

AUGUST 15, 2007

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 August 15, 2007.

Present: Commissioners Dale Linton, Robert Brundage and Donald McCracken; Randy Stearns, Managing Director; Bob Buckowing, County Highway Engineer; and Karen Swan, Finance Director-Clerk. Arrived Late: Mark Christensen, Superintendent.

Moved by McCracken, seconded by Brundage, to approve the minutes of August 1, 2007 as presented. Motion carried.

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

A group of residents from the Strait Tow Boulevard-Colby Road area at Crystal Lake came before the Board to discuss concerns they have about Strait Tow Boulevard and Colby Road west of Strait Tow out to Vickeryville Road. Bill Seiter, representing the residents, stated they feel there are safety and speed issues and are concerned about the safety of people walking, running, rollerblading, etc. The residents would like to see the speed limit lowered on Strait Tow and on Colby east of Senator. Is there a possibility of making the intersection of Strait Tow and Colby a three-way stop? The residents also requested that the Road Commission consider paving Colby Road between Vickeryville Road and Strait Tow Boulevard. They feel traffic on Strait Tow would be reduced because vehicles would come off Vickeryville Road onto Colby Road and over to North Shore Drive rather than across Sidney Road and up Strait Tow to North Shore Drive. Mr. Seiter stated that the group understands the Road Commission's funding shortages but wonders if there is something that can be done collectively. Jerry Stone stated that the two issues are tied together and that paving Colby Road would benefit the whole area; the speed on Strait Tow needs to be lowered from the current 25 mph and more signing and perhaps speed bumps need to be installed. Randy Stearns advised the group that the 25 mph speed limit is as low as the speed limit can be legally set. Two residents expressed concerns about drainage problems on some of the streets that run off the west side of Strait Tow north of the golf course—they feel the roads are too high in relationship to their properties and water runs off the roads and into their yards and in some cases, homes. Randy Stearns, Managing Director, stated that the roads were built up and paved when the township installed the sewer system around the lake years ago, and that the Road Commission had not been involved in that project. Bob Buckowing, County Highway Engineer, stated that some of the drainage problems had been addressed a couple years ago, but there may be more that needs to be looked at to see if anything can be done—mainly, to where could the water be run? Dale Linton, Chairman, stated that there is only a 20-foot wide right-of-way on Strait Tow, and the Road Commission is very limited in what it can do within those confines. Dale further stated that the Board has discussed Colby Road, which is a primary road, in the past and had looked at a couple different options a few years ago; however, inadequate funding is the major issue and this part of Colby Road is not eligible for Federal Aid funds. Dale stated that in the past township boards have contributed funds for primary road projects in their townships and urged the residents to talk to their township boards. Karen Swan, Finance Director, explained the funding situation that most road commissions—especially rural counties—are facing. This problem is due to years of under-funding roads and bridges but has really manifested itself over the last few years due to decreasing funds and rapidly increasing costs. Karen advised the residents that even if the townships were agreeable to contributing funds to pave Colby Road, it is doubtful that the Road Commission would have the funds to participate anytime in the near future. Karen further explained the steps that have already been taken over the last several years to reduce costs, including early retirement, elimination of positions and employees, temporary layoffs, no vehicle, truck or heavy equipment purchases for the past three years, along with further steps that will be taken in the near future, which will include the layoff of all road maintenance employees along with three supervisors, one management employee, and one administrative employee for a two-week period at the end of September. Bob Buckowing suggested that the residents on Strait Tow and Colby might want to consider contacting the township to set up special assessment districts for each road for road improvements and paving. One of the residents asked if a three-way stop could be made at Strait Tow and Colby to slow down traffic. What about rumble strips? Randy Stearns said he would look at the location with the MSP traffic safety officer next week; however, the state police discourages the use of stop signs to control speed because it tends to create more problems with rear-end collisions. After the residents left, the Board discussed the possibility of at least salt stabilizing Colby Road from Vickeryville Road to Strait Tow Boulevard before fall; the cost would be minimal and should ease some of the maintenance problems.

Moved by McCracken, seconded by Brundage, to approve the following township contract. Motion carried.

Cato Township

One application of chloride at 1,000 gpm - \$7,903.

Manager's Report

- Paving on Fenwick Road is tentatively scheduled for next week.
- Spoke with MDOT about Greenville's proposed salt storage building; it was suggested we take bids this fall or winter for next summer.

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- Seal-coating is going well; the new pump and nozzles are working really well. We are also using Kent County's distributor and operator, which keeps the operation moving along.
- Spoke with Senator Cropsey's assistant, Craig Starkweather, earlier today about the crews from the correctional facility; we won't have a crew anymore after August 17th. Mr. Starkweather thinks crews may be available again in the future.

Superintendent's Report

- Next year for seal-coating, we should consider using Terry Materials from Alma again, even if they aren't the lowest bidder. They are very good to work with and we don't lose money for demurrage or canceling an order.
- Weather permitting we will be starting the third round of chloride applications next week in most townships.
- The curb and gutter has been installed on Bailey Road, the area behind curbs is backfilled and seeded. It looks good.

Engineer's Report

- The contractor is working on the Blackmer Road Bridge. The deck has been removed and sheet piling is being installed.
- The Soil Erosion & Sedimentation Control Program has been accepted and now has to be adopted by the Board.
- Rich and I have been keeping an eye on the area on Wyman Road north of Tamarack Road. The road has not shifted anymore since the last time we discussed it.

Moved by McCracken, seconded by Brundage, that effective immediately the Board hereby approves and adopts the Soil Erosion & Sedimentation Control Program as presented; and, furthermore, the Board hereby gives authority to the County Highway Engineer to make changes, as needed, to keep the program in compliance with regulations as directed by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. Motion carried. Roll call: Yes-McCracken, Brundage, Linton.

Moved by McCracken, seconded by Brundage, to approve the Mutual Aid Agreement between the Road Commission and the Cities and Villages within Montcalm County and to authorize the Managing Director to sign said agreement. Motion carried. Roll call: Yes-McCracken, Brundage, Linton.

Moved by McCracken, seconded by Brundage, to reschedule the September 5th board meeting to 3 p.m. on September 12, 2007 and the September 19th board meeting to 3 p.m. on September 26, 2007. Motion carried.

Moved by McCracken, seconded by Brundage, to hold a public hearing at 3 p.m. on September 26, 2007 for the purpose of reviewing and adopting the proposed 2008 General Appropriations Budget. Motion carried.

Moved by Brundage, seconded by McCracken, to approve the 8/15/07 bills totaling \$458,541.27 and Payroll #17 totaling \$72,054.59. Motion carried. Roll call: Yes-McCracken, Brundage, Linton.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Chairman

Clerk