

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Monday, January 25, 2021

Virtual – Winnebago County Administration Building
112 Otter Avenue, Oshkosh, WI 54901

Present: Thomas Egan, David Albrecht, Steven Binder, Tom Ellis, Chuck Farrey, Maribeth Gabert, Robert Keller, Larry Lautenschlager, Steve Lenz, Michael Norton, Patrick O'Brien, Joel Rasmussen, Robert Warnke, and Bill Wingren.

Also Present: Alan Ott - District Director for Representative Glenn Grothman; Jennifer Garner - Regional Representative for Senator Tammy Baldwin; Senator Dan Feyen; Representative Michael Schraa; Representative Lee Snodgrass; Mark Harris – County Executive; Mary Anne Mueller – Corporation Counsel; Jeffrey Mann – Assistant Corporation Counsel; Douglas Gieryn – Director of Public Health; John Casper – President/CEO Oshkosh Area Chamber of Commerce; and Nicholas Zabloudil

Excused: Tom Konetzke and Tom Snider

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Chairman Egan and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion by Supervisor Albrecht and seconded by Supervisor Farrey to approve the minutes of the June 22, 2020 meeting. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

Public Comments:

Representative Lee Snodgrass introduced herself to the committee. She is newly elected to the 57th Assembly District.

Election of Officers:

Discussion was held as to how to conduct the election of officers. Corporation Counsel, Mary Anne Mueller, stated that if there is more than one person nominated, and the meeting is being held virtually, it would be best to raise your zoom hand to vote. It was noted that only a Chairman or Vice-Chairman of a committee is eligible to vote.

- For President: Motion by Supervisor Farrey and seconded by Supervisor Wingren to nominate Tom Egan for Chairman of the Legislative Committee. Motion by Supervisor Norton and seconded by Supervisor Wingren to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.
- For Vice-President: Motion by Supervisor Norton and seconded by Supervisor Lenz to nominate Larry Lautenschlager for Vice-Chairman of the Legislative Committee. Motion by Supervisor Norton and seconded by Supervisor Lenz to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.
- For Secretary: Motion by Supervisor Ellis and seconded by Supervisor Lautenschlager to nominate Vicki Schorse for Secretary of the Legislative Committee. Motion by Supervisor Norton and seconded by Supervisor Lautenschlager to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

Correspondence:

None.

Discussion: 980 Release Housing Options & Programs

Corporation Counsel, Mary Anne Mueller, reported that there are currently three 980 offenders residing in Winnebago County. The County has been notified that eight more offenders are scheduled for release, but no decision has been made at this time.

Ms. Mueller noted that 2021 could be a challenging year for Winnebago County. Mike Elder, Facilities Director and Jeff Mann, Assistant Corporation Counsel are working to find additional housing for these offenders. There are certain restrictions as to where the offenders can be housed. Supervisor Schorse noted the State might be looking to de-centralize these offenders and re-locate them to their home counties. This could be a major impact on the counties.

Representative Schraa noted that the Legislature passed a bill in regard to this issue with provisions included. The Governor vetoed that bill.

Jeff Mann has been in contact with realtors to assist in finding residents for these offenders.

Senator Feyen applauded the County Board for the facility located by the Highway Department.

Discussion: Concept for Developing a ProActive Annual Legislative Agenda

Supervisor Schorse would like to see an annual review or "State of the County" regarding Legislative issues that could make the Legislative Committee be proactive versus reactive. She would like to look for ways to work with the

Legislators and provide more leadership with and from the Legislators. If possible, she would like to see ways to include citizen participation. Supervisor Schorse recommended that right after the budget process might be a good time of year to put something together. She hopes to be able to discuss this more in depth at a future date and make this happen as soon as possible.

Discussion/Action: Jackson County Resolution #53-12-2020 – "Request to Review Funding for APS and Increase Long Term Care Placement Locations within Wisconsin":

No discussion or action was taken regarding this resolution.

Discussion/Action: Jackson County Resolution #54-12-2020 – "A Resolution in Support of State Funding for Equitable Return of Utility Tax Collections to Counties and Municipalities as Utility Aid":

Motion by Supervisor Farrey and seconded by Supervisor Lautenschlager to approve this resolution and forward to the County Board. Supervisor Farrey stated that this resolution also affects the townships in Winnebago County. He feels the State is keeping too much of the money for utilities and that it should be shared with counties and municipalities. Vote on Motion: CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE. NAYES: 1 - Wingren

Discussion: Dealing with COVID Relief Bill being Considered by the State Legislature and Specifically the Provision Waiving Penalties and Interest for those Property Tax Owners Who Cannot Pay their Property Taxes on Time:

Supervisor Norton attended a Wisconsin Counties Association Leadership Committee meeting where Kyle Christianson, Director of Government Affairs, presented waiving penalties and interest. He said that the State Legislature had passed a bill on this issue, the Senate did not pass it. Mr. Christianson thought this might be presented as a stand-alone bill. Supervisor Norton would like the Representative's opinions on this matter.

Executive Mark Harris feels that the interest portion of the property taxes will be waived. Interest on property taxes is a revenue for the County. By waiving the interest, it would affect the County budget.

