

June 20, 2023 meeting of the Monroe County Highway Committee

Meeting called to order at 9:00 am by Chairperson David Pierce.

Members present: David Pierce, Wally Habegger, Douglas Rogalla, Zach Zebell, and Nodji VanWychen.

Members absent: None

Others present: Highway Commissioner – David Ohnstad, Office Manager – Brooke Adams, and Town of Tomah Chair – Howard Hanson

1. Period of Public Comment

No public comment

2. Last Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of the May 16, 2023 regular meeting made by Doug Rogalla, seconded by Nodji VanWychen. All ayes, motion carried.

3. Review Vouchers and Credit Card Charges (Discussion)

Highway Department vouchers and expenditures were reviewed. Month vouchers: \$484,192.82.

4. Credit Card Request (Discussion & Decision)

Motion to approve the request for a credit card to be issued to Fiscal Assistant Vickie Hanson made by Doug Rogalla, seconded by Nodji VanWychen. All ayes, motion carried.

5. Re-purpose of funds (Discussion & Decision)

Motion to approve the re-purpose of funds for the purchase of a hydraulic hammer (unit #833) made by Doug Rogalla, seconded by Nodji VanWychen. All ayes, motion carried.

6. Budget Modification Procedures (Discussion & Decision)

- Commissioner Ohnstad requested this item be struck from the agenda as the matter is being reviewed and an amendment to the policy is being considered by the Finance Committee and Corporate Council.

Zach Zebell arrived at 9:07 am during discussion of item 6.

7. WCHA/WTA/LWM Pilot Program (Discussion & Decision)

- Commissioner Ohnstad stated he is prepared to sign the pilot program agreement out of unity with the association.
- David Pierce stated he doesn't see why the program needs to change.
- Zach Zebell stated if the program isn't broken, no need to fix it.
- Commissioner Ohnstad stated the association is requesting that we move forward with signing the agreement, so is inclined to sign with the caveat that it is a pilot program for the 2024-2025 cycle which starts this fall. The organizational meeting, road tours, etc. would be done by the town and municipal associations rather than the county highway departments.
- Doug Rogalla stated the matter would need to be brought up at the Wisconsin Towns Association meeting.
- David Pierce questioned what the final date is to sign the agreement. Commissioner Ohnstad said there isn't a due date.
- Commissioner Ohnstad stated will speak with executive director and peers on Thursday, 6/22, to get more information.

No motion made. No action was taken.

8. Highway Improvement Schedule of Obligations (Discussion)

Commissioner Ohnstad presented information on the updated schedule of obligations.

- The first two items for CTH ET have not been funded yet, so are not included in the total, but are projects we are working on.
- Agreement with the City of Tomah leaves a \$459,185 balance that will need to be paid by the county.
- CTH ET from STH 21 to Flare Ave. is under contract. Waiting for the pre-construction meeting to start work. Did have a request for change management approved which increased the program cap. Scheduled to complete this summer.

