



Winnebago County

*The Wave of the Future*

**HIGHWAY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2024**

**A. Call to Order**

*The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Chairman Don Nussbaum at the JP Coughlin Building.*

*Present: Chairman Don Nussbaum, Supervisor Chuck Farrey, Supervisor Ralph Harrison, Supervisor Billy Halbur, and Supervisor Tim O'Brien*

*Also Present: Highway Commissioner Robert Doemel, Highway Finance Manager Jill Prah, County Executive Jon Doemel, County Executive Assistant Ethan Hollenberger, Human Services Data System Coordinator Paula Way, Sheriff Jon Matz, Dave Schmidt, Dennis Yoder, Ron Miller, Helene White, Jackie Silva, Harry Silva, Mike Roberts, Robert Haag, Gail Haag, Tom Van Zeeland - Team Winnebagoland, and County Clerk Julie Barthels*

**B. Pledge of Allegiance**

*The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.*

**C. Invocation**

*The invocation was given by Supervisor Tim O'Brien.*

**D. Public Comments on Agenda Items**

*Jackie Silva - Commented on the wording of the projects that, instead of "may", change to "will" to mow ditches. She would like to see the culverts included in the wording of projects.*

*Ron Miller - Commented on the Proposal regarding tiling on County Road E. If the project starts next year, he has a drain tile that needs to be changed.*

*Dave Schmidt - Representing ATV Alliance for Winnebago County. He appreciates the time to discuss the proposed changes to the ordinance regarding ATV/UTVs. Willing to answer questions that the committee may have.*

*Tom Van Zeeland, Team Winnebagoland - spoke in support of the proposed change to the ordinance regarding ATV/UTV traffic.*

**E. Approval of Minutes**

1. September 16, 2024 Minutes

*Motion by Supervisor Farrey, seconded by Supervisor Harrison to approve the September 16, 2024, minutes. CARRIED by VOICE VOTE. (5-0)*

**F. Committee Member Comments**

*Supervisor Harrison commented on the culvert issue and ditch mowing, and the wording for the drain tile issue.*

*Chairman Nussbaum commented on the weeds by County Road E.*

*Supervisor Farrey asked for clarity regarding the proposal for the County Road E project. He requested some background information when this topic comes up.*

**G. Highway Commissioner Comments**

*Commissioner Doemel noted that the Highway Department is concentrating on getting the paving done at this time. He commented that the mowing would get done.*

## H. 2025 County Executive Budget Proposal

### 1. 2025 Budget Overview by the County Executive

*County Executive, Jon Doemel, presented a brief overview of the 2025 Winnebago County Budget.*

*Items that were touched on:*

- *State Impact on Local Dollars - Since 2006, local governments have been limited in general growth. The levy limits are limited to the growth of new construction. In 2023, Act 12 provided a new supplemental state aid. The 2024 budget allocated this aid to the Sheriff's office. Act 12 also repealed the Personal Property Tax. The county has seen other intergovernmental aids increase for some reimbursements related to medical assistance in Human Services and Park View Health Center.*
- *Key Budget Assumptions - Accounting for low general levy increases. Many departments are fully staffed at this time and that hasn't happened in quite a while. The County will be assuming a 4% pay increase for employees and assuming a 6.52% increase in health insurance premiums.*
- *County Budgeting Code - The previous budget process did not allow for the board or the public to know exactly what the money was being spent on.*
- *Rethinking Budgeting Initiative - This initiative considers new ways of thinking, new technologies and updated practices to better meet the changing needs of communities. He explained the new program that Winnebago County will be using. Priority Based Budgeting will allow the county to see the programs that are used and what the cost is for these programs. Priority-based budgeting has been around since 2012. Winnebago County has used line item budgeting. With priority-based budgeting, it will allow everyone to see what the money is actually being spent on. This budget will let you see all the programs that are used in each department and how much they cost for both personnel and non-personnel. Executive Doemel commented on the results that the County has seen since initiating this program.*
- *History of County Budget Planned/ Use of Fund Balance (Fiscal Health) - Fiscal health planning will look at actual spending and budgeted spending.*
- *County Executive Specific Budget Initiatives - To continue to focus on people in Winnebago County, improve communication through social media and other tools for the public, and improve employee wellness and retention initiatives.*

