

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Monday, October 24, 2022

James P. Coughlin Center
625 E. County Road Y, Oshkosh

Members Present: Chuck Farrey, David Albrecht, Steven Binder, Robert Keller, Larry Lautenschlager, Michael Norton, Koby Schellenger, Morris Cox, Nate Gustafson, Ralph Harrison and Patrick O'Brien (Virtual).

Also Present: Winnebago County Chairman Thomas Egan, Winnebago County Supervisors Brian Defferding and Jacob Floam, Mary Anne Mueller (Corporation Counsel), Eric Sparr (District Attorney), John Casper, State Representatives Gordon Hintz and Michael Schraa

Present Via Zoom: Patrick O'Brien, Doug Gieryn, Linda Palmer, Heidi Keating, and Fawn George (Office of Representative Lee Snodgrass)

1. Call to Order

Chairman Farrey called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Farrey opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Approval of minutes of May 23, 2022 meeting

Motion by Supervisor Cox and seconded by Supervisor Schellenger to approve the minutes of the May 23, 2022 meeting. MOTION CARRIES.

4. Public Comments

County Board Supervisor Brian Defferding spoke about agenda item 6 from Kenosha County possibly becoming a 2nd Amendment Sanctuary State. He is in favor of either Winnebago County or Wisconsin being a 2nd Amendment Sanctuary State and continued to voice his opinion and concerns regarding this matter.

5. Correspondence

No correspondence.

6. Discussion/Action: Kenosha County Resolution No. 22: Resolution to Conduct Countywide Advisory Referendum on making the State of Wisconsin a 2nd Sanctuary State

A brief and informal discussion of this resolution. Chuck Farrey stated that this resolution is being brought forward by a committee from Kenosha County asking for support from other counties for them to bring it forward to their county board. Supervisor Cox thought maybe they could also be bringing it forward to the WCA.

Motion by Supervisor Binder and seconded by Supervisor Gustafson to bring discussion to the floor.

Motion by Supervisor Norton and seconded by Supervisor Cox to take no action on this resolution. MOTION CARRIES 9-1 (Nay – Gustafson; Patrick O'Brien appeared virtually and could not vote due to the new County Board rule)

7. Discussion/Action: Resolution Requesting the State of Wisconsin Review and Revise its Policy on Foreign Ownership of Farmland by Entities Party to Adversarial Governments – County Board Supervisors Jacob Floam and Nate Gustafson

Motion made by Supervisor Gustafson and seconded by Supervisor Binder to bring discussion to the floor.

Supervisor Jacob Floam briefly discussed this agenda item. The core point of this resolution is asking the state to take a look at its policy on foreign ownership of farmland by Congress, Madison and the United States and governments themselves. The state did try to revise the policy back in 2014 but was voted down but this resolution would be a much narrower description than that.

State Representative Michael Schraa stated that he has a bill being drafted right now to deal with this issue at the state level. Chuck Farrey confirmed that the passage of this resolution here today would only support Rep. Schraa's point of view and position for the upcoming bill headed to Legislation. If anyone is interested and would like to look at the state statute, it is 710.02.

Supervisor Schellenger voiced his questions and concerns regarding this issue.

Motion by Supervisor Schellenger to amend resolution: to delete the entire last WHEREAS paragraph; and in the NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, end the paragraph after farmland and delete everything after. Motion seconded. MOTION CARRIES for amendment.

Motion made by Supervisor Gustafson and seconded by Supervisor Binder to bring resolution back to floor as amended. MOTION CARRIES 9-1 (Nay – Schellenger; Patrick O'Brien appeared virtually and count not vote due to the new County Board rule)

8. Discussion: Chapter 92 Wisconsin Statue specific to Winnebago County Land Conservation Committee

Chairman Farrey wanted this on the agenda to make the members and the legislators aware of what Chapter 92 really entails. There is quite an issue that has been presented to all the Farm Service Agency (FSA) chairmen from the FSA Committees. Under statutory requirement, the chairman or their designee of that committee is on the Land Conservation Committee (LCC) of each county. The FSA director for the State of Wisconsin has issued an order that the FSA representative cannot vote, generally speaking on anything that would involve an agricultural issue that would affect the FSA on a LCC committee. With this ruling from the state, it circumvents the intent of state law under Chapter 92. There is a lot of discussion going on between conservation groups within the state, the executive committees of the conservation groups and the WCA as how to address the issue. The current proposal is to amend state law to coincide with the directive from the FSA. This is primarily an awareness issue and Chairman Farrey will keep everyone updated as things move forward.

9. Discussion/Action: Resolution – "Requesting the State of Wisconsin Review and Revise the Entry Level Compensation Rate for Assistant District Attorneys"

Motion made by Supervisor Norton and seconded by Supervisor Cox to bring discussion to the floor. District Attorney Eric Sparr gave a brief and informal discussion of this resolution.

Motion by Norton and seconded to vote on resolution. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

10. Discuss proposed State and Federal Legislation from the Legislative Committee members

None

11. Discuss Proposed / Potential State Legislation as Presented by Local Legislators and Committee Members

Rep. Gordon Hintz stated the County Parks department contacted Legislators regarding a motion going through the finance committee for the Grundman boat landing renovation and improvement project. At this time, he hasn't heard anything on that.

Rep. Schraa wanted to take this opportunity to thank Rep. Gordon Hintz for all his insight and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

Rep Schraa stated they will go back into session in January. He will be involved in Legislative Counsel Study committee hearings for increasing offender employment opportunities and briefly discussed that in more detail and possible bill ideas that should help that situation. He also stated they are getting a lot of complaints on solar farms and they are working on that in Legislation.

12. Update from County Executive Jon Doemel

County Executive Jon Doemel was not present.

13. Update from State Legislators

Representative Michael Schraa – District 53:

Representative Gordon Hintz – District 54:

14. Update from Federal Representatives

Alan Ott, District Director—Rep. Glenn Grothman

- Congress passed resolution in September to fund government through the middle of December.
- Introducing a bill for Age Discrimination in Employment Parity Act
- Introducing a Bill for Senior Independence Act
- Introducing a Bill for Member Financial Transparency Act

15. Topics to be discussed at next Legislative Committee Meeting

Supervisor Norton would like to have a discussion on Shared Revenue Reform.

16. Next Meeting Date and Time

Discussion among all members. Supervisor Albrecht stated that the current set up works well and State Representative Michael Schraa stated Mondays at 8:30 am works best for legislators. Decision to continue to keep current schedule, 4 times/year (January, March, May and October) on the 4th Monday of the month at 8:30 am, unless an emergency issue would need to be addressed, then a meeting would be scheduled. Motion by Supervisor Albrecht and seconded by Larry Lautenschlager. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

17. Adjourn

Motion by Supervisor Albrecht and seconded by Supervisor Gustafson to adjourn. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.
The meeting was adjourned at 9:51 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Cassie Smith-Gregor, Recording Secretary