



Administration Building

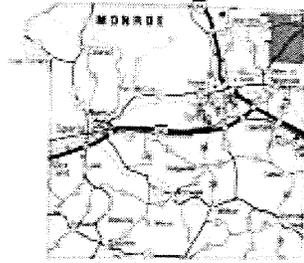
MONROE COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

JACK DITTMAR, P.E., Highway Commissioner

803 Washington Street, Sparta, WI 54656

Phone: (608) 269-8740 Fax: (608) 269-8831

e-mail: jack.dittmar@co.monroe.wi.us



NOTICE OF MEETING

COMMITTEE: Highway
TIME: 9:00 A.M.
PLACE: Highway Administration Building
803 Washington Street, Sparta, WI
DATE: Friday, October 23, 2015

SUBJECT MATTER TO BE CONSIDERED

[all items are subject to Discussion & (except public comment) Action]

1. Period of Public Comment
2. Last Meeting Minutes
3. 9:10 a.m. – Attend Finance Committee Budget meeting in Highway Department Conference Rm
4. Review Payroll
5. Review Vouchers & Credit Card Charges
6. Commissioner's Report (copy attached)
Projects, Equipment, Facilities, Budget, & Personnel
7. Horse Manure & Rubberized Horse Shoes on CTHs (County Corporation Counsel Invited)
8. County Board Resolution – Authorizing 2016 County Aid for Bridge or Culvert Construction and Repair Under WI Statutes Sections 82.08 & 61.48
9. County Board Resolution – Authorizing 2016 County Highway Bridge & Culvert Special Assessments Under WI Statute 83.03(2)
10. Future Agenda Items

Date Notice Posted: October 19, 2015

PLEASE NOTE: A quorum of the Monroe County Board or other committees may be present at this meeting. No business of the County Board or other committees will be conducted at this meeting, only the business noted above.

September 18, 2015 meeting of the Monroe County Highway Committee

Meeting called to order at 9:00 a.m., by Chairman James Schroeder.

Members present: James Schroeder, Gail Chapman, David Pierce and Nodji VanWychen.

Members absent: Wade Blackdeer

Others present: Highway Commissioner – Jack Dittmar, Office Manager – Becky Pitel, County Personnel Director – Ken Kittleson (Item VI. only), County Highway Employee & Town of Clifton Supervisor – Kevin Cook, County Highway Employee – Chris Breeden (Items I.-VI. & VIII. only), and County Highway Employees-Scott Jerome & Lance Larson (Items I.-IV. & VI. only).

I. Period of Public Comment – None.

II. Motion to approve the minutes of the August 21, 2015 meeting made by Nodji VanWychen, seconded by David Pierce. All ayes, motion carried.

III. Payroll presented as follows:

Check Date: 9/3/2015

• Field Personnel	\$64,580.95
• Administration	<u>\$12,112.07</u>
• Total	\$76,693.02

Check Date: 9/17/2015

• Field Personnel	\$65,247.71
• Administration	<u>\$11,885.61</u>
• Total	\$77,133.32

IV. Vouchers presented as follows:

• Early Pay	\$232,510.55
• Credit Cards	\$ 1,294.11
• Month Vouchers	<u>\$171,319.70</u>
	\$405,124.36

*** Agenda rearranged to accommodate guests. ***

VI. Personnel Items – Discussion ONLY to Include: Wages, Interstate Premium Pay, Performance Pay, Scheduled Time off, Training & Length of Employment

