

October 15, 2009

The regular meeting of the Board of Cass County Road Commissioners was called to order by Chairman Krempec at 9:00 A.M. and the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was said in unison.

Board Members Present: Commissioner Powers, Commissioner Celie, Commissioner Poehlman, and Commissioner Krempec

Absent: Commissioner Bowser

CCRC Staff Present: Louie Csokasy, Joe Bellina, and Grace Chester.

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## **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

Public Present: Barbara Dempsey (Ontwa Twp.), Norma Lerner (Press), Roseann Marchetti (Parks' Board), Pete Fournier (Porter Twp.), Bruce Campbell (Co. Water Resources) and County Commissioner Gordon Bickel.

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## **APPROVE AGENDA**

Commissioner Powers moved to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Poehlman seconded and the motion was carried.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Pete Fournier: Attended Newberg Township board meeting and said there were positive comments made regarding repairs on Bair Lake and Born Streets. County Commissioner Bickel also complimented the road commission on the work.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Powers moved to approve the minutes of 10-01-09. Commissioner Poehlman seconded and the motion was carried.

## **SPECIAL MEETINGS & MILEAGE**

Krempec	Parks' Board	10-09-09	4 hours	32 miles
	Safety Committee	10-12-09	4 hours	32 miles

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Commissioner Celie said that after review, the bills were approved for payment and noted that the large bills were mainly for payroll and road materials.

### **POLICY COMMITTEE**

Committee Chairman Powers said that existing policies have been sorted by types of activities and the committee plans to meet after today's Board meeting.

### **PARKS BOARD**

Krempec recapped the Parks' Board meeting of October 8, noting that two lease agreements for office and equipment rental with the CCRC were approved. The 2010 budget was approved and there will be review of the parks' chain of command to determine who the parks' manager is to report: County Administrator Proctor, the Chair of the Parks' Board or a separate committee.

A Parks' Board evening workshop is to be held on October 27 to set goals and discuss how to achieve them.

Lawless Harvest Fest held on October 3 was well attended with 120 children and 200 adults. The Sand Hill Crane Marathon also was held at Lawless Park.

Krempec said that the parks' attendance seems divided by types of activities: Lawless- by families. Russ Forest-by equestrians, and Dodd-by fishermen. He would like to promote different activities to utilize and highlight all that the parks have to offer and encourage new visitors to come out and previous visitors of one park to use all of the parks.

Powers noted that at one time when the road commission board also served as the parks board, they would hold a pancake and sausage breakfast rotating locations to each of the parks. Powers said it was a popular event and he thought it brought out people that didn't normally visit the parks. Fournier suggested increasing parks' advertising to generate more public interest.

### **SAFETY MEETING**

The last CCRC safety meeting was held on October 12. Krempec said the personal protection equipment list is finished and ready for printing and the new safety vests have arrived.

Ways to address ice accumulation over the doors will be sought as the committee feels it a safety hazard to both vehicles and people. Krempec may enter that topic into discussion at the next Frugal Five meeting to see if other county road commissions had this problem and how they addressed it.

### **MANAGER'S UPDATE**

Manager Csokasy said that in lieu of his usual talk, he will preview the power point presentation that he will do for the county commissioners tonight highlighting the road commission's accomplishments this past year and the goals for next year.

As the power point slides were shown Csokasy provided the following commentary:

Cass County consists of 1014 miles of roads of which 269 are classed as primary roads and 745 are local with all of the primary roads in Cass County being paved. Manager Csokasy said that is unusual for Michigan Counties. The road commission is responsible for 8000 acres of road right of way. Cass County is one on only three counties in the state that own and operate their own asphalt plant.

Csokasy detailed how its primary funding is received through the Michigan Transportation Fund and said since 2003 it has decreased 2 to 3 % per year. Csokasy said that doesn't sound like much but also oil costs have greatly increased. Since most road materials are oil based, revenue has decreased and expenses increased. The overall loss to the road commission is \$500,000. per year which could have been spent directly on roads.

This year an excess of 2.5 million dollars has been spent on the roads; a large part funded by the federal stimulus program and is the most spent in the last ten years. Township activity increased this year and more was spent on local roads than primary roads. With an estimated 25% decrease in state funding for townships, Csokasy anticipates that next year more will be spent on primary roads than local.

This year 32.60 miles of road were chip and sealed, primarily with federal stimulus funding. 5.68 miles were re graveled and 21.92 miles were re paved. A large project undertaken this year was repairing the Redfield Road Bridge which will be opened soon to the public.

Goals: Create a three-year road plans for each remaining township. Develop a plan to address all issues that fall into the category of "Outside the White Lines." These are areas such as mowing, brush and tree removal. A roadside spraying program to control brush is planned for implementation next year.

Requests for service: Per Csokasy, improvement in this area will continue to be a goal. Over a 1000 requests are received annually and the MOR Committee was created to review the process for handling citizen requests for service with the goal of decreasing the length of time to process each request. A better system of documentation has resulted.

Another goal is working to achieve an early settlement for the upcoming union contract.

Csokasy said that the CCRC must work within the constraints of decreasing MTF funding but all in all the road commission is "doing just fine."

