

Van Buren County Board of Road Commissioners

Wednesday, August 8, 2018
Regular Meeting - Administrative Office, Lawrence, Michigan

BE IT REMEMBERED: That on the 8th day of August, 2018 at 7:00 PM, E.D.T., the Board of County Road Commissioners for the County of Van Buren met in regular session in the offices in Lawrence, Michigan.

PRESENT: Road Commissioners Askew, Boze, Burleson, Kinney, and Svilpe
Engineer-Manager Lawrence B. Hummel, P.E.
Board Secretary-Finance Director Linnea Rader
Highway Engineer Barry Anttila
Operations Director Greg Brucks
Administrative Assistant Jill Brien

GUESTS: County Commissioner Doroh
County Commissioner Freestone

Chairman Svilpe called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

No additions/deletions to the Agenda.

Motion by Boze, seconded by Askew to approve the Agenda.

AYES: 5
NAYS: 0
MOTION CARRIED.

Moved by Kinney and seconded by Boze to approve the minutes of the July 25, 2018 meeting as presented by Board Secretary Rader.

AYES: 5
NAYS: 0
MOTION CARRIED.

The Chairman opened the meeting to public comment. None was received.

Board Secretary-Finance Director Rader provided an update as follows:

- Special Harassment Training reimbursement received from MCRCSIP (\$500.00).
- Resignation of LuAnn Sell. Additional discussion was provided by Hummel.
- Update regarding temporary automated phone system which may be used at times pending new hire.
- Interview progress: Mechanic-Welder, Payroll/Accounting Clerk, Receptionist-Secretary.
- Shirt order.
- Tracking a 8-12% MTF increase this year over last year.
- Large voucher today containing bills for sealcoat liquid, sealcoat slag, and various ongoing projects.

Rader also discussed a notice she received from Commissioner Kinney referencing the Annual Report and the Audit Report. Kinney's concerns were a reference on Page 14 of the Annual Report to "Page 5", which should be referenced as "Page 6", and a sentence in the Audit Report that he felt was "garbled". Rader explained that the page numbering issue cannot be changed by the Road Commission as it is a fillable form created by the State of Michigan. She will contact Jingjing Chang at the Department of Transportation to see if this can be fixed for next year. The "garbled" sentence in the Audit Report was prepared by the Road Commission's auditor, so this wording cannot be changed now that the Report has been finalized.

Moved by Boze, seconded by Askew to approve the following Road Commission Vouchers:

Voucher #2046	\$125,737.11
Voucher #2047	\$923,799.75

AYES: 5
NAYS: 0
MOTION CARRIED.

The results of the new county-wide road millage were discussed by all present. Engineer-Manager Hummel strongly recommended that the Board consider requesting that the County Commission place this proposal on the ballot at the November general election rather than waiting until the 1 mill renewal is on the ballot again in 2020. Freestone believes the request must be received by September 6th in order to be on the November ballot. Hummel discussed putting a plan together that outlines work to be accomplished on the primary system without making definite commitments, and leaving the plan "fluid". County Commissioner Doroh felt Road Commission staff did a good job presenting information at the various meetings throughout the county. Svilpe was concerned that, in retrospect, what will the Road Commission hear from the people when we cannot make improvements to the primary system due to the failed millage proposal? Burleson asked if it might help to request the millage again, but for less than the 12 years as was previously requested. Hummel stated that if roads are fixed in the voters area already, they may not care about a renewal. In looking at the Primary System as a whole, staff believes that it will take the full 12 years to make improvements to the entire system. It was discussed that part of the reason for the "no" votes might be the additional revenue from the 2015 road funding package. Hummel discussed that these increases by the Legislature gradually increase the funding beginning in 2017 for roads that have been neglected for 15 plus years. These increases to the Road Commission's Transportation Funds are necessary to accomplish berming, chip seal, tree work, drainage/ditching work and other programs that have been practically non-existent over the past 15 years.

Hummel reviewed a report from the Coalition for Better Roads being handled out of Attorney Kelley Page's office. In total, the Coalition received \$4,150.00 in donations in addition to Michigan Paving & Materials directly paying for advertising in local papers.

Hummel reviewed the election results by township and discussed trying to "repackage" the millage request. He asked that the Commissioners think about what to add, or what to take away from the educational materials and to be prepared to discuss at the next meeting. A more detailed road plan may have to be developed; however, it will have to be very fluid, similar to Ionia County. Staff will bring ideas to the next meeting to help the Commissioners to make a decision. Meanwhile, Hummel discussed that the Board may need to consider a Failed Local Road Policy similar to the policy adopted in Kalamazoo County.

Hummel and Rader reviewed a Pass Through Agreement Between The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission and the Van Buren County Road Commission regarding culvert inventory data collection. Motion by Boze, seconded by Burleson to authorize Hummel to execute the Agreement on behalf of the Road Commission.

AYES: 5
NAYS: 0
MOTION CARRIED.

A copy of the Agreement is on file at the Administrative Office and is available for inspection by contacting the office at 269-674-8011.

The County Commissioners' Guidelines for Road Commissioner Effective Communications (Second Draft) were reviewed by all present. Rader voiced concerns regarding the capitalized bold print, and felt that it did not show cooperation, and considered it "shouting". Kinney discussed the concerns that he had with paragraph 2, and telling his townships that he would no longer take service requests. He asked if he was going against Administration to continue taking the requests and sending them to the Road Commission? Hummel advised that the preference would be that Commissioners not take service requests, but that it is clear from the discussions held that each Commissioner will continue to do what they want to do. The reason that requests for service are better take by staff at the Road Commission is a lot of time the information we receive is wrong, and we "chase our tail around the county". Motion by Boze, seconded by Kinney to take off the capitalization and bold print from the second draft, add a line for an effective date, and forward to the County Commission for their review and consideration.