June 20, 2023 meeting of the Monroe County Highway Committee

- CTH ET Forbes Rd. to CTH N is scheduled for 2024. The right of way plat was approved recently, and will be holding a right of way round up Tuesday and Wednesday, 6/27-6/28 at the Tomah Police Department Community Room. Property owners have been invited to come in. Remains a tight design schedule to meet funding obligation.
- CTH PC design is being worked on, currently at about 50%. Remains in the program for STP local funding in 2025. It is an \$8 million project, even with \$6.4 million in federal funding we are still left with a sizeable local match. May look for larger program funding for the project. Tentative schedule of construction in 2026 if the funding is available.
- CTH BC is ongoing and current. Scheduled for construction in 2025.
- CTH PP at the intersection of US 12, the \$16,000 is to realign the curb radii from US 12 onto CTH PP.
- CTH PP Bridge East Fork of Lemonweir River held the pre-construction meeting last week and construction is scheduled to begin the week of June 26. The road will be closed for approximately 3 months.
- CTH U Bridge is under construction. Once abutments and piers are poured, will need to cure and then will begin assembling the substructure. Hopeful that construction will be completed by the tractor pull weekend in Norwalk.
- CTH Z Bridge over Poe Creek remains under design.
- CTH Z Bridge over Billings Creek has an operational planning meeting on Friday, June 23.
- CTH N Bridge over the Little Lemonweir River is under design. Scheduled for construction in 2026.
- CTH A Bridge over Indian Creek was just awarded. 80% reimbursable for design and construction.
- CTH T Bridge over Moore Creek, south of Hwy 71 was just awarded. It is a 2-span bridge with substantial realignment. Construction dates have not been determined.
- CTH T Bridge over Moore Creek, north of the Village of Norwalk, was just awarded. 100% funding for the design and construction.
- CTH P is funded by STP Rural, and local funds. The design is in progress with the intent to keep alignment as is, with minor modifications.
- CTH F from CTH U to CTH T is a bond issue project. Approval has been made to move county highway improvement discretionary funds from CTH PC to CTH F. The idea being to offset some of the bond issue money. The project is scheduled for 2024.
- CTH W from Vernon County line to STH 71 pre-construction meeting was last week. Construction to begin the week of June 26. Advance warning signs will be posted this week as the road will be closed to through traffic. Will be spreading raw aggregate on top of existing pavement and will grind, shape, and compact the new road base and then pave on top. Will be under construction for several months.
- CTH I prep work should be finished early part of next week, and then will be working with the contractor to schedule construction.
- CTH J is about 30% complete on design. The project will be submitted in the 2024-2025 cycle for STP Rural funding.
- CTH AA is in need of funding for the 2 sections. Will be applying for STP local funds for the project.
- The schedule is where we are at currently, and it is fluid. We will continue to be as aggressive as we can with pursuing funding, but there is still a fair amount required of matching funds.

9. Establishment of Capital Reserve (Discussion & Decision)

- Our total obligations are currently over \$31 million in project costs. Our local commitment is about \$8 million.
- Commissioner Ohnstad said what he believes needs to be done is have a reserve account (set up as an interest bearing account) outside of the operating budget. The commitments are not going away, and if we can't meet those commitments, the projects will not happen. The best option to meet commitments is a capital reserve funded by local dollars above and beyond the operating budget.
- Ohnstad said that in the 7 years he has been with the department, we have only added 1 position (mechanic). Projects are being added, but staff and funding is not. The additional work needs to be reflected in funding.
- David Pierce said he thinks a capital reserve should be segregated from the operating budget.
- Wally Habegger said he is unsure. Needs to hear both sides.
- Doug Rogalla said that the issue is more that all county funds are mixed into the same mixing bowl. It is not clear what money comes in from the state and where it is supposed to go.

June 20, 2023 meeting of the Monroe County Highway Committee

- Zach Zebell said he doesn't have a solid opinion on the option at this point because he doesn't know enough about it yet. Does think that there needs to be more put into the roads.
- David Pierce said he thinks that any funding we get from the state should be off limits to other departments.
- Zach Zebell said you can look at the highway funds and see a large pot of money, but don't see the schedule of obligations.
- Doug Rogalla asked about including replacement fleet in a capital reserve. Asked if there is a list showing vehicles and the schedule of replacement costs.
- Commissioner Ohnstad provided a 10 year improvement-replacement schedule for equipment. In 2024, proposing to replace patrol trucks which cost \$315,000+ each. Would be the truck and snow equipment. Also looking at replacing soil stabilizer and pavement reclaimer. The unit age is 34, and is outdated. To replace with a decent used unit would cost around \$500,000. Some pieces of equipment are 34-38 years old, well beyond the effective life. Money is being spent to fix older units because the funds aren't available to replace.
- Commissioner Ohnstad said he is proposing to take the equipment reimbursement from the DOT on state projects to use as part of the formation of the reserve (approximately \$906,000 in 2022) to get to the \$1.6 million needed. In addition, revenues from auction sales of old equipment would also go to the fund. The fund would be interest bearing and that interest would remain in the fund. All of our programs and projects are subject to multiple audits (local, state, and federal levels).
- Doug Rogalla asked if Commissioner Ohnstad would be able to present a budget for the proposed fund at the next committee meeting. Commissioner Ohnstad said yes.

