



LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2024

AMENDED

A. Call to Order

Chairman Farrey called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Members Present: 12 – Steven Binder, Howard Miller, Kate Hancock-Cooke, Karen Powers, Koby Schellenger, Morris Cox, Donald Nussbaum, Chuck Farrey, Ralph Harrison, Frank Frassetto, Douglas Nelson and Tom Egan.

Note: Supervisor Kate Hancock-Cooke is the vice-chair of the Judiciary & Public Safety Committee, filling in for Chairman Jim Wise.

Absent: 4 - Maribeth Gabert, John Hinz, Larry Lautenschlager, and Thomas Snider.

Also Present at the Meeting:

Cassie Smith-Gregor, Deputy County Clerk

Ethan Hollenberger (Assistant to the County Executive)

Bill Topel (Human Services Department Director)

State Representative Nate Gustafson

State Representative Lori Palmeri

SydneyRose Faestel, District Director for Senator Rachael A. Cabral-Guervara's Office

Supervisor Conley Hanson, District 26

Supervisor Rachael Dowling, District 1

via TEAMS

Marcie Rainbolt (Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) - Government Affairs Associate)

Chelsea Shanks (Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) - Government Affairs Associate)

Doug Gieryn (Public Health Director)

Adam BellCorelli (County Executive Office)

B. Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Public Comments

Supervisor Rachael Dowling, District 1, spoke as a public servant and concerned neighbor as a member of the community speaking in support of business item no. 6; "Request the Wisconsin State Legislature Pass Legislation to Stop Corporations from Purchasing Single-Family Homes."

D. Approval of Minutes

Supervisor Nussbaum mentioned that Blong Yang was at the June 3, 2024, meeting. Mr. Nussbaum made a friendly request for him to be added to the attendance portion of the minutes.

Motion by Supervisor Cox and seconded by Supervisor Harrison to approve the minutes of the June 3, 2024, meeting as amended. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

E. Committee Chair's Report

Chairman Farrey reported that he was not going to allow agenda item I. 3., Comments on Agenda items, under the Updates from the County Executive.

F. Update from State Legislators

State Representative Nate Gustafson - Assembly District 55

Representative Gustafson stated he had been taking some time the last couple of months meeting with stakeholders in Madison of what the next session may look like and kind of been preparing for that. Some of the things that he will be looking at in the next session are actually agenda item number 6, the housing issue, as they keep hearing about housing. Some other interesting areas that they're looking at is any sort of regulation that has been a burden to small businesses that they're allowed to remove and push so they can flourish and want to stay in our state and continue to do business here.

State Representative Lori Palmeri - Assembly District 54

Representative Palmeri stated that Assembly District 54 now includes part of the Cities of Oshkosh and Neenah, the Town of Oshkosh, and part of the Town of Vinland. Ms. Palmeri appreciated Representative Gustafson's comments about things likely being very different in this next session. She mentioned they're anticipating more bipartisan work, and ran through a list of things that they've been working on this offseason in preparation for the next session. Some of these items include:

- Fully funding reproductive health access*
- Medicaid funding for emergency rental assistance. This is under a waiver program and is not a new concept.*
- Additional housing, expanding upon the bipartisan workforce housing package that was passed last season. They had the American Planning Association in Wisconsin giving input on that.*
- State Internet access for all the municipal service programs, which is at \$40 million for the state. They're intending to put in a request to expand that.*
- Senator Feyen and Representative Palmeri worked on a bill together last session, and it came very close. This was in regard to training at assisted living facilities for folks to get lift assistance when they are not injured. There's a high number of calls from Lift assist no transport that Medicaid and Medicare do not fund. There were a number of folks who signed on to it. Ms. Palmeri looks to see that coming back.*
- Mental health resources, including a respite care expansion. It would be kind of a gap to complement some of the other services to reduce the necessity of some of the inpatient critical incidents.*
- Increasing state funds for state parks.*
- Pay disparity with corrections' folks that got left out of the mix last session that they pulled to correct.*

Many of these items came from constituents, so Ms. Palmeri is looking forward to working with Representative Gustafson, Senator Cabral-Guervara's office and many others in this upcoming session.

