

Manitowoc County Executive Committee
The Heritage Center, County Board Meeting Room
1701 Michigan Avenue, Manitowoc, WI 54220
March 5, 2020

Attendance: Chairperson Brey, Supervisor Behnke, and Supervisor Gerroll.

Others Present: Corporation Counsel Peter Conrad, Supervisor Baumann, Supervisor Brunner, Supervisor Falkowski, Supervisor Hansen, Supervisor Metzger, Supervisor Muench, and Supervisor Swade.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Brey at 5:00 p.m.

Approval of the December 9, 2019 committee minutes: Supervisor Behnke moved, seconded by Supervisor Gerroll to approve the minutes of the December 9, 2019 meeting. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment: Chairperson Brey declared public comment open at 5:03 p.m. Comments were taken regarding the resolution declaring Manitowoc County a Second Amendment Sanctuary County as follows:

Roger Vanderlogt, Village of Mishicot, supported the resolution because he would like the board to work with the sheriff to show Manitowoc County takes the 2nd Amendment seriously.

Jim Theyerl, Town of Manitowoc, supported the resolution because having more gun control legislation would add to government power.

Dennis Steinbrenner, City of Manitowoc, opposed the resolution because he believes it is only a symbolic gesture and have no legal weight.

Darlene Wellner, Town of Kossuth, opposed the resolution because it may prevent officials from enforcing state gun laws.

Brad Petrashek, City of Two Rivers, supported the resolution because the government should protect rights and not take away.

Mark Kleiber, Town of Cato, did not see anything wrong with the resolution other than it was a “feel good resolution” and would have no legal effect.

Dan Guralski, Town of Rockland, supported the resolution because we have the right to bear arms.

Shelly Welch, City of Two Rivers, opposed the resolution stating not everyone knows if they have underlying issues and we need to keep everyone safe.

Dave Stecker, Town of Newton, supported the resolution stating citizens have the right to protect themselves.

Bruce Grossheim, City of Two Rivers, supported the resolution and asks the board and sheriff to support and honor their oaths of office as he did his military oath.

Val Jean Marcoe, Town of Meeme, opposed the resolution stating he has always had rights and has received new ones; this just gives the NRA another spot on their map.

Laurie Fettig, Town of Newton, supported the resolution as a gun shop owner and she believes it will assist the sheriff.

Barb Herrmann, City of Manitowoc, opposed the resolution stating individual concerns should be addressed with the legislators.

Maura Jost, Town of Centerville, supported the right to use firearms for hunting, sports and to protect public safety and encouraged the board to take more time to consider this action and ramifications of the resolution.

Ryan Anderson, City of Manitowoc, supported the resolution stating it does not circumvent due process and protects the rights given by God.

Carl Bonde, Town of Gibson, supported the resolution stating it would make people think twice before taking rights away.

Dave Hassemer, City of Manitowoc, supported the resolution and the right to bear arms.

Nicole Benthein, City of Two Rivers, supported the resolution stating she wants the right to protect her family.

Michael Slattery, Town of Cooperstown, opposed the resolution, stating we have police to protect and serve, which we fund. Our guns would not be taken away.

Mike Walters, City of Manitowoc, supported the resolution and wants to be able to protect himself.

Shae Sortwell, Town of Gibson, supported the resolution because he believes it is a good thing. It supports our sheriff and the laws he can enforce.

Tyler Schad, Town of Kossuth, supported the resolution because it sends a message that we won't roll over on our rights.

James Downey, Town of Rockland, supported the resolution because it shows we want the 2nd Amendment to remain as is.

Tim Fettig, Town of Newton, supported the resolution as it shows as a community that we support the sheriff and the department.

Dan Guralski (second time), stated if we had 70 counties support the resolution, the government would not think to bring it up.

No one else present wished to speak, therefore public input was closed at 6:00 p.m.

Discussion and possible action on Resolution Declaring Manitowoc County a Second Amendment Sanctuary County. Chairperson Brey informed everyone that he is not against the 2nd Amendment, but is against a 2nd amendment sanctuary county. He referenced his disagreement with the last three paragraphs of the proposed resolution and stated he will not support the resolution. Supervisor Behnke stated he has issues with the resolution.

Supervisor Behnke moved, seconded by Supervisor Gerroll, to make the following amendments:

Remove lines 22 – 28 “BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County Board of Supervisors of the County of Manitowoc affirms its support of the Sheriff to exercise sound discretion to not enforce against any citizen an unconstitutional firearms law; and; BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County Board of Supervisors of the County of Manitowoc will not appropriate any funds for any enforcement of unconstitutional laws against the people of Manitowoc County; and”, and insert lines 18-20 “WHEREAS, Wisconsin State Senators and State Representative have also sworn by their Oath of Office to uphold the United States Constitution and the Constitution of the state of Wisconsin.”

Supervisor Behnke continued discussion stating the sheriff took an oath and had issues with “discretion” language and appropriation of funds section. He would like to see the resolution passed along to the county board for a vote. Upon discussion and voice vote, the motion carried, 2 ayes and 1 no.

Supervisor Behnke moved, second by Supervisor Gerroll, to approve the amended resolution. Discussion continued, Supervisor Metzger stated that the constitution should not be messed with and does not believe this resolution is something the county board should be voting on. Supervisor Falkowski stated the amended resolution does not challenge oaths of office or enforcement ability. He would support the amended resolution. Supervisor Hansen believes in the 2nd Amendment and that background checks are a necessity. His main concern regards people who would have access to weapons, but should not. Problems occur when we attempt to pick and choose laws we wish to enforce. Supervisor Muench supported the 2nd Amendment and stated that a person with mental illness, for example with PTSD, shouldn’t automatically lose rights. Supervisor Falkowski stated he doesn’t see any new rights in the resolution and it would not affect law-abiding citizens. Chairman Brey feels better about the amendment, but still will not support. He was concerned with the last paragraph language (lines 34-37) because everyone has different interpretations of the term unconstitutional. Upon voice vote, the motion carried, 2 ayes and 1 no.

Chairperson Brey informed all in attendance that the resolution will go to County Board on March 17, 2020.

Adjournment: Supervisor Behnke moved to adjourn, seconded by Supervisor Gerroll. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Backus
Manitowoc County Clerk