

Minutes of the Transportation Committee

The Transportation Committee of the McLean County Board met on Tuesday, December 6, 2005 at 8:00 a.m. in Room 404 of the Government Center, 115 E. Washington Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

Members Present: Chairman Bass, Members Dean, O'Connor, Cavallini, Hoselton, and Baggett

Members Absent: None

Other Members Present: None

Staff Members Present: Mr. John Zeunik, County Administrator; Ms. Christine Northcutt, Recording Secretary, County Administrator's Office

Department Heads Present: Mr. Jack Mitchell, County Engineer, Mr. Eric Schmitt, Assistant County Engineer

Others Present: Ms. Christine Brauer, Member Regional Planning Commission, Ms. Jennifer Sicks, Transportation Planner, Regional Planning Commission

Chairman Bass called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Chairman Bass stated that the first item for action is the approval of the minutes from the October, 2005 meeting. He asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

Motion by Dean/Cavallini to approve the minutes from the October 4, 2005 Transportation Committee Meeting. Motion carried.

Chairman Bass asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the November 15, 2005 Stand-up Committee Meeting.

Motion by Dean/Hoselton to approve the minutes from the November 15, 2005 Stand-up Committee Meeting. Motion carried.

Chairman Bass informed the Committee that the next item on the agenda is the payment of the November, 2005 bills. Chairman Bass stated that he has a letter from Ms. Jackie Dozier, County Auditor, recommending payment of the bills. He asked if there were any questions from the Committee.

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Mr. Hoselton asked what type of business is "Premier Fabrication". Mr. Cavallini noted that they seem to have a lot references in the bills for small amounts. Mr. Mitchell stated that he is not sure what those charges are for, but that he would check and report back to the Committee.

Motion by Cavallini/Dean to recommend approval of the bills for November, 2005 as submitted by the County Auditor. Motion carried.

Chairman Bass stated that the first item for action are the Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) Audits for the #52 County Road Districts, #71 MFT County and #52 Township Bridge Program for Fiscal Year 2004. Mr. Mitchell stated that these items could all be taken together.

**Ms. O'Connor joins the meeting at 8:12 a.m.

Mr. Hoselton asked why this audit runs a full year behind. Mr. Mitchell stated that the MFT audits are completed by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) Auditors and that they typically run behind.

Motion by Cavallini/Baggett to recommend Approval of the #52 County Road Districts, the #52 Township Bridge Program and the #71 Motor Fuel Tax County Audits. Motion carried.

Chairman Bass stated the next item is a 2006 County MFT Maintenance Resolution. Mr. Mitchell stated that this is an estimate of the anticipated maintenance costs for FY 2006. Mr. Mitchell stated that the Resolution is for \$1,750,000.00. Last year's Resolution was for \$1,825,000.00. It was pared back because more funding was needed for construction funding.

Motion by Hoselton/Cavallini to recommend approval of the 2006 County MFT Resolution.
Motion carried.

Chairman Bass stated that the next item is an engineering agreement for repair work proposed on the Lexington and Towanda I-55 Interchanges. Mr. Mitchell informed the Committee that he received a call from the IDOT District Office proposing a Jurisdictional Transfer of the Lexington and Towanda Interchanges from the State of Illinois to the County of McLean. The transfer was to take place after the State contributes funds to bring the roads back into acceptable shape. The County must also agree to turn over the \$800,000.00 in federal funding that they received to repair these interchanges. Mr. Mitchell reminded the Committee that he brought this information to them at their Stand-up meeting prior to the Board Meeting on November 15th. The Committee gave Mr. Mitchell permission to prepare an engineering agreement for this project. Mr. Mitchell stated that he contacted the Farnsworth Group for an estimate on this work. The estimates showed that the Lexington interchanges were about 57% patch, therefore, the County is making the argument with IDOT that the road needs to be rebuilt. The replacement cost for Lexington is \$1.5 million vs. approximately \$1.2 million for patching. Mr. Mitchell noted that the County is still negotiating with IDOT on the Lexington and Towanda interchanges. Mr. Mitchell stated that he hopes to bring an agreement to the Committee next month. IDOT has several hundred high priority projects around the State that need to be completed. Mr. Mitchell informed the Committee that he will try to advance these projects as early as possible. Mr. Mitchell noted that he reminded IDOT that the Shirley interchange needs to be repaired as well. Mr. Mitchell stated that the engineers estimated that project will cost approximately \$200,000.00. The Shirley project is not part of the high priority projects that were earmarked for the \$800,000.00 in federal funding. Mr. Mitchell reminded the Committee that the original request was for \$3 million. Mr. Mitchell stated that he would be glad to answer any questions from the Committee.

