

July 20, 2006

The Board of County Road Commissioners for Montcalm County held a meeting at its office located in Stanton, Michigan at 3:00 p.m. on July 20, 2006.

Present: Commissioners Dale Linton, Robert Brundage and Donald McCracken; Randy Stearns, Managing Director; Jack Johnson, Superintendent; Robert Buckowing, County Highway Engineer; and Karen Swan, Finance Director-Clerk.

Moved by McCracken, seconded by Brundage, to approve the minutes of June 20, 2006 as presented. Motion carried.

Moved by Brundage, seconded by McCracken, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Todd Young and Tim Young of Sandyland Farms came before the Board to discuss Deaner Road west of Gravel Ridge Road. They are concerned that the gravel road does not hold up to the large amount of truck traffic—semi trucks and potato trucks—which use the road to access the scales and storage facilities at Sandyland Farms. Todd Young stated that between the fall of 2006 and spring of 2007 they expect to have more than 2,000 semi-trucks shipping corn, carrots and potatoes in addition to trucks bringing crops in for storage. Todd also stated that brokers have told them that some owners of privately-owned trucks won't come in there with their expensive rigs. Todd stated that the road should be ditched, graveled and paved to all-season standards, and asked if there was some way that they could help. Dale Linton stated that he remembers discussing this same thing with their father several years ago, but unfortunately the money isn't there to do it—funding keeps going down and our fixed costs keep going up. Todd Young stated that the salt stabilization works good but it's just a band-aid, and with all of the truck traffic on this road it should be paved. Dale Linton stated that if the road was to be paved it wouldn't be this year and probably not even next year with the way funding is going. Would the Youngs be willing to gravel the road in preparation for paving? Todd Young stated that they had already spoken to Halliday Sand and Gravel and a trucking company to get a price for gravel and for hauling it. Mr. Young was advised that if the road is to be paved, 22A gravel should be put down. It was decided that Randy Stearns and Bob Buckowing would meet on site with the Youngs on Monday morning to look at the road and develop an estimate so everyone has an idea what the cost could be; then both sides can discuss the matter and decide what, if anything, can be done. Todd Young stated that he would like to at least see the road graveled this year; but that depends on whether or not the Road Commission is willing to make a commitment to pave the road. Dale Linton stated that because of the substantial amount of truck traffic and the jobs provided by Sandyland Farms it is important that a good all-season road provides year-round access to the business, the Road Commission should consider it but that everything depends on funding and Sandyland Farms' contribution.

Moved by McCracken, seconded by Brundage, to approve the contract with Reynolds Township and the Village of Howard City to gravel and place a 250-pound bituminous mat with valley gutters on Maple Hill Road (Sycamore Street) between Church Road and Chestnut Street at a cost of \$9,842 to each entity. Motion carried.

Reviewed correspondence from attorney, Michael Cavanaugh, regarding the proceedings on Spring Grove Road and whether or not the Board would want to hold another public hearing in this regard. The Board stated it would prefer not to hold another public hearing at this time—wait and see what transpires.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the Weighmaster-Permit Agent's position and whether or not the position should be eliminated. The person in the position was off work for a full year and his absence did not cause anyone to take on an undue amount of work and the amount of work for this position has dropped dramatically. Permit applications are down 142 percent from last year; in 2004 we had 223 permits, in 2005 we had 186 permits, and so far this year only 77 permits. The Assistant Engineer has been doing the few permits that we get, and he has the time to do them due to lack of Federal Aid projects and the related paperwork that he would normally do. We already turned the state trunkline permits back to MDOT a couple years ago, so that is no longer being done by this person. Due to falling revenues and increasing costs we have cut out primary road paving projects, among many other things, from this year's budget; this year's township road contracts are down by almost \$800,000 compared to last year—a 36 percent decrease; during the previous four years we averaged 44,325 tons per year of asphalt put down on paving projects, and this year we are only putting down 17,331 tons—a 155 percent decrease. The Weighmaster portion of the job is basically part-time for a few weeks in the spring, and this past spring we contracted Kent County Road Commission to do the work at a very economical cost to the Road Commission—it was much more efficient and cost effective. As mentioned at the last board meeting, our insurance company will shortly be changing the way they want us to investigate accidents and the person in this position will no longer be doing the investigations. All of this equates to hardly any work for this position. This past December, due to the financial situation the Board made the decision not to fill the Floater position that opened up when the Fairplain Township position was signed for, and not too long ago the Board decided not to fill the Superintendent's position when Jack Johnson retires at the end of this year, so how can we justify this position when there is so little for this person to do and finances are so limited?

JULY 20, 2006

Moved by McCracken, seconded by Brundage, to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, a position of Weighmaster/Permit Agent exists within the Road Commission for Montcalm County; and

WHEREAS, due to financial considerations, restructuring, a reduction in the amount of work, and termination of certain operations by the Road Commission, the Road Commission, through its Board, has determined that it is necessary to eliminate the Weighmaster/Permit Agent's position;

NOW THEREFORE, the Board of County Road Commissioners hereby eliminates the position of Weighmaster/Permit Agent effective July 24, 2006. The employee currently holding this position shall be subject to lay-off as of that date and shall be paid two (2) weeks severance pay. Because that employee was formerly a member of the bargaining unit, then, in accordance with Article XXVI, Section 8 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, he shall be allowed to transfer back to the bargaining unit if he so desires, but only with a majority approval of all Union members and, if approved by the Union members, only to an open position that remains unsigned under the job bidding process, as is provided for in the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Motion carried. Roll call: Yes-McCracken, Brundage, Linton.

Moved by McCracken, seconded by Brundage, to approve a request from B&B Environmental Services of Newaygo, Michigan to extend the 2006 contract for catch basin cleaning services for one additional year. Motion carried.

Moved by Brundage, seconded by McCracken, to approve the 7/20/06 bills totaling \$858,715.79 plus Payroll #15 totaling \$73,889.58. Motion carried. Roll call: Yes-McCracken, Brundage, Linton.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

Chairman

Clerk