

Village of Elm Grove

Public Works Utilities Committee

Meeting minutes

Present: Mr. Schindler (via Zoom), Mr. Koleski (via Zoom), Mr. Eull, Ms. Schneider, Mr. Zwirlein, Mr. Harley and Mr. Olson

Absent: None

Also Present: Mr. Harrigan & Mr. Paul, Mr. Travis Brush of KL Engineering and some residents whom reside adjacent to the Highland Pathway project.

1. Call meeting to order

The Public Works Utilities Committee meeting was called to order on Monday, February 9th, 2026, at 5:30 PM by Mr. Schindler.

2. Review and act on minutes from January 12th, 2026 Meeting

Mr. Schindler identified a correction needed in Item 8, paragraph 3 regarding the criteria for existing concrete driveway approaches. He noted that the minutes incorrectly stated the criteria was "if they are less than 2 years old" when the actual consensus was that driveways would remain if "in good condition and met the slope requirements for the engineer."

Ms. Schneider questioned whether fire trucks were under the purview of DPW, which was clarified as not being the case.

Motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Mr. Zwirlein, seconded by Mr. Olson, and passed unanimously.

3. Update and review of 60% plans for Highland Dr Pathway Project 2026

Mr. Travis Brush of KL Engineering presented the 60% pathway plans. He reported on a February 5th site walk with Richard Paul Jr. to review the revised alignment's impact on trees. The team used GPS units to evaluate trees based on type, condition, impacts from grading, and safety features such as sight lines. Trees marked for removal were indicated with red X's on the plans.

A significant discussion occurred regarding MMSD Chapter 13 requirements. Mr. Brush explained that MMSD is currently classifying the pathway project as a "sidewalk" rather than a "recreational trail," which could trigger stormwater management requirements since the project exceeds 0.5 acres of new impervious area. This classification could add

significant costs to the project if pervious asphalt pavement (2-2.5 times the cost of standard pavement) or other stormwater management solutions would be required.

Mr. Brush and village staff have been in communication with MMSD, including Kevin Shafer, arguing that the pathway should qualify as a recreational trail based on setback from the roadway and existing ditch lines. The village is awaiting MMSD's determination, as this issue has broader implications for future pathway projects.

The committee also discussed:

- Utility pole conflicts between Victoria Circle North and South that require coordination with We Energies and AT&T to potentially relocate poles in conflict with the retaining wall.
- A proposed easement at 1255 Highland Drive to save a large spruce tree. Property owner Mr. Levenson, who was in attendance, confirmed his willingness to provide the easement to allow the path to curve around his tree, noting it would likely be less expensive than removing the large tree. The committee supported pursuing this easement.
- Retaining walls, including an additional wall needed near Victoria Circle North to maintain proper pathway slope per accessibility guidelines. The committee discussed railing requirements for the retaining walls and agreed to maintain consistency with existing wooden railings used elsewhere on Highland Drive.
- Traffic control options during construction. Mr. Brush presented two alternatives: a one-way traffic operation or a road closed to through traffic approach. He estimated the one-way option would increase traffic control costs by 30-50% and could create safety hazards from wrong-way drivers. The committee reached consensus supporting the full road closure option, which would still maintain access for residents, mail delivery, and garbage collection. Construction is anticipated to take approximately 3-3.5 months, likely June through August 2026.
- Project cost updates showing an increase of approximately \$200,000 from the 30% plans, partly due to earthwork adjustments, storm sewer requirements, and the additional retaining wall. The estimate includes a 20% contingency.

4. Review and possible action on Underwood Creek Daylighting Bids

Village staff reported that the bid opening for the Underwood Creek Daylighting Project took place on January 27th, with CW Purpero being the low bidder. The rebid resulted in significant cost savings of approximately \$1.3 million compared to the previous bid, with the current bid at \$6,326,305 compared to the previous \$7.6 million.

Staff noted that the primary funding source for the project is tax increment from TIF District Number 2, with an expenditure window expiring on April 27th. While construction may not begin immediately due to ongoing litigation with the railroad regarding land acquisition, executing the contract would secure the TIF funds.

