

**Legislative Committee
Monday, July 25, 2016
James P. Coughlin Center**

Present: Tom Egan, Chuck Farrey, Tom Ellis, Paul Eisen, Bill Wingren, Jerry Finch, Joel Rasmussen, Tom Snider, Lawrence Smith, Robert Warnke, Ken Robl and George Scherck

Also Present: Mark Harris, County Executive; Jennifer Garner, Senator Baldwin's office; Rep. Amanda Stuck, John Casper, President/CEO Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce; Chris Kniep, Director of UW Extension; Ernest Winters, Highway Commissioner; Joseph Aulik, Director of Veterans Services; and Supervisor Robert Keller

Excused: Bill Roh

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Chairman Egan and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Introductions were made of all members present.

Motion by Supervisor Finch and seconded by Supervisor Snider to approve the minutes of the May 23, 2016 meeting. Carried by Voice Vote.

Public Comments:

No comments.

Discussion of the upcoming State Transportation Budget and TDA's "Just Fix It" Campaign:

Ernie Winters, Highway Commissioner, commented on the "Just Fix It" campaign and how it will affect Winnebago County and County residents. Wisconsin Counties Association has signed on to this campaign. Citizens need to tell the governor that the local residents want to see the transportation budget fixed. This item was discussed at the Highway Committee meeting, they thought it would be best to bring it to the Legislative Committee before presenting it to the County Board. Motion by Supervisor Snider and seconded by Supervisor Robl to accept the resolution regarding the "Just Fix It" campaign and forward it to the County Board. Carried by Voice Vote. Nays: Wingren.

UW-Extension nEXT Generation:

Chris Kniep, Director of UW Extension, reported on the nEXT Generation reorganization of Cooperative Extension. They are looking at a 3.6 million dollar cut to the state budget for the Extension which would mean eliminating eighty positions across the state. Ms. Kniep discussed options that were included in a handout to members of the committee regarding proposed cuts and combining counties to be covered by one agent. The Winnebago County UW Extension Committee would like to draft a resolution to join with other Counties in Wisconsin in supporting to keep the Extension going.

Motion by Supervisor Farrey and seconded by Supervisor Finch to have the UW Extension Committee bring a resolution supporting UW Extension to the next Legislative Committee meeting. Carried by Voice Vote.

Veteran's Medical Care

Supervisor Finch introduced Joe Aulik, Director of Veteran's Affairs. Mr. Aulik commented that Veteran's medical care is currently running at a \$30 million deficit. This needs to be on the Federal Legislative radar. They are looking to reduce employees by 7%, hoping this does not include doctors. He touched on a grant that the County received and how it should be

returned to be a block grant; there are too many restrictions on the grant received. Mr. Aulik is working on a resolution that will be taken to the Judiciary and Public Safety Committee and then presented to the Legislative Committee. Mr. Aulik touched on Veteran suicides and how they are working on “Zero Veteran Suicide Initiative”. This has been brought to the Secretary of Veteran Affairs attention, they are sending out e-mails, newsletters and hosting radio shows to reach out to Veterans. They are working with the Sheriff’s Department as well. Mr. Aulik reported on the number of Veteran suicides in Winnebago County this year, and that Veterans need someone on call to be able to help them when they are in need. Mr. Aulik thanked the County Board for all their support.

Concerns about the Cost of Required Publication for County Activities

Supervisor Larry Smith reported on a Legislative Study Committee meeting to be held on July 26, 2016 regarding publications and alternative publications. In 2015, Winnebago County spent \$23,000.00 in publications. Supervisor Smith asked members to contact their Legislators to encourage them to attend meetings regarding publications. He feels that the details of the publications could be placed on an internet page, and only publish the title of the bills and who submitted them.

Update from County Executive Mark Harris

Executive Mark Harris brought up an issue of concern relating to the transportation budget and personal property taxes. He noted that Governor Walker has taken a position to cut back and delay road projects to slow down having to borrow money to complete these projects. By delaying the project, there is concern that it will cost more in the long run to complete. Mr. Harris feels that it is inevitable that personal property taxes will be eliminated. The municipalities and Counties Association are concerned as to where that money will be recovered. Mr. Harris is looking to our Legislators to disapprove the elimination of personal property taxes unless there is a solution to back fill the revenues for local governments.

Update from State Legislators

Representative Amanda Stuck reported that she would not support eliminating personal property taxes unless there was a real solution to support the loss. She is concerned that there is a lot of support in Madison to eliminate the personal property taxes. When indexing was eliminated in 2005, it greatly affected the transportation fund. Wisconsin is currently rated third in the nation for the worst road conditions. Representative Stuck addressed study committees that are currently working on access to civil legal services, another committee to study the shortage of volunteer firemen and emergency medical services. Ms. Stuck then took questions from the floor.

Jennifer Garner, representative to Senator Tammy Baldwin, reported that Senator Baldwin was in Oshkosh visiting the Living Healthy Community Clinic. She was very impressed with the quality of care that was delivered to the community. Ms. Garner addressed the Ballast Water Condition and the increase in invasive species in the Great Lakes waterways. She showed her appreciation to Director Aulik and Supervisor Finch for bringing the Veteran issue forward to their attention. Senator Baldwin has been working on a number of Veteran related subjects: an act that was signed into law to limit use and ways drugs are prescribed to Veterans; making sure Veterans get quality care as quickly as needed; making sure that Doctors who have been fired from Veteran Clinics are not allowed to doctor in Community Clinics; protecting Veteran’s social security numbers from fraud; and supporting BRAVE act to aid in Veteran’s unemployment rates. Ms. Garner then took questions from the floor.

Chairman Egan thanked Representative Stuck and Jennifer Garner for attending the Legislative meeting.

Chairman Egan asked all members to look at Rule 24.5 of the Rules of the Winnebago County Board of Supervisors regarding the Legislative Committee.

No topics to be discussed at next Legislative meeting.

Next meeting date: To be set by Chairman Egan.

Motion by Supervisor Farrey and seconded by Supervisor Rasmussen to adjourn. Meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:
Julie Barthels
Recording Secretary