

**Jefferson County
Finance Committee Minutes
July 7, 2026**

Committee members:

Jaeckel, George (Chair)	Braughler, Jim
Christensen, Walt	Ristow, Phil
Drayna, David (Vice Chair)	

- 1. Call to order** – Chairman Jaeckel called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.
- 2. Roll call (establish a quorum)** – Finance Committee members present were George Jaeckel, Walt Christensen, David Drayna, Jim Braughler, and Phil Ristow. There were no other board members in attendance. Staff in attendance included County Administrator Michael Luckey, Corporation Counsel Danielle Thompson, Finance Director Marc DeVries; Budget Analyst I, Morgan Toutant; Financial Partnership Manager, Emily Clavette; Communications and Marketing Coordinator, Ryan Roecker (Teams); Paralegal, Sarana Stolar (Teams); Health Department Director, Elizabeth McGeary (Teams); and Human Resources Director, Jessica Tucker (Teams). Members of the public present were James Kuckkan of the Watertown Daily Times (Teams).
- 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 June 9, 2026** - Motion by Braughler/Ristow to approve the minutes from the Finance Committee June 9, 2026. The motion passed 5-0.
- 6. Communications** – Corporation Counsel Thompson and Finance Director DeVries updated the Committee on the results of the Supreme Court ruling on Pung v. Isabella County regarding the sale of tax foreclosed properties. The ruling was favorable to counties in that it establishes the auction price as the fair market value and therefore no additional proceeds are due to the previous homeowner.
- 7. Public comment** – None.
- 8. Discussion and possible action on funding a part-time Public Health Nurse position in the Health Department and amending the 2026 budget** – Health Department Director McGeary explained that there were carryover funds available in their Public Health Infrastructure Grant to fund a part-time nursing position for at least the next year and a half. This position would build capacity in the Health Department by improving their ability to respond to current and emerging public health needs. No county levy would be necessary to activate the position. Motion by Christensen/Ristow to approve the resolution and forward to the County Board of Supervisors. The motion passed 5-0.
- 9. Discussion and possible action on amending the fee structure for discovery in the District Attorney's office and amending the 2026 budget** – no action was taken.

10. Discussion and possible action on accepting donation of hazardous materials equipment in the Emergency Management Department and amending the 2026 budget – Luckey explained that Johnsonville Sausage had generously donated \$12,000 of hazardous materials equipment to the County. Since the County has received value, the value of the donated equipment will need to be recognized in the County's accounting system and a budget amendment would be needed. Motion by Ristow/Braugher to approve the resolution and forward to the County Board of Supervisors. The motion passed 5-0.

11. Discussion and possible action on authorizing a contract with The Sigma Group for environmental remediation services and delegating budget management authority for the City North Redevelopment project – Luckey explained that the Sigma Group had developed budgetary costs for the remediation of the old highway site that are consistent with the purchase and sale agreement with Virtus. The high cost estimate is \$832,000 and would be funded by general fund surplus for the 2026 fiscal year. The excavation work will be bid out according to the Purchasing Ordinance. Motion by Jaeckel/Christensen to approve the resolution and forward to the County Board of Supervisors. The motion passed 5-0.

12. Discussion and possible action on accepting bids for the gate operators at the Highway Maintenance property – Luckey explained that the gate operator at the Highway Shop had been struck by lightning. The County sought bids for the replacement of the gate operator with the low bid being \$43,418. Insurance proceeds of \$39,000 have been received to cover the cost, and an additional \$4,418 will be provided by the Highway Department. Motion by Christensen/Jaeckel to approve the resolution and forward to the County Board of Supervisors. The motion passed 5-0.

13. Discussion and possible action on applying for a Site Assessment Grant and amending the 2026 budget - Financial Partnership Manager Clavette explained that a site assessment grant is available from WEDC and a potential site in Watertown has been identified for this grant. The grant is competitive and the potential award is \$250,000. Motion by Braugher/Jaeckel to approve the resolution and forward to the County Board of Supervisors. The motion passed 5-0.

14. Discussion on 2026 annual report from the Finance Department – DeVries presented the 2026 annual report for the Finance Department to the Committee. No action was taken.

15. Discussion and possible action on 2027 budget – no action was taken.

16. Discussion on funding recommendation for the EMS Working Group – Luckey presented various scenarios for funding countywide EMS services. Discussion ensued regarding several levels of funding and the benefits of each level. In general, the Committee was cautiously supportive of a levy increase to fund EMS but wanted to discuss further at a subsequent meeting. No action was taken.

17. 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 Treasurer Stade updated the Committee on the status of tax foreclosed properties.

18. Discussion and possible action on 2026 projections of budget vs. actual revenues and expenditures – No action was taken.

19. Review of the financial statements and department update for May 2026-Finance Department – No action was taken.

20. Review of the financial statements and department update for May 2026-Treasurer's Office – No action was taken.

21. Review of the financial statements and department update for May 2026-Child Support – no action was taken.

22. Update on contingency fund balance – The 2026 contingency amounts are \$472,063.43 for general contingency, \$100,343.53 for other contingency, and \$300,000 for vested benefits contingency. No action was taken.

23. Set future meeting schedule, next meeting date, and possible agenda items - The next scheduled meeting is set for August 4, 2026, at 8:30 a.m.

24. Review of invoices - Motion by Jaeckel/Ristow to approve invoices totaling \$5,357,401.85. The motion passed 5-0.

25. Adjourn - Motion by Christensen/Jaeckel to adjourn at 10:53 a.m. The motion passed 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Marc DeVries, Finance Director
Jefferson County