

**SPECIAL ORDERS SESSION
WINNEBAGO COUNTY BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2010**

Chairman David Albrecht called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the County Board Room, Fourth Floor, Courthouse, 415 Jackson Street, Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and an invocation by Supervisor Lennon.

The following Supervisors were present: Konezke, Barker, Eisen, Ramos, Miller, Roh, Smith, Hamblin, Albrecht, Swanson, Thompson, Lennon, Reynolds, Hall, Wingren, Jacobson, Norton, Warnke, Robl, Eichman, Locke, Hegg, Finch, Sievert, Farrey, Diakoff, Brennand, Egan, Ellis, Rengstorf and Reinert.

Excused: Gabert, Widener, Neubauer, Engelbert and Kline.

Motion by Supervisor Robl and seconded to approve the agenda for this evening's meeting. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

PUBLIC HEARING

No one addressed the Board.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Supervisor Finch reported that the Parks Department is holding their annual Autumn Fest on Saturday, September 11. He encouraged everyone to attend this fun event.

Supervisor Jacobson invited the Board members to the Park View Health Center's Fall Festival parade that is being held on the grounds on Wednesday, September 8.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Albrecht announced that Supervisors Gabert, Widener, Neubauer, Engelbert and Kline are excused from tonight's meeting.

PRESENTATION OF PLAQUES TO FORMER COUNTY BOARD SUPERVISORS

Chairman Albrecht presented plaques to former County Board Supervisors Amy Gearhart, Tena Riste and Arlene Schmuhl. Former supervisors Donald Griesbach, Jim Koziczowski and James Nelson were not able to attend tonight's meeting to receive their plaques.

At 6:05 p.m. Chairman Albrecht called for a brief recess so coffee and cake could be served to the former supervisors. The Board reconvened at 6:20 p.m.

**SOLID WASTE/RECYCLING GREEN PROJECTS UPDATE
JENNIFER SEMRAU, RECYCLING SPECIALIST**

Jennifer Semrau, Recycling Specialist with the Winnebago County Solid Waste Department, reported on her department's various "green" programs and activities. Ms. Semrau stated that "green is the new black", because being green can also generate profits and reduce costs. She explained that for more than 20 years, the Solid Waste Department has been involved in green projects and activities. Those projects and activities include:

- Landfill Gas Collection/Utilization
 - Landfill gas is created when solid waste decomposes in the landfill
 - Federal and state laws require that landfill gas be collected and destroyed
 - The gas can be destroyed by "flaring" the gas, which is burning the gas without recovering any of the energy from it.

Since 1990, Winnebago County has captured landfill gas and used it to generate electricity. Gas from both the Snell Road and Sunnyview Landfills is collected and used to generate power. Ms. Semrau explained that the electricity that is generated from the collected landfill gas is sold to Wisconsin Public Service.

Ms. Semrau stated that the waste heat that comes from these generators is used to supplement the heating and hot water systems at the county's law enforcement center, saving the county \$50,000 per year. At the Highway Department, landfill gas is used to supplement the natural gas that powers two boilers. This practice saves the county approximately \$10,000 per year.

Ms. Semrau stated that Winnebago County generates 5.477 megawatts of electricity from their various generators, which is enough to supply 3,500 residential homes. She explained that generating this much electricity is equivalent to:

- 1,160 rail cars full of coal for a coal fired power plant to generate 5.477 megawatts of electricity
- Planting 64,500 acres of forest
- Removing 45,300 vehicles from the road

Ms. Semrau reported that in 2009, revenues from this program exceeded \$2 Million. These revenues offset equipment costs and department operations.

Ms. Semrau then reported on the county's Household Hazardous Materials (HHM). In 1998, the county built a permanent, seasonal HHM facility at the Transfer Station. County residents can drop off HHMs at the facility and the county will dispose of them in the proper manner. Ms. Semrau explained that in association with the HHM facility, there is an exchange room where full or almost-new products are placed and other people can take them and use them rather than the county having to dispose of them.

Ms. Semrau stated that since 1998, 5,034 residents have dropped off 341,903 pounds of materials at the HHM facility and 932 residents have taken 27,201 pounds of materials from the exchange room. Making those materials available to others to use has kept those 27,201 pounds of materials from needing to be disposed of.