*Executive Doemel then took questions from the committee.*

### 2. 2025 Programs and Budget Request Presentation by the Department Head

*Highway Commissioner, Bob Doemel, presented his 2025 budget.*

*He described the programs that are used in the Highway Department and what they entail:*

- *Roadway Maintenance & Repairs, Asphalt/Concrete*
- *Winter Maintenance*
- *Highway Department Equipment Maintenance & Repairs, Parts Inventory*
- *Roadside Facilities*
- *Structures*
- *Roadway Shoulder Maintenance & Repairs, Gravel/Paved*
- *Roadside Vegetation*
- *Traffic Signs Repairs*
- *Equipment Repairs & Maintenance for other County Departments*
- *Parking Lot Maintenance - Other County Departments*
- *County Board and Committee Support*

*Commissioner Doemel provided a graph showing the differences between revenue and expenses.*

*Commissioner Doemel covered his challenges and his successes. Challenges that they are facing including drastic increases in fuel prices, construction materials, equipment parts and new equipment. Trying to maintain a full staff and training them.*

*Successes include the highway office renovation and a quicker turn around time when purchasing new equipment. They are close to fully staffed for the first time in five years.*

*Commissioner Doemel then took questions from the committee.*

3. 2025 – 2029 Capital Improvement Plan Presentation by the Department Head  
*Highway Commissioner, Bob Doemel, provided the proposed 2025-2029 Capital Improvement Projects.*  
*Commissioner Doemel noted projects and equipment that they will need to replace in 2025:*

*Road Projects:*

- *County Road M - from Highway 44 to Highway 91, 6.64 miles - plans to pulverize and pave the road and widen the curves.*
- *County Highway E - Oakwood Road to County Highway FF, 3.53 miles - pulverize and pave the road, plans include drain tile installation, tree and brush removal and traffic sign replacement. This project will be broken up into two sections.*

*Equipment:*

- *5 Yard Dump Truck - Need to purchase 2 new trucks*
- *Winter Equipment for Truck - Need to purchase enough equipment for 5 trucks. (Wings, plows and boxes)*
- *Shop Sign Truck - Current truck is from 2013. Used every day of the year to set up lane closures.*
- *Brine Tank Outfitting - plan is to take an old plow truck chassis and retrofit the tank to it. The current truck has over 13,000 hours on it.*
- *Wood Chipper - The current one is 21 years old. Used all year long for cutting brush.*
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*The Highway Department repairs and maintains many county roads. They have reconstructed rural sections of the roadway and updated them to concrete urban sections of roadway. These sections are normally located near local city limits or heavy industrial truck traffic areas.*

*Commissioner Doemel then took questions from the committee.*

4. Recommendation from the Committee on the 2025 Budget Requests  
*Supervisor Halbur noted to make sure the verbiage is changed from "may" to "shall" for the County Road E project, if the engineering study is feasible.*

**I. Business Items**

Action may be taken on any business items.

1. Discussion on Potential Changes to Winnebago County Code 7.16 All-Terrain Vehicle/Utility Terrain Vehicle Routes & Regulations

*Motion by Supervisor O'Brien, seconded by Supervisor Halbur to bring this discussion forward.*

*Supervisor Halbur offered some changes to the original ordinance and provided those changes to the committee. He researched how other counties have their ordinances worded regarding speed and hours of operations. He included all the information he discovered in his proposal for Winnebago County's ordinance and looks forward to discussion.*

*This ordinance is required to be viewed by the Traffic Safety Commission.*

*Sheriff John Matz contacted other Sheriff's Departments to get their opinions on this topic. There is a difference between rural counties and urban counties regarding the laws for UTV/ATV traffic on the roads. Sheriff Matz feels that a driver's license needs to be a requirement for this ordinance. He would like to see UTV's have to be licensed and registered as a natural vehicle with the Department of Transportation.*

*Motion by Supervisor Nussbaum, seconded by Supervisor Farrey to postpone this item indefinitely. AYES: 4; NAYES: 1 - Halbur. CARRIED.*

**J. Next Meeting Date**

*The next meeting is scheduled for November 18, 2024.*

**K. Adjourn**

*Motion by Supervisor Farrey, seconded by Supervisor Halbur to adjourn.*

*The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.*

*Respectfully Submitted by:*

*Julie Barthels, County Clerk*