

## **Minutes of the Public Works Committee July 14, 2016**

Chair Dave Swan called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

### **Present:**

Dave Swan, Darlene Johnson, Steve Whittow, Tom Schellinger, Richard Morris **Absent:** Chuck Wood, Keith Hammitt

### **Others Present:**

County Board Chairman Paul Decker, County Board Supervisor William Mitchell, Engineering Services Manager Gary Evans, Director of Public Works Allison Bussler, Airport Manager Kurt Stanich, Citizens Laurence Menning, Earl Baumann, Irene Ridgeman, Dan Koehler, Subdivision Developer Craig Caliendo, and Legislative Policy Advisor Sarah Spaeth. Recorded by Administrative Specialist Beth Schwartz, County Board Office.

### **Public Comment**

Several citizens of Saylesville Road commented on proposed Ordinance 171-O-023. Menning expressed that his three children had several safety incidents on the way to school. He feels that speed is not monitored enough by patrol cars, and said this decision significantly effects citizen's lives. Baumann explained that many incidents of rear ending have occurred. He previously petitioned the County Board in the 1970's to lower the speed limit, which was not passed. He claims that without a shoulder, the road is not safe for bike riding or pedestrian activity. He recommends solar powered flashing speed signs and reduced speed ahead signs. Ridgeman wanted the Committee to know how important this environmental space is in the historic area of Saylesville, including the new landmark Pond and Blacksmith shop. With homes, businesses and a cemetery within 30 feet from the edge of the road, there is no room for drivers to navigate well at 45 mph. She has experienced problems getting into her driveway as the road is very busy. She commented that a problem with the traffic study is that it was done at a slower traffic time, and the road gets much busier at different times. She also added that the number of accidents in the speed study may not be accurate because not all are reported. Koehler said he has wanted the speed limit lowered for decades. Caliendo, the developer of the new subdivision on the road, claimed the speed limit is dangerous and he expressed concerns for future residents. All citizens present urged Committee members to lower the speed limit for safety reasons. They also included their written petition to lower the speed limit.

Multiple letters of correspondence from property owners in support of this ordinance were sent to the Committee. The Town of Genesee Chairman also sent a letter to the Committee urging them to support the proposed ordinance, of which the Genesee Town Board unanimously supported.

### **Discuss and Consider Ordinance 171-O-023: Establishment Of Speed Zone On County Trunk Highway X (Saylesville Road)**

Mitchell stated residents that live in the area have requested the speed reduction from 45 mph to 35 mph on County Trunk Highway X from its intersection with Point Drive to its intersection with Holiday Road based on safety concerns. Mitchell disagreed with the conclusions of the speed study findings, claiming the impact of the speed limit is not accurately portrayed. In the most open area, many vehicles do go the speed limit or under, especially near the historic area. He claims this is an area that even with a passing lane will cause problems at the current speed limit. He asked the Committee to consider other parts of the road that are already 35 mph. To clarify feedback he received that the Ordinance was put forth to help a developer avoid costs, Mitchell claimed this is not true, and was brought forth because of safety concerns from constituents. Schellinger commented that 25 mph would be safer than 35 mph and suggested making segments of the road 25 mph. Whittow disagreed

with this logic, and believed 25 mph segments will create speed traps.

Evans said speed study findings show the road is in the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, which indicates the speed limit is set correctly to the speed people drive at naturally. The study looked at crash history, where near misses are not recorded, but actual crashes are, and found this highway in the average. Driveway spacing was assessed, and found the majority of driveways are correctly spaced from the road. This was part of the basis of their decision to not recommend lowering the speed limit. Evans stated he was not sure lowering the speed limit will solve the problem of pedestrians and bikers. A shoulder or path may need to be created. He claimed the subdivision needs to be designed to match the operating speeds. Although speed limits are not lowered for subdivisions to prevent problems with sight distance, the subdivision was the catalyst that got this discussion going. He suggested lowering the speed limit in a larger area and expanding the Ordinance all the way to Highway 83.

Swan asked if this road has a designation, in which Evans answered it is an arterial street. Bussler stated that in a perfect world, state roads connect regions, such as Milwaukee to Madison, and county roads connect communities, which are required by law to carry truck traffic. That is their purpose and it is illegal to prevent them from doing so. This is not meant to be a road to walk a dog, and the speed limit won't change that. Crossings and sidewalks can be created, but the purpose of this road is to carry traffic. Public sentiment has been changing recently and local municipalities are putting in sidewalks and recreational pathways on county roads. It is recommended county roads are 55 mph, but there are many exceptions.

Morris suggested amending this Ordinance to include all of the road up to Highway 83.

