

This meeting was called to order on Monday, October 10, 2011 in the County Board Conference Rooms at the Vilas County Courthouse, 330 Court Street, Eagle River, Wisconsin. Public meeting notice was given to the public twenty-four hours prior to the meeting. The meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm by the following Committee members: Linda Thorpe (Chair, Vilas County Personnel Committee), Charles Rayala, Jr. (Member, Vilas County Highway Committee), Terry Lukas (Chair, Forest County Highway Committee), and Erhard Huettl (Chair, Forest County Executive Committee).

Vilas County Personnel Members Present: Chair Linda Thorpe, Jim Behling, Emil Bakka, Bob Egan and Sig Hjemvick.

Vilas County Highway Members Present: Maynard Bedish, Charles Rayala, Jr., and Ralph Sitzberger.

Forest County Highway Members Present: Chair Terry Lukas, Don LeMaster, and Tom Vollmar.

Forest County Executive Members Present: Chair Erhard Huettl, Terry Lukas, and Paul Millan.

Others Present: John Rogers (Forest Co Highway Commissioner), Martha Milanowski (Vilas Co Corporation Counsel), Tom Numrich (Vilas Co Highway Bookkeeper), Jarred Maney (Vilas Co Interim Highway Commissioner), Louise Krus (Vilas Co Highway Secretary), Steve Favorite (Vilas Co Board Chair), Janna Kahl (Vilas Co Human Resources Manager), and Ken Anderson (Press).

Approve Agenda: Motion by L. Thorpe, seconded by S. Hjemvick to approve the agenda to be discussed in any order of the Chair. All voting aye, carried.

Approve Minutes: Motion by B. Egan, seconded by E. Bakka, to approve the September 30, 2011 Personnel Committee minutes. All voting aye, carried.

Discussion of the Possibility of Shared Forest/Vilas County Highway Commissioner and/or Shared Highway Equipment: S. Favorite began by stating he would moderate the dialogue in regards to the possibility of a shared position and/or equipment between the two counties. He stated that we would likely not leave the discussion with a clear answer, but we owe it to our taxpayers to engage in these conversations and consider these possibilities, even if there is not a final decision made at this time. Forest Co. asked if it was the Vilas Co. Highway Committee or the County Board who initiated this possible joint venture. R. Sitzberger stated it was the Board; C. Rayala stated that he was not in favor of this joint venture at this time, but that he would open to these discussions.

J. Behling stated that the regulations regarding sharing equipment and labor are relatively unclear. It is not illegal to share equipment or personnel in road maintenance projects, but it is illegal to share resources for road construction projects. He thinks there is a pathway to shared equipment and personnel, especially since there is not a lot of construction occurring in the two counties, but there is a lot of maintenance work done in both counties.

S. Favorite and J. Maney explained that Vilas Co. currently plows roads for two towns, and generates revenue as a result of that labor/equipment. S. Favorite suggested that the joint venture with Forest Co. could result in similar additional revenue for Vilas Co. Forest Co. stated that providing blacktop to another county would be cost prohibitive because their current plant is not portable. J. Behling asked if there is a central location in Forest Co. and Vilas Co. where it would be cost effective for the two counties to co-own and co-operate an asphalt plant. It was determined that the group would need to look at a map to determine such a location, and further detailed that such a venture would require the construction of a new plant. Forest Co. asked if it would be better to build a portable plant, and J. Maney responded that would be a better option and that Vilas Co. current costs for asphalt are \$45/ton off the mill, and \$60/ton if the material is delivered to the site. Forest Co. stated their rates are \$44/\$60, respectively. J. Maney stated that Vilas Co. does not have the equipment to feed and move a portable plant, Forest Co. said they do not have such equipment either. E. Bakka stated that another consideration would be transport time, set-up time, and shut-down time. J. Maney stated it takes Pitlik & Wick several days to transport and set-up their portable mill. E. Huettl stated that another advantage to laying down your own asphalt is to ensure it is done correctly. J. Maney stated the County has a good working relationship with Pitlik & Wick.

M. Bedish stated he is not in favor of this arrangement. He stated Vilas Co. needs to be for Vilas Co., Forest Co. needs to be for Forest Co. and they should pay for services as they are needed. E. Bakka thinks this arrangement could work if it was managed with the right tools. R. Sitzberger stated that BRB states that two counties cannot share people, but they can share equipment for maintenance. He also stated that this type of arrangement works for smaller counties, such as those that are 45 minutes or less apart, but Vilas Co. itself is too large to make this work. From R. Sitzberger's experience, a 50/50 arrangement never works, because one party is not truly a 50% partner/contributor. R. Sitzberger would like to see Vilas Co. combine the job descriptions of Highway Commissioner and Patrol Superintendent and the State will pay 60% of the salary. J. Behling stated that if the group were to look at why Jackson & Clark Co's considered this arrangement, it was because they could not afford to continue at the same rates they were operating. They did not engage in this agreement out of convenience, but out of necessity. Our counties are not that different from those two counties. Forest Co. asked if it would be possible to try this arrangement for 90 days.

L. Thorpe questioned J. Rogers if he knows how to read blueprints. J. Rogers stated no, he does not. He understands the general aspects of blueprints, but for anything specific, he would need to consult an engineer. Educational background of the highway commissioner was then discussed.

E. Bakka stated for this arrangement to work, it would require a cooperative effort. He stated that it appears Forest Co.'s Highway Committee is willing to listen and to try it, but he does not see that interest from Vilas Co. Highway Committee. B. Egan provided a copy of the agreement between Clark and Jackson to Forest Co. for reference. R. Sitzberger stated if Vilas Co. is running its trucks to Crandon, the Co. is adding unnecessary miles to its trucks. S. Favorite said he does not agree with keeping a depreciating asset in a garage, especially if it is a potential revenue source; he added that it is about finding the right balance. J. Behling added that the Counties claim the agreement saved one county

\$60,000/year, and the other county \$90,000/year. Forest Co. questioned whether the DOT supported this agreement, and S. Favorite stated that Vilas Co. does not know the answer to that.

E. Huettl provided several examples where Forest Co. and Vilas Co. have undergone current and past successful cooperative efforts. J. Behling stated that we may not be able to combine routes, but we might be able to find more efficient ways to run the equipment. J. Maney stated that the Counties are mandated by the State of when and how they can plow the state roads. J. Maney stated that Vilas Co. has abided by the same guidelines for county roads that the State sets forth in most cases. Forest Co. asked about Vilas County's time frame. S. Favorite responded that Vilas Co. is ok for now; Forest Co. has their Commissioner and Vilas Co. has an acting interim Commissioner. S. Favorite prefers to build consensus as opposed to rushing a decision.

There was general consensus to continue these discussions regarding a joint Commissioner and equipment among the majority of the members present. C. Rayala wants to consider similar talks with Oneida Co. R. Sitzberger wants to stop talking about this issue in general because he thinks it will not work.

Letters and Communications: None.

The Committee Chairs stated that there is no further business on the agenda therefore this meeting stands adjourned at 5:37 pm.

Minutes reflect the recorders notation and are subject to approval by the appropriate board or committee.

Submitted by Janna Kahl, Vilas County Human Resources Manager