

WINNEBAGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS - HIGHWAY COMMITTEE

DATE: February 20, 2023

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

PRESENT: David Albrecht, Highway Committee Chairman
Tom Egan, Highway Committee Member
Chuck Farrey, Highway Committee Member
Ralph Harrison, Highway Committee Member
Donald Nussbaum, Highway Committee Member
Robert Doemel, Highway Commissioner

ALSO PRESENT: Mary Anne Mueller, Corporation Counsel
Sid Opperman, 4608 County Rd. E, Oshkosh
Howard Miller, 5468 Grandview Rd., Larsen
Matthew Olson, 8303 Sauby Rd., Larsen

Chairman Albrecht called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. A motion was made by Supervisor Farrey, seconded by Supervisor Nussbaum to approve the minutes from the January 16, 2023 meeting as written. Motion carried 5-0.

Chairman Albrecht asked for public input on the agenda items. Matthew Olson, Winchester Town Chairman, addressed the committee regarding a proposed driveway access along CTH M. He stated that the county will not allow an access due to the fact there is an existing access on Grandview Rd. He stated that changing the wording in the county ordinance could help this situation.

Sid Opperman, 4608 CTH E, Oshkosh, spoke to the committee regarding continuing drainage issues along CTH E. He stated that he requested to have his culvert reset, but it has not been done yet. He would like this issue added to the next committee meeting agenda to determine a maintenance procedure to keep the weeds down.

Supervisor Howard Miller addressed the committee requesting to change the wording of Winnebago County Ordinance 7.14 (8), to replace the word "possible" with "legally compliant". He distributed an updated ordinance he drafted that he feels would further define the term so driveways are in the safest place. Currently, there is an access located on Grandview Road that was grandfathered in, and its primary use is for agriculture. This access does not meet the Town of Winchester's policy for a residential access. The Town of Winchester would like this ag access removed, and a driveway access placed on CTH M instead. A motion was made by Supervisor Nussbaum to amend Ordinance 7.14 (8), changing the word "possible" to "legally compliant". There was no second on the motion. Commissioner Doemel stated the way Ordinance 7.14 (8) reads, accesses are to use a local road instead of county trunk highway if one is available. The ordinance was originally designed that way to have less ingress and egress onto heavier traveled roads. Commissioner Doemel said if the property owner wishes to request a change, he has to take out the permit as they are required to be signed by the property owner, not by an entity who may or may not wish to purchase a parcel of land. Mary Anne Mueller, Corporation Counsel, stated that the ordinance draft created by Howard Miller is legal, however, changing the wording has ramifications. She stated that she feels the language that is currently in place is more black and white than the proposed language. Supervisor Nussbaum asked Ms. Mueller how this could be fixed to get the driveway into the right spot. She stated that potentially changing the wording could be undermining the uniformity of the ordinance, and Commissioner Doemel's authority to enforce it. After further discussion, Supervisor Egan asked Supervisor Nussbaum, and Supervisor Miller if they would consider holding this item over for one month. They both agreed.

Installing flashing signs on Green Valley Road was discussed. Supervisor Farrey stated if guardrail cannot be installed on Green Valley Road, a flashing curve sign is the next best option. Supervisor Farrey made a motion for the Highway Department to install and maintain flashing signs on Green Valley Road in the Town of Vinland. Motion was seconded by Supervisor Nussbaum. Commissioner Doemel stated that Green Valley Road is not county property. Winnebago County has no jurisdiction on a town road, so the Highway Department will be arbitrarily putting up a sign on a town road with no jurisdiction. He stated that this action sets a precedence, and now another town is requesting signs on roads not under county jurisdiction. Supervisor Egan stated he believes the towns should be willing to participate in the costs. Supervisor Farrey stated that the Town of Vinland does not feel this is their jurisdiction since the deed reads that it belongs to Winnebago County. Commissioner Doemel explained that he spoke to the WisDOT who confirmed that years ago any land acquired was put into the county's name, which is also true up and down the entire I41 corridor. That procedure is no longer followed by the state. Commissioner Doemel warned that passing this item will force Winnebago County to install a structure in the road right-of-way, which is a safety hazard. He also stated that a funding procedure will have to be created because the Highway Department does not have the funds available in their budget to pay for work on town roads. Winnebago County gets no funding for town roads, each individual town gets their own funding. After discussion, the motion on the table was carried 5-0.

