



**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, MARCH 24, 2025**

A. Call to Order

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

Members Present: 12 – Tom Egan, Steven Binder, Howard Miller, Jim Wise, Karen Powers (arrived at 8:40 am), Morris Cox, Donald Nussbaum, Chuck Farrey, Larry Lautenschlager, Frank Frassetto, Douglas Nelson and Thomas Snider.

Absent: 4 - Maribeth Gabert, John Hinz, Koby Schellenger and Ralph Harrison.

Also Present at the Meeting:

Cassie Smith-Gregor, Chief Deputy County Clerk

Jon Doemel, County Executive

Ethan Hollenberger, Assistant to the County Executive

Rhys Phillips, Paralegal

Dean Kaufert, State Representative, 53rd Assembly District

Lori Palmeri, State Representative, 54th Assembly District

Nate Gustafson, State Representative, 55th Assembly District

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

via TEAMS

Lu Scheer

B. Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

D. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Supervisor Cox, seconded by Supervisor Frassetto, to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2025, meeting. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE. (Abstain: Nussbaum)

E. Committee Chair's Report

There was no committee chair's report.

F. Update from State Legislators

State Representative Dean Kaufert - Assembly District 53

Representative Kaufert, representing the 53rd Assembly District, introduced himself to everyone attending the Legislative Committee meeting.

Mr. Kaufert is on the following committees:

- * Chair of the Committee on Corrections*
- * Vice-Chair of the Committee on Ways and Means*
- * Serves on the Committee on Financial Institutions*
- * Serves on the Committee on Local Government*

Mr. Kaufert commented on the following items:

- * Governor's State budget - the main drivers of the budget are the medical assistance (MA program), corrections, and the University of Wisconsin System.*
- * Corrections - Mr. Kaufert is the new chair of the Corrections Committee. Some facilities have faced some challenges. The prison population has ballooned and is really driving things which have created pressures.*

** UW System - the governor has put in the budget the largest increase ever in the UW System. Numbers are flattening out throughout the state of Wisconsin with regard to enrollment, but they're holding steady and, from what they were, they're closing some smaller campuses around the state. There are a lot of challenges ahead.*

** Budget deadline is July 1, 2025. Mr. Kaufert believes it is important that they pass that budget by July 1, 2025, or they will go to cost to continue meaning whatever the budget was last time that goes on. The closest public hearing on the budget will be on April 2, 2025, in Kaukauna. Representative Kaufert hopes that they can continue to provide services at a reasonable cost while keeping taxes down.*

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 mentioned she was the following committees:

- * Minority ranking member on the Committee on Environment*
- * Serves on the Committee on Forestry, Parks and Outdoor Recreation*
- * Serves on the Committee on Local Government*

Ms. Palmeri will be presenting a short overview of the budget process and some of the items they're in to the downtown Rotary group later today. She has had the opportunity to give some input from our local City Council, Winnebago County Executive's Office, constituent groups, and landlord groups to the governor's office. They do see in the budget for Winnebago County, 2 additional DNR staff that were specifically requested by Winnebago County. There are some concerns about the rental community and short-term rentals. She will take that information back to Madison to work with colleagues or their committees.

Ms. Palmeri confirmed that the budget public hearing will take place from 10:00 am - 5:00 pm on April 2, 2025, at the Kaukauna High School Gym. She will also be hosting a specific budget listening session for the public at the library on May 5, 2025.

State Representative Nate Gustafson - Assembly District 55

Representative Gustafson shared a story involving a picture taken visiting the Capitol on May 3, 2005, when he was in 4th grade. Mr. Gustafson had taken a picture with his state representative at that time and that happened to be Representative Kaufert. On May 3, 2025, will be the 20th anniversary of that photo. Mr. Gustafson has the rare privilege and opportunity now to serve alongside Representative Kaufert.

Representative Gustafson is on the following committees:

- * Chairing a new committee that was created, Committee on Science, Technology and AI Committee.*
- * Co-Chairing the Joint Committee on Information Policy and Technology.*
- * Vice-Chair of the Committee on State and Federal Relations*
- * Serving on the Committee on Regulatory License Reform Committee*
- * Serving on the Committee on Judiciary*
- * Serving on the Committee on Ways and Means*
- * Serving on a new committee created, Committee on Government Operations, Accountability and Transparency (GOAT). The goal is to dig through, find inefficiencies, ways, fraud, abuse and find ways that they can clean them up.*

Mr. Gustafson discussed some details around AI, the upcoming state budget and the last thing he addressed was the Rural Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Issue.

