

## LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### Meeting Minutes – April 7, 2015

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman Edwin Kelley called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Florence County Courthouse second floor jury room.
2. **Roll Call:** Committee members in attendance included Florence County Board Supervisors: Edwin Kelley, Holly Wahlstrom-Stratton and Edward Wenger; Fred Erwin, Unit Chair of the Wisconsin Town's Association (WTA), and Ron Yadro, Florence School Board Member. Additional meeting participants were: Florence School District Superintendent, Ben Niehaus; Human Services Director, Jen Steber; Health Department County Nurse, Ann Price; and Legislative Coordinator, Margie Yadro.
3. **Observe a Moment of Silence.** All in attendance paused to honor the memory of Florence County Board Supervisor and fellow Legislative Advisory Committee Member, Don Gardner, who passed away on March 30, 2015.
4. **Approval and/or revisions to the current agenda.** Wahlstrom-Stratton moved to add "Discuss and/or Act" upon item #8 "Resolutions" on the agenda. Seconded by Erwin. All were in favor.
5. **Approval of the February 3, 2015 Legislative Advisory Committee Minutes.** R. Yadro motioned to approve the previous meeting minutes as drafted. Supported by Wenger. Motion passed.
6. **OLD BUSINESS –**
  - A. County Board action on resolutions and bills: Kelley reported that the County Board Supervisors supported all resolutions and bill correspondence as recommended from previous action taken by the Legislative Advisory Committee.
  - B. School Board/Resolutions: Superintendent Niehaus presented a draft of a preliminary bill related to tuition payments for pupils attending out-of-state public schools. He felt that final adjustments are being made at this time and expects that both Senator Tom Tiffany and Representative Rob Swearingen are ready to sponsor this proposal for resident public school districts to choose to enter into a tuition agreement with out-of-state districts. R. Yadro moved to refer this item until more information becomes available. Supported by Wahlstrom-Stratton. All were in favor.
  - C. Florence County Townships: Erwin recently reviewed the Rhinelander "Safe Ride Home" program that basically offers a coupon oriented taxi service. He stated that another option called "Ride Share" is also being promoted to provide transportation assistance with certified drivers through smartphone apps which he felt might be a good fit for rural areas that do not have many public transportation options. Erwin moved to refer this item until more information is known. Supported by Wahlstrom-Stratton. Motion passed.
  - D. National Forest PILT monies: Wenger noted ongoing correspondence asking for the "Payment In Lieu of Taxes" (PILT) program to be fully funded and reauthorized along with the "Secure Rural Schools" initiative. Niehaus expects more details on this soon along with a clearer understanding of the possible impacts of several of these related funding sources to local budgets. He reported the Florence School District's loss of approximately \$30,000 in similar funding since last year. This item will remain on the agenda and continue to be discussed as more budget information is known.
  - E. Terrestrial Invasive Species support: M. Yadro introduced a resolution to request increased state and federal resources earmarked for invasive species management on road right-of-ways. Several Committee members asked to emphasize the direct link to human health hazards, risks to tourism and economics, and overall safety. Wenger moved to add that language and send it on for County Board Supervisors' consideration.

Supported by Erwin. Motion passed. M. Yadro also alerted Committee Members to some of the same invasive species exposure on trail systems throughout the region.

- F. Regional Transportation Aids for the North: M. Yadro felt that the invasive species management issue should also be addressed at a regional level with organizations such as the Wild Rivers Invasive Species Coalition. R. Yadro added the small gain for the local school district on state transportation aids that still fell short of expectations. Niehaus had recently testified to the Joint Finance Committee and spoke specifically on the inequity in the distribution of these funds across the state. He believes that the legislators are well aware of the necessity to work on this issue and expects to know more on this for the next meeting.
- G. Letter to Senator Stabenow on US Postal Service closures: R. Yadro moved to include this as an action item on the upcoming ANSWERS meeting agenda as this appears to affect neighboring Michigan counties more significantly. Supported by Wahlstrom-Stratton. All were in favor.
- H. E-Cigarettes: a Public Hearing is being scheduled to consider adoption of a related County Ordinance. No further action was necessary.