The committee discussed the contract's "termination for convenience" clause that protects the village if the railroad litigation is not resolved favorably. Staff reported progress in discussions with the railroad's engineers regarding the project design.

It was noted that village ordinance excludes engineering costs from the total project cost, providing additional flexibility within the referendum-approved budget. A 10% contingency is included in the project budget.

Motion to recommend to the Board of Trustees the award of the Underwood Creek Daylighting contract to CW Purpero, with provisions for cancellation included, was made by Mr. Harley, seconded by Mr. Eull, and passed unanimously.

5. Update on Village Hall Bridge inspection

Mr. Paul presented the most recent inspection of the Village Hall Bridge that traverses Underwood Creek. The bridge has moved from a typical two-year inspection cycle to an annual inspection due to ongoing deterioration of the superstructure, particularly the girders.

The Public Works Department has performed recommended maintenance, but the overall condition of the superstructure continues to decline. The bridge is currently not used by the Public Works or Fire Department vehicles. The inspection has been submitted to the county for review and recommendations.

Mr. Paul also reported that the Gebhardt Bridge, shared with Brookfield, is in line for a grant which would be determined in June. If approved, the village's cost share would be minimal, with construction potentially in 2027. A maintenance agreement with Brookfield needs to be finalized.

The committee discussed options for the Village Hall Bridge, including the possibility of not replacing it since there is another entrance to the property. Mr. Harrigan emphasized that while the bridge is not in imminent danger of failing, it is now rated low enough to require planning for its future. The bridge remains safe for pedestrians and regular vehicles, but not for fire trucks, ambulances, or heavy delivery vehicles, which are directed to use the Juneau Boulevard entrance.

6. Review of 2025 Paving totals and update on 2026-2030 Paving CIP

Mr. Paul reviewed the invoice from Wolf Paving for the 2025 paving project. He highlighted areas where costs exceeded estimates, particularly road edge topsoiling at \$49,000, which is typically done in-house at a much lower cost. Other overruns were related to widening intersections, straightening roads to maintain consistent width, and improving driveway transitions.

For the 2026-2030 Capital Improvement Plan, Mr. Paul presented a map showing planned projects for each year. The 2026 projects focus on the northeastern quadrant of the village, including Elmhurst Parkway. All projects will include stormwater improvements and culvert replacements.

The committee also discussed a resident request from Stacy Barry Coffey to synchronize the Hollyhock Lane pathway construction (planned for 2028) with road reconstruction. Mr. Paul explained that only a tenth-mile segment of Hollyhock needs immediate attention, with the remainder not requiring reconstruction within the 5-year plan, making coordination impractical.

7. Review and possible action on ordinance revisions as the relate to CH 325 Water Control

Mr. Paul explained that revisions to Chapter 325 Water Control were needed to address findings from the DNR's MS4 audit. The changes are intended to align with DNR requirements for the village's next 5-year MS4 permit period, particularly regarding construction sites and stormwater management on private properties.

The committee noted the need for a clearer understanding of the changes since the redline version was difficult to review. They requested that after Legislative Committee review, the ordinance return to Public Works for a final review along with an overview of any procedural changes that would impact village operations.

Motion to remand the proposed revisions to Chapter 325 Water Control to the Legislative Committee, with the provision that it return to Public Works prior to Board approval, was made by Mr. Olson, seconded by Mr. Zwirlein, and passed unanimously.

8. Update on Public Works Projects

Mr. Paul reported that the department has been handling ongoing snow removal from multiple small storms. He noted they were in good shape with salt reserves and have experienced no major equipment issues. The crew has been conducting tree removals and pruning during periods between snow events.

He mentioned some pothole issues on lower-rated roads (3s and 4s) that are being addressed regularly, as well as some temporary issues with driveway approaches due to frost heave during the recent cold snap.

9. Other Business

No other business was discussed.

10. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Olson, seconded by Mr. Eull, and passed unanimously.