Motion to place the discussion and decision on the establishment of a capital reserve on the July committee agenda was made by Doug Rogalla, seconded by Wally Habegger. All ayes, motion carried.

Zach Zebell left the meeting at 10:12 am.

10. Committee Chairman Report (Discussion)

David Pierce presented information from attending the WCHA Summer Road School.

- Learned about open meeting rules.
- Keynote speaker was Craig Thompson, Wisconsin Secretary of Transportation.
- Provided brochures from expo on different equipment options.

11. Local Bridge Design (Discussion)

- Commissioner Ohnstad said that with federal funding being awarded for construction and design on 3 county highway bridges, and 3 town road bridges.
- With accepting federal funding, we have to follow the Quality Based Selection process that is defined in the DOT manual.
- An RFP will be sent out to consultants on the maintained roster (we have 11) and have them submit proposals for design.
- Unsure if we will do individual interviews for each project, but will have a group discussion and make consultant selections based on scores from the submitted RFPs. Interview questions will be established with a range of points for responses. Responses can either be written or in person. Would prefer written due to the number of projects.
- Once SMA agreements are completed and returned to the DOT by towns, the process can proceed.
- Howard Hanson, Town of Tomah Chair, asked what the time frame is for the designs. Commissioner Ohnstad said would be approximately 6 months before the design is started. Estimating \$70,000 for the design. Will be a three way agreement. Funding is up to 100%, but there may be some smaller miscellaneous charges.
- Ohnstad said that it is up to the highway review committee whether the towns participate in scoring or not. Asked Howard Hanson his opinion. Hanson said he thinks someone from the towns should be part of the scoring.
- David Pierce said that each town will have a representative invited to the scoring.
- Ohnstad said that when SMAs are executed by the towns, the RFP will be drafted, then sent to the DOT for approval. Once DOT approves the RFP, it will be sent out to the 11 consulting firms on our roster. Hoping to be able to move forward by the July meeting.

June 20, 2023 meeting of the Monroe County Highway Committee

12. Commissioners Report (Discussion)

- Wally Habhegger asked about the Salt Storage Building bids. Commissioner Ohnstad said bid was awarded and signed last week with Structures Unlimited. They guaranteed completing the project within the timeframe specified in the RFP. The other bid was around \$2000 less, but completion was a month later. Once construction is completed, we will have to pave prior to winter and we are unable to push the time frame back. The Structures Unlimited proposal has 12 foot walls, and then an additional 10 foot vertical leg up to a domed roof. 6500 pounds of salt will be going in the state salt shed and it has been ordered.
- Ohnstad said that the heated storage building RFP (re-bid) closes 6/29. On the revised RFP we had completed a soil analysis so bidders can design their footings based on the soil bearing capacity. Did not include a firm completion date. These items may make a difference in the dollar amount.
- Mashuda Contractors are crushing asphalt millings off of the I90-I94 project to resize, and will be reused for state projects. La Crosse County will start hauling out material next week. Material will be available to be used for site preparation for the new salt shed.
- Site preparation for the new salt shed and area for heating storage building will be approximately \$230,000.

13. Future Agenda Items

Next meeting date Scheduled for Tuesday, July 18, 2023 at 9 am at the Highway Administration Building.

David Pierce requested Roll Call be added to the agenda.

Discussion & Decision on the Establishment of Capital Reserve to be held.

Motion to adjourn at 11:17 am by Doug Rogalla, seconded by Nodji VanWychen. All ayes, motion carried.