

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

1. **DAY & DATE:** July 9, 2020
2. **PLACE:** Wood County Courthouse, Rm 114,
400 Market Street, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495
3. **MEETING TIME:** 9:00 A.M.
4. **ADJOURNMENT TIME:** 10:47 A.M.
5. **MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Jacob Hahn, Supervisor John Hokamp,
Supervisor Lee Thao, Supervisor David LaFontaine
PRESENT VIA WEBEX: Supervisor Al Breu

6. **OTHERS PRESENT:** Sandra Green, Parks & Forestry Office Supervisor; Chad Schooley, Parks & Forestry Director; Fritz Schubert, Forest Administrator; Roland Hawk, Highway Commissioner; John Peckham, Highway Accounting Supervisor; Supervisor Dennis Polach; Shirley Klapperich; Supervisor Bill Leichtnam; Ken Jinsky; Doug Passineau; Rhonda Carrell; Town of Saratoga Supervisor;
PRESENT VIA WEBEX: Chairman Lance Pliml; Highway Dept. Reception; Supervisor Clendenning

7. Call meeting to order. Meeting called to order at 9am.
8. Declaration of Quorum. Declared.
9. Public comments. Ken Jinsky commented regarding the detour and structural damage on his home. His intent here today is to present his first choice, which is to receive a commitment from Wood County Highway Dept. that we will take responsibility and pay for those said damages. He does not want litigation moving forward. Supervisor Hahn needs to wait to talk to county insurance before evaluating the results. R. Hawk explained the situation to the committee as well as the guests. R. Hawk explained the process for filing a claim. The claim has to show and indicate what the cost will be to the county. Once the claim is received, a determination will be made after review. He has a Victorian home that has a porch that wraps around the side. He stated the porch has moved away from the home about an inch, posts are hanging down and everything has shifted due to the vibration of large trucks that now use the CTH U detour due to the reconstruction of CTH U (Eagle Road) between Wisconsin Highway 54 and Biron paper mill. Supervisor Hahn and Highway Commissioner Hawk suggested again obtaining a form from the County Clerk to submit to the Risk Management committee. No other public comments.

10. Correspondence. R. Hawk stated that J. Peckham has been tracking COVID information and posting this information on the Highway Office door. This information was up for three months and they just recently received an anonymous complaint that the information was considered propaganda. The information was simply taken from the World Health Organization website and posted to inform the public of COVID information. An apology was given and the information has been removed from the Hwy. Dept. front door. J. Peckham wants to reiterate this was not intentional and the issue has been completely resolved.

R. Hawk stated CIP has been approved for debt service and stated his 2021 request is a reduction from last year because of successful grants received for projects on Hwy. X and Hwy P in Auburndale area.

11. Approve minutes from previous committee meetings. **Motion by D. LaFontaine, second by A. Breu. All in favor. Motion carried.**

12. ATV Trail/Route System Update. R. Hawk provided an update. ATV working group held a meeting in late June to identify our next steps moving forward and extending a northern route for ATV/UTV's in Wood County. We identified a number of options for alternate routes to be signed and directed. We had a few conversations on the expense as well as working on updating the current map. We will look at obtaining approval for the new routes and then requesting additional funding for next year. We have identified a few roads that will not open as routes.

13. HIGHWAY

- a. Highway Staff Reports.
Interviewed for a new shop supervisor. They will begin reference checks soon and make an offer.
- b. Highway Revenue Report. R. Hawk states not experiencing out of the ordinary.
- c. Highway Vouchers. **Motion to approve the highway vouchers by L. Pliml did talk with finance about streamlining the vouchers.** A discussion was had regarding the "process" in which vouchers have to be done now according to the Finance Dept. Everyone agreed that the current process is tedious and we can explore going back to doing vouchers the way we used to for example, 25 Alliant Energy bills for the month can be paid with one voucher, instead of the 25. L. Pliml advised that Sandra Green and John Peckham speak with those in Finance on how to move forward. Thank you L. Pliml and D. LaFontaine for assisting us with this change. **Motion by D. LaFontaine and second by L. Thao. Motion approved.**
- d. County Highway Right of Way Vegetation Spraying Program; Ditch Mowing, etc. R. Hawk discussed the Department's use of an herbicide to control woody vegetation. Highway sprays approximately 1/3 of the county per year. Initially herbicides were used to control invasive weeds is growing in the right-of-way such as Wild Parsnip. R. Hawk also provided information such as where these items can be purchased from, how they are used and applied and the effect on the vegetation. Shirley K., who is present, expressed her concern about losing our natural pollinators. Her concern is there is not one that says if it gets on waterways that it is harmful to aquatic and fish species.

Her concern is losing our Bees and not thinking about the consequences of them and the pollinator plants along that road. R. Hawk explained that spraying to control woody vegetation is a very efficient, economical, and safe process for reducing woody vegetation in the right-of-way and pollinators should not be affected because the generally are not attracted to woody vegetation. The other issue she has is the mowing of the right-of-ways. We are destroying the corridors for other pollinators. Why do you have to spend the time, effort and cost of mowing the right-of-ways? R. Hawk states it is a safety issue when vegetation obscures vision. You need to be able to see well enough to be able to turn safely onto the road. Ms. K is here to educate this committee as much as possible regarding our pollinators and how we are losing them. R. Hawk states Highway needs to use the most efficient process to control the vegetation in the right-of-way. R. Hawk went on to explain the positives and negatives of mowing and how they affect the staffing, equipment and budgets. Supervisor Leichtnam is concerned where there are water resources such as ponds, culverts and creeks. They have been fighting for a long time in the Town of Saratoga and are concerned with water quality.