Supervisor Nelson asked the representatives to keep in mind that they still need regulations on wake boats, so hopefully, that can be addressed in this next session.

Senator Rachael Cabral-Guervara - Senatorial District 19

SydneyRose Faestel, District Director for Senator Rachael Cabral-Guevara, was present but had nothing to report. She reminded the committee that if there's anything specific they'd like to talk about or have any questions for the Senator, to let her know.

G. Update from Federal Legislators

There were no federal representatives present.

H. Communications Shared by Committee Members

There were no communications shared by committee members.

I. Updates from the County Executive

1. **Wisconsin Counties Association 2025-2027 Budget Priorities Presentation**

Marcy Rainbolt and Chelsea Shanks from the Wisconsin Counties Association discussed budget priorities ahead of the January 2025 legislative session, focusing on securing funding for state circuit courts that have struggled financially. They're aiming to highlight the counties' significant financial responsibilities, suggesting an imbalance between county expenditures and state aid. The situation is compounded by ongoing costs linked to public defense and the Guardian ad Litem program, which creates additional financial strains for counties. Despite state allocations, local budgets remain pressured. Counties face challenges in funding Assistant District Attorneys and receiving adequate reimbursements for victim witness services. Overall, the counties' financial difficulties underscore the necessity of enhanced state support, especially in addressing the shortage of certified interpreters and other pressing budgetary concerns.

Chelsea Shanks highlighted the need for enhanced mental health services, stressing the impact of public awareness on the strained mental health system. There's a push for community support programs to alleviate the pressure on emergency services, and a commitment to standardize crisis intervention resources across counties.

The ongoing legislative session addressed various budget priorities, including transportation, with an emphasis on intergovernmental cooperation and innovative solutions. Winnebago County is navigating challenges related to courthouse costs and legislative changes associated with substance use waivers and other bills. The East Central Planning Commission is prioritizing public safety and innovation grants, while ongoing discussions address issues like zoning conflicts and funding for ambulance services. The overall focus is on reforming processes and securing necessary funding amid changing state legislative landscapes.

2. **State Legislative Session Impact on Winnebago County**

The legislative session poses challenges for counties, particularly in implementing bills which take years to enact. Key legislation included Act 12 on shared revenue, with the county expecting to utilize \$1.8 million for the Sheriff's Office in 2024, and an innovation grant from the Department of Revenue for merging services with local governments, which could provide incentives for collaboration. Legislative priorities emphasize public safety, EMS, and transportation funding. Bills that may impact Winnebago County focus primarily on jailer protected status, pension benefits, kinship care flexibility for foster care candidates and a new requirement for local officials to report campaign expenses in a state system. Wisconsin has also introduced measures to enhance judges' safety amidst national concerns, as well as, ongoing discussions regarding the withdrawal of certain towns in Winnebago County from county zoning regulations and potential funding for Fox Cities projects.

3. Comments on Agenda Items

Supervisor Frassetto left the meeting at 9:49 am.

J. Business Items

1. **Resolution: Requesting that the state of Wisconsin, in its 2025-27 state biennial budget, provide state funding to cover the full non-federal share of Medical Assistance CSP and Crisis services**

Chairman Farrey asked the committee which resolution they wanted to address, the one from Winnebago County or Jackson County, as they both dealt with the same issue. A decision was made, and Chairman Farrey announced the committee would take up the Winnebago County-sponsored resolution that was brought forward by the Winnebago County Human Services Board, and therefore would not address the one from Jackson County.

Motion by Supervisor Binder, seconded by Supervisor Powers, to approve the resolution and forward it to the County Board. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

Resolution from Jackson County: #31-08-2024 - Support of State Investment for Mental Health Funding

This resolution was not addressed. The committee voted on the Winnebago County-sponsored resolution pertaining to this same issue.