The speed limit along CTH G was discussed. The town of Winneconne requested to lower the speed limit on CTH G from CTH M to Cross Road. Commissioner Doemel stated that the traffic counts and safety data investigated by the Sheriff's Department showed no issue with this change. A motion was made by Supervisor Egan, seconded by Supervisor Farrey to approve lowering the speed limit on CTH G from CTH M to Cross Road from 55 mph to 45 mph. Motion carried 5-0.

The speed limit along CTH M was discussed. The town of Winneconne requested to lower the speed limit on CTH M from CTH G to Clarks Point Road. The Sheriff's Department investigation showed no issue with this change. A motion was made by Supervisor Egan to lower the speed limit on CTH M from CTH G to Clarks Point Road from 55 mph to 45 mph. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Nussbaum and carried 5-0.

Commissioner Doemel stated that he received an email from Supervisor Dowling requesting to have sidewalks installed along STH 47. She suggested the work be paid for by Winnebago County or with ARPA funds. Mr. Doemel stated that STH 47 is a state highway and that Winnebago County has no jurisdiction over it. He did mention however, the earlier precedence set by paying for work on a town road would be a similar situation with this being a safety issue. Commissioner Doemel stated that the ditches along the highway are 8-10' deep, which would amount to a huge undertaking, most likely including land acquisition and the installation of storm sewers, which could cost in the millions. He stated that the state is scheduled to do a resurface of the highway in 2032. The state will not participate in the installation of sidewalks. Supervisor Nussbaum commented that he does not know enough about this project, and that Ms. Dowling should have been in attendance today to explain. Supervisor Harrison feels that the WisDOT should use their allotment of ARPA funds for these projects.

Commissioner Doemel stated that he reached out to the WisDOT realty department. He was informed that years ago any property purchased by the WisDOT was put in the county's name throughout the state, dating back to the 1960's. This procedure is no longer followed. In order to correct this, each parcel would have to be surveyed, which would be very costly. The state does not have the resources to do this.

The following were reported as general operations:

- The bids came in for a Gradall replacement. The cost for a new unit is \$502,000, which has doubled since 2011. The department is investigating if it can rehab the old machine. If a new one is ordered, it was estimated to take one year for delivery. Commissioner Doemel stated that all the equipment prices have gone through the roof.
- One of the tri-axle trucks was received. It was sent off to get the winter equipment installed. This is the second truck that came in with a \$10,000 surcharge added to the price.
- As mentioned at the last meeting, all of the county departments need to work on a method to expedite the process to purchase equipment if it becomes available. This is due to the shortage of equipment and the uncertainty of the market.
- Commissioner Doemel stated that he spoke to the Sheriff's Department regarding the purchase of two-way radios. One of the county board supervisors does not believe that the Highway Department needs the newest radios, that staff can use their cell phones. Commissioner Doemel explained that two-way radios are a very important tool used every day by the department. He stated that CDL rules do not allow staff to communicate using their cell phones when driving. The new radios in question will be hard-mounted into the vehicles, replacing the portables that are hard to hear and 10 years old.
- Supervisor Harrison asked if the commissioner has been included in correspondence regarding the pay study. Mr. Doemel said that he is included, but does not have any specifics on pay to date.

The next meeting of the Highway Committee is scheduled for Monday, March 20, 2023.

A motion was made by Supervisor Egan to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Harrison, and carried 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 10:38 a.m.

Laura Spanbauer
Administrative Associate