AYES: 5
NAYS: 0
MOTION CARRIED.

With regard to the REVISED Road Commission Guidelines for Attendance/Communication, the Road Commissioners will review and provide comments at the next regular meeting.

Road Commissioner's Township Meeting Attendance Report

From July 25th to present:

Askew: No meetings.

Boze: No meetings.

Burleson: No meetings.

Kinney: Went on a road tour and found 12 missing street name signs in Decatur Township, and approximately 30 more in Arlington, Paw Paw and Waverly Townships. He feels that the Road Commission should consider making it a priority to replace street name signs. Hummel provided some background. Street name signs have been a low priority due to other more important signs that need immediately attention, such as stop signs. In addition, retroreflectivity minimum compliance rules have been mandated by the Federal Highway Administration with a deadline for the replacement of these required traffic signs coming up soon. Because there is a life expectancy for retroreflective signs, it will require that a replacement plan be in place. The retroreflectometer alone costs \$14,000.00. The Road Commission currently employs one person in the Sign Department. If the Road Commission were to begin replacing/placing streethead name signs at all intersections, even if the Township were to pay for the labor and materials, another staff member would need to be hired. With regard to Kinney's question as to whether the Road Commission maintains an inventory of signs, RoadSoft houses no streethead signs. Kinney asked if there was a legal requirement to replace missing street name signs? Hummel responded that the "legal requirement" to place signs is based on sound engineering judgment, as set forth in the MMUTCD, through its incorporation into the vehicle code and statutes. Hummel explained that in the mid- to late 1990's a plan was put together by Road Commission staff with regard to the installation of street name signs throughout the county. Staff will attempt to locate that program to assist the Board in determining if it should have a Policy to replace street name signs.

Svilpe: No meetings.

Commissioner Doroh discussed a service request he forwarded to Jill from the Bangor Chief of Police to reduce the speed limit in Bangor just south of the City limits on CR681. He also asked about the status of the resident near the Bangor Garage who is asking for a fence to be installed to separate his property from the Road Commission's. Hummel reviewed the letter sent by Mr. Herne with the Board and those present. There was a "pile" of sand that had migrated over the property line, as well as the blade of a plow truck. The Road Commission requested and received quotes for a fence. Discussions were held regarding splitting the cost of the fence with the adjacent property owner. Barry will get quotes to place a concrete barrier and the Board will review both options at a later date to make a final decision. Doroh asked that Bangor Garage staff be advised that he may be there to review the situation.

Rader reviewed with the Commissioners the County's Resolution for per diem requests for outside meetings. Motion by Boze, seconded by Kinney to approve the requests by Askew, Boze, Burleson, Kinney and Svilpe for a special per diem for the July 25th Special Meeting of the Board.

AYES: 5
NAYS: 0
MOTION CARRIED.

Operations Director Update:

- Boom Mowing continues.
- Ditching continues.

- Pothole and shoulder work continues.
- Tree work continues.
- Struggling with in-bound slag delivery.
- Brush spraying to begin in September.
- Township local road mowing began approximately a week ago.

Boze reported that the Clerk in Hamilton Township voiced her compliments to Greg Brucks for fog seal in Hamilton Township.

Highway Engineer's Update:

- 30th Street at 48th Avenue, paving is done. Project is complete except for a few sign replacements.
- 48th Avenue between 70th Street and 72nd Street, Covert Township, Pavlak moved on site but there is now a hold up due to the location of a watermain. Moved contractor to Baseline Road in South Haven Township.
- 26th Avenue, Bangor Township, and 75th Street, Covert Township, still waiting for DEQ's 20-day Public Notice period to expire, and for permit to be granted.
- 24th Street, Almena Township, contractor moving in next week.
- 77.50th Street, Covert Township, pipe placed today. Should complete pipe and backfilling tomorrow.
- 67th Street, Geneva Township, pipe is in and street is opened. Just needs HMA patch.
- Baseline Road, South Haven Township, work is underway.
- Submitted some paperwork to DEQ regarding SESC Audit.
- Next meeting will open bids for a crosspipe replacement in Columbia Township on 47.50th Street. When the project is complete it will qualify for local bridge funds.
- First of September we will be ready to let crush and shape projects for bid.
- Opened two MDOT Federal Aid bids: one for work on CR665, Paw Paw Township, and one for work on CR687, Keeler Township. Do not have construction schedules yet, but they will both be completed this construction season.
- CR687 from I94 South to CR352 is complete, except the punch list items being developed.
- Silver Oaks Condominiums off CR652 North of Red Arrow Highway; curbs have been installed.
- M40 at 31st Street and 64th Avenue, Antwerp Township, meeting next Tuesday with Supervisor Ruzick.

Engineer-Manager's Update:

- Northern/Southern Joint Conference, Battle Creek, September 12-13, 2018
- Service Request Report discussion opened by Rader. Commissioners each discussed whether they felt helpful to add to township discussions. Boze felt it was good information as it shows staff work that is over and above our "normal" duties. Svilpe feels it is more beneficial to report to township board on Legislative Priorities and not on "how many potholes are patched".
- Southwest Council meeting on Monday, August 13, Cass County Road Commission.

Motion by Askew, seconded by Burleson to adjourn the Call of the Chair at 9:08 PM.

AYES: 5
 NAYS: 0
 MOTION CARRIED.

Secretary

Chairman