

JANUARY 7, 2004

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 7, 2004.

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

Moved by Brundage, supported by McCracken, to approve the minutes of December 17, 2003 as presented. Carried.

Moved by Brundage, supported by McCracken, to approve the agenda as presented with the addition of K) Set 2004 Meeting Dates. Carried.

Moved by Brundage, supported by McCracken, to appoint Dale Linton as Chairman of the Board for the calendar year 2004. Carried. Ayes: McCracken, Brundage. Abstain: Linton.

Moved by McCracken, supported by Linton, to appoint Bob Brundage as Vice-Chairman of the Board for the calendar year 2004. Carried. Ayes: McCracken, Linton. Abstain: Brundage.

Moved by McCracken, supported by Brundage, to appoint Karen Swan as Finance Director-Clerk of the Board for the calendar year 2004. Carried. Ayes: McCracken, Brundage, Linton.

Moved by McCracken, supported by Brundage, to appoint Randy Stearns as Managing Director for the calendar year 2004. Carried. Ayes: McCracken, Brundage, Linton.

Moved by Brundage, supported by McCracken, to appoint Robert Buckowing, P.E. as County Highway Engineer for the calendar year 2004. Carried. Ayes: McCracken, Brundage, Linton.

Moved by Brundage, supported by McCracken, to set the 2004 Board meeting dates at 3:00 p.m. on the first and third Wednesday of each month. Carried.

Moved by McCracken, supported by Brundage, to accept the offer from Liquid Dustlayer, Inc. to extend its 2003 bid price of \$0.376 per gallon for 38% liquid calcium chloride (applied) through 2004. Carried.

Clerk's Report

- Cogitate was up the week of Christmas to switch the remainder of the accounting programs from the DOS-based software to the Windows-based software. We've been on the Windows-based software for accounts payable for several years, but from here on out all accounting, e.g. payroll, inventory, etc. will be done in Windows. We're learning how to use the new system, and it's going well, but it will take some time to get all of it figured out. Bec has run the first payroll, and other than a few minor glitches everything worked out fine. In regard to Cogitate, as you know several months ago it was rumored that they were going out of business; however, we have received confirmation from Cogitate that they are not going out of business, and they think the rumor had been started by a disgruntled former employee who had been let go.
- The next 7 County Council is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, January 20th. Gratiot County is hosting.
- In regard to MTF, as you know the first MTF check received in October at the beginning of the fiscal year was substantially down from October 2002 and we weren't sure what the trend would be—since November the checks have been up to about where we estimated for this year's budget. Hopefully that will continue. That, along with the relatively mild and snow-free winter we've had until just lately, should help the budget.
- The trunkline maintenance contract liability insurance settlement has finally been worked out and approved. We recently received notification that we will be getting a refund sometime later this fiscal year. The state went back to 1996 when they started claiming, and taking, a portion of road commissions' insurance refunds received from MCRCSIP—even though we paid for the trunkline liability insurance. As you know, they even held back refunding trunkline audit adjustments owed to us because a small portion of the adjustment was based on the trunkline liability refunds. I've estimated the refund to be \$100,000+, which will be a big help with the budget.
- Advised the Board that we must develop a written policy regarding county vehicle usage especially for employees who are assigned county vehicles—we need to address commuting and also personal use. I am going to contact Treasury to clarify some questions and will try to have something drawn up for the Board's review in February.

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Superintendent's Report

- I know we discussed holding off until spring to make equipment and vehicles purchases, but in light of the budget looking better as Karen discussed previously and the fact that we have a pickup truck crisis, we need to look at doing something sooner rather than later. We have 18 pickup trucks with over 130,000 miles—one foreman's truck has over 180,000 miles. The foremen are on call 24/7 and they need reliable vehicles. I discussed this with Randy and he has been checking with the state under the extended purchasing program. The state is in the process of updating this year's bids, and they plan to have the updates completed in the next two weeks. We need to purchase at least three new pickup trucks now for the foremen and put several more in the FY2005 budget for delivery next fall. The culvert crew's pickup truck has over 200,000 miles—we can get that to last through the summer but we definitely need to replace it before the end of the year. We want to get with the culvert crew to see what they think they need—possibly a one-ton truck. We can get rid of at least the three worst pickup trucks, but Kelly and I are also going to take an inventory of all trucks and equipment to see what we can eliminate and take to Kent County's auction. The Board is in agreement and directed Jack to pursue this.

Engineer's Report

- I've been working on the Crystal Road enhancement project, specifically the written agreement between the various entities. Also working on project estimates as requested by the townships for the coming construction season.
- Rich is working on the Federal Aid projects for Crystal Road from M46 to North County Line and also Sidney Road from M91 to Hillman Road. From what we're hearing, Isabella County has changed their plans for Winn Road (Crystal Road) at our north county line—they originally planned to work with us to realign the road at the county line; however, we now hear that they plan to leave the road where it is. The Board directed Bob to contact Isabella County to discuss this; if they still plan to leave the road as it is, we should at least do something to improve the intersection where North County Line Road runs west off of Crystal Road.
- I've been working with the developer on the Viking Ridge Plat and anticipate final paperwork for the next board meeting.

Commissioners' Comments

- When will the Crystal Road enhancement project be let? Planning on early spring; completion depends on who gets the contract. We will get all that information at the GI meeting.
- What about the Critical Bridge list—do we know anything yet? The state is supposed to let us know in February, so we should know by the end of February if the bridge on Blackmer Road qualifies for funding.

Moved by McCracken, supported by Brundage, to approve prepays totaling \$18,508.57 and Payroll #26 totaling \$151,100.64 and Payroll #1 totaling \$74,427.21. Carried. Ayes: McCracken, Brundage, Linton.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Chairman

Clerk

