

WINNEBAGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS - HIGHWAY COMMITTEE

DATE: August 20, 2018

TIME: 2:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Ken Robl, Highway Committee Chairman
David Albrecht, Highway Committee Member
Chuck Farrey, Highway Committee Member
Robert Warnke, Highway Committee Member
Tom Egan, Highway Committee Member
Raymond Palonen, Highway Commissioner

ALSO

PRESENT: Mike Collard, Human Resources Director
Jill Prah, Highway Accountant/Office Manager

Chairman Robl called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Commissioner Palonen distributed copies of the proposed 2019 Highway Operating Budget as presented to County Executive Harris. Supervisor Egan questioned why the budget had not been presented to the Highway Committee before the Executive. Mr. Palonen explained that since it is the Executive's budget he thought he would present to the Highway Committee after Mr. Harris made his changes. Commissioner Palonen presented the budget detail by line item and fielded questions from the Committee. He noted one change made to the budget was moving \$2,000 out of General Office Supplies into Small Equipment Technology for a laptop. Based on a three-year average, the Highway levy totaled a 5.96% reduction overall. The Highway Department's County Road Maintenance budget shows a 2.79% overall increase. The County Executive had requested a 1.5% target budget change from the previous year.

The personnel expense portion of the budget was explained by Human Resources Director, Mike Collard. Mr. Collard stated the increase in wages and fringe benefits in the budget stems from increases in health insurance costs and the change to the Table of Organization. Mr. Collard said since the Committee could not come to an agreement on adding Supervisors to the Table of Organization at an earlier meeting, the issue reverted back to being done during the budget process. Discussion was held regarding this issue. Supervisors Farrey and Egan stated they thought after the idea of adding Supervisors to the staff died for lack of approval at a previous meeting, that it would be brought forward for continued discussion by the Committee. Commissioner Palonen reiterated that the two current Superintendents are working too many hours, and are in need of assistance. Supervisor Egan informed the Committee on the animosity expressed to him by highway crew members about adding two supervisory positions. Supervisor Egan stated he would like to see the department add only one supervisor position to try that first. Supervisor Warnke stated he thinks more trust should be put in the person who runs the department to decide what the staffing needs are. Supervisor Albrecht agreed that they should do what Commissioner Palonen feels is necessary for the department. After further discussion, Mr. Collard stated that it would cost approximately \$25,219 to move two positions from Foreman up to Supervisors. Supervisor Farrey stated he thinks it would be in the department's best interest to hire one new employee and promote one from within. Supervisor Egan stated that he's not sure he can support two positions. Mr. Collard stated that it will cost approximately \$85,000 in salary and fringe benefits to add a new supervisory employee. After further discussion, the committee voiced unanimous support of creating one new supervisory position and converting one Foreman position into a supervisory position for a total of two Highway Maintenance

Supervisor positions. Commissioner Palonen asked for the Committee's support of this item at the County Board meeting.

Commissioner Palonen distributed an article regarding how the State would like to shift funding for the STP Bridge projects, and how it would affect the Highway Department. Mr. Palonen stated he would like the Committee's input after they read the article.

Due to the Labor Day Holiday on Monday, September 3rd, the next meeting of the Highway Committee will be held on Wednesday, September 5th at 1:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Supervisor Farrey, seconded by Supervisor Egan to adjourn. Motion carried 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Laura Spanbauer
Administrative Associate