

**ONEIDA COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS & SOLID WASTE COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES**

**Oneida County Highway Department Conference Room
Thursday, April 16, 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: Lisa Bauknecht/Solid Waste Director, Ben Rich/Interim Highway Commissioner, Tom Roepke/Kraus-Anderson, James Rognstad/Kraus-Anderson, Jeri Cooper/Highway and Dan Gleason/Highway

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 Fried/Almekinder to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

3. Approve minutes of the Public Works & Solid Waste Committee meetings held April 2, 2026

Motion by Hess/Jensen to approve the minutes of the meeting as presented. Motion carried.

4. Public comments

None

5. Future Meeting Dates:

- April 30, 2026
- May 14, 2026
- May 28, 2026

6. March Monthly Vendor Vouchers and Budget to Actual Reports

Bauknecht presented the reports noting the report included \$7,300 for the trailer damage that was previously reported.

7. Credit Account Application for Cleary Buildings, and

8. Credit Account Application for Lake Partners

Motion by Fried/Almekinder to approve the credit account application for Cleary Buildings and Lake Partners as presented in number 7 and 8 of the current agenda. Motion carried.

9. Leachate Prefiltration System

Bauknecht explained Merrill would not accept the leachate if not pretreated.

Bauknecht reported the cost of the pre-filtration system would be approximately \$22,000 for materials, \$55,000 for labor and \$18,000 annually for reading and monitoring, however, both the installation and annual costs could be reduced significantly if performed by department staff. Bauknecht explained if the leachate were treated, Rhinelander would accept it at a cost of \$250 per load compared to Merrill at \$550 and Medford at \$900 noting they would recoup the money within two years.

Bauknecht reported \$40,000 was released from the long-term care account in addition to potential grants, however, the costs would be funded from the departments operating budget.

Jensen noted both he and Fried would like to see the cost savings demonstrated before approving.

Almekinder commented this would need to be done regardless and the sooner it was done the sooner they begin saving money.

Motion by Almekinder/Cushing to approve.

Fried commented he would like to go onsite and see the kind of work staff would be performing noting he was bringing a resolution forward at County Board to separate Solid Waste from Highway so there were dedicated committees.

Motion carried; Fried and Jensen opposed.

10. Transfer Station Wall Repair

Bauknecht explained the steel protecting the concrete wall was repaired at a cost of \$18,000 and the cost to fix the wall on the other side would be an additional \$17,000 noting \$24,000 was budgeted for the current year for building repairs.

Motion by Jensen/Cushing to approve the transfer station wall repair not to exceed \$20,000 with funding through the maintenance account. Motion carried.

11. Hauling Compost/Fiber Cake to Landfill

Bauknecht reported corporation counsel advised there could be potential liability if hauled to the Lincoln County landfill noting the DNR was not in favor of building another landfill to dispose of the compost and fiber cake.

Fried recommended conferring with corporation counsel to understand their options prior to transferring the material.

12. Composting fiber cake

Bauknecht suggested laying out and windrowing the fiber cake to reduce the weight but noted it would increase the volume.

13. PFAS grant funding

Bauknecht provided a Wisconsin Legislative Council Amendment Memo that outlined what was happening with potential grant funding related to PFAS.

14. Solid Waste Report

Bauknecht reported:

- Tonnage was increasing
- Equipment repairs were in process
- The RFP for the scale was almost complete

15. Future Agenda Items

16. Approve Vendor Vouchers

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

17. Invoices Paid Report

Rich reported there was nothing out of the ordinary.

18. Out of County Travel for Foreman and Operator to Trenching & Excavation Competent Person Training, May 7, 2026 in Portage County

Motion by Jensen/Almekinder to approve the out of county travel for foreman and operator to trenching and excavation competent person training as presented. Motion carried; Fried not present.

19. Patrol Superintendent Recruitment and Staffing Updates

Rich reported the patrol superintendent position was posted and there was one vacancy on the crew that was under review.

