



MINUTES

Eau Claire County | Committee on Highway

Thursday, February 10, 2022 | 7:30 a.m.

WebEx Virtual Teleconference

Committee Members Present: Chair Steve Chilson, Vice-Chair Carl Anton, Supervisor Judy Gatlin, Supervisor Nathan Otto, *Supervisor Nick Smiar*

Staff/Others Present: Highway Commissioner Jon Johnson, Assistant Commissioner Brian Spilde, Engineering Technician Lori Engen, Fiscal Associate IV Nicole Spaeth, HR Director Jessica Rubin, County Administrator Kathryn Shauf, Finance Director Norb Kirk

1. **Meeting called to order by Chairman Chilson at 7:30 a.m.**
2. **Past committee meeting minutes (1/13/22) – Discussion/Action**
 - Supervisor Anton motioned to approve. Motion carried 4-0.
3. **Public Comment** – none
4. **New Highway Building Memorial to Ray Henning – Discussion/Action**
 - The Building Committee would like a recommendation from the Highway Committee on how to memorialize Ray Henning in the new Highway facility
 - Options discussed: 1) A plaque on the outside of the building, 2) Naming the Conference Room after Ray, 3) Having a plaque/picture of Ray in the conference room
 - Per Administrator Schauf the county does not have a policy on naming components of the organization. Naming the meeting room with a picture/plaque would be a is something we could easily accomplish.
 - Suggestion to involve Ray's wife in the planning. Possibly name a future internship position after Ray.
 - Supervisor Gatlin motioned to move forward with memorializing Ray Henning in the new highway facility conference room with a plaque and/or picture. Motion carried 4-0.
5. **Highway Improvement Plan – Discussion/Action**
 - HIP illustrates the vision/goal of department as well has information about plans for improving the highway system. Combines a lot of individual documents into one cohesive plan.
 - Good resource for county board who wants more info about what the highway committee does. Goal for creating this document is to provide better info at a higher level about what we do at the highway department whether for new/existing county board members or the general public.
 - VRF used primarily for improvement plans but could be used for general highway maintenance which will save more money in the future over waiting for deterioration and doing complete reconstructions.
 - Would like support from the committee in moving forward with this improvement plan so we can submit it to the Administrator's office.
 - Supervisor Gatlin motioned to support the development and implementation of the HIP as a living document. Motion carried 4-0.
6. **Highway Engineer Position – Discussion/Action**
 - Jon worked with HR & Corp Counsel to create a resolution to abolish current Engineering Supervisor position & replace it with a County Engineer position at a grade level higher in order to attract a qualified candidate.
 - This position will be a licensed position that will require their sign-off on specific projects. Qualification for certification can be done through accreditation through a college or years of experience, and completed by passing an exam to obtain license.

- Supervisor Gatlin motioned to approve the resolution to abolish Engineering Supervisor position and replace it with the County Engineer position. Motion carried 4-0.

7. Highway Report

- Highway Commissioner Update – Jon Johnson
 - **Bipartisan infrastructure law (BIL)** – federal funding for local programs. 1.29 billion dollars coming to the state of WI over the next 5 years. There is a specific timeline of how the funding gets allocated. Could get 80% of construction (only) projects costs covered for this first round of funding. Jon is evaluating our current funding that can be leveraged to participate in this bill for projects that qualify. Second round of funding in Feb covers more of the planning and construction costs. This program also allows for 15% of funding to go toward local roads. Jon is helping local townships apply for funding through this bill as well.
 - **General updates:** WHCA Road School in January – laid out 4 year plan for association, Jon now in past president role, moving forward with consultant management process. Also working on legislation, pushing Green Light Bill to put green lights on municipal equipment – allows us to replace amber lights with green lights to distinguish us from commercial vehicles which is more visible in low-light conditions
 - **Local MPO:** Metro planning org, working with Eric on funding from City of EC and Altoona. Will receive additional funds for CTH T projects from the state for that project.
- Operations Update – Brian Spilde
 - Still working on brushing and clearing for CIP and maintenance plans. Fixing guardrail damage from winter accidents. Started the anti-icing program (worked on 94 and Clairemont).
 - Shop – working on a truck-mounted attenuator. Have been reviewing gain/loss on maintaining old trucks verses upgrading to new trucks.
 - Looking forward to summer program to bid out for construction materials.
 - Brian & Chris are working with state DOT on plow routes reviewing the category of roadways and service model.
- Engineering Update – Jon Johnson
 - All current 2022 projects are underway for design. McGaver Creek on county H – still scoping this project but all others are moving forward. Looking to get engineering contracts in place for projects that need to be designed by August. RFP out for bridge inspections, due next week. Over 100 inspections due for 2022-2023.

8. Review of Payment Vouchers (1/21/22, 1/28/22 [2], 2/4/22 [2]) – Discussion/Action

- Supervisor Chilson motioned to approve. Motion carried 4-0.

9. Future Meeting Dates, Times, and Agenda Items – Discussion/Action

- Request from Pagonis to have a joint finance/highway meeting to discuss future highway plans, PASER ratings, general funding, BIL funding. Proposed a potential meeting Thursday, Feb 24 @ 8:00 am.
- Next meeting: **Thursday, March 10, 2022 at 7:30 am**
- Future Agenda item: Update on open positions (requested by Supervisor Gatlin)

10. Meeting adjourned by Chairman Chilson at 9:03 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole Spaeth

Nicole Spaeth, Fiscal Associate IV
Eau Claire County Highway Department
APPROVED 03/10/2022