He expressed his concerns on behalf of the Town of Saratoga. R. Hawk explained the process as a post emergent that once it is applied and on the vegetation, it cannot be washed off. What if it gets into the water (surface or ground), the only way it would happen is if it would be directly sprayed onto the water.

Rhonda Carrell, Town of Saratoga Supervisor, has pictures of the county's contractor spraying liquid spray onto the vegetation and into the water, applying it from a broom. It appears they sprayed across an entire ditch where there is a tributary into the 7-mile and sprayed it all the way up to the creek and both sides of the road in wetland areas. It is very concerning and in areas of waterways or wetlands, if there is something safer that can be used. Possibly go back to spot spraying and cutting and she asks that this committee and the highway department consider this request. A. Breu has one comment on the wild parsnip and the dangers and wants all to be aware of this and to watch the video on Wild Parsnip. B. Leichtnam is asking the HIRC to inquire to the Waushara County crew, monitor their work when they are applying and do some investigating on some of the applications they are using. The request from the Saratoga is to return to cutting. Supervisor Hahn requests this subject be brought back to HIRC at the beginning of next year.

- e. CTH U – Eagle Drive Project. (KEN JINSKY information). Schedule to be completed in September.
- f. Speed reduction on CTH Y (Adler Street, City of Marshfield). R. Hawk received an email from the City of Marshfield asking about the process for reducing the speed on Adler Street on the North side of Marshfield, which is also CTH Y. It drops to 35 and 25 in various places and requests we extend the reduction in other areas. Recommendation to the committee is to move forward with a possible speed study. They would need to submit a formal request in order for this to be considered.

Follow up to Local Road Forum held June 18. They had a Town meeting in Richfield and R. Hawk did plant the seed about helping more of the towns with maintenance such as plowing, moving, etc., and in return, Highway would be guaranteed three to five years of contracted work with municipalities in order to acquire additional equipment and personnel for the county fleet.

- g. Ditch Mowing on County Z in the town of Saratoga. See discussion above (12 d.) regarding the Township of Saratoga.

14. PARKS AND FORESTRY

- a. Parks & Forestry Staff Reports. No questions or comments regarding the reports. August 4-7, Forestry Certification Audit. Wood County will be on the August 4th. F. Schubert stated S. Green, the office supervisor has been putting together reports of where our pulpwood, mostly hardwood, aspen, and a little some Oak, has been hauled over the last 5 years to find out what percentage was hauled to Verso (NewPage, Biron and WI Rapids locations). Once we have those numbers finalized, we will bring that information back to the committee.
- b. Special Use Permits. C. Schooley gave brief descriptions of each requested permit.

A. Golden Sands RC&D to use the Red Sands Beach Pavilion for training of volunteers to treat invasive species. They would also do training for our staff. C. Schooley would like to ask for a fee waiver for the use of the building for that day which is \$150. **Motion to grant a fee waiver by D. LaFontaine and A. Breu. All in favor. Motion carried.**

The second one is the Dairy Strong Disc Golf Tournament, which will be held on Saturday, July 18, 2020. Fee for course closure and exclusive use of the course is \$50 plus \$2 for each participant. **Motion by A. Breu and second by L. Thao. All in favor. Motion carried.**

The third is one for a fundraiser for Jeremiah's Crossing, which is a therapeutic horse ranch in the Dexter area. Fundraiser is on August 15, 2020 and they utilize the Dexter shelter building area. This is a public event and their estimated crowd is 350. C. Schooley is requesting approval for this event. **Motion to approve by D. LaFontaine and second by L. Thao. All in favor. Motion carried.**

- c. 2019 Annual Report. C. Schooley pointed out the couple of changes to the report that is in the packet. **Motion to approve the Annual Report by A. Breu and second by J. Hokamp. All in favor. Motion carried.**
- d. Parks and Forestry Revenue Reports.
- e. Parks and Forestry Vouchers. C. Schooley explained the process of moving forward with paying some of the monthly billings via the Purchasing Card. C. Schooley requests approval and Supervisor Pliml also agreed this is the best way to move forward. Both the Highway and Parks department will be moving forward with using the Purchasing Card as much as possible. **Motion to approve revenue reports and vouchers by D. LaFontaine and second by L. Thao. All in favor. Motion carried.**

15. Future Agenda Items. Discussion regarding Capital Improvement Plan ranking, department budgets for 2021.

16. Set next regular meeting date: August 6, 2020 at 9:00am at Wood County Courthouse, Rm 114, 400 Market Street, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495

17. Adjournment. Meeting adjourned by Chairman Hahn at 10:47 am.

Minutes taken and recorded by Parks & Forestry Office Supervisor, Sandra Green