Representative Schraa commented on the first bill, AB1. There were 14 provisions in that bill, waiving interest and penalties was not included. The Governor implemented protection for renters; that they could not be evicted for not paying their rent during this pandemic.

Senator Feyen agreed with Representative Schraa that this was not included in AB1 or the bill that the Senate passed. No conversations were held in the last month regarding this issue. Taxes do not go away, they have to be paid eventually.

Alan Ott, Representative for Congressman Glenn Grothman, commented that options for another package for COVID 19 relief, on the federal level, will be brought forward soon.

Discussion/Action: For Legislative Committee to Meet in Person versus Virtual:

After discussion, it was decided to have the next meeting virtually unless circumstances change to permit meeting in person.

Discuss Proposed / Potential State Legislation as Presented by Local Legislators and Committee Members

Supervisor Norton and the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Team are concerned about being able to order alcohol on-line and have it delivered to a residence. Concerns include how the age of the individual is verified and if they are legally able to purchase and consume the alcohol.

Representative Schraa noted that he co-sponsored this bill. There are a lot of concerns regarding the loss of revenue for the hospitality industry. Representative Schraa invited anyone to voice their concerns to him regarding this issue and he would take them to the Committee.

Representative Snodgrass noted that there are two bills, AB363 and LRB133. AB363 is the bill noted above by Supervisor Norton, she does not plan on co-sponsoring that bill. She is in favor of LRB133 which would allow persons to order mixed drinks along with food for pickup from bars and restaurants.

Senator Feyen stated there are two distinct bills that will be presented, both require proof of age verification.

Update from County Executive Mark Harris

County Executive Mark Harris reported on the following issues:

- Unemployment – County numbers lag the State total. October - 4.2%; November - 3.8%.
- COVID-19 – 168 deaths in Winnebago County. Positive tests, hospitalizations and death numbers are decreasing. Vaccination doses aren't available fast enough for all the eligible groups. The County has received

doses of the vaccine for COVID. They have been administered to First Responders and Firemen to aid in protecting them from the virus.

- Utility Aids – An example of how this affects the County: annexation of land from Town of Neenah to City of Neenah. When a power plant facility is transferred from a town to a city, the allocation of the utility tax is divided with 2/3 to the city and 1/3 to the county. If the facility is in a township, then the allocation is 2/3 to the County and 1/3 to the municipality.

Supervisor Schorse inquired about a Registration Software Systems for vaccination registration. The University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh and ThedaCare are currently using this system and it works smoothly for registering. Supervisor Schorse would also like to see someone take the lead for a process for a "Public Visual Indicator" to publish information regarding COVID-19.

Doug Gieryn, Director of Public Health, reported that the County received a limited amount of the vaccination. They are currently working with the National Guard to aid in administering the vaccinations. A site will be set up at the Sunnyview Expo grounds. Director Gieryn is working with the City of Appleton for a tri-county site. It will be held at the Appleton Expo building. They are looking to partner with the hospitals in the area for the next phase of the vaccination.

Update from State Legislators:

Senator Dan Feyen – District 18:

- Thanked the Drug Companies for their diligence in preparing the COVID-19 vaccination.
- Unemployment insurance issues continue to be an item of major concern. Both Winnebago County and Fond du Lac unemployment numbers are coming down. He is the chair of the Economic and Workforce Development Committee. They will be meeting this week, strictly informational.
- COVID-19 bill – Senate passed a different bill than the Assembly. Will be working on this to get it to the Governor's desk.
- Many issues are being discussed at the State, he encourages anyone with concerns to contact him.

Representative Michael Schraa – District 53:

- Will be taking up the Senate session for AB1 – COVID-19 Relief Bill. The Senate and Assembly are working together regarding: mandatory vaccinations – personal choice/business liability aspect; local health departments being able to shut down churches
- Resolution regarding the Governor's mask mandate – Feel that the extension is unconstitutional. It should be up to the business to require masks

Representative Lee Snodgrass – District 57:

- Committees: Assembly for Children and Families; Forestry, Parks and Recreation; Transportation; and Tourism
- Believes that mask mandate needs to stay in place
- Is in support of the bill that was passed by the Senate regarding COVID. Hopes that the Assembly and the Senate can work closely together regarding this issue.
- Feels businesses should be able to control what happens in their business regarding employees, etc.

Update from Federal Representatives:

Alan Ott, District Director—Congressman Glenn Grothman

- Congressman Grothman was sworn in for his 4th term. He is the longest serving Republican in the State of Wisconsin delegation.
- Serving on the House Over Site and Reform Committee and the Education and Labor Committee
- 1st Act of Congress – Ban terms father, mother, son and daughter from the rules of US House because they are gender terms
- Priorities for this session: Border Security; Reform of Welfare and other programs that are anti-family related; Getting a Handle on the Debt; Work on the Cancel Culture with Social Media; Passing Bi-partisan Legislation regarding Air America. The Air America Act stemmed from Winnebago County, Wisconsin.

Topics to be discussed at next Legislative Committee Meeting – Human Services ADRC funding – Budget item for State Legislation.

Next Meeting Date – To be determined.

Motion by Supervisor Albrecht and seconded by Supervisor Rasmussen to adjourn. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.
The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Julie Barthels, Recording Secretary