



# Vernon County Highway Department

1335 Railroad Avenue  
Viroqua, WI 54665

Phone 608-637-5452  
vchd@vernoncounty.org

## Highway Committee Minutes Thursday, March 12, 2020

**Members Present:** JoAnn Nickelatti, Glenda Sullivan, Mike Leis, Dave Williams

**Others in attendance:** Commissioner Phil Hewitt, Lonnie Muller, Ole Yttri, Mark Davison

**1. Call to order, JoAnn Nickelatti, Chair, presiding**

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Chairperson Nickelatti.

**2. Affirmation of proper public notice of meeting**

The meeting was properly noticed.

**3. Review and approve minutes of the February 13, 2020 meeting**

Motion by Williams, seconded by Leis, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

**4. Audience to visitors – none.**

**5. Discussion and possible action on RTA Resolution**

Committee discussed the resolution, no action was taken.

**6. Discussion and possible action on Iron Worker Purchase \$7,000**

Hewitt stated that shop supervisor got the price down from about \$10,000 to \$7,000 so he purchased the iron worker. Motion made by Leis, seconded by Williams to approve the purchase. Motion carried.

**7. Discussion and possible action on Commissioner Vehicle – Lease or Buy**

Hewitt again presented some figures for leasing and buying from the state DOT lease program, Enterprise, and from Sleepy Hollow. To purchase a new Dodge truck from the state program, it would cost \$34,888 vs. \$34,700 from Sleepy Hollow. A new Dodge Durango from the state program would be about \$38,000 and Sleepy Hollow didn't have one on the lot to compare, but said would run about \$40-41,000. Hewitt stated he'd prefer a lease to stretch his budget and the payment would be \$668/month, for 4 years, allowing 20,000 miles per year through Enterprise, with the option to exit the lease anytime. At the end of the lease, Hewitt stated he would have approximately \$10,500 in equity to use towards the purchase of the Durango or towards another lease from Enterprise. Motion made by Leis, seconded by Sullivan for Phil to lease whatever vehicle he chooses. Motion carried.

**8. Review and approve vouchers for payment.**

Motion made by Leis, seconded by Williams to pay the vouchers as presented. Motion carried.

**9. Commissioner's Report – Phil Hewitt – Non-action items**

- Towns use of old shop – Town of Viroqua has used the old highway shop 12 times for washing their vehicles and asked for input on what to charge. The committee decided \$20 per wash would be sufficient.
- Floor sweeper/squeegee – Phil is going to get prices for a floor cleaner for next month's meeting.
- FHWA/FEMA funds -- \$30,000 from FEMA and approximately \$140,000 from FHWA for 2016 flood repairs. Hewitt asked if the committee thought the money should go into the



# Vernon County Highway Department

1335 Railroad Avenue  
Viroqua, WI 54665

Phone 608-637-5452  
vchd@vernoncounty.org

equipment budget or back into road maintenance, Williams thought it should be designated for road maintenance.

- Tar kettle – the tar kettle is going back to Stepp. If we ordered now a new one would be ready by next year but not sure that is the direction we want to go. Hewitt said he is waiting to see how the DOT will be handling jobs in the future; if they will bid it into their jobs or if they would have the county perform the work; in which case it would be advantageous for us to purchase a new one.
- Road bans – the weight restrictions went on for county roads this Monday. Next year we will add a fee for permits, with the fee being somewhere between \$25-100. Other counties are currently implementing this.
- Re-aligned sections – changes have been made to road sections so that it is more efficient.
- Open state position – Hewitt said that he is not planning to hire a full-time person for the current vacancy. He has spoken with some of the guys and they are okay with rotating duties to cover the four-lane section.
- Rumble strips – the DOT now requires the use of rumble strips, which cost the county \$12,000, on all state projects. The state will reimburse \$30 per day for the use of the rumble strips.
- Storage – someone is interested in renting another storage shed that isn't being utilized by the highway department anymore. Hewitt said it will be no different than the two other storage sheds that are currently being rented, one for salt and one for fertilizer, by other parties.
- Coronavirus – Hewitt stated he had a plan in place should he become infected. The plan puts Sue in charge as interim commissioner, and Tom and Eric will still oversee the daily operations of the crews. If an employee tests positive, they will be required to stay home for 21 days and not be allowed to return to work until they have a written doctor's note. Hewitt said that he will approve employees to use their ELB and if someone doesn't have enough banked in their ELB for the three week period, he will allow employees to "borrow" and "pay back".

## **10. Discussion and possible action on Merging/Reclassifying Shop Clerk & Parts Manager Positions**

- The Chair may entertain a motion to enter into closed session:  
19.85(1)(c) (c) Considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility. Motion made by Williams, seconded by Sullivan to enter into closed session. Motion carried.
- Reconvene in open session pursuant to Wis. Stat. 19.85(2). (Roll call vote if not unanimous.) Motion by Leis, seconded by Sullivan to re-enter open session. Motion carried.
- May act on item discussed in closed session. Motion by Williams, seconded by Sullivan to recommend to personnel to reclassify, creating a new position to combine a parts/shop clerk, grade 11 step 10. Motion carried.

## **11. Highway Commissioner Performance Evaluation**

- The Chair may entertain a motion to enter into closed session:  
19.85(1)(c) (c) Considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility. Motion made by Sullivan, seconded by Williams to enter into closed session. Motion carried.



# Vernon County Highway Department

1335 Railroad Avenue  
Viroqua, WI 54665

Phone 608-637-5452  
vchd@vernoncounty.org

- Reconvene in open session pursuant to Wis. Stat. 19.85(2). (Roll call vote if not unanimous.) Motion by Williams, seconded by Sullivan to re-enter open session. Motion carried.
- May act on item discussed in closed session. No action taken.

## **12. Set next meeting date**

Next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 7, 2020 at 9:30 a.m.

## **13. Adjourn**

Motion by Sullivan, seconded by Williams to adjourn. Motion carried.