

July 16, 2024 meeting of the Monroe County Highway Committee

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Meeting called to order at 8:59 am by Chairperson David Pierce.

Members present: David Pierce, Wally Habegger, Jim Kuhn, and Nodji VanWychen

Members absent: Zach Zebell

Others present: Highway Commissioner – David Ohnstad, County Administrator – Tina Osterberg, Fleet & Facilities Manager – Bill Pieper, and Highway Office Manager – Brooke Adams

2. Period of Public Comment

No Public Comment

3. Last Meeting Minutes (Discussion & Decision)

Motion to approve the minutes of the June 18, 2024 regular meeting made by Wally Habegger, seconded by Jim Kuhn. All ayes, motion carried.

4. Review Vouchers and Credit Card Charges (Discussion)

Highway Department vouchers and expenditures were reviewed. Month vouchers: \$377,079.99.

5. Bond Issue Arbitrage Review (Discussion)

Commissioner Ohnstad stated that this is a summary of the final reconciliation. The arbitrage rebate payment of \$55,101.26 was filed and paid to the IRS. The issue should now be resolved. Commissioner Ohnstad reiterated that the bond was still a positive investment for the county.

6. Budget Performance Report (Discussion)

A. Commissioner Ohnstad reviewed the most recent monthly budget report.

B. Commissioner Ohnstad reviewed the amendments to the Emergency Overtime Report. The Emergency Overtime hours will likely be fairly consistent from year to year.

Jim Kuhn stated that the important thing is that the report shows the change from 2 years ago to today.

Commissioner Ohnstad stated that the report will continue to be updated annually.

7. FY 2025 Budget Development (Discussion)

Commissioner Ohnstad provided an update on FY 2025 budget development. Salary projections have been received. Planned highway improvement projects have been determined, but are subject to change. The 10-Year Fleet Management plan will be updated as there are some adjustments to be made to the current 2024 budget.

Bill Pieper explained that after further research, it was determined that the reclaimer budgeted for in 2024 would no longer be a necessary investment. With the funds budgeted, there is possibility to purchase a hydraulic excavator and depending on costs, other equipment could be purchased as well. Once information is available, the proper budget adjustment requests will be made.

8. Purchasing, RFP, Grant Administration (Discussion & Decision)

Commissioner Ohnstad stated there is likely not a decision needed, but wanted to discuss concerns with the proposed County Purchasing, RFP, and Grant Administration policies. The goal of standardization of processes county-wide is understood, however the Highway Department has well developed, comprehensive, standardized templates and processes in place that have been used and modified for many years. Commissioner Ohnstad provided and reviewed an example of a full RFP process with an executed contract, the 2024 Bituminous Surface Treatment Program. For most infrastructure projects, the WisDOT pre-qualification list of vendors is relevant and readily available. One of the concerns is if the process were to become too complicated, fewer bids would be received. For grants, most of the programs are either state or federal funds and require following the state and/or federal guidelines. The hope is that the county's efforts to standardize do not compromise the Highway Department's process. The department would not benefit from arbitrary changes to the current process.

County Administrator Osterberg stated that it was the Finance Committee's request to have a streamlined process. A request for feedback was sent out a year ago and comments received from other departments and the Finance Committee were included in the final policy. The Highway Department did not provide any feedback at that time. Part of the policies are to make sure everyone involved is aware of their responsibility, and the committee of jurisdiction is kept informed. Adrian Lockington has put in quite a bit of time been working on the policies, and currently does RFP's for the majority of county departments. Working with Corporation Counsel, standard Terms and Conditions were

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created. The goal through the process is to have a set template of forms. Any business done with any county department will have the same requirements.

Commissioner Ohnstad stated that the department has been transparent with the Highway Committee when applying for program funding. Feedback on the grant policy was not provided because applications are made on a continuing basis for established programs that use a very specific format. The difference needs to be recognized. A standard format is fine, but would like to note that having someone else involved with the process adds steps, but not value.

Jim Kuhn stated that the Highway Department has a lot of special type grants that have their own requirements of forms. Human Services has the same thing. A concern he has is that information used to start with the committee, now it is all done outside of the committee and comes back to be rubberstamped. He would like to hear about things on the front end.

