ONEIDA COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Oneida County Highway Department Conference Room
Thursday, July 9, 2026 8:00 a.m.

Committee members:	Present	Excused	Absent
Ted Cushing	X		
Bob Almekinder	X		
Billy Fried	X		
Dan Hess	X		
Greg Oettinger	X		

Also Present: Ben Rich/Highway Commissioner, Dan Gleason/Highway, Katie Bauknecht/Sugar Camp Town Chair and Brian Jopek/Lakeland Times

1. **Call to order and Chairperson's announcements**
   Chair Ted Cushing called the Public Works Committee meeting to order at 8:00 am noting the meeting was posted according to Wisconsin Open Meeting Laws and ADA accessible.

2. **Approve agenda**
   Motion by Fried/Almekinder to approve the agenda as presented and posted. Motion carried.

3. **Approve minutes of the Public Works Committee meeting held June 25, 2026**
   Motion by Hess/Oettinger to approve the minutes as presented for June 25, 2026. Motion carried.

4. **Public comments**
   None.

5. **Future Meeting Dates:**
   - July 23, 2026 Fried noted he would not be present.
   - August 6, 2026
   - August 20, 2026

6. **Approve Vendor Vouchers**
   Motion by Hess/Oettinger to approve the vender vouchers as presented. Motion carried.

7. **Approve Maintenance Contract for Town of Woodboro**
   Rich reported corporation counsel did not yet review the contract. Rich explained the town was aware the department charged time and materials. Rich commented the 2-year contract was vague and how much the town spent could vary from year-to-year because the Town used their GTA to fund maintenance.

8. **Approve 2026 Blade Quotes**
   Rich reported there was 108 percent increase in the cost of the blades suggesting if the price falls, they might want to consider purchasing a surplus in case this happened again.

Rich explained flame-hardened blades require replacement five-times as often the carbide blades, which increases labor costs and potentially discourages use of underbody plows.
Fried questioned where the additional $100,000 would come from to purchase the blades.
Rich explained the increased inventory cost are reflected as an expense to the equipment as the blades are replaced.
Motion by Oettinger/Almekinder to approve the 2026 blade quotes. Motion carried.

9. Approve Sand Lake Boat Landing Launch Ordinance

Rich reported corporation counsel was working on the ordinance.
Bauknecht commented she emailed the recreational facilities assistance program information to the commissioner and financial technician.
Rich commented Mike McCarthy of Inflow Systems recommended against installing a cash drop box but he (Rich) did not foresee an issue. Rich estimated it should not cost more than a few hundred dollars.

10. Request for Jurisdictional Transfer of Willow Road, Town of Lynne and Pine Lake Road and Squirrel Lake Road, Town of Minocqua to the Oneida County Highway System update

Almekinder commented he did not hear from land Information yet but would check on Monday.
Fried commented their path was to collect information before forwarding the request to the county board questioning if this should go before the land records committee.
Cushing commented he would request land records add it to their agenda.

11. Equipment Updates

Rich commented there were no major breakdowns and the shop was doing great keeping the equipment up and running noting there should be an additional patrol truck delivered before winter.

12. Complaint Status Report

Rich explained the DOT directed the department to address only the complaints that are true safety issues on the state system.
Fried commented the Town of Minocqua was discussing posting a lower speed limit on STH 70.
Rich reported they planned to address the complaints on CTH C in the Town of Stella.
Almekinder commented he did not understand why the state pushed STH 70 out for four more years.
Rich explained asset management emphasizes maintaining roads that are still in good condition.

13. Commissioner's Report

Rich reported:

- The CTH E project was wrapping up noting the pavement was complete and the crew was finishing some shoulder work.
- The CTH K project was almost complete noting Lincoln County would be striping both CTH E and CTH K.
- The CTH N project would begin on July 20.

- The crew started crack sealing CTH C.
- Mowing on the state system should be complete by the end of the week and then starting on the county the following week. Rich noted there was debate about the responsibility for the maintenance of the roundabout.
- The DOT approved the brushing of small pines along STH 47.
- They were still pursuing funding for STH 70 noting the Bureau of Structures requested an estimate to install concrete for load displacement over a failing culvert.
- Lincoln County would be restriping the specialty markings at the intersections of CTH J at USH 51 and STH 47 but the State will not fund the painting.

14. Future Agenda Items

- Jurisdictional Transfer of Willow Road, Town of Lynne and Pine Lake Road and Squirrel Lake Road, Town of Minocqua to the Oneida County Highway System
- Boat Landing Launch Fee Ordinance
- Town Bridge Aid Policy
- CIP Requests
- 2027 Town bridge aid requests
- Town of Woodboro Maintenance Contract
- Bonding Options for Road Construction

15. Public comments

None

16. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 8:37 am

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Committee Chairman Committee Secretary