Mr. Dean asked if this Jurisdictional Transfer included the bridge or if it only includes the roadways up to the bridge. Mr. Mitchell responded that the bridges are the State's responsibility and are not included in the Jurisdictional Transfer. Mr. Hoselton stated that the bridges are in worse condition than the on and off

ramps. Mr. Mitchell stated that the State repaired the bridge a few years ago. He noted that the last time he drove over the bridge he thought that it was in decent shape. Mr. Mitchell stated that he will have to drive over the bridges again and check them out.

Ms. O'Connor asked if Mr. Mitchell might want to look into adding a Structural Engineer to the Highway Department staff so that this type of work can be done in-house rather than hiring another Engineering firm. Mr. Mitchell replied that is something that can be looked into during the next budget cycle.

Motion by Hoselton/Cavallini to recommend approval of an Engineering Agreement for repair work on the Lexington and Towanda Interchanges. Motion carried. Mr. Dean voted "no".

Chairman Bass stated that the next item is an Engineering Agreement for replacement of four County Bridges: the Peacock Bridge, the Spady Bridge, the Henning Bridge, and the Seegmiller Bridge. Mr. Mitchell went to the map and showed the Committee the location of each specific bridge that needs to be replaced. Mr. Mitchell stated that all of these structures were built under the State's outdated H-15 loading requirements. The State has updated their bridge requirements to an H-20 Standard. The bridges built under the H-15 Standard are not capable of handling 80,000 lb. loads. Therefore, the Highway Department recommends replacing all four of these structures. Mr. Dean asked why the engineering work is not put out for bid. Mr. Mitchell stated that it is mainly because it is against State law to bid for professional services. Ms. O'Connor asked what is the total cost for this engineering. Mr. Mitchell responded that the total cost would be approximately \$73,000.00. Ms. O'Connor reiterated that it would be a good idea to look into employing a structural engineer at the Highway Department so that these services did not have to be hired out. Chairman Bass asked if there were any other questions. Hearing none, he called for a motion.

Motion by Cavallini/O'Connor to recommend approval of an Engineering Agreement for replacement of the following bridges: Peacock Bridge, Spady Bridge, Henning Bridge, Seegmiller Bridge. Motion carried.

Chairman Bass stated that the next item for action is the Spring posting. Mr. Mitchell stated that, at the Committee's behest, he has prepared a report on the Spring posting. Mr. Mitchell informed the Committee that the report can be found

in the agenda packet on pages 44 – 47. Mr. Mitchell stated that the Highway Department has compared McLean County's Spring posting procedure to other County's and looked at the history of the Spring postings. Mr. Mitchell noted that McLean County's Spring postings are very similar to neighboring County's Spring postings. In looking at the history of the Spring posting procedure, the reason for the Spring posting is because the roads would be significantly damaged during the Spring thaw if they were not posted. Mr. Mitchell went through the signs that are used on County Roads during the Spring posting and the signs that are used year-round on County Roads. Mr. Mitchell stated that if farmers or other business people need to move a load during the Spring thaw, they apply for a permit through the County Highway Department. The Highway Department has one person that issues permits throughout the Spring season. The issuance of permits depends upon how much precipitation occurred during the fall and winter, and how the Spring cycle of warm days and chilly nights is leaving the ground. If there is a hard freeze, the Highway Department will issue permits for businesses to haul loads. In summation, Mr. Mitchell advised the Committee that he would recommend that the Committee leave the Spring posting and permitting process the way it is. It is in place to protect the roads and it is effective. Mr. Mitchell advised the Committee that the Townships use the same signage and they are happy with the system as well. It would be a financial hardship on the Townships to change the signs. Mr. Mitchell stated that he would be happy to answer any questions that the Committee may have.