Administrator Osterberg stated that the grant policy requires them to be taken to the committee of jurisdiction.

Commissioner Ohnstad stated that there is a 10-year Highway Improvement Plan in place that has been approved by the Highway Committee more than once. Trying to find the right program for each project is done constantly.

Administrator Osterberg stated that there should be an updated 10-year plan for the 2025 budget.

Commissioner Ohnstad stated that since the plan was developed in 2017 it has been updated and approved several times. If it was required to have approval for every submittal, there would be a lot of meetings.

Administrator Osterberg stated that a brief "here is what we have been doing" update to committee members would be fine.

Commissioner Ohnstad stated that the Highway Committee is one of the only committees that has statutory authority. In counties with a county administrator the Highway Committee is advisory, policy only. The administrative authority is delegated to the office of the Highway Commissioner. Projects on the 10-year Highway Improvement Plan have been approved through the committee and through the budget process. Attempts to secure funding are made for projects that have been approved.

Jim Kuhn stated that his interpretation is that the Highway Department is different than other departments. Other departments are strictly under the county and the county rules. You can't do that with the Highway Department.

Administrator Osterberg stated that there is an exemption in the RFP policy for DOT projects.

Jim Kuhn stated that it seems the concern is with RFP's, the department would in essence lose control as Adrian Lockington would be doing the RFP's.

Administrator Osterberg stated that there would be a standard RFP template in which you would change the scope of work.

Nodji VanWychen stated she thought Administrator Osterberg said there were exceptions.

Administrator Osterberg stated that for the Highway Department, the exception would apply to state and federal highways. A standard RFP provides a standard terms and conditions applicable county wide.

Commissioner Ohnstad stated that the Highway Department has different items in the solicitations than other departments. Standards should be limited to items that are genuinely universal throughout the county.

Nodji VanWychen asked what Adrian Lockington's responsibility is on the standard form, what is her involvement. Administrator Osterberg answered that Adrian has been the one drafting the policy and working with Corporation Counsel. For many departments, Adrian is the lead gatherer of information. Departments provide Adrian with the scope of work, and she puts the RFP out. For the Highway Department it will likely still be done by Commissioner Ohnstad or Bill Pieper, but using the standard form.

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Wally Habhegger stated that the Administration and Personnel Committee has been inundated the past year with policy change. If something isn't broken, why are we fixing it? The Highway Department is well established at what it does, why are we going through this process?

Bill Pieper expressed his concern that small vendors that only provide the department with a small amount of products will not provide bids if they are required to go through the RFP process as proposed.

Brooke Adams stated that the concern is the way the policy reads, that all RFP's must be completed by Adrian Lockington. Administrator Osterberg responded that there are exceptions for standardized state and federal restrictions. Brooke Adams asked if all other RFP's would then be required to be done by Adrian Lockington. Administrator Osterberg stated that is correct.

Nodji VanWychen stated that the process should only be used with departments that don't have a department head, or the personnel to complete the tasks.

Commissioner Ohnstad stated that listening to vendors, RFP's that are too complicated will not be applied for. He requested that systems and processes in place that are already working not be impacted.

Strike decision, no decision needed.

County Administrator Osterberg left the meeting at 10:45 am.

9. Commissioners Report (Discussion)

Commissioner Ohnstad provided a report:

- CTH BC – Erosion control is starting to be installed today. The contractor did ask for a 2 week extension, which was denied. Scheduled end date is August 30th.
- CTH F – Erosion is being worked on that will take an extra 2-3 days. On schedule to begin paving 7/22.
- CTH P – Waiting on final approval from the DOT for the design. Project is on schedule for 2025.
- CTH ET – We did commit to an October let for the Federal Lands Access project.
- Local bridges have all been awarded. Total of 7 bridges, 4 local and 1 county 100% funded, 2 county 80% funded.
- Agricultural Improvement projects were announced this week. Town of Greenfield, Town of Scott, Town of Byron, and Town of LaGrange were awarded funded. The second round will be starting shortly.

Next meeting date scheduled for 9:00 am, Tuesday, August 20, 2024 the Highway Administration Building.

Motion to adjourn made by Jim Kuhn, seconded by Nodji VanWychen. Meeting adjourned at 11:15 am.