

Highway Committee

June 13, 2023

Chair Max Weiss called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Board Members Present: Mr. Max Weiss, Mr. John Sendelbach, Mr. Steve Nelson, Mr. Dwight Ruff, and Mr. Brian Michaels.

Others Present for All or Portions of the Meeting: Mr. Bob Platteter, Mr. John DeWitt, Ms. Janet LaDuke, Mr. Lee Engfer, and Ms. Roxann Halverson (Teams).

Review/Discussion regarding Public Comments: None.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding Minutes of the Previous Meeting: Mr. Ruff made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Nelson. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding Vouchers: Vouchers were reviewed. Mr. Sendelbach made a motion to approve the vouchers, seconded by Mr. Michaels. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding the Buffalo County Fair Board Rep. – Delay in Payment to install Guardrail on Track: The Fair Representative was unable to attend the meeting today. The Fair Board is asking the County to donate the posts, hardware and guardrails for the track area. The current guardrails have some structural issues and need to be replaced. Another company will install them if the County donates the materials. It is a couple thousand dollar expense. Mr. Ruff made a motion to table this item, seconded by Mr. Nelson. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding Staffing: The Highway Department is fully staffed. The newest Mechanic will be going to Durand July 11th to begin his CDL classes.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding Equipment – Bid for Frontend Loader, Barron County Fuel Truck, and Pickups 29 & 33 Repairs: Bids were obtained for a new frontend loader to replace the 2001 John Deere 624H loader. The committee discussed each of the bids and the repairs needed to the frontend loader we have. The cost of the repairs is unknown and the committee would like to have that information for any future purchases. Mr. Michaels made a motion to approve the purchase of the John Deere 624P frontend loader from McCoy Construction and Forestry in the amount of \$209,345.00, which includes the weighing system, seconded by Mr. Ruff. A roll call vote was taken. All in favor. Carried.

Mr. Platteter discussed the fuel truck Barron County had for sale. Barron County had wanted \$60,000.00 for the truck and declined our offer of \$40,000.00. It was placed on auction with a reserve but only received a max bid of approximately \$37,000.00. Barron County has contacted Mr. Platteter and offered the truck for \$40,000.00. Mr.

Sendelbach questioned possible leaks the tanks may have and certification. Mr. Platteter will check into this prior to finalizing any purchase.

Trucks #29 and #33 have had some mechanical issues. Mr. Earney was able to get the one truck's transmission repaired under warranty even though the warranty had expired. The other truck had transmission cooler issues that have been addressed.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding Buildings & Grounds – Cold Storage/Sign Shop, Theft at the Alma Shop Yard, and Security: The bird netting installation and cleanup is complete in the cold storage/sign shop and the new door should be installed by the end of June.

Mr. Platter explained a recent possible theft issue behind the Alma Shop. An employee was doing cleanup in the back area sorting good material from bad. He had a pile of posts to keep set aside. Those posts and some other posts and items disappeared over the weekend. There was evidence a skid steer was used to load what was taken. The Sheriff's Department was notified and began work on a search warrant. Another employee indicated some of the posts were sold to a neighboring property owner but was going to come back later to pick them up. That property owner will be contacted to discuss this issue and a new policy is set in place that when things are sold, they need to be picked up right away. Mr. Platteter would like to look into fencing the highway shops for security. He will bring back bids to a future meeting.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding Roads & Bridges – Construction Project Status, Joint Petition & Resolution for Funding of Palkowski Road Bridge (Town of Montana), Consideration of County Road E Repairs, Flooding of Highway 35, and Award Bid for Sealcoat Aggregate: Mr. Platteter gave an update on road construction. These updates are on the website.

Mowing will begin around July 1st for state roads and has already begun on county roads. Mr. Ruff indicated the roads he would like extra attention due to site line when pulling out into oncoming traffic.

Palkowski Bridge was discussed. The Town of Montana is petitioning for assistance with the bridge replacement. Mr. Ruff made a motion to approve the petition, seconded by Mr. Sendelbach. Carried. Mr. Sendelbach made a motion to approve the resolution by roll call vote, seconded by Mr. Nelson. All in favor. Carried.

A 2.2 mile section of County Road E is quickly deteriorating. This was not on the original plan of roads to be repaired this year. Mr. Platteter explained he will need to scale back on the County Road F project to get County Road E repaired, unless there is funding from another source. The Committee advised cutting out a portion of the County Road F project.

The flooding on Highway 35 was discussed. A section of about 400 feet was fixed, but the State may request that this section be replaced instead of the type of repair that was

done. Mr. Teska is working with Mr. Kelly Johnston on obtaining reimbursement for work the Highway Department provided during the flood.

One bid was received for the aggregate product. Milestone submitted a bid for different sections of roads that need road work ranging from \$15.00 per ton to \$16.50 per ton if the county picks up the product and \$28.00 per ton to \$35.00 per ton if they deliver it to the worksite location. Mr. Ruff made a motion to approve the bid by roll call vote, seconded by Mr. Nelson. All in favor. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action Finances – Financial Status Update, Review of 2022 Annual Report, and Review Status of Monthly Billings to Townships: Ms. LaDuke gave the financial update. 2022 is closed except for a few journal entries that need to be made and 2023 is closed through February. They are currently working on March billings.

Ms. LaDuke reviewed the annual report with the committee. There is a \$95,000.00 loss showing in the report.

Town billing for work the county has provided was discussed. Typically, those bills are two months behind but currently those are a little further behind. There was some discussion of a town complaint the bills being 9 months behind. Ms. LaDuke explained the difference between the billing of joint projects and regular projects being billed out.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding Contract with WTA for TRIP & MSIP Administration: Mr. Platteter explained by Statute the Highway Commission is responsible for administration of LRIP programs. The Wisconsin Towns Association would like to take over this responsibility and is doing a test program which Buffalo County would be a part of. This would be a loss of revenue of about \$2,300.00 but Mr. Platteter explained there is more expense from the work that goes into the Administration of the program than the revenue that comes in. Mr. Nelson made a motion to approve the rescinding from the WCHA, seconded by Mr. Ruff. Carried. This will be discussed at the County Board meeting so that everyone can be brought up to date on how this will work going forward.

Review/Discussion/Action regarding the Commissioner's Report: Mr. Platteter reported on his recent conference and the influx of the State budget. He also informed the committee that the floating holiday will be used on July 3rd by all staff. This will mean the Highway Department will be closed July 3rd and 4th.

Committee Chair Report: Chair Weiss requested an update on the County Road H intersection. Mr. Platteter explained the signage has been moved and the area will be monitored for further concerns. The ATV ordinance is still in the hands of the State waiting for approval. Construction signs were discussed. The signs should come down each day on temporary work areas.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be July 11th, at 8:00 a.m.

Public Comments: None.

Adjourn: Mr. Ruff made a motion to adjourn at 10:52 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Roxann Halverson
Buffalo County Clerk