

PERTAINING TO AGENDA ITEM #6

From: Michele Sadauskas

Sent: Thursday, March 28, 2024 10:46 AM

To: Jonna Jewell <jjewell@oneidacountywi.gov>; 'ed@4starrealtynorthwoods.com' <ed@4starrealtynorthwoods.com>; Jim Winkler <jwinkler@oneidacountywi.gov>

Hi Ed-

Jonna sent me your email about attending the April CUW Committee meeting. As a reminder, our Chair Jim Winkler has asked "to hear more about what the Conservation Congress does (are they an advisory group or policy makers), who the Oneida County Delegates are, what expenses you are looking to get reimbursed, and why should the County support the Conservation Congress (CC) delegates".

I strongly suggest any relevant material you want to share with Committee be provided ahead of time. In this way supervisors can be better equipped for discussion at the meeting.

Thank you.

RESPONSE

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress has been around for 90 years. We take public input and advise the Department of Natural Resources and the Natural Resources Board on all matters of Hunting, Fishing, Trapping and Silent Sports. Please have the board members go on the Website to learn more. <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/about/wcc>. There are 5 elected delegates from each of the 72 counties in the state. Currently Oneida County has three delegates: Chair, Ed Choinski, Connie Polzin, and Brett Weir. Our annual Spring Hearing is coming up in April and I am anticipating two more delegates will get elected to fill our two openings. Our expenses we are hoping to be reimbursed are about \$3,500 annually. The biggest cost is our state convention. The whole delegation meets for three days somewhere in the state in May.

Why should Oneida County help us? We do the work for the citizens of this county, most of us are on other committee assignments. Up until last year, Oneida County has supported us for the past 40 years and somehow our funding was cut. We are an integral part of Natural Resources Management and we do the work of the people of this great county.

Ed Choinski
Oneida County Chair

Cell: 715-493-7827

BACKGROUND CONVERSATIONS

From: 4 Star Realty <ed@4starrealtynorthwoods.com>

Sent: Tuesday, April 4, 2023 1:23 PM

To: Michael Fugle <mfugle@co.oneida.wi.us>

Subject: Oneida County Conservation Congress

Michael: I asked Tina a question about being reimbursed for travel, rooms and dinner regarding the our upcoming meetings. **(See response in BLUE below)** This is the time of year most of meeting occur and I want to double check and make sure the County is still reimbursing us for meetings. I understand the State pays for Committee Meetings. I have been on the congress for over 17 years and the county has always paid these expenses. Because of Covid we didn't do much of anything over the past few years and I am try to instruct the delegates on how to get paid. Thank you for your response in advance.

Ed Choinski

Oneida County Conservation Congress Chair

Cell: 715-493-7827

From: Finance

Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 2:31 PM

To: 'ed@4starrealtynorthwoods.com' <ed@4starrealtynorthwoods.com>; Finance <Finance@co.oneida.wi.us>

Cc: Michael Fugle <mfugle@co.oneida.wi.us>

Subject: RE: Website Contact

Hello Ed,

Thank you for your patience while I am researching your inquiry. Is there a reason that you and fellow delegates are requesting travel reimbursement from the County instead of the State of Wisconsin? It appears that you should be eligible for reimbursement for Committee meetings from the State (follow link).

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/sites/default/files/topic/About/WCC/misc/TravelVoucherGuide2022.pdf>

Is the reimbursement that you have received in the past for those meetings which are not eligible for State reimbursement – specifically District Meetings, Spring Hearings or the Annual Convention? And if so, did you receive authorization prior to the travel from the County Board or any Oneida County Committee?

*Thank you in advance for your assistance in clarifying the past practice and most appropriate process moving forward. Thank you,
Tina*

From: Michael Fugle <mfugle@co.oneida.wi.us>

Sent: Tuesday, April 4, 2023 1:46 PM

To: '4 Star Realty' <ed@4starrealtynorthwoods.com>

Cc: Michele Sadauskas <msadauskas@co.oneida.wi.us>; Tina Smigielski <tsmigielsk@co.oneida.wi.us>;

Tracy Hartman <thartman@co.oneida.wi.us>

Subject: RE: Oneida County Conservation Congress

Hi Ed,

The Wisconsin Attorney General stated that “[c] counties lack the authority to pay the expenses of county board members who attend meetings of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress” OAG 29-84 citing 61 Op.Atty.Gen. 327 (1972). I find no subsequent statutory amendments that provide authority for the County to reimburse citizen delegates that advise a State Executive Branch Agency, see Wis. Stat. § 15.348.

Mike

Oneida County Corporation Counsel

Michael J. Fugle

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Rhineland, WI 54501

(715) 369-6155

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From: Tina Smigielski

Sent: Thursday, May 11, 2023 10:02 AM

To: Finance; ed@4starrealtynorthwoods.com

Cc: Michael Fugle; Michele Sadauskas; Tracy Hartman

Subject: RE: Website Contact

Hello Ed,

Good morning. Thank you for your voice mail yesterday. You inquired which department “paid for” the 2 reimbursements in the past. Based on Finance Department records, vouchers issued to “CHOINSKI, ED” were coded to the “Commissioner and Committees” business unit which falls under the County Board.

Regards,

Tina