

# Buffalo County Minutes

**Committee/Board:** BUFFALO COUNTY HIGHWAY COMMITTEE

**Date of Meeting:** Tuesday, January 7, 2020

**Location:** Highway Department Committee Room

**Electronic and Hardcopy Filing Date:**

Chairman Grisen called a regular scheduled meeting of the Buffalo County Highway Committee to order at 9:00 a.m.

**Buffalo County Highway Committee members present at the meeting were:** Mr. Danzinger via telephone, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Bork and Mr. Grisen. Others present for all or part of the meeting were Mr. Bob Platteter, Mr. Kelly Johnston, Ms. Roxann Halverson, Ms. Sonya Hansen, Mr. David Schmidt, Mr. Jimmy Ellis, Mr. Ray Secrist, Mr. Rick Reuter, Mr. Perry Thomsen, Mr. Ryan Qwendt, Mr. Del Twidt, Mr. Bruce Auseth.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed. A motion to approve the minutes as written was made by Mr. Bork, seconded by Mr. Taylor. A roll call vote was taken and all approved. Carried.

**Public Comments:** None.

**Read and Approve Vouchers:** Voucher #26435 through 26494 were reviewed. Mr. Taylor made a motion to approve the vouchers, seconded by Mr. Bork. A roll call vote was taken and all approved. Carried.

**Consideration and Action regarding Township Concerns of Rustic Roads:** Ms. Hansen and Mr. Schmidt gave a brief review of the process and approval of Rustic Roads. The process began in November of 2018 with four routes being viewed for possible designation. The State approved two of the routes, but changed the one route to include travel on County Road U. The County would still maintain these roads, but the natural beauty of the area would need to be undisturbed. The speed limit on the route would be reduced to 45 mph. Mr. Platteter explained some work that would be done on County Road EE and County Road F.

Mr. Bork expressed concerns with the route the State approved. He explained the amount of traffic that travels on County Road U, not only those going to work, but large farm equipment also. He explained that the roads do not need this designation for people to travel on them and enjoy the natural beauty, they can do this at any time. He questioned the return on the investment for having these routes designated. What will Buffalo County or the Towns gain from this? The Rustic Road signs and brochures are provided by the State, but the County would be responsible for all speed limit postings and installing those signs.

Mr. Perry Thomsen requested an explanation as to why there was no letter sent out to the landowners or towns affected by this. He explained no one in the area knew about this until two weeks ago.

Mr. Ryan Qwendt (?) expressed his concern with not being notified of this happening. It was explained there was a news article in the Journal regarding the Rustic Roads. The citizens expressed their concern that not many people get that newspaper or any newspaper. The best way to let the citizens know about this issue was for the County to send out a letter to the Towns. Mr. Thomsen explained there was no letter sent to the Towns as his wife is a Town Clerk and she did not know about this.

Mr. Jimmy Ellis spoke regarding guidelines imposed by the State for Rustic Roads. He questioned if anyone knew the regulations for replacing bridges on this route and that they needed to be replaced with either a wooden structure or rock structure that was decorative in nature. He wondered what businesses would benefit from the tourists on this route, as there are no businesses directly on the route. He has concerns with this being a heavy industrial ag district and the amount of traffic these roads have each day. He expressed his concerns with the Board bossing Towns around.

Mr. Ray Secrist asked if a letter he sent previously had been distributed to the Board. Chair Grisen indicated it had been given to everyone. Mr. Secrist took a poll at his last Town meeting, which had more attendance than he can remember having in the past, and all present were not in favor of the Rustic Road designation. Mr. Rick Reuter explained his Town only has a small segment on the route but feels a letter should have been sent out so that the citizens would know what was going on. He feels the speed limit change on this route will cause issues. County Road EE is already dangerous and has numerous rescue calls every summer due to accidents. This designation will only make this worse. He also explained that everyone that has contacted him has been against this. He wondered if there were a way for the citizens to get this repealed.

Mr. Danzinger explained that the State has already approved the routes, is having signs made, and created the brochure. He believes this is already a done deal. Mr. Danzinger indicated that to his knowledge there is no way to repeal this.

Mr. Bruce Auset indicated that the signs have already been received by the Highway Department. The State only sent four signs for the two routes. He wondered what the implications would be if County Road U was taken off the route.

Chair Grisen asked the Committee what their wishes for this issue were. Ms. Hansen explained that the Highway Committee was to have a joint meeting with the Economic Development Committee to work on this issue, but that has not been done yet. The Committee indicated that last month's meeting had Mr. Jim Ziegeweid in attendance from the Economic Development Committee. Ms. Hansen explained the agenda posting did not indicate that there was a joint meeting held.

A discussion was held on if there was any opposition to the route in the Nelson area. Mr. Platteter explained that he did hear from the Town Chair and they are not in favor of that route either.

Mr. Bork made a motion to not put up the route signs until a repeal process was looked into, and if the routes could not be repealed then put up the signs, seconded by Mr. Taylor. A roll call vote was taken. Mr. Danzinger voting no, all others voting yes. Carried.

**Consideration and Action regarding Replacement for Mechanic/Patrolman:** Mr. Platteter indicated this is just an update. The position has been offered to Austin Pronschinske and a background check is being completed.

**Consideration and Action regarding Disposal of Truck #86:** Mr. Platteter explained this is the small tank truck that carries about 1500 gallons. It is a single axle truck that last year had a tank leak and has had other issues. The bigger trucks are now used and this one could be disposed of. Mr. Johnston and Mr. Platteter agreed that there is not much value to this truck being it is so small. Mr. Danzinger made a motion to place this truck on auction with a minimum of \$1,000.00, seconded by Mr. Taylor. A roll call vote was taken, and all were in favor. Carried.

**Consideration and Action regarding the Pick Up Shed at the Waumandee Shop:** Mr. Platter is still working on this item and will be obtaining a construction quote to bring back to the Committee.

**Consideration and Action regarding County Road G Bridge Replacement and County Road E and County Road N Chip Seal:** Mr. Platteter explained that the bridge on County Road G can be replaced using the STP program and will pay for 80% of the costs if the design is like the current design. The cost for exchanging a like kind bridge is between \$344,000 and \$385,000. Mr. Platteter explained the road is curvy and dips where the bridge is. He would like to be able to take some of that out. The different designs and costs were reviewed. Mr. Grisen made a motion to approve the 40 mph horizontal and 25 mph vertical curve design, seconded by Mr. Taylor. All voting in favor. Carried.

County Road E and County Road N chip seal project issues were discussed. Samples have been taken to see why the road did not hold up. The grader will be taken up there and excess chips swept again.

**Consideration and Action regarding the 2020 WisDOT Composite Rates:** Mr. Platteter explained these rates have been approved in the past and would like to follow the same for 2020. Mr. Taylor made a motion to approve the 2020 WisDOT Composite Rates, seconded by Mr. Bork. All in favor. Carried.

**Commissioner's Report:** Mr. Platteter reported that next week is Road School. He will get the agenda to those attending. Some odds and ends that are no longer being used have been sold. The Emergency Response trailer was sold for \$8,600, dump box for \$2,100, patch heater for \$1,200, Attenuator for \$25, mounted broom for \$1,000, and brine maker for \$2,600. The well is on the list to be completed and the fuel system is ordered and waiting for delivery and installation.

**Committee Member's Report:** None.

**Next meeting:** February 11, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

**Adjournment:** Mr. Bork made a motion to adjourn at 10:20 a.m., seconded by Mr. Taylor. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxann Halverson  
Buffalo County Clerk