

Minutes of the Transportation Committee

The Transportation Committee of the McLean County Board met on Tuesday, May 4, 2004 at 8:00 a.m., in Room 700 of the Law and Justice Center, 104 West Front Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

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

Members Absent: None

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

Department Heads Present: Mr. Jack Mitchell, County Engineer

Others Present: Ms. Christine Brauer, Regional Planning Commission; Ms. Jennifer Sicks, Regional Planning Commission; Mr. Barry Reeves, Professor John Chow, Heartland Community College, Professor Guo, NorthEast Technical University, China

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

Mr. Cavallini introduced Professor John Chow, Heartland Community College who will be observing throughout today's meeting. Mr. Chow introduced Professor Guo, NorthEast Technical University in China. Mr. Chow explained that Professor Guo is visiting the United States to learn about local government. The Committee welcomed them both to the meeting.

Chairman Bass presented the Minutes of the April 6, 2004 meeting for approval.

Motion by Owens/Cavallini to approve the Minutes of the April 6, 2004 meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

**Ms. O'Connor arrived at 8:05 a.m.

Chairman Bass presented the bills for approval.

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Mr. Jack Mitchell, County Engineer handed the bills to the Committee. Chairman Bass informed the Committee that there is a letter from Ms. Jackie Dozier, County Auditor, recommending payment of the bills.

Motion by Hoselton/Owens to recommend approval of the bills for April, 2004 as submitted by the County Auditor.

Chairman Bass asked if there were any questions regarding the bills. Mr. Dean asked Mr. Mitchell what kind of welding supply cost the County over \$4,600.00. Mr. Mitchell replied that he does not know off hand what that expense would be, but he would check on it and get back with Mr. Dean.

Mr. Owens asked what is the computer equipment purchase. Mr. Mitchell replied that the Highway Department included the purchase of five new computers in the 2004 Adopted Budget.

Mr. Dean asked Mr. Mitchell if there is a certified welder on staff at the Highway Department. Mr. Mitchell responded that the Highway Department is currently looking into the requirements in order to receive certification. There are not any certified welders on staff at this time.

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Chairman Bass asked if there were any additional questions. Hearing none, Chairman Bass called for a vote on the previous motion.

Motion carried.

Chairman Bass stated that there are no appearances by members of the public or County Employees.

Chairman Bass informed the Committee that the first item for action is a Revised Weight Limit Agreement between the County and Mr. Barry Reeves. Mr. Mitchell explained that this is to raise the weight limit on Towanda-Gridley Road to 80,000 lbs. from the Interstate 55 interchange to Mr. Reeves' lane. Mr. Mitchell informed the Committee that Mr. