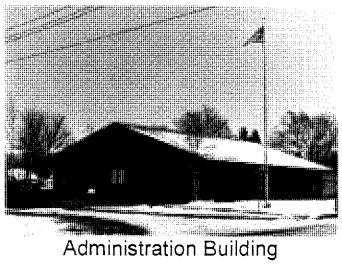

Administration Building


# MONROE COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

**JACK DITTMAR, P.E., Highway Commissioner**

803 Washington Street, Sparta, WI 54656

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

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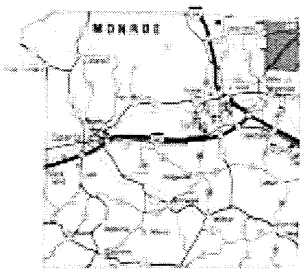


# *NOTICE OF MEETING*

**COMMITTEE:** **Highway**

**TIME:** **9:00 A.M.**

**PLACE:** **Ho-Chunk Nation Roads Division Conference Room**
**28902 STH 21 East, Tomah, WI** ***NOTE: Location!***

**DATE:** **Friday, August 15, 2014**

## 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. **Review Payroll**
4. **Review Vouchers & Credit Card Charges**
5. **Commissioner's Report (copy attached)**
   **Projects, Equipment, Facilities, Budget, & Personnel**
6. **Monroe County Highway Department Standard Operating Policy No. 14-1 (SOP-14-1) Establishment of ATV/UTV Routes on County Trunk Highways (revised draft attached)**
7. **2015 Budget**
8. **Future Agenda Items**
9. **10:30 am – 1:00 pm – Highway Tour: East Side of County**

**Date Notice Posted: August 11, 2014**

*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.***

**July 18, 2014 meeting of the Monroe County Highway Committee**

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

Members present: David Pierce, James Schroeder, Nodji VanWychen, and Gail Chapman.
Members absent: Wade Blackdeer
Others present: Highway Commissioner – Jack Dittmar, County Administrator – Cathy Schmit, Highway Office Manager – Rebecca Pitel, Highway Department Employees - J.P. Naniga and Lance Larson (Items I.-*VI. only*), and Road Runners ATV/UTV Club of Monroe County Vice President & Highway Department Employee – Mike Pierce (Items I.-*VI. only*).

I. Period of Public Comment – None.

II. Motion to approve the minutes of the regular June 20, 2014 meeting made by Dave Pierce, seconded by Gail Chapman. All ayes, motion carried.

III. Payroll presented as follows:

Check Date: 06/26/2014

- Field Personnel $62,355.15
- Administration $10,876.49
- Total $73,231.64

Check Date: 07/10/2014

- Field Personnel $64,508.33
- Administration $10,876.48
- Total $75,384.81

IV. Vouchers presented as follows:

- Early Pay $ 1,462.61
- Credit Cards $ 4,203.37
- Month Vouchers $439,304.54

$444,970.52

***V. Commissioner's Report***

- **Projects:**
  - County crews: cleaned up & repaired erosion from the June 18 rain & wind storm, replaced more rusted out culverts, performed a lot of maintenance ditching, swept highways, performed gravel shoulder maintenance, ground up and replaced the pavement at the intersection of CTH ET & CTH N, patched pavement, and continued mowing.
  - State crews: cleaned up & repaired erosion from the June 18 rain & wind storm, finished mowing, repaired guardrail, performed shoulder maintenance, sprayed guardrail with Jackson county Highway crews, patched pavement, and paved the new STH 21 RR crossing in Fort McCoy.
  - Erosion from the June 18 rain provided an opportunity to remove the majority of fractured and overhanging shale from the CTH Q hill cut. On STH 27 at Cataract, the rain caused a large slope washout at the millpond and a ditch at a culvert outlet also eroded severely. The state was in need of a large amount of rocky fill material and instead of buying material from a quarry they trucked shale from CTH Q. The county funded the machinery and men to remove and load the shale and the state paid for everything else. About 40 loads were taken up to Cataract and the majority of the rock face is now solid & the cut is a little wider.
    **Jack presented the Committee with a letter on behalf of the Committee to be sent to landowner Junior Vieth regarding the CTH Q hill.
  - County crews also started and finished our work on the CTH EW (Village of Warrens Main St) project. This is a small reconditioning project to grind up and replace the 40 year old asphalt pavement. County crews ground up the existing pavement and cut out joints at all intersecting streets. The Village is performing some utility improvements and reshaping Church St and Mathy Construction should have the paving complete by today's Committee meeting. The Village is paying for the parking lane improvements and the County is paying for the center travel lanes. This will be a much anticipated improvement for the Village & Cranfest.