## **ENGINEER'S UPDATE**

Chief Engineer Bellina said that he will do a follow-up with the inspector regarding the Redfield Bridge this afternoon. Bridge inspection of all of the county bridges is scheduled for today with the Redfield Bridge done last so that Bellina can be on-site. Bellina said that the new guardrail still needs to be installed but otherwise the bridge is completed and upon a favorable inspection will be opened. Krempec said that he had driven by the bridge and that it looks like new; he said that the project time and effort but the job was done right.

Mason Street culvert: The road will be closed to traffic next week for the work to begin and public notices have been sent.

Three year road plan: working to finish Marcellus Township and then develop the plan for Jefferson Township. Upon receipt of the traffic count information, work will begin for Howard and Pokagon.

Meeting: Bellina will attend the regional bridge conference on October 29 where the committee will evaluate submitted bridge projects to determine the ones to be recommended to the state.

Federal projects: the last of the 2009 project bills have been submitted to the state.

Gumwood Road: proposed plans for work on Gumwood have been considered for a long time. Per Bellina, Berrien County has Rural Task Force funds they do not plan to use this year and CCRC can exchange this funding for future year CCRC funds. Bellina said that his office is not currently capable of doing the complicated design plans needed for this project and he has selected a design firm that can do the work for approximately \$32,000. There is a December deadline to get these plans developed or the funding will no longer be available.

Csokasy said that the road commission had met with the Milton Township Board and presented three road plan alternatives for Gumwood Road for consideration. The Milton Board elected not to provide any input so now the road commission will make the decision.

Motion:

Commissioner Poehlman moved to authorize Manager Csokasy to execute and sign a contract with Abonmarche for design plans for Gumwood Road not to exceed \$35,000. Commissioner Powers seconded and the motion was carried by unanimous roll call vote. (Note: Bowser absent).

Lake Drainage issues: There was discussion regarding the changes in drainage issues around Cass County Lakes due to an increase in the size of the houses and properties and more year round residents. This has increased drainage issues. Per Water Resource Commissioner Campbell, the road commission can address water issues but are limited to the areas located in the road right of way and under special circumstances he can create a drainage district. Formation of individual lake boards is hoped to provide answers for the areas that fall in between. There was discussion on an ongoing issue with the Donnell Lake pipe.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business for the Board to address.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**ASMRC BALLOTS**

Three ballots were presented for Board consideration and after discussion and recommendations by Commissioner Powers, Commissioner Poehlman moved to cast the following votes:

**ASMRC Board Of Directors:** Commissioners: Robert Powers (Cass) and David Vanderkooi (Ottawa) and Staff: Kenneth Straub (Jackson) and Joseph Pulver (Clinton).

**ASMRC representative to the CRAM Board:** Orrin Gregg (Lenawee)

**Amendment:** to change Article VIII to increase dues to \$50.00 per road commission.

Commissioner Celie seconded and the motion was carried.

**QUARTERLY SAFETY AWARD DRAW**

The four names drawn to receive a \$50.00 savings bond were Brenda Schuur, Dustin Miller, Daryl Polmateer and Ray Duffield.

**QUARTERLY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING VOUCHERS**

The commissioners reviewed and signed their quarterly meeting and travel vouchers.

**MEETING**

ASMRC 2009 ANNUAL CONFERENCE (FRANKENMUTH) 12-07/12-09. Manager Csokasy will be doing a presentation at the conference and Commissioner Powers serves on a committee. Commissioners Poehlman and Celie also plan to attend.

**SITE INSPECTION**

Chairman Krempec postponed today's scheduled site inspection. Manager Csokasy asked for Board recommendations on sites to visit and said Commissioner Bowser suggested the renewable energy park located at the Midwest Energy facility in Cassopolis.

**PERMITS**

The commissioners reviewed the permits that had been signed. It was noted that a permit fee for Betty Lampen had been reimbursed.

**Driveway**

09-13-04-9349	W Lakeshore Dr.	Silvercreek	Cleveland/Triple E Asphalt
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**Utilities**

10-14-07-1006	Halvorsen Rd.	Volinia	Midwest Energy
10-02-21-1010	Barron Lake Rd.	Howard	Semco
10-04-36-1011	Shady Lane	LaGrange	Semco
10-13-04-1012	Karl St (Co. Line Rd.)	Silvercreek	Semco

Annual  
10-04-25-1002 All County Roads-logging all Pike Lumber Co.

#### **OTHER/COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

**MEETING:** Krempec informed of a scheduled October 22 meeting here at the road commission from 6:30 to 8:30 P.M. The topic will be bike paths, trails and other non motorized transportation in Cass County. Manager Csokasy said that an Ad Hoc group will be working in support of non- motorized traffic. He has recommended Pete Fournier for the group.

**BIKE TRAIL:** Krempec said that the proposed conversion of the old rail line in Vandalia to a bike trail is still in the works.

**MEETINGS:** Chairman note: Southwestern Road Commission Council meeting in Muskegon is for the same day as the Frugal Five meeting here. Krempec said the Frugal Five members determined at their last meeting that the smaller Frugal Five meetings was more beneficial to them and that group set the date of the Frugal Five meeting. Powers elected to represent the road commission at the SWRC Council meeting.

Water Resource Commissioner: Campbell said that a tentative hearing date for consideration of the Williamsville Drain District petition is November 9 at the Cass County Library.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

At 10:30, Celie moved for adjournment. Powers seconded and the motion was carried.

CLERK Grace Chester

CHAIRMAN Leroy R.Krempec

Minutes approved by Board action 11-05-09