

## **Minutes of the Transportation Committee**

The Transportation Committee of the McLean County Board met on Tuesday, May 1, 2007 at 8:00 a.m. in Room 404, Government Center, 115 East Washington Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

Members Present: Acting Chairman Hoselton, Members Baggett, Dean, Cavallini and Caisley

Members Absent: None

Other Members Present: Member Owens

Staff Members Present: Mr. John Zeunik, County Administrator, Ms. Lucretia Wherry, Recording Secretary

Department Heads Present: Mr. Jack Mitchell, County Engineer

Others Present: Mr. Eric Schmitt, Assistant County Engineer; Ms. Jennifer Sicks, Transportation Planner, Regional Planning Commission

Acting Chairman Hoselton called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. He stated that the first item for action is approval of the minutes from the April 3, 2007 meeting.

Motion by Cavallini/Baggett to recommend approval of the minutes from the April 3, 2007 meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

Acting Chairman Hoselton asked the Committee to review the bills from April, 2007. He advised that Mr. Jack Mitchell, County Engineer, would address any questions that the Committee may have.

Motion by Caisley/Dean to recommend payment of the April, 2007 bills as submitted by the County Auditor.

Mr. Baggett commented that fuel prices have risen again. He asked if this is affecting the fuel budget. Mr. Mitchell responded that the Highway Department takes quotes whenever gas or diesel is needed. He noted that he is not aware if the fuel budget has been affected at this time. Mr. Mitchell advised the Committee that they are now using the new soy-diesel. The soy-diesel is 11% soy and the Highway Department has not noticed any negative effects with the new product. Mr. Baggett asked if the soy-diesel is the same price as diesel fuel. Mr. Mitchell responded that he is not sure if it is the same price, but all government agencies are mandated by State Law to use soy-diesel whenever it is available. It is not available in the winter because it tends to gel.

Acting Chairman Hoselton asked if there were any further questions regarding the bills. Hearing none, he called for a vote to recommend approval of the bills.

Motion carried.

Acting Chairman Hoselton stated that Mr. Owens is present at today's meeting to give a report on his trip to the National Association of Counties (NACo) Legislative Conference in Washington D.C.

Mr. Owens stated that the NACo Transportation Steering Committee is dealing with one issue that would strongly impact Counties. There are concerns about the balance in the Highway Trust Fund. This fund is supported mainly from revenue from a fuel tax. Congress is concerned how this fund will continue to be replenished. Currently, there are two options before Congress. They are as follows: Increasing the fuel tax, or privatization through tolling. At this time, it appears that Congress is leaning towards raising the fuel tax. Congress is also discussing other options such as selling federal bonds to help collect additional dollars for the trust fund, or to eliminate the gas tax completely and go to a mileage charge. There are a lot of kinks to be worked out with a mileage charge.

Mr. Owens stated that other issues discussed included:

- Congress is allocating \$39.5 billion for road projects for Fiscal Year 2008.

- There is a Joint Resolution between NACo's Transportation Steering Committee and the Environment, Energy and Land Use Committee to support amending the *Clean Water Act*. Basically, what is being proposed is a change in the language from "navigable waters" to "waters of the United States." That would mean that local agencies and Counties would need to obtain a "Clean Water Act Permit" for any project that would impact any waterway in the United States, even non-navigable waterways.

Mr. Mitchell asked if there was any discussion about how much Congress is proposing to increase the gas tax. Mr. Owens replied that he is unsure; however, discussions at the meeting included amounts between \$.05 and \$.10 per gallon increase.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the Federal Highway Trust Fund is projected to be completely depleted by Fiscal Year 2008 or 2009. Mr. Mitchell added that Congress will need to act swiftly to overcome this shortfall.

Mr. Caisley asked if it would be appropriate to adopt a Resolution opposing the change with respect to the *Clean Water Act*. Mr. Dean responded that he would feel more comfortable if there was more research done on the changes to the language and how it would affect the County. Mr. Mitchell stated that the change in the language would affect many of the waterways in the County. Under the current *Clean Water Act*, there are many waterways that are not considered navigable. If the language is changed, all work, including work on ditches containing water, would require a permit.

Mr. Owens stated that he would be glad to investigate this topic further and let the Committee know what he has learned. The Committee agreed.

Acting Chairman Hoselton thanked Mr. Owens for his report. He stated that the next item for the Committee's consideration is the letting results from an April 24<sup>th</sup> Letting.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the letting on April 24, 2007 was for the Colfax-Weston Road stabilization project. The estimate for this work was 24% over the engineer's estimate. The Highway Department is recommending rejecting that bid and performing the widening of the road with County Highway staff.

Mr. Cavallini asked what exactly is a "road stabilization project". Mr. Mitchell responded that the Colfax-Weston Road is cracked very badly. The cracking has reduced the strength of the existing roadway and will crack on through to a new

surface, if installed. The stabilization project would involve using a large "tiller" or stabilization machine to pulverize the existing roadway to a depth of about 8 inches. In the next step, emulsified asphalt is laid over the surface with a roller. Finally, a mill would be used to mill over the surface. Mr. Mitchell advised the Committee that the following year, a hot-mix surface would be overlaid over the entire surface. This work will take place over a 7½ mile stretch of the Colfax-Weston Road.

