Jefferson County
Finance Committee Minutes
August 5, 2025

Committee members:	Jones, Richard (Chair)	Zarling, Karl
	Christensen, Walt	Drayna, David
	Jaeckel, George (Vice Chair)	

1. Call to order – Finance Committee Chair Richard Jones called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

2. Roll call (establish a quorum) – Finance Committee members present were Richard Jones. George Jaeckel, Walt Christensen, David Drayna, and Karl Zarling. Other board members in attendance were Phil Ristow. Staff in attendance included County Administrator Michael Luckey, Corporation Counsel Danielle Thompson, Finance Director Marc DeVries; Assistant Finance Director, Tammy Worzalla; Budget Analyst, Morgan Toutant; Human Resources Coordinator, Jessica Tucker; Facilities Director, John Fox; Planning and Zoning Director, Matt Zangl; Human Services Director; Brent Ruehlow; Fair Park Director; Rebecca Roberts; Economic Development Director, Deb Reinbold; Financial Partnership Manager, Emily Clavette; Court Commissioner, Jennifer Weber; and Paralegal, Sarana Stolar. Members of the public present were Matt Slowinski of DANA Investment Managers, Mark Turley, Mark Palmer and Eric Sievers of Aztalan Bio, and Beth Gehred.

3. Certification of compliance with the Open Meetings Law – County Administrator Luckey certified compliance with the Open Meetings Law.

4. Approval of the agenda – Agenda was approved as presented.

5. Approval of minutes for Finance Committee for July 7, 2025 - Motion by Jaeckel/Zarling to approve the minutes from the Finance Committee meeting held on July 7, 2025. The motion passed 5-0.

6. Communications – None.

7. Public comment – Sarana Stolar spoke in opposition of item #9 on the agenda.

8. Discussion and possible action on presentation on County's investments by DANA Investment Managers – Matt Slowinski of DANA Investment Managers gave a presentation on the status of the County's investments and also presented a range of expected investment returns for 2026. Projected income from investments at DANA during 2026 is between $1.5 and $1.7 million. There was no action taken.

9. Discussion and possible action on accepting a grant from It Gets Better for $5,000 in the Human Services Department and amending the 2025 budget – Human Services Director Ruehlow explained that the Department was approached by a Safe Space youth group to be the fiscal agent for a grant from the Iola Foundation for LGBTQ+ youth awareness, resources and empowerment. Discussion ensued regarding whether Jefferson County was the proper entity to be named fiscal agent for this grant, as opposed to a local non-profit agency. Motion by Jones/Christensen to approve the resolution and forward to the County Board of Supervisors. The motion passed 3-2 with Jaeckel and Dranya dissenting.

10. Discussion and possible action on awarding bid for Fire Alarm System at the Fair Park – Facilities Director Fox explained that the County received one bid from Current Electric for $39,000 and is recommending a 15% contingency for a total budget of $44,850. Motion by Jaeckel/Zarling to approve the resolution and forward to the County Board of Supervisors. The motion passed 5-0.

11. Discussion and possible action on upgrading County server environment to Windows 2025 and amending the 2025 budget – Planning and Zoning Director Zangl explained that a recently procured upgrade to the GIS software requires a corresponding upgrade to the server software. This purchase was originally intended for 2026 and would normally be paid for by all county departments through MIS. However in order to expedite the purchase, Matt's department has partnered with Human Services, MIS, Highway and Administration/Finance to identify funding to accomplish this upgrade in 2025. Motion by Jaeckel/Zarling to approve the resolution and forward to the County Board of Supervisors. The motion passed 5-0.

12. Discussion and possible action on claims against Jefferson County – Corporation Counsel Thompson explained that Optum Rx has filed a claim against Jefferson County related to their request for Jefferson County to remove them as a defendant in a pending claim against Optum Rx for the damages caused by the opioid crisis. Thompson recommends denying the claim from Optum Rx. Motion by Christensen/Zarling to deny the claim from Optum Rx and forward the resolution to the County Board of Supervisors. The motion passed 5-0.

13. Discussion and possible action on servicing the Live Local Development Fund loans and amending the 2025 budget – Finance Director DeVries explained that the accounting and loan servicing for Live Local Development Fund needs a home and originally that home was ThriveED, however as this concept was developed further it became apparent that Jefferson County was better equipped to handle these duties. If the County were to assume the accounting for this program, a budget amendment for the first loan originating in 2025 is needed. Motion by Zarling/Drayna to approve the resolution and forward to the County Board of Supervisors. The motion passed 5-0.

14. Discussion and possible action on Jefferson County's participation in a financing agreement with Aztalan Bio – County Administrator Luckey explained that Aztalan Bio, who had recently purchased and upgraded the Valero plant north of the City of Jefferson, seeks assistance in the form of a loan of $18 million from Jefferson County via the State of Wisconsin's Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL) program. Under Aztalan Bio's proposal, Jefferson County would secure the loan from BCPL and pass the funding through to Aztalan Bio. Discussion ensued regarding the risk of the loan and possible security interests and financial incentives that the County could seek in return for the loan. County Finance Director DeVries believes that this loan is too risky for public financing and is more properly suited for private investors. Motion by Christensen/Zarling to entertain the request from Aztalan Bio by engaging outside counsel to conduct due diligence on the proposed financing agreement. The motion passed 4-0 with Supervisor Jaeckel abstaining.

15. Discussion and possible action on 2026 budget – DeVries updated the Committee on the status of the 2026 budget. No action was taken.

16. Discussion and possible action on determining the disposition of foreclosed properties, setting minimum bids for the sale of foreclosed properties, and considering offers to purchase on foreclosed properties – Corporation Counsel Thompson and Paralegal Stolar updated the Committee on the status of tax delinquent collections. No action was taken.

17. Consider a motion to convene in closed session for the following:

- **a. To confer with legal counsel concerning the strategy to be adopted by Jefferson County with respect to litigation in which it is or is likely to be pursuant to Wis. Stat. §19.85(1)(g). The purpose of closed session will be discussion and possible action on a settlement demand regarding an alleged employment claim.**
- **b. To deliberate or negotiate the purchase of public properties or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session pursuant to Wis. Stat. §19.85(1)(e). The purpose of closed session will be discussion and possible action regarding the sale of County-owned farmland.**

Motion by Jones/Jaeckel to convene into closed session. Roll call vote, motion passed 5-0.

18. Reconvene in open session – Motion by Jones/Jaeckel to reconvene into open session. The motion passed 5-0.

19. Discussion and possible action on 2025 projections of budget vs. actual revenues and expenditures – No action was taken.

20. Review of the financial statements and department update for June 2025-Finance Department – No action taken.

21. Review of the financial statements and department update for June 2025-Treasurer's Office - No action taken.

22. Review of the financial statements and department update for June 2025-Child Support - No action taken.

23. Update on contingency fund balance – DeVries reported the current balances of 2025 contingency funds before action taken at this meeting are $500,000 for general contingency, $532,250 for Other Contingency and $300,000 for vested benefits. No action was taken.

24. Discussion of funding for projects related to the new Highway facilities and sale of old Highway facilities - No action was taken.

25. Set future meeting schedule, next meeting date, and possible agenda items - The next scheduled meeting is set for September 2, 2025, at 8:30 a.m. Potential agenda items include discussion on 2026 budget, and potential capital and debt structures.

26. Review of invoices - Motion by Jaeckel/Drayna to approve invoices totaling $4,599,932.59. The motion passed 5-0.

27. Adjourn - Motion by Jaeckel/Drayna to adjourn at 11:22 a.m. The motion passed 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Marc DeVries, Finance Director
Jefferson County