

October 1, 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, Commissioner Bowser and Chairman Krempec.

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

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Roseann Marchetti thanked the road commission for mowing along Christiana Lake Road and commended the road news bulletins that are being printed in the paper.

County Commissioner Bickel complimented the CCRC on the patching done on Bair Lake Street. Manager Csokasy said that he had done a followup with Newberg Supervisor Norton regarding potholes on Born Street.

Water Resource Update: Bruce Campbell said that his office now has a web site containing current drain project status and other environmental information.

Regarding the status of the Williamsville drain petition, Campbell said the preliminary engineering and survey studies are being completed and then the petition will go to a board of determination hearing in November. After the hearing, an order of necessity will be issued and then he can proceed.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

1. County Parks' Leases (2)
2. Correspondence regarding a lawsuit

APPROVE AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Powers moved to approve the minutes of 9-17-09. Commissioner Poehlman seconded and the motion was carried.

SPECIAL MEETINGS & MILEAGE

Poehlman	NATS-Niles	9-29-09	4 hours	18 miles
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COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Commissioner Bowser said the committee reviewed the cash flow and discussed proposed township matching funds for next year. Bills were reviewed and approved for payment. Commissioner Celie noted that the larger bills were for the chip and seal materials

POLICY COMMITTEE

Committee Chairman Powers said the committee had met and reviewed the policy list and marked several as obsolete and categorized the remainder for further review.

NATS REPORT

Commissioner Pohlman said project amendments were approved for Cass and Berrien Counties and there were public comments about Gumwood Road and Redfield Street.

The Pokagon Band has asked to be allowed to sit on the NATS Board as a voting member. Some discussion on whether the tribe would be required to pay the standard dues since their scope of work would be limited to the area within the Indian nation property.

MANAGER'S UPDATE

Per Csokasy, all township road work is completed except a small road end in Penn Township, the Maple Street gravel project in Marcellus Township and Surges Road in Milton Township.

Paving was done on 17.6 miles of township roads and an additional 5.7 miles were graveled. On primary roads, 5.3 miles were paved and 22 miles were seal coated. Manager Csokasy said that this reflects the largest volume of work done by the road commission since 2005. The paving crews will be working into November to complete the remaining six federal projects, the above-mentioned projects, the parking lot at Dodd Park, Bogue Street in Vandalia and the intersection at Indian Lake and Dixon. The paving schedule has been reduced to two days a week in order to allow road crews to complete other work. A trial of brush removing equipment is scheduled for the week of October 6th.

A three-year road plan was presented to a citizen's group from Calvin Township. The road commission estimated that the township should be spending \$135,000. to \$190,000. to keep their road system functional but Csokasy said obtaining funds to pay for that amount of work will be the township's biggest issue.

FINANCIALS

The road commission's cash flow position decreased by \$120,995 last month because of advance payment of bills. The Manager said that the non invested cash account stands at 194,300 versus a year ago figure of 283,500. The year to date receipts are \$6.6 million and for FY 2008 were \$6.0 million. The payables for FY 2009 were \$6.8 million as compared to FY 2008 amount of \$6.9 million.

OPERATIONS

By not paving every day, work on drainage, grading, mowing, and brush removal are being caught up. Road salt for the upcoming winter has been ordered and the first of the three wing plows has been delivered and mounted.

Manager Csokasy said that a district grader has been outfitted with a GPS tracking system to test the systems effectiveness and potential value as a tool for the road commission to use to improve operations.

Csokasy said the budgeted amount for road projects for FY 2010 reflect an anticipated 2.5% decrease due to less township revenue sharing funds from the state.

MEETINGS

Manager Csokasy plans to attend an Edwardsburg Retirement Club meeting in early November and the ASMRC meeting in December and has been asked to do a presentation on how Cass County is using road data in the decision making process. On October 15, he will update the County Board of Commissioners on the fiscal year end.

Csokasy distributed a rough draft of the outside the white lines projects to the commissioners for their review and comments.

ENGINEERING

The Redfield Bridge work was started on the 29th of September with the installation of the upstream dam that will shift the water flow west to prepare for grouting operation . Bellina had pictures of the work to show the commissioners and said that so far the public response has been positive.

Chief Engineer Bellina said that the engineering department has been working closely with the paving crews on the more difficult federal projects among them the milling on Ironwood before the asphalt application.

Work continues on submission of the federal project bills to the state and quotes will be sought for an engineering work station and CAD program.

Bellina said that the Mason Street culvert is scheduled to be done in October and grinding Pioneer Street in early December. Informational letters are to be sent to bordering property owners this week.