## 7. NEW BUSINESS –

- A. **AB-013**, related to the return of seized firearms to the person who owns the firearms: Wahlstrom-Stratton moved to send this bill on to Sheriff Rickaby for recommendation. Supported by R. Yadro. Motion passed.
- B. **AB-019**, related to unlawful use of a global positioning devices and providing a penalty: several Committee Members expressed their concerns for potential infringement on personal privacy. Kelley agreed to seek administrative recommendations on this issue.
- C. **AB-037**, related to requiring certain persons to hold certificates of food protection practices in order to operate certain school lunchrooms participating in the National School Lunch Program. Niehaus reported contacting the office of the author of this bill and found this proposal to require one person on staff to carry this certification as originally recommended by the schools. He feels this will have little bearing on the local district who already has the resource people necessary to comply. R. Yadro motioned to table this item indefinitely. Supported by Wenger. Motion passed.
- D. **AB-049**, related to the waiting period for handgun purchases: several Committee Members commented on supporting the immediate purchase of a hand gun once a successful notice of the background check is completed, eliminating the 48-hour waiting period. Erwin moved to send a letter on to legislators in support of this bill. Seconded by Wenger. Motion passed.
- E. **AB-081**, related to modifying and repealing rules promulgated by the DFI and the DOR relating to documents filed with the County Registers of Deeds: Wahlstrom-Stratton reported a brief discussion on this with the Florence County Register of Deeds, Pattie Gehlhoff, who felt that the recording fees should stay within the County. Wahlstrom-Stratton moved to combine a request for an administrative recommendation for AB-081, along with AB-082 and SB073, relating to instruments filed or recorded with, and fees charged by, the Register of Deeds. Supported by R. Yadro. All were in favor.
- F. **AB-082 & SB-073**: included in above action taken.
- G. **AB-106**, related to policies regulating the use of electronic smoking devices on school district property: Niehaus commented that the local School Board has already adopted policy to cover this type of product use. R. Yadro moved to support the bill and send it on to County Board and ANSWERS for further action. Seconded by Erwin. All were in favor.
- H. **AB-122**, related to exempting certain vehicles of utilities from Class B highway weight limitations and certain special seasonal weight limitations: Wahlstrom-Stratton commented on restrictions impacting certain type of trucks transporting emergency materials or providing necessary public services. Though the need for access was acknowledged, concern was expressed over who would ultimately repair the roads if additional damage results. Wenger moved to send this for administrative recommendation to the Florence County Highway Commissioner, Jeff DeMuri. Supported by Erwin. Motion passed.

- I. **SB-015**, related to the manufacture and acceptance for sale of products containing microbeads: Wahlstrom-Stratton reported on the length of time manufacturers have to change their process in production of several types of medication and personal care products that contain synthetic plastic microbeads that are now found in Wisconsin lakes. Wahlstrom-Stratton moved to send this on to the Health Department Administrator, Annette Seibold, for recommendation. Supported by Erwin. All were in favor.
- J. **SB-033**, related to eligible applicants under the broadband expansion grant program: Wahlstrom-Stratton explained the increased opportunities for schools and library boards that would now be grant eligible under this bill to expand broadband infrastructure to underserved areas. Niehaus added that this could provide additional opportunity for future technical development at the School such as a “Fab Lab.” Wahlstrom-Stratton moved to send a “Letter of Support” to County Board Supervisors to request that legislators pursue this bill. Seconded by R. Yadro. Motion passed.
- K. **SB-052**, related to tax incremental financing (TIF) project plan amendments and extending the life of a tax incremental district if the district is adversely impacted by statutory changes to the method of calculating equalized valuation: it was noted that this bill only impacts districts before certain dates. Wahlstrom-Stratton moved to send both SB052 and SB053 to Florence County Economic Director, Wendy Gehlhoff, for further recommendation. Supported by R. Yadro. All were in favor. Wahlstrom-Stratton added her concern for future non-industrial development within a TIF District.
- L. **SB-053**, included in above action taken.
- M. **SB-067**, related to pupil assessments, evaluation of educator effectiveness, and school accountability reports: Niehaus shared concerns about this bill that aims to increase school accountability, which in the moment he supports, but feels that the testing mechanisms have been all over the map and that this could ultimately undermine the State Superintendent’s authority. Niehaus would like to see how the Wisconsin Association of School Boards acts on this item. Erwin moved to send this item on to the local School Board for further recommendations and/or action. Seconded by R. Yadro. Motion passed.
- N. **SB-080**, related to exempting certain vehicles of utilities from Class B Highway weight limitations, etc.: included in above action taken for AB-122.

