Phase 2 borrowing was \$52,558.52. Total available funds from Phase 2 borrowing is \$9,530,357.85.

**Next meeting**

October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.

**Adjournment**

**Motion by Strnad, second by Krachey to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.**

**Roberta A. Fisher, County Clerk**