State Senator Rachael Cabral-Guervara - Senatorial District 19

Sydney Rose Faestel, District Director for State Senator Rachael Cabral-Guervara, reported that Senator Cabral-Guervara is the following committees:

- * Chair of the Committee on Health*
- * Vice-Chair of the Committee on Universities and Technical Colleges*
- * Serves on the Committee on Mental Health, Substance Abuse Prevention, Children and Families*
- * Serves on the Joint Legislative Council*
- * Serves on the Committee on Agriculture and Revenue*

Ms. Faestel mentioned they are still currently working on the budget asks and doing some policy,

so if there is anything around either of those or any other issues that you would like to speak to the Senator about or meet with her, let Ms. Faestel know, and she can get it set up for you.

The State Representatives then took questions from the committee members.

Chairman Farrey thanked the legislators for providing updates and attending the Legislative Committee meeting. Mr. Farrey acknowledged and deeply appreciated their time.

G. Update from Federal Legislators

There were no federal representatives present.

H. Communications Shared by Committee Members

I. Updates from the County Executive

Ethan Hollenberger, Assistant to the County Executive, discussed State Legislation impacting County Government. He did not discuss every piece of legislation that impacts county government but some that are relevant to the county that include Veteran Benefit Posters, Publishing Requirements for counties above 250,000, Multiple Rehired Annuitant bills (mainly law enforcement related), delay of implementation of Campaign Finance Information System (CFIS) for local races, and allowing Interpreters to appear virtually for trials.

Mr. Hollenberger discussed Governor Evers' Budget. He explained and talked about the budget process, tax provisions that included levy limit exemption for the regional planning commissions and levy limit exemption for local fire/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) contracts. Mr. Hollenberger kept this discussion minimally about funding and more about concepts in the budget that we care about, that we may want to see, and most of these, all of these things are at risk of being taken out if we go to base budget such as: Increase for County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO), Increase Register of Deeds (ROD) recording fee to \$45 from \$30, Increase court funding by \$70 million in year two, Increase victim witness funding, Fund pay progression for district attorneys, Grants for mental health co-response, Increase in Community Support Programs for mental health, Fund the elimination of Birth Cost Recovery, Continued funding of Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS) Program, Increase to Home Delivered Meals, Funding for rural mental health facility, Increase General Transportation Aids 3%, Continue to fund LRIP-S at \$100 million, Add County Conservation Staffing to Base Budget and Increase, \$10 million in bonding for conservation cost share, Increase to Producer Led Watershed Grants (Muddy Bottom Farmers), 2 Department of Natural Resources (DNR) positions for Winnebago Lake System, and 1 DNR position to study impact of Enhanced Wakes.

Mr. Hollenberger identified and briefly explained to the committee the County Impacts of Federal Funding Stopages that consisted of Breakwall funding from the Department of Interior, Farmers Climate Smart aid to farmers from Department of Agriculture, and Energy Efficiency Block Grant for LED Light replacement at Courthouse.

Mr. Hollenberger gave a brief update on his trip to NACo and provided updates on NACo 100-day calls weekly, Political Appointees still getting into place (Intergovernmental Affairs staff is most key), County Veterans Service (CVSO) Act (needs appropriation), Surface Transportation Reauthorization, Tax Free Municipal Bonds, and Continued government funding until the end of the year. The last thing he talked about was the Airport Master Plan. Mr. Hollenberger then took questions from the committee.

J. Business Items

1. Resolution #44-2/25 from LaCrosse County

Motion by Supervisor Binder, seconded by Lautenschlager, to approve the resolution and forward it to the County Board. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE. (Abstain: Frassetto)

K. Items for Next Agenda

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

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

L. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will take place on Monday, June 2, 2025, at 8:30 a.m. at the James P. Coughlin Center, Meeting Rooms A & B.

M. Adjourn

Motion by Supervisor Cox, seconded by Supervisor Frassetto, to adjourn. MOTION CARRIED. The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Submitted by:

Cassie J. Smith-Gregor

Winnebago County Chief Deputy Clerk

The video portion of this meeting is available on the County website:

<https://winnebagoowi.portal.civicclerk.com>