

MINUTES

Eau Claire County
Joint Committee

Committee on Highway
Committee on Finance and Budget
Thursday, June 7, 2018 / 8:00 am

227 1st St West
Eau Claire County Agriculture Center – Room 103
Altoona, WI 54720

Members Present:

Committee on Highway: Supervisors Carl Anton, Steve Chilson, Nancy Coffey, Ray Henning, and Judy Gatlin

Committee on Finance & Budget: Supervisors Steve Chilson, Jim Dunning, Robin Leary, Stella Pagonis, and Gerald Wilkie

Staff present: Frank Draxler, Purchasing Director; Jon Johnson, Highway Commissioner; Rhonda Olson; Kathryn Schauf, County Administrator; Brian Spilde, Highway Operations Manager; Rod Thorson, Highway Engineer; Amy Weiss, Senior Accounting Manager

Others Present: Sean Lentz, Senior Municipal Advisor at Ehlers; Chris Hetland, Financial Specialist at Ehlers

Committee on Highway Chairperson Ray Henning called the meeting to order at 8:02am.

Committee on Finance & Budget Chairperson Stella Pagonis called the meeting to order at 8:03am.

Confirmation of Compliance with Open Meetings Law: Confirmation was provided that the meeting properly noticed. There was no public comment.

Funding Options for Highway Department; Capital Improvement Plan; Discussion – Action

Kathryn Schauf began the discussion with an introduction to a power point presentation developed by county staff.

Jon Johnson continued the discussion by reviewing PASER ratings. He included history on where the county has been, where the county currently is, and described options for where the county would like to go. There are a few methods for determining a county's overall PASER rating, one of which includes a tiered approach. A tiered approach takes into account a road's traffic level when evaluating the level of investment needed to attain a desired PASER rating. Concerns were raised regarding farm hauling and the effect a tiered approach would have on rural road maintenance. Specifically, there would be an economic impact to the county if farms leave due to difficult travel conditions.

Discussion continued into the difference between maintenance expenditures and capital investments. The county uses capital for more than just highway improvements. The county has other assets to maintain and invests in technologies to aid with county services.

Amy Weiss and Sean Lentz presented information on the County's current long term debt structure and forecasts for projected future borrowings. It is not a sustainable plan to fund maintenance costs by borrowing.

Alternative funding sources were reviewed and discussed. One option is realigning the property tax levy. This is not ideal as it takes funding away from other county services. State aid is not adequate. The county cannot continue to rely on fund balance as a method of filling in the gap.

A Vehicle Registration Fee (VRF) is a revenue source that would help fund highway projects. Sean Lentz provided documents comparing the cost to the county of borrowing (interest and issue costs) versus vehicle registration fees over a 10 year period.

For Finance & Budget: Supervisor Steve Chilson made a motion to advance a resolution to the County Board that the committee is committed to an average PASER rating of 6 for Eau Claire County. Seconded by Supervisor Robin Leary. Motion carried unanimously.

For Highway Committee: Supervisor Steve Chilson made a motion to advance a resolution to the County Board that the committee is committed to an average PASER rating of 6 for Eau Claire County. Seconded by Supervisor Judy Gatlin. Motion carried unanimously.

For Finance & Budget Committee: Supervisor Gerald Wilkie made a motion to advance a resolution to the County Board to implement an annual vehicle registration fee of \$30/vehicle. Seconded by Supervisor Jim Dunning. Motion carried 4-1.

For Highway Committee: Supervisor Nancy Coffey made a motion to advance a resolution to the County Board to implement an annual vehicle registration fee of \$30/vehicle. Seconded by Supervisor Carl Anton. Motion carried 4-1.

Committee on Highway adjourned the joint committee meeting at 10:25am.

Committee on Finance & Budget adjourned the joint committee meeting at 10:25am.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Weiss
Committee Clerk