Ms. Semrau also presented information to the Board on their electronics and bulb recycling program and their medication collection program. Other "green" programs administered by the Solid Waste Management Department include:

- Yard waste/clean wood drop site/compost bin sales
- Oil filter, used oil, antifreeze recycling
- Appliance, tire, lead-acid battery, propane tank, scrap metal recycling
- Education (materials, presentations, tours) to schools, community groups, businesses, municipalities, etc.
- Single stream recycling

Ms. Semrau stated that Winnebago County is forming a "Green Team" made up of people from various county departments that will study how Winnebago County can become more "green". Their first meeting will be on September 15.

Ms. Semrau then took questions from the Board.

BUOY 100 FINAL REPORT – ARLENE SCHMUHL, CHAIRPERSON WINTER NAVIGATIONAL AIDS SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Arlene Schmuhl, Chairperson of the Winter Navigational Aids Special Committee, explained that this committee was formed after there was an accident near buoy 100 last winter. Ms. Schmuhl explained that Buoy 100 is a lighted, permanent (cement) buoy in Lake Winnebago near the mouth of the Fox River in the City of Menasha. Last winter the light on the buoy was not operating when the accident occurred. It was the committee's responsibility to determine whether Buoy 100 should be lit in the winter or just in the summer.

The committee included Supervisor Nancy Barker; Don Herman, Otter Street Fishing Club and Sunk Ice Rescue; Terry Schroeder, Snowmobile Alliance; Dale Frank, Payne's Point Hook and Spear Club; Dr. Paul McAvoy; Capt. Geoff Carman, U.S. Coast Guard; Ryan Krings, Neenah/Menasha Fire Rescue; Brian Asendorf and Dave Peck – citizen members; and Sheriff Michael Brooks.

Ms. Schmuhl stated that the committee's main objectives were:

- Determine liability—is the county liable for accidents occurring if the buoy isn't lit. The answer is no, because incidents such as these fall under the recreation immunity exemption.
- Do other government entities have winter navigational aids—lighted or not lighted. After a diligent search, they discovered that no where in the State of Wisconsin are there any winter navigational aids. There is a national park in northern Minnesota where they maintain an ice road across a body of water, but it is not lit.
- Is there a way to maintain travel routes on Lake Winnebago in the winter and to let people know what the ice conditions are on the lake and near Buoy 100? The size of the lake and the various jurisdictions that cover the lake make it difficult to maintain and monitor routes. However, the Otter Street Fishery Club has had success using old Christmas trees to mark routes on the lake. They have an actual system about how and where the trees are placed and why they are pointing in a certain direction.
- Was it possible that the U.S. Coast Guard would take over management of the buoy system as they did up until 1988. Although the Winnebago System is considered a federal waterway, they won't take over the buoy system until all the locks on the Fox River are open. When that happens, they may be willing to take joint jurisdiction of buoy system.

Ms. Schmuhl stated that when the committee first met, they were split on whether the buoy should or should not be lit in the winter. Points of their discussions included:

- Do people on the lake see the light on the buoy and think it's a beacon on land? Unless people are familiar with the area and know that it's a buoy, they may head towards it thinking it's on land. Even people familiar with the area can get confused and disoriented when it's foggy or snowing.
- Should it remain lit and used to designate a dangerous area? If you do that, what about marking other potentially dangerous areas on the lake? And, if those areas aren't marked, will people have the false impression that these areas are safe?
- If the lights on the buoy are different colors, could the buoy be used as a reference point for people on the lake? It would be a challenge to educate people that it is being used strictly as a reference point. The other problem with this idea is that during the holidays, homes and businesses around the lake are decorated with colored lights, so distinguishing the buoy could be difficult. Reflective signs were also discussed, but disregarded because a vehicle would have to be quite close for them to see the sign and then it might be too late.
- Various sports groups were contacted for their opinion on whether the buoy should be lit and the majority said it should not be lit in the winter.

Ms. Schmuhl reported that at their May meeting the committee voted 9-1 not to light the buoy during the winter months. She stated that because a number of people who had a vital interest in the buoy issue could not be at the May meeting, they scheduled a June meeting so they could attend and express their opinions on the matter. Another vote was then taken and it was unanimous not to light the buoy during the winter months. Ms. Schmuhl reported that the committee also feels it's important that some of the money designated towards the buoy system be used to educate people about the lake's buoy system. Ms. Schmuhl then took questions from the Board.