Motion: Swan moved, second by Morris to Amend Ordinance 171-O-023 that it extend the lower speed limit up to Highway 83. Motion carried 4-1. Swan voted no.

Evans said changing the speed limit can create the expectation people are driving slower when they really are not. The fallout of passing this Ordinance is that new safety issues arise. Whittow commented that traffic studies don't lie but it is a growing area and we should listen to resident concerns. He compared Saylesville Road to Racine Avenue, and brought up the big shoulder on Racine Avenue as a suggestion for future improvements to make Saylesville Road safer.

MOTION: Morris moved, second by Johnson to approve Ordinance 171-O-023 as amended. Motion carried 4-1. Swan voted no.

### **Discuss and Consider Ordinance 171-O-024: Approve Lease Agreement Between The Humane Animal Welfare Society And Waukesha County**

Changes to the lease are being made, which Corporation Counsel has not reviewed yet, therefore this Ordinance will be considered next month.

### **Overview and Tour Of Airport Operations**

In a brief history of the Waukesha County Airport, Stanich explained the first flight for Waukesha County was in 1919 from Waukesha to Stonebank. The first person to build a plane in Waukesha County was in 1928. The Waukesha Aviation Club formed 1931, and they petitioned the County Board by putting on an airshow. The 1940s brought Civil Air Patrol with the Waukesha Composite Squadron, which is still active today.

The Waukesha County Airport is the nationally designated General Aviation Airport in Wisconsin and the busiest. General Aviation is the largest fleet of airplanes in the entire United States, which is anything not commercial or military. It makes up for 75% of flights in the United States. Companies use General Aviation

Airports like Waukesha because it makes it convenient for them to buy, rent and charter airplanes. Some of the benefits which allow companies to outperform those who use airlines include convenience, superior service, flexibility, reduced stress, increased productivity, and efficiency. Aside from businesses, the Waukesha Airport is also used for recreation, Medic Rescue, Flight for Life, military operations, and flight training. Stanich also discussed Capital Projects based on the Airport Layout Plan with Runway Safety Area improvement being the next project. Complying with a new FAA rule about distance from roads, this will have an \$80,000,000 economic impact. In answering Johnson's question, Stanich said many plans were considered in improving the Runway Safety Area, but the best option was chosen from a fiscally responsible standpoint.

Stanich said the industry is very much in need of pilots and support staff. There is so much competition with careers that the amount of licenses issued is going down, yet demand for pilots and industry specialists is going up. There is a false public perception that getting a flying license is expensive. Compared to the education cost of other careers, the return on a career in aviation is above average. Stanich encouraged everyone to explore careers in aviation and aerospace. In response to Johnson's question about starting a career in Aviation, Stanich said it takes 6-12 months of flying every week to get a private pilot license, and from there go on to commercial training. He said there are no UW schools offering programs at this time, but there are flight schools in the area to complete in addition to an Associate or Bachelor degree.

Morris left 9:50 a.m.

### **Tour of Airport Facilities**

The Committee was led on a tour of the airport facilities by Stanich including public and private hangers, the air traffic control tower, and the airport's new runway.

### **Approve Minutes of June 16, 2016**

MOTION: Morris moved, second by Schellinger to approve the minutes of June 16, 2016. Motion carried 5-0.

### **Announcements**

Bussler stated much has been done to continue the campaign from Work Zone Safety Awareness Week. She commented that inattentive driving causes death in the line of duty. The Public Works Department made a Public Service Announcement and posted a video to their twitter feed, urging drivers not to use cellular phones in a construction area.

### **Executive Committee Report of June 20, 2016**

Swan reported on the following items that were discussed at the last Executive Committee meeting:

- Discussed Parks & Land Use Golf Course Cashiering Audit
- Discussed Public Works Highway Operations Division Audit
- Approved Ordinance 171-O-008: Modify Project Scope for Capital Project 201407, Waukesha to Brookfield Multi Use Trail
- Approved ordinances and appointments that have since been considered by the County Board.

### **Future Agenda Items**

- Schellinger suggested an overview of the condition of County Roads and Bridges Rating System

### **Legislative Update**

Spaeth reported the legislature is in recess, and although there were initial meetings, there were none affecting Public Works. Spaeth also said the Governor has requested the Department of Transportation's (DOT) budget to be submitted earlier than usual this year. The budget will be submitted in September and the DOT was asked not to increase taxes or fees and to reconsider some of the Southeast area major road projects.

**Future Meeting Date(s)**

- August 11, 2016
- September 15, 2016

MOTION: Schellinger moved, second by Johnson to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 a.m. Motion carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Morris  
Secretary