

Florence County
LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 6, 2015 9:00 AM

Florence County Courthouse (second floor conference room)

1. **Call to Order:**Chairman Edwin Kelley called the meeting to order at 9 AM.
2. **Roll Call:** County Board Supervisors Holly Wahlstrom-Stratton and Larry Dzekute; Unit Chairman, Wisconsin Towns Association, Fred Erwin; and Florence School Board Member, Ron Yadro. Supervisor Edward Wenger was excused. Also participating: Florence Schools Superintendent, Ben Niehaus, and Legislative Advisory Coordinator, Margie Yadro.
3. **Approval and/or revisions to the current agenda:**Wahlstrom-Stratton moved to accept the current agenda as posted. Supported by Erwin. All were in favor.
4. **Approval of the September 4, 2015 Legislative Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes:** On a motion by Wahlstrom-Stratton, seconded by Kelley, the minutes were approved as drafted.
5. **Legislative Action or Recommendations –**
 - A. **Florence County Board Supervisors:** Kelley stated that Supervisors took action last month following local administrator and Legislative Advisory Committee member recommendations. M. Yadro distributed letters to legislators as directed.
 - B. **State and Federal School Legislation:**Niehaus offered an update from Florence Schools stating that the 3rd Friday count in September was up by 6 students from the previous year. He provided a handout explaining the history of general state aid to the local school district which showed a steady annual decrease of 15% in 9 of the past 11 years, dropping from a total of over \$2.6 million in state funding in 2005-06 to an estimated \$546,342 in 2015-16. Niehaus expressed concern for taxpayers taking on more financial burden as the state increases aid to private schools and voucher expansion. He also shared a developing resolution to amend the “maintenance of effort” federal requirement which currently penalizes school districts for reducing their spending levels even though they maintain the same quality services to students with disabilities. This resolution brought forward by the local school district is expected to seek state support at the annual Wisconsin Association of School Boards Convention. Niehaus finished with an invite to attend the upcoming District’s Annual Meeting where more information would be provided on the complicated school funding formula in addition to campus capital improvement projects and the development of a community Task Force charged with review of the school facilities, learning environments, and cost-effective solutions for taxpayers.
 - C. **Florence County Wisconsin Towns Association (WTA):**Erwin reported on a variety of E (electronic)-waste collection considerations for local communities. He added that legislative priorities and actions continue to include transportation finance decisions along with operating Implements of Husbandry which are related to certain vehicles and farm equipment on highways. He was pleased to report that towns can continue to contract with counties for projects when mutually beneficial.
6. **Federal Funding:**efforts are being undertaken to introduce a bill to reauthorize and fund the Secure Rural Schools programs, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and Payment in Lieu of Taxes program.
7. **Regional Transportation Aids:** Erwin reported on transportation aids to Towns for road maintenance.

OLD BUSINESS – (discussion/action)

8. Department and Partner Agency/Organization Recommendations:

- A. **SB-236:** relating to temporary alcohol beverage retail licenses. Erwin moved to send Economic Development Director Wendy Gehlhoff’s comments to support this bill on to County Board Supervisors for further consideration. Seconded by Wahlstrom-Stratton. All were in favor.

- B. **AB-274:** relating to possession of firearms by individuals who commit multiple or violent misdemeanor offenses and providing a criminal penalty. Erwin moved to follow Sheriff Jeff Rickaby's recommendation to oppose this bill as drafted. Seconded by Dzekute. All were in favor to convey that message in a letter to area legislators with support requested from County Board Supervisors.

NEW BUSINESS – (discussion/action)

- A. **AB-243:** relating to restrictions on hunting antlerless deer by members of a group hunting party. Warden Kelly Crotty had sent in a comment to describe the current regulation of group hunting parties. After further discussion, especially on the challenges to enforcement, Wahlstrom-Stratton motioned to support this proposed legislation and send a letter to County Board Supervisors for further consideration. Seconded by Dzekute. Motion passed.
- B. **AB-325:** relating to allowing a school board president to fill certain vacancies on a school board; and, **SB-217:** relating to allowing a school board member to serve as a volunteer coach or extracurricular activity supervisor. After a recommendation from Superintendent Niehaus, R. Yadro moved to combine these two bills in a letter of support for further consideration by County Board Supervisors. Seconded by Wahlstrom-Stratton. All were in favor.
- C. **SB-239:** relating to replacement, reconstruction, and transfer of an approved high capacity well. On a motion by R. Yadro, supported by Wahlstrom-Stratton, all were in favor to defer this item to the Land Conservation Department and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for more information.
- D. **Resolutions:** repeal Act 55 related to Shoreland Zoning Standards. On a motion by Wahlstrom-Stratton. Supported by Erwin. All were in favor to direct M. Yadro to contact Zoning Administrator Rich Wolosyn to take any Zoning Committee action on this item directly to the Florence County Supervisors for further consideration and support.
- E. **Update from area Legislators:** M. Yadro provided a brief overview of a newsletter update from Senator Tom Tiffany's office that included a strong job report for Wisconsin; new driver license identification cards this fall; and, continued road repairs and closures on US 141.
- F. **Group discussion/any other action on legislative business:** several members had attended a local Listening Session with Representative Rob Swearingen and Senator Tiffany. Erwin also commented on SB 118 (AB 161) relating to limitations on town expenditures for certain highway purposes. The Senate version appears to have passed with its sister bill referred to the Assembly's Committee on Rules.
- G. **Future ANSWERS/Legislative Advisory Committee meeting agenda items:** the upcoming ANSWERS meeting has been scheduled for October 28th at 9 a.m. at the Resource Center. Items suggested for the agenda included: public school funding and regulation, forestry projects and programs, ATV/snowmobile trail access and improvements, and invasive and protected species and potential impacts from their special designations.
- H. **Set date for next Legislative Advisory Meeting and adjourn:** with all business completed, R. Yadro moved to set the next meeting date as November 3, 2015 at 9 a.m. Seconded by Erwin. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Legislative Advisory Coordinator Margie Yadro