Mr. Dean thanked Mr. Mitchell for the report and for the way that the Highway Department works with farmers and other business people during the Spring thaw in issuing permits for loads.

Motion by Dean/Hoselton to keep the Spring Posting
Schedule, Signage and Permit Fees as it currently is.
Motion carried.

Mr. John Zeunik, County Administrator, informed the Committee that there have been three attempts in the Legislature to take the road posting away from Counties and Townships and to establish it in State law. There was quite a bit of support last year, but, at the end of the session, it did not pass. There has been support, in the past, from the trucking industry and the Farm Bureau. Mr. Mitchell responded that last year he attended a meeting regarding this bill. Various County and Township Officials got together and made a proposal to the legislators that if they do pass a bill to make all of the roads 80,000 lbs., the legislators need to provide the Counties and Townships with the money to upgrade all roads to 80,000 lbs. This proposal included a \$.04 increase in the

Motor Fuel Tax. The Counties and Townships also asked for Illinois lawmakers to pass the "Minnesota Weight Bill". The "Minnesota Weight Bill" is a bill that allows law enforcement officer to go to any commercial scale and issue weight limit violations based upon scale tickets up to two weeks after the tickets are issued. Mr. Mitchell stated that the County hopes to maintain the Spring posting.

Chairman Bass stated that the next item on the agenda is an Appropriation Transfer Request. Mr. Mitchell informed the Committee that the Contract Services Line Item has gone over budget. Therefore, the Highway Department is requesting a transfer of \$25,000.00 from the Purchase of Machinery Line into the Contract Services Line item. Individual line items within the same category can be transferred without Committee or County Board approval, but this is a transfer from the Capital Outlay category to the Contractual Services category. As such, this requires Committee and County Board approval.

Motion by Hoselton/O'Connor to recommend approval of an Appropriation Transfer request of \$25,000.00 from the Purchase of Machinery/Equipment line item to the Contract Services line item. Motion carried.

Chairman Bass stated that the Committee will skip the next item, which is an Executive Session item to review the 2006 County Engineer MFT Appropriating Resolution, and go through the informational items first.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the first item is the project summary of the work on the Heller Bridge and the LeRoy – Lexington Road. Mr. Mitchell stated that the Heller Bridge work is complete and the final payment has been made. Mr. Mitchell stated that the work on the LeRoy – Lexington Road is completed. The final payments have not been made on this road. Mr. Mitchell informed the Committee that he added raised reflective markers on this road. The State uses these on all of the roads that they pave and they seem to help drivers see the lines at night and during a heavy rain. Mr. Hoselton asked if these markers will be knocked out or loosened by the snowplows. Mr. Mitchell stated that they are supposed to stay in place and shouldn't be removed by the snowplows.

Mr. Mitchell informed the Committee that they had questioned the amount of rent that was being charged on a farm lease. Based upon that discussion, the rent has been raised from \$110,00.00 per acre to \$135,000.00 per acre. Chairman Bass asked if Mr. Mitchell had anything else that he wanted to bring up before the Committee entered Executive Session. Mr. Mitchell asked the Committee if they would like to change January's Committee meeting from January 3, 2006 to January 10, 2006 at 8:00 a.m. Mr. Mitchell stated that the Committee typically moves the meeting when it falls the day after a holiday. The Committee agreed.

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Chairman Bass asked if there were any other questions or comments. Hearing none, he called for a motion to enter into Executive Session.

Motion by Hoselton/Cavallini to enter into Executive Session to discuss the 2006 County Engineer MFT Appropriating Resolution with Mr. Zeunik to remain in the Executive Session. Motion carried.

The Committee returned to Open Session at 9:50 a.m.

Motion by O'Connor/Cavallini to recommend Approval of the Resolution Appropriating Motor Fuel Tax Funds and fixing the salary of the County Engineer and his travel, instruction and schooling, and conference expenses for FY 2006. Motion carried.

Chairman Bass reminded the Committee that the January Transportation Committee meeting would be held on Tuesday, January 10, 2005 at 8:00 a.m.

Chairman Bass asked if there were any further comments or questions. Hearing none, he adjourned the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Northcutt
Recording Secretary