FORMER OSHKOSH B'GOSH BUILDING UPDATE – MIKE ELDER, FACILITIES DIRECTOR

Mike Elder, Winnebago County Facilities Director, updated the Board on the status of the former Oshkosh B'Gosh building. He stated that approximately six weeks ago they began converting the building for use as county facilities—one building for Second Chance and the other building for administrative offices. They had hoped to have the Second Chance building ready by the time school started, but they ran into some asbestos and plumbing issues. They do have all the demo work completed and the interior walls are up segregating classrooms and staffs' offices. It is all painted and the other interior finishes—ceilings, floors, etc.—should be done in a couple of weeks. Mr. Elder stated that Second Chance is scheduled to be in the building by September 27.

Mr. Elder stated that the other building, which will be called the county's administration building, had all the demo work completed. Other things that have been done are:

- Restrooms have been "deconstructed" so they can be redone to meet ADA requirements
- Fire alarm system is being brought up to code
- New walls are framed out and the drywall is being put up
- Parking lot is being redone; stormwater drainage systems have been installed to meet stormwater regulations
- They have started preparing the area where the generator from the old Park View site is going to be located. The generator will be used if the building loses power from Wisconsin Public Service.
- The areas for the Information Systems Department and Human Resources Department will be carpeted soon. The cubicle walls will then be put in place.
- The computer room still needs to have the air-conditioning installed. Once that is in place, they will be able to move their computer network system into the building.

Mr. Elder stated that they hope to have departments start moving into the administration building by the end of October. He stated that the Finance Department's area on the fourth floor still needs to have the layout of the cubicles finalized. Once that has been done and the cubicles installed, they will be able to move into their area.

Mr. Elder stated that the second floor is where the Public Health Department will be located and that is the floor that needs the most work. They will most likely be the last department moved into the building.

Mr. Elder then took questions from the Board.

UPDATE ON THE VETERANS SERVICES DEPARTMENT – ROBERT STONE, VETERANS SERVICES OFFICER

Robert Stone, Winnebago County's Veterans Services Officer, spoke to the Board about his department's mission statement, their impact on the community and the people they serve. Mr. Stone described the demobilization of the 32nd Wisconsin National Guard unit at Fort McCoy and explained the counseling they received after they returned from a war environment. Mr. Stone stated that they look for the resilience level of the military people who return. Those people that

come home and have difficulty assimilating into civilian life are the people his department serves.

Mr. Stone stated that their mission statement was recently updated to reflect their purpose and reads, "Assist the service person with restoration—return to the level of function before they went off to service or better. Promote veterans and veterans programs in the Winnebago County area. Provide input to state and federal department of Veterans' Affairs on matters related to veterans' programs." They meet their mission statement and help the veteran through various health care programs, education programs, loan programs and counseling services.

Mr. Stone then described the makeup of his department and personnel. He also presented information on the number of clients they serve and explained the various things that they do for them. Charts that Mr. Stone presented to the Board made a comparison of 2007-2009 and indicated the number of client visits, records created, forms generated, veterans transported, records edited and total clients served.

Mr. Stone then presented information about the economic impact of the federal benefits that come to Winnebago County through the Veterans Services Department is approximately \$37,000,000. Mr. Stone explained that although the county's veteran population has decreased by about 4% since 2007, there has been approximately a 25% increase in total VA expenditures to the county. There has also been a 25% increase in the total compensation and pensions paid to the county's veterans.

Mr. Stone explained that state benefits to the county's veterans has decreased in light of the current economic situation at the state level. The area that is the most drastically hit was the housing loan program. He stated that they are not doing any home loans, which has caused more than a \$2 Million decrease in that area.

Mr. Stone also explained the following:

- Working to constantly advance veterans' programs. They are currently in the process of adding three more presumptive conditions that resulted from exposure to Agent Orange.
 - Dependent Indemnity Compensation – veterans' dependents are eligible for benefits if the veteran died as a result of these presumptive conditions
- Veterans Disability Compensation Rates.
- Veterans court initiative – Judge Karen Seifert helped to develop educational information about the court system for veterans who have violated the law and are involved with the court system.
- Veterans booth at the county fair and how they were able to help veterans
- Attendance at the job fair
- Extra benefits that they have been able to provide to veterans

Mr. Stone thanked the Board and County Executive Harris for their continuing support of the Veterans Services Department.

Motion by Supervisor Robl and seconded to adjourn until September 21, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan T. Ertmer
Winnebago County Clerk

State of Wisconsin)
County of Winnebago) ss

I, Susan T. Ertmer, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the Journal of the Winnebago County Board of Supervisors for their Special Orders Session held September 7, 2010.

Susan T. Ertmer
Winnebago County Clerk