

***MINUTES OF THE  
HIGHWAY, INFRASTRUCTURE & RECREATION COMMITTEE***

**DAY & DATE:** Thursday, February 6, 2020  
**PLACE:** Wood County Highway Department, 555 17<sup>th</sup> Ave N,  
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54481  
**MEETING TIME:** 8:00 A.M.  
**ADJOURNMENT TIME:** 8:44 A.M.  
**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Adam Fischer, Supervisor William Winch,  
Supervisor Marion Hokamp, Supervisor Lance Pliml,  
Supervisor Dennis Polach  
**EXCUSED:** Not applicable.  
**OTHERS PRESENT:** Commissioner Roland Hawk, Wood County Highway;  
Accounting Tech Caitlin Carmody, Wood County  
Highway; Forest Administrator Fritz Schubert, Wood  
County Parks and Forestry; Office Manager Sandra Green,  
Wood County Parks and Forestry; Forester Gavin  
Hutchinson, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources;  
Jeffrey Masephol, Central Wisconsin ATV Club

1. Call meeting to order. Meeting called to order by Supervisor Fischer at 7:59 am.
2. Fischer declared a quorum.
3. Public comments.

Jeffrey Masephol from the Central Wisconsin ATV Club thanked the committee and department representatives for all their work with the different ATV groups to get County Road access for ATVs so they could travel from point A to point B on their routes. Supervisor Pliml asked when the statewide maps would be updated to show the routes open in the county. Masephol said there is an app being developed by a larger multi-county ATV club conglomerate that will show ATV routes and trails on it and that is due to be released soon.

4. Correspondence. None.
5. **CONSENT AGENDA**
  - a. Approve minutes from previous committee meetings
  - b. Department Staff Reports
  - c. Department Vouchers
  - d. Department Revenue Reports

**Motion to approve the consent agenda by L. Pliml and seconded by M. Hokamp. All in favor. Motion carried.**

6. Review items, if any, pulled from consent agenda
7. ATV Update

Supervisor Fischer reminded the committee of a request by Supervisor Jake Hahn to have the committee discuss opening all county roads to ATV use. The direction that had been decided on previously was to address it at an early 2020 HIRC meeting. Fischer stated he will be putting it on the March or April meeting to discuss and he wants both department heads to be present for that conversation. Roland Hawk stated that as of this point, all routes that had come before the Highway department have been approved. He stated that

they have a checklist of criteria that the section has to meet before he would approve it and so far, all of the requests have met that criteria.

## 8. **HIGHWAY**

### a. Wind Shed presentation

Hawk stated that at a previous meeting, Supervisor Bill Clendenning had requested that the committee have a presentation by the Wind Shed organization regarding planting of wind rows along county highways to reduce the need for snow fencing and reduce soil erosion. The Wind Shed organization contacted Hawk a few weeks ago asking if the committee was still interested. There was a consensus by the committee to invite the organization to send a presenter to a future meeting.

### b. WCHA updates

Hawk advised that he was elected to the Secretary of the Wisconsin County Highway Association (WCHA) position in January. The position has exposed him to a lot of the political aspects of county highway government. WCHA will be paying for him to attend the Transportation Development Association's Fly-in to Washington D.C. in May 2020. He is aware that he needs to get board approval for any out of state travel, but he was concerned about being able to travel with his counterparts, so he booked the flight and hotel, both of which can be canceled if he does not obtain board approval for the travel. He will be bringing a resolution to committee for that trip next month. Pliml spoke in support of the travel, indicating that he believes the Secretary position will be very beneficial to the county because of the amount of first hand knowledge Hawk will obtain on various matters and his influence on various legislative and funding projects at the State level.

The committee extended their congratulations on being elected Secretary.

### c. Flagger Certification Policy for County Highways

Hawk stated that the Wisconsin Department of Transportation got a bill passed at the state level that requires any construction crew on a state highway to have certified and trained flaggers. Hawk stated that all personnel at the Highway Department who might be in a work zone have completed the certified flagger training course and passed. County highway departments are being encouraged to adopt a similar policy applicable to county highways. This would mean that any utility, contractor, etc. would be required to have certified flaggers. Many of the contractors and utility authorities already have. The biggest push back to the policy would likely come from townships or municipalities who would also be required to get their staff trained if they are doing work in the county highway right of way.

