

JANUARY 19, 2005

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 January 19, 2005.

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

Moved by Brundage, seconded by Linton, to approve the minutes of January 5, 2005 as presented. Motion carried.

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

Moved by Brundage, seconded by Linton, to open the public hearing at 2:31 p.m. to review the following: 1) Sale of Federal Aid Funds to the Michigan Department of Transportation; 2) Proposed 2005 Primary Road Projects; and 3) Operation of Snowmobiles within County Road Right-of-Way. Motion carried.

Dale Linton informed those present that the Board had received a letter from the Montcalm County Board of Commissioners and the Parks & Recreation Commission requesting that the Road Commission explore the possibility of allowing snowmobiles the use of road shoulders and right-of-way. Randy Stearns advised those present that snowmobiles are not allowed to run along any state trunklines located south of US-10 in Michigan. Randy also stated that he spoke with the managers at Newaygo County Road Commission and Mecosta County Road Commission, which both allow snowmobiles use of the right-of-way; and they both stated that they have not had problems. The Road Commission has had its legal representative look into the issue of liability and was advised that the Road Commission would have no liability. Todd Wells stated that he feels allowing snowmobiles to use the county's road right-of-way would bring additional business into the county and is in favor of allowing it. Jack Nelson, owner of Nelson's Speed Shop, stated that according to the law, a snowmobile operator cannot sue a county or a road commission—the snowmobile operator assumes any negligence—just like anything else there will be people who try to abuse the system, but the majority of operators will abide by the laws. Several residents, business owners and a representative from the Michigan State Police—Lakeview Post, voiced their opinions regarding the operation of snowmobiles within county road right-of-way. All those present for this portion of the public hearing were in favor of allowing the operation of snowmobiles with the road right-of-way.

Dale Linton explained that it plans to sell its allocated Federal Aid funds to the Michigan Department of Transportation on a one-year trial basis. Various county road commissions have been doing this for several years and have found that they have been able to do more projects than if they contracted through the state. The Board has stated that the funds will continue to be used only on Federal Aid-eligible roads and when paving said roads, they will be paved to all-season standards. Randy Stearns stated that current plans for the 2005 construction season call for the rehabilitation and re-paving of Sidney Road (CR510) between Hillman Road and Derby Road and also Johnson Road (CR595) between Sidney Road and Stanton Road; if additional funds are available, more projects may be added at a later date.

The public hearing closed at 2:47 p.m. and the Board adjourned until 3:00 p.m. at which time the regular board meeting was called to order.

Moved by Brundage, seconded by Linton, to allow the use of county road (primary and local) right-of-way by snowmobiles, effective February 1, 2005. Furthermore, snowmobiles shall not be permitted use of any state trunkline right-of-way or within incorporated cities and villages unless allowed by city or village ordinance. Motion carried. Roll call: Yes-Brundage, Linton.

Discussed proposed policy regarding work hours and timekeeping to be instituted when the new time clock system is installed. The Board would like some revisions to be made and this was tabled until the February 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

Moved by Brundage, seconded by Linton, to approve the installation of a streetlight at the intersection of Mt. Hope Road (CR555) and Stanton Road (CR522). Motion carried. Roll call: Yes-Brundage, Linton.

Discussed a request from abutting property owners to abandon right-of-way on West County Line Road (Montcalm Avenue) north of South County Line Road (Bricker Road), which is a section line and on the county line between Montcalm and Kent counties. Randy Stearns stated that he advised Les Lillie, Eureka Township Supervisor of the request and also spoke with Jerry Byrne from Kent County Road Commission. Jerry advised Randy that Greg Dean, Oakfield Township Supervisor, is usually not in favor of abandoning right-of-way located on a section line. Jerry will also be discussing this with the Board of Kent County Road Commissioners and will advise Randy of their thoughts in this regard.

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Moved by Brundage, seconded by Linton, to table the previously discussed road abandonment request until the February 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Motion carried.

Moved by Brundage, seconded by Linton, to increase the Managing Director's and Commissioners' credit card limits to \$2,000. Motion carried. Roll call: Yes-Brundage, Linton.

Clerk's Report

- One of our hourly employees asked if the Road Commission would reimburse him for a welding class that he would like to take at Montcalm Community College. The Board stated that it would only reimburse employees for job-related classes or training, and welding does not pertain to the employee's current job classification.

Manager's Report

- Discussed problems the Road Commission is having with Verizon locating services on Miss Dig requests. Many requests are not being properly marked, which has resulted in cables and lines being accidentally cut and the Road Commission being billed several thousand dollars for repairs. We would have no quarrel with paying for pedestals that we may hit with a mower or if we were being negligent; however, we should not be responsible for their locating service's incompetence. Randy and Karen have both spent a lot of time corresponding with and discussing these problems with Verizon to no avail—Verizon is the only utility that we have problems with for improperly marked utilities. At yesterday's Seven County Council meeting we discussed this with the other road commissions, and they are all having the same problem and only with Verizon. Clinton County Road Commission has tried to set up a meeting with Verizon representatives to discuss the problems but has had no cooperation from them. Clinton County's board has authorized its engineering department to put a hold on all permit requests from Verizon until such time that they agree to meet and somehow resolve these issues. The Board agreed that we should do the same.
- Per the Board's request, Randy contacted Isabella County Road Commission regarding their use of crushed limestone instead of gravel when resurfacing some of their unpaved roads. Isabella's manager stated that the cost compared to gravel is high, but they receive a large contribution of funds each year from the casino, which they can use on roads anywhere in Isabella County. Their average cost per mile is \$38,000 using crushed limestone (4" to 5" depth); this cost includes the road commission's cost to pull the berms and prep the road, all materials and the contractor's cost. Our cost per mile to gravel resurface a road (4" depth) is approximately \$11,400 but we spread it ourselves. What would be the cost per cubic yard of crushed limestone stockpiled? Randy will get some prices.

Superintendent's Report

- MIOSHA inspected the Greenville garage last week. We did not receive any citations; however, the inspector recommended that we install a railing around the perimeter on top of the office, since there is HVAC equipment that will require maintenance and someone will have to walk around up there.

Engineer's Report

- Scott Civil Engineering Company is doing borings at the bridge on Blackmer Road north of Condensery Road in Crystal Township.

Moved by Brundage, seconded by Linton, to approve the contract with Scott Civil Engineering Company at a cost of \$16,000 to provide TS&L services for the bridge on Blackmer Road north of Condensery Road in Section 35 of Crystal Township and to authorize the Managing Director and the Chairman to sign the contract. Motion carried.

Moved by Brundage, seconded by Linton, to approve the 1/19/05 bills totaling \$298,448.85 and Payroll #2 totaling \$92,373.78. Motion carried. Roll call: Yes-Brundage, Linton.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

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Chairman

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Clerk