20. Review of 2026 and 2027 approved highway facility CIP projects

Rich reported the electrical upgrade was the only CIP approved for facility upgrades for 2026 adding the CIP for 2025 for emergency electrical was not carried forward to 2026.

Almekinder commented the current electrical system was not up to code and if it failed, WPS would not approve any equipment to support the 240 3-phase system.

Hess commented he thought the CIP for \$100,000 was to be used for design.

Almekinder commented the other projects could be delayed.

21. Rhinelander highway department facility and site evaluation update by Kraus-Anderson

James Rognstad explained the highway facility assessment completed in January of the previous year identified approximately \$13.9 million of deferred maintenance costs that would provide about another 20 years out of the current building. Rognstad commented the electrical, drainage and fire suppression were the three primary projects discussed.

Rognstad explained the cost estimates from the 2015 Barrientos study were also updated noting the delta revealed the building would be bought twice over a ten year period with the deferred maintenance in play. Rognstad reported the initial option was to add new heated storage to get all of the equipment stored inside. However, the new option would require demolition of current cold storage and Quonset hut, reconstruction of the current cold storage, construction of a new wash bay, new storage for about 26 vehicles and the addition of garage doors to the existing maintenance bay at a cost of an additional \$10 million.

Rognstad estimated the cost for a full rebuild on the current site including building replacement to meet future needs was approximately \$22 - \$25 million. Rognstad reported the opinion of value by a broker for the current site was \$1.6 - \$2.4 million listed at \$2.5 million with the current buildings or \$450K - \$750k listed at \$800k scraped. Rognstad commented the strategic questions to resolve were:

- What long-term facility direction should the County pursue?
- Does renovation of the existing facility represent a prudent long-term investment?

- What alternatives should be considered or advanced for further analysis and Committee consideration?

Rognstad commented their next steps could include deciding if they need to look at what the footprint of a right-sized facility would be and then determine if it was within the cost estimate. Rognstad noted they would need some direction how to move forward.

Tom Roepke commented the logical next step would be to go to the executive committee so they can provide the deliverable that was paid for noting they could create an option just to move forward with the three projects as discussed.

Rognstad commented they were not advocating for any specific outcome rather providing the executive committee with the information.

Fried excused at 9:38 a.m.

22. Approve Design Services Proposal for fire protection, plumbing and electrical upgrades for the Rhinelander highway department facility

Motion by Hess/Cushing to deny all the proposals that were received for fire protection, plumbing and electrical upgrades and open up a new RFP for electrical upgrades for the Rhinelander highway department facility.

Fried questioned if there was funding for design of the other items identified as part of the five-year plan to invest in the facility.

Hess noted the executive committee did not approve those projects for 2026.

Cushing commented funding was not approved for the other projects so they would need to proceed with the electrical then request funds for the other projects.

Motion carried.

23. CTH N purchase of additional right of way

Rich requested the committee approve moving forward with Jewell to purchase a small portion of additional right of way along CTH N.

Motion by Cushing/Almekinder to proceed with Jewell for CTH N. Motion carried; Fried excused.

24. Sale of Equipment: 100, 126, 157, 231, 434, 429 and paint totes

Motion by Jensen/Almekinder to approve the sale of equipment per item 24 as presented. Motion carried; Fried excused.

25. Equipment Updates

Rich reported:

- The new John Deere tractor was received on Monday
- Lincoln County rented the tar truck and conveyor truck for work on STH 17 S

26. Complaint Status Report

Rich reported there were a couple new complaints that were already fixed.

27. Commissioner's Report

Rich reported:

- The crew was still cutting trees cut along CTH G
- Corporation counsel advised against offering the chips to the public

- The crew was almost finished with the mastic on CTH K
- The crew should be able start tarring soon
- The posts were installed at the Sand/Dam Lake boat landing and will mount the sings once delivered
- Road limits should be lifted the last week of April or the first week of May
- A screening plant would be rented for 2 months to make sand in each pit for salt sand

28. Future Agenda Items

- Staffing Update
- RFP results for electrical design

29. Public comments

None

30. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 9:46 am

Committee Chairman

Committee Secretary