Chairman Jim Schroeder opened by asking the present employees to introduce themselves to the Committee. Scott Jerome inquired to Highway Commissioner Jack Dittmar if he had received a “check mark” for missing a call-out on Friday, July 24th. Jack reviewed the call in log and explained that “yes” Mr. Jerome was marked down as missing a call in as he was not marked as being scheduled off that Friday. Scott was not happy and stated that he had the whole week following off and he assumed that since the weekend was his time that he would not be called-out. Jack explained to the Committee how all Department Supervisors use a Google calendar to schedule time off and how the call in log is used in conjunction with the google calendar to call in employees for emergency overtime. Jack explained to employee Kevin Cook that he looked into Kevin’s question from last month’s meeting regarding missing a call in and how it affected his performance pay from last year. Dittmar stated that the one missed call in marked on his review did not in any way affect his performance pay. Jim went back to discussing Scott’s concern about being called out on July 24th. Jim thinks that it should be assumed that if Scott had the whole next week off that he would not be available. Personnel Director Ken Kittleson stated that he does not feel that it should ever be assumed that they aren’t available as the employee may want to be called in. Scott inquired to Ken if he knows for sure whether or not he is going to be gone tomorrow? Ken stated that it was simple that he just needed to call his Supervisor at that time and let him/her know that they were now not available for call in. On the other hand, Ken Kittleson stated that Saturday is part of the weekend and that he didn’t think employees needed to call their Supervisor to notify them of a change in their plans. Scott feels that Friday is part of his weekend too when they are not scheduled to work. Jack stated that some employees are so concerned about whether missing a call in is affecting their pay when in reality (like Kevin Cook’s example), missing a few summer call ins doesn’t affect their pay. Employee Chris Breeden explained to the Committee that his fellow employees are scheduling for the summer weekends off in March to make sure that they do not get a black mark for missing a call-out. Chris stated that he cannot do this as he cannot be sure at that time that he wouldn’t be available, but he also understands why his fellow employees are scheduling the time off regardless. Chris is concerned with how these missed call-outs will affect his attendance records for possible employment down the line. Ken stated that the Personnel Department never releases this type of information when someone is doing a background check. He also stated that the Personnel Department usually does not mail anything out

September 18, 2015 meeting of the Monroe County Highway Committee

from employee's files, background check information is given verbally over the phone. Ken reassured Chris that his file is not that detailed and the only time a file would be released is if it was court ordered or the employee signs a form requesting it to be released. Jack explained to the Committee that the performance evaluation is not that detailed either. Jack also stated that numbers that stick out are employees that never miss a call in specifically in the winter. Jim inquired if the call-out on July 24th was in Scott's normal work area. Jack stated that the emergency overtime work was not in Scott's normal work area, but the employee who is assigned to this section did not answer the phone when called, so that employee was also marked as missing a call in. Kevin explained to the Committee that he does schedule every weekend off in the summer because he is on-call all winter and doesn't feel that the highway employees every really get any time off. Kevin stated that the supervisors rotate being on-call, but the employees do not rotate so he feels like they are never really "off" for the weekend. Kevin stated that things within the department are not fully remembered and is wondering why we keep track of missed call-outs. Ken stated that your evaluation is basically based on how your supervisor sees your performance. Kevin is still concerned with how your supervisor can properly rate your performance when they do not work beside you, yet they are rating you. Ken stated that your supervisor should know whether or not you are getting your work done and that it is not based off of hearsay. Scott disagreed and stated that he knows supervisors are taking comments into effect which is hearsay. Ken disagreed with Scott as he does not believe the supervisors are basing their evaluations off of one comment, but off of several comments. Ken stated that he feels some of the long term employees are ruining it for the new employees and that the "Tomah shop is worse than the Sparta shop". Kevin told Ken that "he was a little offended by his statement as he is an employee of the Tomah Shop and that clearly his statement was based off of hearsay". Ken told Kevin that he was correct that his statement would be hearsay, but he also believes that every employee should be able to start with a clean slate regardless of their skills. Ken told Kevin that he feels he "jabbed the new employees at last month's meeting", after all when Kevin started out here he was just a garbage hauler. It is human nature to not be happy with things and his suggestion would be to make suggestions to their immediate supervisor. It really is not the Highway Committee's place to be resolving personnel issues. Ken also does not feel the employees can come to the Highway Committee with these types of requests as they are mainly countywide policy and it cannot be changed for one department. Jim stated that it seems to him we have a problem with scheduled time off and performance pay. Jim also inquired if the employees need to be on some kind of rotation. Jack stated that the supervisors are looking into a possible rotation, but it is difficult as there are different employee skill levels and interstate sections which require different employees depending on the emergency situation. Scott stated that the department has employees that know the state side and vice versa. Jim inquired as to why a rotational system cannot be tried out. Jack feels there is not a perfect solution for this concern, you are going to end up telling someone that they cannot be approved "off". Jack does feel that Scott has stepped things up from his first performance evaluation to his second. In fact, Jack stated that "Mr. Jerome received his 2% pay increase this last year". Ken inquired to Jack if he was understanding the call in process and if he was using this information in the performance pay evaluation process. Jack stated "yes" it is part of their attendance rating as this is the only performance criteria in which we have actual black and white data. The other 9 performance criteria are all rated based on the supervisor's view which definitely isn't a black & white criteria. Ken stated that scheduling every weekend off is playing the system then. Ken suggested to Jack to turn this into a positive thing for the employees and make it the employee's responsibility to sign up for overtime. Chris feels that the present way this is handled is creating a monster. Employee Lance Larson stated that he just recently had a situation that he ended up working late and could not put in for time off for the weekend because he was working. Lance stated that "he likes his job and needs his job, but he needs to have family time too and doesn't want to be punished". Chris reminded the Committee that there are things in life that they cannot control. Jack inquired to the employees if they would rather not use the call in log data for summer attendance and instead rely on their supervisor's memory. Ken stated that "the black check mark has taken on a life of its own". Chris told the Committee that he took a pay cut to come and work here and he is concerned that long term employees are not making over \$20 per hour. Jack mentioned that previously the union contract never had a pay range so everyone had to be paid the same. Now each job classification has a pay range with over \$5/hr spread from the minimum to the maximum. Jim clarified though that previously it was all overtime after 8 hours worked. Chris inquired if our department has seniority? Jack said "no, we do not have to use seniority". Chris expressed concern with being told that the check marks don't matter, but it does matter to him. Scott stated that "he has gotten the shaft and that there is history". Ken told Scott "that he feels he hasn't changed and he still has an attitude." Ken stressed that the county is an equal opportunity employer and reminded Scott Jerome that he needed to talk with his supervisor about his concerns. Ken stated that there is no need to have this item

September 18, 2015 meeting of the Monroe County Highway Committee

on the Committee's agenda. Jim stated that he "was hoping that the dialogue would help, but it seems to be making people angry". Ken suggested a voluntary overtime list as this has turned into a negative and it needs to be turned around on its head. Jack stated that he would do away with summer call in log data for performance evaluations and this would be left to their supervisor's memory. In reference to some of last meeting's questions, Jack mentioned that of our total 41 hourly non-office employees, 18 have been here less than 3 years and that the department depends on our senior employees to help properly train our newer employees. It was stressed that the senior employees are taking off because they do not want to deal with the check marks. Chris feels that it would be a great idea to take away the check marks and go to voluntary overtime. Jim feels that the employees need to talk more with their supervisors. The employees present stated that they do talk to their supervisor and they are not sure where the "ball is getting dropped". Ken clarified that the Committee is not in the chain of command for these types of issues. The Committee's role is just to monitor operational policies. Ken is concerned that employees are just venting and the Committee will not be able to resolve their concerns. It was stated that the county board can only set policy. Ken feels the Committee has given employees the opportunity to talk hoping it would make them feel better. Jim does not understand why things go so far and then they end. Chris would like to know "if the Tomah shop is known as the complaining shop then why has no one come from Personnel to see why they are complaining?" Jack feels that Supervisors Jon Pauley & Dennis Dickman do an excellent job managing their employees and accepting "no" is one of the toughest things for the Tomah shop employees. Jack stated that the "glass is either half full or half empty and how we let our fellow employees affect us is another issue". Lance told Jack that people are afraid to come talk to him because of repercussions and he does not feel it is just the Tomah shop that feels this way. Ken stated that there is a lot of fear of the performance evaluation which is coming from break time talk. Jim called this discussion to an end and recommended to the employees to be more vocal with their supervisors. Chris inquired what they are to do if they do not get an answer or do not like the answer they receive. Ken stressed that he "would really like the employees to stay unless they feel that the grass is greener, but the county does have to stay consistent amongst all departments". Jack asked Lance if he could clarify his previous statement about employees being scared to talk to him. Larson stated that he is not sure what the complete problem is for some of his fellow employees. Gail Chapman asked Jack if he ever goes to the shops in the morning and talks with the employees. Lance stated as being a new employee it gets engrained into you that you will be punished for talking with the Commissioner. As a new employee it is hard to know if this is true as you do not have the exposure like the senior employees have had through past experience. Lance also feels that there could be some better pay options. Nodji VanWychen asked the employees present if they would go back to their shop and share what they have learned today. Lance stated that he would but he also hopes that his comments and concerns are validated too.