- **Equipment & Facilities:** - Nothing new to report.

- **Budget:**
  - May monthly budget analysis (see handout). Even with the drastically long & over budget winter and due to a late supplemental project start we are about $150k under historic averages of our 3 major accounts combined.
  - Cash Balance continues in good shape and close to historic averages.

- **Personnel:**
  - Public Works Laborer testing & interviews of the top 8 of 30 applicants to the recent advertisement was conducted at the end of June. Personnel is currently working on background checks of the top 3 candidates to fill a current opening and the one retirement & one resignation that occurred at the end of June.

**Nodji VanWychen inquired about the changes to the department interstate premium pay that she has been recently hearing about. Administrator Cathy Schmit explained to the Committee that the interstate pay is a differential pay that should only be paid when the employee is working on the interstate. Schmit stated that is the county policy to only get paid a differential pay when you are performing that type of work, an employee should not receive the pay all the time just because it is the primary job function. Department employee JP Naniga stated that he is our newest Section Leader working an interstate section and that this pay was part of an incentive for him to be taking on the risk of working out on the interstate with its increased hazards. Naniga also stated that the employees had recently checked with adjoining counties and found out that the LaCrosse County interstate employees are being paid $22 per hour, Juneau County interstate employees are being paid $21.04 per hour with an additional 75 cents per hour when working on the interstate for that day with the stipulation that the employee only has to work 1 hour on the interstate to get the additional 75 cents per hour for the full day. Nodji VanWychen feels that the county needs to be more competitive to keep our present employees here instead of us training the employee and having them seek employment with a higher paying county. Jim Schroeder asked Administrator Schmit how the county would go about increasing the rate of pay for this type of position. Cathy Schmit explained that she works with Personnel on these types of matters. Schmit does not feel that it is justified at this time to raise the rate of pay for this position and stated that if the county doubles the differential pay that she feels the employees will still not be happy. The Committee inquired as to whom pays this rate. Jack Dittmar explained that the state would reimburse the county for this pay. The Committee asked Jack if he felt that the state would have any issues with reimbursing us for this rate if we raised it, to which he replied "no". Jack feels that the interstate premium pay should be increased to at least $1 per hour. Administrator Schmit does not feel an increase would be necessary as this premium pay was recently more than doubled (from 20 cents per hour to 50 cents per hour) in 2012 when Act 10 was implemented. Gail Chapman stated that even though it doubled "20 cents is nothing and 50 cents is only a little more than nothing". Dave Pierce agrees that the differential pay for this position should be increased. Cathy Schmit stated that she would look into it for next year's budget.

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

***VI. Monroe County Highway Department Standard Operating Policy No. 14-1 (SOP-14-1) Establishment of ATV/UTV Routes on County Trunk Highways***

Jack Dittmar presented the Committee with a copy of the subject draft policy which was included with today's agenda. Jack explained that he patterned this draft off of Juneau County's current ATV/UTV policy. He also presented the Committee with a copy of Juneau County's application for requesting a county trunk highway to be established as an ATV/UTV route. Road Runner ATV Club Vice President Mike Pierce stated that the Town of Wellington has recently expressed interest in opening the town's roads for ATV usage and would like to be considered for county highway connectors even though they do not have their town ordinance established. Mike Pierce mentioned that the Town of Oakdale and the Village of Oakdale have added ATV routes to their areas. Dittmar again expressed his professional opinion against mixing ATVs with CTH traffic and reiterated the paperwork requirements that Corporation Counsel Andy Kaftan detailed at the last Committee meeting to legally use CTHs for ATV/UTV routes. Corporation Counsel also cautioned the Committee about involving local municipalities in the route approval process, but Dittmar still feels it would be best to at least have some input from the towns and /or villages. Administrator Schmit inquired if it would be possible to combine the last two steps of the approval criteria and get input from the County Sheriff and the local municipality at the same time. The

Committee felt that would be reasonable. Mike Pierce inquired about the billing of signage for the routes to the clubs. Dittmar stated that Juneau County's policy indicates that a member of the ATV club goes around with a highway employee to install signs and the ATV club pays for all signs. Jack feels that as the statutory maintaining authority, the county will be ultimately liable for any incidents where signage of a CTH is in question. It is understandable that the clubs could get sued first, but there would be no stopping the county from being sued in the case of an accident. At a recent Southwest Region Highway Safety Coordinators meeting, the WDNR ATV Administrator stressed the importance of proper signage for limiting liability. Even though the County may have an agreement with an ATV club, Jack feels the only way to guarantee that signing is going to be installed properly and missing signage will be replaced promptly is for the Department to perform the signing and then bill the ATV club. Mike Pierce stated that the clubs are not working on government money and this would be a pretty large expense to the clubs. Dave Pierce would like to see the signage portion of the draft worded differently. Dave Pierce suggested that it should be stated that the county oversees the signage and will contact the club first with missing or inadequate signing. If the sign is not put back up within 24 hours, then enforce the billing process. Mike Pierce also inquired about the road speeds. Mike Pierce stated that most municipalities are leaving the road speed to the current speed of the roadway so it is not confusing to law enforcement, eliminating different speeds in different areas. Dittmar also feels that the county should only consider accepting applications from legally insured groups or municipalities. Cathy Schmit inquired if the county would be requesting proof of insurance. Mike Pierce stated that this really would not be necessary as State Statues cover the liability for this under recreational immunity, as long as the county does not charge ATV users a fee. Mike Pierce feels that this could be taken out of the policy for making decisions on routes. Mike Pierce stated that "90% of accident are actually due to operator error". Dave Pierce still agrees that the county should only accept applications from legalized groups or municipalities and the Committee agreed to let Corporation Counsel review state statutes for what the County's liability is. Jack Dittmar inquired if the Committee agrees on doing a press release for the route being requested or wants to do a more formal individual contact with adjacent property owners. The Committee agreed that a free press release in all local newspapers and radio stations was adequate. Nodji VanWychen would like the towns to get a copy of the adopted policy. Dittmar stated that the Wisconsin Town's Association August meeting agenda was already full, but he could potentially get on the agenda for the November meeting to discuss and handout the final policy. Jack will make the suggested Committee changes and bring the policy back at the next meeting for adoption.

***VII. New Patrol Superintendent Pickup***

Jack Dittmar explained to the Committee that the State of Wisconsin regularly puts out bids for cars & pickups that we can purchase off of which also satisfies our statutory bidding requirements. Dittmar handed out copies of our 2014 actual machinery purchases to date and stated that he would like the Committee's blessing on purchasing a new pickup truck for the Patrol Superintendent. This pickup is the last item included in this year's budget and our equipment revenues are currently projected to be almost $100k greater than what was budgeted. Dittmar would like to use the state low bid Ford and order a truck through our only local Ford dealer (Brenengen in Sparta). We have been very happy with our Ford pickups purchased over the last decade and this type of truck would cost under $40,000. Chair Jim Schroeder inquired if the Department would be looking at selling any equipment in place of the new pickup. Dittmar stated "yes this pickup would replace the Patrol Superintendent's current 6 year old pickup with 150k miles which would be trickled down into our fleet to replace a 19 year old pickup which would be sold. Jack stated that he has the statutory authority to purchase budgeted equipment (as discussed at the last meeting under Committee policymaking with Corporation Counsel) and the Committee feels that this purchase is in order.

***VIII. Consultant Engineers at Committee Meetings & "Short List"***

Jack Dittmar presented the Committee with a copy of our current (dated 06/17/11) Consulting Engineer "Short List". Our short list contains a maximum of five preapproved consulting engineers which we use for designing federal aided projects (mainly bridges). Inclusion on our list is based on qualifications and results of previous Monroe County projects. Dittmar stated that Romenesko Engineering, LLC is no longer in business and asked if the Committee would like to add a replacement to the list. Dittmar also presented the Committee with a copy of the county's "Consulting Engineer Federal Aid Contract History", which shows all the engineers we have used for federal aid projects over the last 38 years and the costs of contracts sorted by year and also by consultant. The Committee asked Jack if

he has a recommendation and he replied that Jewell Associates Engineers did an excellent job on the recent designs of bridge replacements with multiple culverts for CTH M and the Town of Sparta. **Motion made by Dave Pierce, seconded by Gail Chapman to revise our consulting engineer short list by replacing Romenesko Engineering, LLC with Jewell Associates Engineers, Inc. All ayes, motion carried.**

Dittmar asked the Committee if they would like to have consulting engineers come to Committee meetings as he gets numerous phone calls throughout the year from engineers asking to give a presentation to the Committee. Past Committees haven't put consulting engineers on their agendas due to the number of firms wanting to make a sales pitch to the Committee and the fact that we have an approved short list. Highway conferences and other highway meetings are the preferred way for new firms to introduce themselves to the Committee. We do have a few non-federal aid projects occasionally with RFPs sent to firms that aren't on our short list and this is the best way for them to showcase their work. Nodji VanWychen stated that she trusts Dittmar's judgment in this category and that was good enough for her. The other members agreed that they did not feel it necessary to have Committee meeting presentations by consulting engineering firms.

***IX. Future Agenda Items***

The Committee will look at a final Monroe County Highway Department Standard Operating Policy No. 14-1 (SOP-14-1) for the Establishment of ATV/UTV Routes on County Trunk Highways as well as a draft 2015 Department budget.

***Nodji VanWychen asked to go back to the Commissioner's Report to inquire about the recent draft of the PTO policy that she has also been hearing about. All Committee members have been getting questions on this and would like more information. Administrator Cathy Schmit explained to the Committee that the Paid Time Off (PTO) policy would be the cleanest way of requesting time off from the county. Schmit feels that this would eliminate people having to lie about being sick or parents worrying about having to take time off from work when their children are sick. The draft policy would include the employee's regular amount of yearly vacation in their PTO bank which would also include 10 ½ days of holidays and 6 days for sick leave. The other 6 days of sick leave that an employee normally would receive under the present policy will be put towards the county purchasing a short term disability policy for the employee that would pay up to 70% of the employee's income. However, the short term disability policy would not kick in until the employee has been off from work for 60 days and would cover up to 6 months. Employees would be given an option of purchasing additional short term disability that would kick in after 2 weeks of being off and cover the gap up to the 60 days, as well as an option to purchase long term disability to kick in after the 6 months. The county will not be covering any health insurance premiums when the employee is off on disability, but the employee is welcome to pay the full premium which is how the present county policy is written. Schmit also stated that the county would be combining funeral leave into this bank and that there is not additional time off for funerals, the employee would just simply have to use their PTO time. Schmit does not feel that funeral leave is a highly used benefit at this time. Schmit also explained to the Committee that the Personnel Committee has revised the first draft to allow present employees to use their existing sick leave banks for an illness that is covered under FMLA. Otherwise the current sick leave banks will be frozen and paid out at a rate of 25% upon retirement (the same as current county policy). The draft PTO policy also stipulates that PTO banks will be paid out at 50% upon retirement only. Administrator Schmit stated that she wanted to have the PTO policy discussion started a long time ago but it took longer to develop the initial draft. Schmit really wanted to have the PTO policy implemented by now so they would not have to set up two different types of leave/benefit usage programs in the new Tyler countywide financial software. Schmit realizes that getting the PTO policy passed and implemented this month will not be possible as it will be pulled from the July county board agenda as there seems to be too much misinformation circulating. Over the next few months the Personnel Committee will continue to work on the draft policy and then bring it to the full county board for approval.

***X. 10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. – Highway Tour: Northeast Corner of County***

The Committee decided to postpone the tour to next month's agenda.

Motion to adjourn at 11:45 a.m. made by Gail Chapman, seconded by Dave Pierce. All ayes, motion carried.

*County Highway Commissioner's Report for: August 15, 2014*

**Projects:**

- County crews: replaced more rusted out culverts, performed a lot of maintenance ditching, patched pavement (by hand and also with a spray injection machine), continued mowing, and started our only major reconditioning project of the year (4.1 miles of CTH A from Jungle Rd to CTH N in Clifton).
- State crews: washed bridges, performed shoulder maintenance, performed maintenance ditching, patched pavement, cut trees, and fixed highway fencing.
- State & County crews also started and finished our first WDOT Performance-based Maintenance (PbM) project shouldering the inside westbound lane of I-90 from CTH M to the La Crosse county line. As part of the 2013-2015 State budget the WDOT is piloting PbM projects with most all counties. PbM projects are completed for unit cost prices, not actual costs like other WDOT maintenance work. We submitted our unit costs based on the project taking 4 days to complete and we finished in under 3 days, so we should easily cover our costs.

**Equipment & Facilities:** -Nothing new to report.

**Budget:**

- June monthly budget analysis (see handout). Due to a late start on summer paving & reconditioning projects we are about $190k under historic averages of our 3 major accounts combined and cash balance continues in good shape & close to historic averages.

**Personnel:**

- Public Works Laborer testing & interviews of the top 8 of 30 applicants to the recent advertisement was conducted at the end of June. Personnel is currently making offers to 3 of the top candidates to fill a current opening and the one retirement & one resignation that occurred at the end of June. New employees are expected to start around the beginning of September.

# 2014 JUNE MONTHLY BUDGET ANALYSIS

## *MONROE COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPT.*

### Year to Date (YTD) Expenditures (EXP) of 3 Major Accounts (Summer & Winter Maintenance and Supplemental Construction) AND Cash Balance (BAL) as of 06/30/2014

** NOTE: All $ are thousands **

| Account # | Account Name | 2014 BUDGET | 2014 YTD EXPENDITURES | 2014 YTD PERCENT OF BUDGET | *3 YR AVE YTD EXP* (% TOTAL EXP) | 10 YR AVE YTD PERCENT TOTAL EXP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1-53311 | County Routine Maintenance | $1,750 | $614 | 35.1% | *$553* 32.0% | 35.4% |
| 1-53312 | County Snow & Ice Control | $700 | $620 | 88.6% | *$470* 72.0% | 67.3% |
| 1-53319 | C.T.H. Supplemental Construction | $2,200 | $2 | 0.1% | *$129* 14.3% | 18.5% |
| | TOTALS = | $4,650 | $1,236 | 26.6% | *$1,153* 30.0% | 33.3% |

| | 2014 TAX LEVY | 2014 YTD CASH BALANCE | 2014 YTD PERCENT OF TAX LEVY | *3 YR AVE YTD BAL* (% TAX LEVY) | 10 YR AVE YTD PERCENT TAX LEVY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CASH BALANCE | $3,076 | $3,016 | 98.1% | *$2,958* 101.4% | 79.1% |

**MONROE COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT**
**STANDARD OPERATING POLICY NO. 14-1 (SOP-14-1)**

# ESTABLISHMENT OF ATV/UTV ROUTES ON COUNTY TRUNK HIGHWAYS

DRAFT

*Purpose:*
To provide procedures & criteria for establishment of ATV/UTV routes on county trunk highways within the county.

*Justification:*
- The Monroe County Highway Committee recognizes that ATV/UTV use within the County is on the increase despite a lack of ATV/UTV trails.
- Organized ATV/UTV groups and individuals are requesting ATV/UTV routes on County Trunk Highways for recreation, tourism & transportation.
- Not all local municipalities within the County are amenable to ATV/UTV routes within their borders.
- Legally established ATV/UTV routes require adoption of a County Board ordinance which specify routes and follow formal publishing requirements, therefore establishment takes time and cannot easily be changed.
- ATV/UTV routes on County Trunk Highways create safety concerns which must be weighed against the recreational/tourism/transportation benefits of allowing ATV/UTVs on County Trunk Highways.
- A written policy gives clear direction to groups/individuals wanting routes and will ensure that establishment is handled consistently.

*Policy Legal Considerations:*
- *Wisconsin State Statutes:* 23.33 define & regulate ATV/UTVs.
- *Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Administrative Code:* Chapter NR 64 establishes standards for the implementation of the all-terrain vehicle program under §23.33.

**POLICY:**
- All requests for establishment of ATV/UTV routes shall be submitted on a Monroe County Highway Department application.
  - Applications shall only be accepted from legally organized and insured groups or Monroe County municipalities.

- By signing the application, applicant is agreeing to be financially responsible for all costs associated with legally signing requested routes. For the life of the routes, applicant shall sign all routes and replace missing or inadequate signs within 24 hours of notice. If applicant is notified by the County Highway Department that a sign is missing or inadequate, applicant shall install the requested signs(s) within 24 hours. If the requested sign(s) are not installed within 24 hours of notification, the County Highway Department will install the requested sign(s) and bill the applicant for all costs associated with installing the sign(s). If a bill isn't paid within 60 calendar days of postmark, the routes shall be closed.
- By signing the application, applicant is agreeing to maintain a minimum of one WDNR certified Trail Patrol Ambassador for each 10 miles of approved routes and to document a minimum of ½ hour per route mile per week patrolling approved routes.
- Application deadline for annual ATV/UTV route establishment shall be January 02. Applications missing the annual deadline shall wait until the next year.
- Incomplete applications shall be returned to applicant with incomplete areas highlighted. Applicant shall have 15 calendar days to return the completed application or wait until the next year to apply.

- The County Highway Committee will approve ATV/UTV routes based on the following criteria with the main goal being safety of all highway users:
  1) Current AADT of requested route less than 500 vehicles per day.
  2) No vertical (hill) or horizontal (curve) alignment safety concerns.
  3) The applicant shall demonstrate that no other practical option exists (ex. off road trail, Town road route, etc.).
  4) All other alternatives shall be fully investigated.
  5) The requested route must connect segments of ATV/UTV road route networks unless the requested route is a starting point of an ATV/UTV route. To be considered a starting point of a route an establishment must post a sign designating an adequate parking area for ATV/UTV loading/unloading.
  6) Length of the requested route must be the minimum necessary.
  7) County Sheriff and County Public Safety & Justice Coordinating Committee input.
  8) Local Municipality input.
  9) Citizen input.
- If the County Highway Committee is satisfied with the first 6 route approval criteria, they will forward copies of all information to the County Sheriff and local municipality for input from the Sheriff and Public Safety

DRAFT

& Justice Coordinating Committee and the local municipalities. A public news release to the local newspapers & radio stations will also be sent out during this step to solicit citizen input.

- If the County Highway Committee is satisfied with all 9 route approval criteria, they will create and send a resolution to the County Board for creation or amendment/appendment of a County ATV/UTV Route ordinance.
- The County Highway Commissioner is authorized to close a route at any time if compliance with the approved application or county ordinance are not being met. If the Commissioner closes a route, the County Highway Committee shall approve the closure or reopen the route at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

Recommended for Adoption:

_____

Jack Dittmar, County Highway Commissioner

Adopted: August 15, 2014
Monroe County Highway Committee:

_____

James Schroeder, Chairman

_____

Gail Chapman, Vice Chairman

_____

Wade Blackdeer

_____

David Pierce

_____

Nodji VanWychen

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