The second phase of the pavement marking program will begin next week. Per Manager Csokasy, Christiana Lake Road will be added to that list. Loose stones from the chip and seal projects have been swept and Commissioner Bowser noted that he had received another call about the loose stones at the end of Shurte Street.

Chairman Krempec reminded that the next Frugal Five meeting is scheduled for November 9th, here and suggested Bellina do the presentation on gravel roads.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

PARKS BOARD

Krempec said that effective October 1, 2009, Scott Wyman officially became an employee of the county instead of being leased from the road commission. Two leases between the county and the road commission remain for office space and equipment rental. The leases will be addressed by the parks board at their next meeting and upon their approval, sent to the CCRC Board.

Krempec said that the Parks Board is moving ahead with goal setting and will work to determine the best way to get them accomplished.

Harvest Fest will be held at Lawless Park on Saturday, October 3. A contract to have the road commission pave the Dodd parking lot was approved.

Park reservations are up which is good but Krempec said the Board is attempting to find a way to track which groups use the park, whether it is a variety of new people and groups or the same ones.

The Parks' Board approved the purchase of equipment from the road commission that were used mostly in the parks.

The Lawless Master Plan: Krempec noted an article printed in the paper generated questions about the \$9 million plan. Per Krempec, the plan is an overpriced wish list and it will be a long time before there is action.

The parks generated revenue of \$25,000. with a budget set at \$165,000. Ways need to be found to generate more interest from a larger area and a discussion on programs to increase park attendance followed including constructing multiple baseball diamonds, programs specialized to showcase each park's assets, facilities for camping and Rv and camper parking and actively seeking more groups to hold events at the parks.

SAFETY MEETING

Krempec reported that at the last safety meeting, there was further discussion on the required use of hard hats in the garage area. The mechanics think the hard hats pose a bigger danger of an accident when worn while working under equipment. The committee suggested the mechanics wear skull caps and use hard hats at the shop supervisor's discretion. New safety vests and the use of straps on trailers hauling debris were discussed.

The personal safety device list is finalized and committee member Brenda Schuur is working on typing it up and making copies and upon completion copies will be provided for the commissioners. Employee CPR training was discussed. .

Pete Fournier asked about a previous report on improving safety issue when working on changing plow blades and Krempec said this is still being considered.

NEW BUSINESS

PARKS' LEASES

The leases were mentioned earlier in the meeting and Manager Csokasy said there are two agreements, one for the rental of office and storage building space and another rental of CCRC equipment if used by the parks on a part time basis. The original leases were in effect from 10-01-08 to 9-30-09 and need to be renewed.

Per Csokasy, the usual procedure is for the CCRC to approve a lease and authorize its Chairman to sign. Since Chairman Krempec is a member of the Parks' Board and it is not the intention to give an appearance of a conflict of interest, Csokasy asked for the Board's consideration to allow the manager to sign off on the leases when they are received from the Parks' Board. After discussion, Commissioner Powers moved to authorize Manager Csokasy to sign the parks' lease agreement with Cass County when received. Commissioner Poehlman seconded and the motion was carried.

Manager Csokasy reviewed a notification letter of a lawsuit to be filed against the road commission.

PERMITS

Driveway

09-01-21-9339	Ben Clanton	Calvin	Steven Larey
09-13-16-9341	Townhall Rd.	Silver Creek	Pokagon Band /Chorba
09-02-24-9343	Pine Lk St	Howard	Byron Miller
09-04-25-9344	Fox St	LaGrange	Jack Corbit/Chorba
09-15-33-9347	Twin Lakes	Wayne	Michael Behnke/Chorba

Utilities

09-10-30-9342	Shore Acres	Penn	No. Shore Cottages/R&R Exc.
09-06-06-9346	Channel Pkwy.	Mason	DNR/Concord Exc.
09-08-27-9348	Born St	Newberg	Betty Lampen/Am. Tree Service

OTHER/COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Poehlman spoke about a Farm Bureau Board meeting that he attended. He recommended that the FB Board support a CRAM policy to require parity between gas and diesel fuel taxes. Poehlman said that he thought it was a fairness issue: why should a diesel vehicle and a gas fueled vehicle use the same roadways and the diesel vehicle pay a lower price. After his talk and explanation of road funding, the FB Board voted to support the measure.

ROW PERMITS

Manager Csokasy said that by Board action, a \$40.00 permit fee was set for work done in the road right of way but he felt there were certain instances when it would make sense to have the option to waive that fee. Commissioner Powers said that possible liability issues should be taken into consideration: who would be the responsible party if someone was hurt while working in the ROW. No action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10:30, Commissioner Powers moved to adjourn. Commissioner Poehlman seconded and the motion was carried.

CLERK _____ CHAIRMAN _____