

# ONEIDA COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS & SOLID WASTE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Oneida County Highway Department Conference Room  
Thursday, March 19, 2026 8:00 a.m.

Committee members:	Present	Excused	Absent
Ted Cushing	X		
Bob Almekinder	X		
Billy Fried	X		
Dan Hess	X		
Robb Jensen	X		

**Also Present:** Ben Rich/Interim Highway Commissioner, Jennifer Lueneburg/LRES Director, Dan Gleason/Highway and Bill Kern/Kern Professional Services

## 1. Call to order and Chairperson's announcements

Chair Ted Cushing called the Public Works and Solid Waste Committee meeting to order at 8:00 am noting the meeting was properly posted and ADA accessible.

## 2. Approve agenda

Motion by Jensen/Fried to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

## 3. Approve minutes of the Public Works & Solid Waste Committee meeting held March 5, 2026

Motion by Hess/Fried to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

## 4. Public comments

None

## 5. Future Meeting Dates:

- April 2, 2026
- April 16, 2026
- April 30, 2026

## 6. Approve Vendor Vouchers

Motion by Fried/Almekinder to approve the vendor vouchers as presented. Motion carried.

## 7. Line Item Transfers

Motion by Almekinder/Hess to approve the line item transfers as presented. Motion carried.

## 8. Winter Maintenance Procedures for State and County Highways

Rich reported there were no updates.

Cushing commented the department did a great job with the last storm.

Jensen questioned if there was a way to get the State to separate winter and summer maintenance noting they could draft a letter of support from the committee.

## 9. Discussion with Kern Professional Services

Bill Kern commented he managed highway departments in Wisconsin for over 30 years before deciding to start this business about a year and a half ago. Kern commented on his background in engineering and finance in addition to working in departments of various sizes. Kern explained there was a lot of turnover in the state and over the last 5 to 8 years, counties have had trouble hiring highway commissioners. Kern estimated 95 percent of the last 20 positions were filled internally because they were not getting external applications. Kern explained he worked with both new and experienced commissioners citing his experience in pavement management, capital planning and equipment management. Kern commented that for many counties he worked broadly on operations and for others more specifically on equipment management. Kern noted after being brought on to assist new commissioners in their first year, several counties extended their contracts because they saw benefit to keeping him on. Kern reported that typically he would come in twice a month for half a day to work with commissioners for the majority of counties.

Jensen commented he felt they should continue to do their own recruitment then review the services if the new commissioner needs assistance.

Cushing agreed they should proceed with the recruitment and then determine their needs.

Fried questioned approximately how much other counties were spending.

Kern reported counties were spending from \$25,000 to \$60,000 annually for his services.

## 10. Sand Lake Boat Landing Updates

Rich reported Interstate felt they could have a start date of April 15 for the signs with the QR codes and would determine where to place the signs within the next 2 weeks. Rich reported WPS was in the process of providing quote to run power if the committee decided to add cameras in the future. Rich explained Interstate felt it would be less expensive to run power than using solar and there would be \$100 monthly fee for cameras. Rich reported according to the email between the former commissioner and the DNR the DNR was not interested taking over the landing.

Cushing suggested closing the landing if they were not interested.

Fried commented a private party might want to purchase the landing.

Jensen commented they would need to find out if the DNR would let the landing be closed and if not what is the legal basis of that opinion.

Rich reported the DNR referred the department to a biologist who was in charge of boat landings to advise what the parameters were for getting rid of the landing that has not responded to the email.

Cushing directed Rich to follow up with contacting the biologist.

Fried requested Rich bring back the cost of running power in addition to contacting the DNR to indicate the County is looking selling the landing.

## 11. Review and Approve Proposals for Highway Design for CTH B

Rich reported four design proposals were received:

- Becher Hoppe \$105,180.00
- S.E.H. \$111,908.00
- Corre \$114,730.00
- MSA \$115,100.00

Motion by Jensen/Cushing to approve the highway design for CTH B award to Becher Hoppe for a cost not to exceed \$105,180.00. Motion carried.

## **12. Review and Approve Proposals for Culvert Designs**

Rich reported three design proposals were received:

- Becher Hoppe           \$ 22,830.00
- Corre                   \$ 39,800.00
- S.E.H.                 \$116,680.00

Motion by Hess/Cushing to approve Beecher Hoppe at \$22,830.00. Motion carried.

## **13. Approve WisDOT Local Force Agreement for Maintenance on STH 70**

Motion by Cushing/Almekinder to approve. Motion carried.

## **14. Sign Request – CTH C**

Rich explained Bowen's Bus Service requested the school bus stop ahead signs on CTH C. Rich reported the line of sight was over 900 feet to the curve and well over 1,000 feet in the other direction so it did not meet the requirements under the MUTCD. Rich noted he requested more detail from Bowen's but had not heard back.

Motion by Jensen/Almekinder to postpone the sign request for CTH C to a future meeting date. Motion carried.

## **15. Highway Commissioner Recruitment Update**

Lueneburg reported the application deadline was March 23 with interviews scheduled for March 30 noting a second application was received. Lueneburg commented she would send the potential interview questions to the committee for their recommendations. Lueneburg suggested requesting the different costs for services from KPS so they would have that information when assessing the applicants.

Fried questioned if they should hold off on interviews and move forward with the interim while they figure out the structure and their needs.

Lueneburg explained the out of class pay was approved for up to 3 months and would need to go before the executive committee after that time. Lueneburg confirmed she would send the applications along with the potential questions to the committee members.

## **16. 2026-2027 Salt Order**

Rich reported salt order of 2,500 tons that was placed was based on a 5-year average.

Motion by Hess/Jensen to approve the 2026-2027 salt order. Motion carried.

## **17. 2026 Seasonal Material Quotes**

Rich reported the seasonal material quotes from local vendors was for small items depending on what was most advantageous to the job.

## **18. Equipment Updates**

Rich reported there was only minor issues with the equipment and both the log truck loader clam and mower were delivered.

## **19. Complaint Status Report**

Rich reported the crew filled and patched reported potholes.

**20. Commissioner's Report**

Rich reported the crew did fantastic over the weekend noting even some that were on vacation that came in because they anticipated over 30 inches of snow. Rich added the crew continued to fill potholes and brush along CTH G. Rich noted the trucks were holding up and there was enough salt and sand in the event of another big storm. Rich explained Enterprise Wood Products offered to take the brush from CTH G without charge. Jensen recommended checking with corporation counsel regarding a potential agreement.

**21. Future Agenda Items**

- Highway Commissioner recruitment
- Highway department campus projects
- Crew and office work schedules
- Update on winter maintenance procedures
- Sand Lake Boat Landing Updates
- CTH C sign request

**22. Public comments**

None

**23. Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 9:17 am

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Committee Chairman

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Committee Secretary