V. **Commissioner's Report (copy attached)**

- **Projects:**

- County crews: performed miscellaneous drainage cleaning/ditching, performed maintenance patching & spot sealing, performed some asphalt rut filling, cut some trees, shouldered this summer's CTH BB reconditioning project, shaped and paved around the new cold storage building, replaced a few cross-culverts on the CTH EW reconditioning project, and started a PbM crack routing & sealing project on USH 12 from CTH O to the Jackson County line.
- State crews: repaired guardrail and fencing, performed sign repair and shoulder maintenance, fixed a hole in an interstate bridge, installed liners in some failing cross-culverts, and prepared equipment to make salt brine and take delivery of salt for this upcoming winter.
- State & County Crews: completed a PbM shouldering project on the I-90 eastbound inside shoulder.
- The CTH BC bridge replacement was opened for traffic last week.
- **WE Energies installed a gas line along CTH C and were permitted to be no closer than 30' from centerline. They actually installed it much closer and we are working with them on resolving this.
- **The CTH ET speed limit resolution in and around the City of Tomah will be going to this month's county board meeting. The fiscal note will be reviewed by the Finance Committee at a special meeting right before County Board. The City of Tomah has refused to help pay any of the speed limit revision costs.
- **The biennial Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) organizational meeting will be held Tuesday October 6th at the Tomah Senior Center. A meeting notice was sent out at the end of August and information about highway sign purchases & recycling old signs and possible sale of a grader next spring was also included in with the meeting notice.

- **Equipment & Facilities:**

- Construction of the new cold storage building is complete.

September 18, 2015 meeting of the Monroe County Highway Committee

- Our new International cab & chassis was delivered a few weeks ago.
- The equipment trailer bid was awarded to Brooks tractor as the low bidder of the trailer that most completely met our specifications. (see attached bid tabulation).
- **Budget:**
 - The Committee approved 2016 budget was input into our new financial software and submitted to the Administrator.
- **We received 75% of our actual costs to replace the CTH E culvert that washed out in the June 06 rainstorms. The Disaster Damage Aids check was for \$12,328.
- **Personnel:**
 - At the request of a majority of our employees, the Administrator approved extending 10 hour days to the end of September. This also gives most employees the Labor Day holiday paid at 10 hours instead of 8.