Mr. Cavallini asked if this would be the first time that the Highway Department will attempt a procedure like this. Mr. Mitchell replied that it would be the first time. He noted that they have viewed this process being done in several other counties, and it seems to have worked well.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the County will pay for the widening of this road, but the stabilization project will actually be funded by the Horizon Wind Farm.

Motion by Cavallini/Baggett to recommend *rejecting*  
a Resolution and Letting Results from an April 24, 2007  
Letting for Non-MFT County Maintenance Sections.  
Motion carried.

Mr. Mitchell informed the Committee that there is a gas-main on the Danvers-Carlock Road that crosses the rebuilding project. The Highway Department has known this main was in the construction area and has been trying to get Nicor to give a firm price for having it moved. Other options have been explored, but, ultimately, it will have to be relocated. The cost is estimated at \$51,860.00, which is rather high, but there are not any better options. Mr. Mitchell stated that the Highway Department recommends approval of this project.

Mr. Dean asked why it would not be Nicor's responsibility to relocate the gas-main. Mr. Mitchell responded that it is located on a private easement off of the existing right-of-way.

Mr. Cavallini asked where it would be moved to. Mr. Mitchell responded that it will be lowered beneath the ground approximately three feet in the same location. Mr. Cavallini asked why it is so expensive. Mr. Mitchell responded that keeping connections and service to all customers while the work is being done will be the most costly component of this work. Mr. Mitchell stated that the Highway Department recommends approval of this project.

Motion by Dean/Cavallini to recommend approval of  
a Nicor Gas Company Utility Relocation in the Village  
of Danvers on 1800 North Road and 500 East Roads  
with Member Caisley abstaining. Motion carried.

Mr. Caisley asked that this item not be placed on the Consent Agenda as he has a conflict of interest. Mr. John Zeunik, County Administrator, replied that Mr. Caisley can announce that he wishes to abstain from this particular item before a vote is taken to approve the Consent Agenda.

Acting Chairman Hoselton asked Mr. Mitchell if he would present the items for information to the Committee.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the piling has been driven and several caps have been poured on the Reese Bridge on the Bentown-Holder Road.

The Arrowsmith Road project has just begun. This project is being funded primarily by the Horizon Wind Farm.

The East Side Highway Report is located in your packets. Mr. Mitchell advised the Committee that information gathered from the last public meeting was available on the East Side Highway website at [www.eastsidehighway.com](http://www.eastsidehighway.com). Anyone with questions or concerns can feel free to view the website or call (217) 373-8901. The second public meeting took place on April 19, 2007. There were 42 members of the public in attendance at the morning session and there were 48 members of the public in attendance at the afternoon session. Members of the public were asked to complete the Context Sensitive Solution audit questionnaire.

The next public meetings are scheduled for May 22<sup>nd</sup> and May 23<sup>rd</sup>. The meetings will be held in the evening at Normal Community High School. The exact time will be announced later. The meetings will be identical. These meetings will address the purpose and need portion of the study.

Mr. Dean asked if there has been an abundance of good feed-back from members of the public. Mr. Mitchell responded the last meeting did not include any public participation. The next scheduled meeting will include public participation. Mr. Mitchell asked Mr. Zeunik if he had any comments on the public meetings. Mr. Zeunik responded that they had hoped that there would be more members of the public present at the meeting. Hopefully, moving the meeting to a more convenient location such as Normal Community High School will yield a larger audience.

Acting Chairman Hoselton asked Mr. Eric Schmitt, Assistant County Engineer, if he would present a report on the Horizon Wind Farm. Mr. Schmitt stated that he was at a meeting at the Horizon Wind Farm this morning and all 120 towers in Phase I are up. Approximately 78 of the towers have been commissioned. Yesterday, 61 towers were producing electricity. Phase I is due to be completed by approximately June 14<sup>th</sup>. Phase II is due to begin construction later this week.

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Acting Chairman Hoselton asked Mr. Mitchell to give the Committee a summary on the construction of the proposed garage. Mr. Mitchell informed the Committee that after the County Board approved the architectural agreement, he met with Mr. Harry Riddle, the architect. When the preliminary plan is finalized, it will be reviewed by the Chairmen of the Property and the Transportation Committees for review and then will be put out for bid. The Property Committee will be the Oversight Committee which awards the bids and oversees the construction.

Mr. Mitchell advised the Committee that Acting Chairman Hoselton had recommended several modifications to the proposed plans. Acting Chairman Hoselton advised the Committee that he recommended a stronger gauge for the steel, covered fittings, and a wind resistant rating equal to 90. In addition, he recommended that the heated floor be poured in quadrants rather than in one section. The Committee Members thanked Member Hoselton for his suggestions to improve the quality of this building.

Acting Chairman Hoselton asked if there were any other questions. Hearing none, he asked Mr. Mitchell if he had any other items to present to the Committee. Mr. Mitchell stated that last week he attended the National Association of County Engineer's meeting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He had been nominated for the Urban Engineer of the Year and was shocked when he received the award. The Committee congratulated Mr. Mitchell.

Acting Chairman Hoselton adjourned the Meeting at 8:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Northcutt  
Recording Secretary