8. **RESOLUTIONS –**

Discussed and/or acted upon:

- A. Opposing changes to ADRC’s Family Care and Senior Care: Wahlstrom-Stratton expressed her concerns over potentially disbanding the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) system that appears to be working well through the county support systems currently covered by local elected official oversight. Human Services Director, Jen Steber, reported sending letters to legislators opposing these changes as well. Wahlstrom-Stratton moved to forward this resolution drafted by Florence County’s ADRC Director, Barb Bauer, on to County Board Supervisors for consideration and further recommendations to state legislators. Seconded by Wenger. All were in favor.
  - B. Communicable Disease Resolution: The Florence County Health Department drafted a resolution to urge legislatures to support funding of mandated communicable disease control and prevention for the public’s health. Wahlstrom-Stratton moved to send this Resolution and informational sheet on to County Board Supervisors to oppose this unfunded mandate. Supported by R. Yadro. All were in favor.
9. **Update from Legislators**: Niehaus asked about any ongoing discussion on the “prevailing wage” issue and was especially curious as to how this might impact construction for the school district if they choose to renovate or remodel in the future. A recent report put out by the Wisconsin Taxpayer Alliance referenced potential impacts to areas such as Florence County. He believes that Senator Tiffany is taking up this issue that could significantly reduce the cost to Wisconsin taxpayers. Niehaus added another legislative proposal to repeal the personal property tax on businesses. Though he appreciated the benefits to eliminating a tax burden, he questioned how the state plans to fill in the gaps in local budgets that are tax based. Niehaus reported testifying to the Joint Finance Committee recently addressing the proposed cut of \$150 per pupil

categorical aid for school districts which he feels has since received unified support as a priority to put back in the state budget. If state revenues are up in May, Niehaus looks for positive action to be taken to return this support to public schools.

10. **Group discussion/any other action on legislative business:** Wahlstrom-Stratton reported a recent article stating that the Northern Long-Eared Bats were listed as “Threatened” instead of “Endangered.” All expressed concerns on impacts to the logging related industries with added restrictions on timber harvests. She also felt that Wisconsin Congressman Sean Duffy is taking up the charge in addressing the potentially far reach implications found in redefining “navigable” waters. Steber shared possible impacts to Human Services Department services and funding in the Governor’s budget proposal and drafted several letters to request continued state support for programs such as Family Care, IRIS, Senior Care, and the ADRC’s, etc. Steber went on to express concern for local residents being negatively impacted by these potential losses and lower limits for family support programs. All related Legislative letters will be forwarded to County Board Supervisors for further action.
11. **Future meeting:** ANSWERS will meeting on April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 9 AM at the Florence Natural Resource Center.
12. **Adjournment:** With all business complete, Erwin motioned to adjourn. Supported by Wenger. The meeting adjourned until May 5<sup>th</sup> at the pleasure of Chairman Kelley. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 10:37 AM.

*Respectfully submitted by: Margie Yadro, Legislative Advisory Committee Coordinator*