2. **St. Croix County - Resolution No. 13 (2024): Resolution Supporting Wisconsin Senate Bill 916 Related to Refugee Resettlement**

Motion by Supervisor Nussbaum, seconded by Supervisor Cox, to bring the resolution forward for discussion.

Motion by Supervisor Schellenger, seconded by Supervisor Cox, to take no action on this resolution. AYES: 4 - Hancock-Cooke, Powers, Schellenger and Cox; NAYES: 7; ABSTAIN: 0; ABSENT: 5 – Gabert, Hinz, Lautenschlager, Frassetto and Snider. MOTION FAILED. Back to the original resolution.

Motion by Supervisor Nussbaum, seconded by Supervisor Cox, to approve resolution and forward to the County Board. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE. (Nayes: 4 - Hancock-Cooke, Powers, Schellenger and Cox.)

State Representative Gustafson reminded the committee to realize when the committee is bringing resolutions like this forward, they are not writing the legislation itself, they are just asking the legislature to look at this again and that is the debate they will have in the legislature.

3. **St. Croix County - Resolution No. 14 (2024): Resolution Supporting the "Care Act" Proposed by Congressman Tom Tiffany Related to Amending Section 412 of the Immigration and Nationality Act**

Motion by Supervisor Cox, seconded by Supervisor Nussbaum, to bring the resolution forward for discussion.

There was no motion to bring this item to a vote.

This resolution died due to a lack of a motion and a second.

4. **St. Croix County - Resolution No. 15 (2024): Resolution Requesting an Immediate Pause of Refugee Resettlement in St. Croix County**

Motion by Supervisor Cox, seconded by Supervisor Nussbaum, to bring the resolution forward for discussion.

Motion by Supervisor Nussbaum to approve and forward to the County Board. This motion died for lack of a second.

Motion by Supervisor Harrison, seconded by Supervisor Powers, to deny. AYES: 7; NAYES: 2 - Binder and Nussbaum; ABSTAIN: 2 - Egan and Miller; ABSENT: 5 – Gabert, Hinz, Lautenschlager, Frassetto and Snider. MOTION PASSED.

5. **Resolution from Jackson County: #30-08-2024 - Advocating for an Inpatient Behavioral Health Facility for Northern Wisconsin**

Motion by Supervisor Cox, seconded by Supervisor Powers, to approve the resolution and forward it to the County Board. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

6. **Request the Wisconsin State Legislature Pass Legislation to Stop Corporations from Purchasing Single-Family Homes**

Motion by Supervisor Schellenger, seconded by Supervisor Powers, to approve the resolution and forward it to the County Board. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

K. Items for Next Agenda

Suggestions from committee members for items to be addressed on a future agenda

- *Resolutions from other counties that were referred to the Legislative Committee from the County Board.*

L. Next Meeting Date

1. To be determined by membership.

- **January 27, 2025; and March 24, 2025;**

- **June 2, 2025;**

Note: Regularly scheduled 4th Monday is Monday, May 26, 2025 (Memorial Day) and the Monday before, Monday, May 19, 2025, is the Spring County Board Tour.

- **October 20, 2025 or October 27, 2025??**

Note: Regularly scheduled 4th Monday is Monday, October 27, 2025. This is the first night of the County Board Budget meetings.

There was discussion among all members. The committee determined the 2025 meeting dates as follows: Monday, January 27, 2025; Monday, March 24, 2025; Monday, June 2, 2025; and Monday, October 20, 2025, at 8:30 am, unless an emergency issue would need to be addressed, then a meeting would be scheduled.

Motion by Supervisor Miller and seconded by Supervisor Schellenger. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

M. Adjourn

Motion by Supervisor Nelson, seconded by Supervisor Harrison, to adjourn. MOTION CARRIED. The meeting adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

Submitted by:

Cassie J. Smith-Gregor

Winnebago County Deputy Clerk

The video portion of this meeting is available on the County website: <https://winnebago.cowiportal.civicclerk.com>