**** = added to report during meeting**

VIII. Horse Manure on CTHs

Chairman Jim Schroeder stated that County Sheriff Scott Perkins approached him at another county meeting and told him that there was nothing the Sheriff's Department can do about this matter. Sheriff Perkins told Jim that he looked into this concern and if manure comes off of a piece of equipment he can do something but if it comes out of an animal it is considered an act of God. Dave Pierce inquired as to how we can enforce residents to clean up after their dogs then. Discussion arose about this being a violation of state statutes. Jim wondered if this should start with the towns first. Becky Pitel stated that the Town of Wilton has had complaints regarding this and looked into information with the Wisconsin Town's Association a couple of years ago. The Towns Association confirmed that this is a violation of state statutes, but the town does not have their own law enforcement so the town has no way of enforcing this issue. Jim feels that if the Committee is going to address a manure issue, they should also consider addressing and requiring a rubberized type horse shoe to preserve the pavement. Highway Commissioner Jack Dittmar stated that Portage County had requests for this almost 20 years ago and did nothing, but he thinks the Village of Augusta in Eau Claire County may have this type of ordinance in place. Town of Clifton Supervisor Kevin Cook inquired if horse manure on CTHs could be ticketed for littering. Highway employee Chris Breeden expressed that there is a lot of time that he is cleaning up horse manure so he doesn't have to work in it to maintain the roads. Nodji VanWychen stated that the Committee should have Corporation Counsel Andy Kaftan look into this concern and bring it back at next month's meeting.

VII. Federal Surplus Property Purchases

Highway Commissioner Jack Dittmar inquired if the Committee would be comfortable giving the Department a \$10K blanket purchase approval for federal surplus property items. Jack explained that the federal government is repurposing \$1,000 tools sets for \$50 and various equipment with extremely low hours for pennies on the dollar. He feels there are various items that could benefit the Department and save considerable tax dollars but they sometimes are only available for a few weeks. **Motion made by Dave Pierce to approve a \$10,000 blanket purchase approval for federal surplus property as long as it stays within our approved budget, seconded by Gail Chapman. All ayes, motion carried.**

IX. Resolutions – TRANS 75 Absence of Need Excluding Bicycle & Pedestrian Accommodations:

Project ID 5119-00-02 CTH M Bridge over Branch of Sleighton Creek

Project ID 5126-00-01 CTH N Bridge over Spring Valley Creek

Highway Commissioner Jack Dittmar explained that these resolutions are specifically for the CTH M & CTH N bridge projects only to not require a bicycle or pedestrian path on the bridges. **Motion made by Gail Chapman to approve the TRANS 75 absence of need excluding bicycle & pedestrian accommodations resolutions for Project ID 5119-00-02 CTH M bridge over branch of Sleighton Creek and Project ID 5126-00-01 CTH N bridge over Spring Valley Creek, seconded by Dave Pierce. All ayes, motion carried.**

X. Future Agenda Items

Horse manure and rubberized horse shoes to be further discussed at the next meeting with County Corporation Counsel.

Motion to adjourn at 12:24 p.m. by Nodji VanWychen, seconded by Gail Chapman. All ayes, motion carried.

County Highway Commissioner's Report for: October 23, 2015

Projects:

- County crews: performed miscellaneous drainage cleaning/ditching, performed maintenance patching & spot sealing, performed some asphalt rut filling, cut some trees, shouldered this summer's CTH BB reconditioning project, shaped and paved around the new cold storage building, replaced a few cross-culverts on the CTH EW reconditioning project, and finished a PbM crack routing & sealing project on USH from CTH O to the Jackson County line, started the second round of mowing, helped with custodial duties at the County Courthouse, performed ditching for the Town of Angelo, and started the CTH U reconditioning project in the Village of Norwalk which includes replacing all of the deteriorated storm sewer at the intersection of Main St & CTH U.
- State crews: repaired guardrail and fencing, performed sign repair and shoulder maintenance, repaired deteriorated concrete, installed liners in some failing cross-culverts, performed drainage ditching, set up message boards for Cranfest, patched interstate asphalt, took delivery of salt for this upcoming winter.

Equipment & Facilities:

- After much negotiations to try to resolve items that do not meet our specifications, our new Peterbilt cab & chassis which was delivered in August was rejected and another International cab & chassis ordered.

Budget:

- Because the just ordered International cab & chassis will not be delivered until 2016, the \$250K budgeted this year was asked to be rolled over into next year's budget.

Personnel:

- Our Public Works Laborer working full-time in the summer for the County Maintenance Department quit last week.