The DOT informed county highways that DOT and Department of Safety and Professional Services staff are authorized to stop at any work zone and check certification of our staff.

Supervisor Polach asked if the county highway department would be able to provide certified flaggers to contractors or municipalities, for example, if needed.

Hawk stated that when they have staff available, they already do. However, if the County Highway Department doesn't have staff available, the requesting organization would have to provide their own. Pliml asked who training was provided through. Hawk stated WCHA devised the training program, but that the Highway Department's sign staff are certified trainers and trained all of their staff. Hawk stated they could provide that training to municipalities and townships if desired.

Hawk requested to bring a policy back next month for the committee to review. Fisher stated he would like to see the Highway Department communicate those potential changes to various stakeholders prior to the policy being enacted.

9. **PARKS:**

- a. Parks Revenue Report
- b. Forestry Revenue Report

The committee reviewed the Parks and Forestry Revenue Reports together. F. Schubert stated that there would likely be contract extensions for many of the timber harvests as this winter has proven difficult for harvesting conditions.

**Motion to approve both the Parks Revenue Report and the Forestry Revenue Report made by L. Pliml and seconded by D. Polach. All in favor. Motion carried.**

- c. Snowmobile & ATV Resolutions for 2020-2021

**Motion to take both the Snowmobile and ATV funding resolutions' approvals in one motion made by L. Pliml and seconded by M. Hokamp. Motion to approve both the Snowmobile and ATV funding resolutions made by L. Pliml and seconded by M. Hokamp. All in favor. Motion carried.**

- d. Wood County Forest 15-Year Comprehensive Land Use Plan – Draft Chapters: 100, 200, 300.

Schubert reminded the committee that he would be presenting draft chapters of the Wood County Forest 15-Year Comprehensive Land Use Plan monthly, by chapter(s), throughout the year, hopefully completing the process and requesting board approval by November. The chapters submitted this month are in draft form and are available for the committee and the public to review and comment on.

Pliml asked if there were any drastic changes from the last time the land use plan was completed. Schubert said no, and that they worked off a template very similar to the last edition of the plan. They have had it out for public comment in survey and online and anyone is free to comment on it. Fischer requested that if there were a significant change from last time that it be highlighted in the report. Schubert explained that both Department of Natural Resource and county personnel got together to revise the plan template and some sections got rearranged. Schubert agreed to highlight any new or significant changes of information.

Pliml stated he was most interested in the trends in forest type. Schubert explained that there were areas that were previously mature aspen that were hard to access and harvest. Those areas have had aspen die off and maple take over. White pine is

regenerating naturally and becoming established in many locations, and is likely to become a greater component of our county forest in the future. We will see the percentage of red pine decrease as it is not being replanted at as great a rate as it was years ago. In many cases natural regeneration of other species (oak, white pine, red maple) is becoming established and will most likely become the next forest type in these locations. Pliml asked if this would equate to a change in revenue from harvest. Schubert stated red pine tends to be the big money maker now, but there is a significant cost for planting and management of it. Schubert said that further on in the plan, trends will be shown. If there is something the committee wished to see specifically represented there, he can do that. Pliml indicated he was interested in seeing the long term effects of the decisions made and to know if it would be of value for the county to invest in something now to see a greater return years down the road. Schubert said access is his biggest concern and has the greatest impact on yearly forest revenue. The last few years have been very challenging for access for harvests and if that continues, it could really be detrimental to the program. Schubert said if he were to make an investment now for greater returns in the future, he would like to see some consideration for investment in obtaining more accessible dry land well suited to timber management.

10. Future Agenda Items.

Hawk stated he would be bringing back a site plan for the Marshfield shop in the next month.

11. Set next regular meeting date: March 12, 2020 at 8:00 AM at the Wood County River Block Building, 2nd Floor, Auditorium, 111 W. Jackson St, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495

12. Fischer declared the meeting adjourned at 8:44 AM.

Minutes taken by Caitlin Carmody, Highway Accounting Technician