

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
Monday, November 28, 2016
James P. Coughlin Center

Present: Tom Egan, Jerry Finch, Ken Robl, Bill Roh, Tom Ellis, Chuck Farrey, Joel Rasmussen, Larry Smith, Robert Warnke, Robert Keller and Paul Eisen

Also Present: County Executive Mark Harris, Representative Mike Schraa, Representative Amanda Stuck, Representative Gordon Hintz, President/CEO Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce John Casper and Director of Veterans Services Joe Aulik

Excused: Bill Wingren

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Chairman Egan and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. A moment of silence was held in memory of Senator Rick Gudex.

Motion by Supervisor Finch and seconded by Supervisor Farrey to approve the minutes of July 25, 2016. Carried by Voice Vote.

Public Comments: None

Discussion/Action regarding the Resolution returning CVSO Grant to a Block Grant Format

Joe Aulik, Director of Veterans Services, reported that the original grant was given to the Veterans' Office to use as needed. In 2015, the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs made restrictions at the county level for how the money could be used. Wisconsin Counties Association is behind the Veterans' Services to return the grant to the way it was. The Veterans' Services will be taking this to the Legislators to return it to the block grant format. The grant was intended to attract talent to the Veteran's office and to enhance services to veterans. Mr. Aulik then took questions from the committee.

Motion by Supervisor Finch and seconded by Supervisor Smith to forward this resolution to the County Board. Carried by Voice Vote.

Discussion/Action regarding the Resolution opposing Regionalization of Veterans' Benefit Delivery in Wisconsin

Supervisor Warnke reported that this resolution would regionalize veterans' offices. He feels this would benefit the smaller counties, but not Winnebago County and the larger counties. He would recommend that the committee oppose this resolution. Director Aulik spoke in agreement to opposing this resolution. He feels it would jeopardize the service to veterans needs.

Motion by Supervisor Farrey and seconded by Supervisor Warnke to bring this resolution to the table.

Motion by Supervisor Eisen and seconded by Supervisor Warnke to amend the resolution as presented.

Supervisor Eisen asked to amend the resolution as follows:

Line 23: Paragraph 1 - "Now, therefore, be it resolved that the county of Winnebago joins other counties in the state of Wisconsin, to express their desire to the Wisconsin State Legislature adamantly opposing any efforts to make County Veterans Service Officers optional."

Paragraph 2 - "Now, therefore, be it resolved that the county of Winnebago joins other counties in the state of Wisconsin, to express their desire to adamantly oppose allowing non-veterans to fill the position of County Veterans Service Officers."

Paragraph 3 - "Now, therefore, be it resolved that the county of Winnebago joins other counties in the state of Wisconsin, to express their desire to adamantly oppose consolidating or regionalizing County Veterans Service Offices."

Supervisor Eisen asked that the title of the Resolution be amended and that Director Aulik provide the County Board with the number of counties that support the opposition of this resolution.

Vote on Motion to Amend - Carried by Voice Vote.

Vote on Resolution as Amended - Carried by Voice Vote.

Discussion/ Action regarding Outagamie County Resolution 57-2016-17 – “Urges the State Legislature to develop and enact bipartisan support for funding of comprehensive, sustainable, effective and evidence based communicable disease control and prevention for the public’s health”

Motion by Supervisor Farrey and seconded by Supervisor Rasmussen to layover until the next Legislative meeting. Carried by Voice Vote.

Update from County Executive Mark Harris

County Executive, Mark Harris, voiced concern regarding the rapid decrease and cuts to veterans’ programs in the last few years. He has serious concerns when money is used to pay salaries versus veteran benefits. Mr. Harris would like to see an audit conducted regarding the veteran’s trust fund. He encouraged the Legislators to find answers to this issue.

Chairman Egan thanked the Legislators for attending the Legislative meeting and listening to Winnebago County’s concerns.

Update from State Legislators:

Representative Amanda Stuck – Feels that transportation will be the largest issue that they face in the upcoming year. She urges everyone to stay in contact and voice their concerns with their Legislators.

Representative Mike Schraa – Reported that Representative Robin Voss was elected Speaker of the House and Representative Jim Steineke was elected Majority Leader. Committee assignments will be assigned soon. Representative Schraa is concerned about the state structural deficit. He feels we are in better shape now than we were two years ago. Another issue of major concern is self-insuring. He feels this will be a controversial issue and will not support it.

Representative Gordon Hintz – Concerned about what issues will come up in this session. Representative Hintz touched on different aspects of the state budget. He encouraged counties to continue to voice their concerns to Legislators. He has concerns regarding insurance – private vs. self-funded. Representative Hintz commented on Veteran issues that have been brought forward. He touched on the Long Term Support and Care.

The Legislators then took questions from the Committee.

Update from Federal Representatives – No one present.

Correspondence – Supervisor Bill Wingren asked to be excused from this meeting.

Topics for next Legislative Meeting – Outagamie County Resolution #57-2016-17 should be added to the next agenda.

Next Meeting Date – January 23, 2017

Motion by Supervisor Farrey and seconded by Supervisor Rasmussen to adjourn. Carried by Voice Vote. The meeting was adjourned at 9:51 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:
Julie Barthels
Recording Secretary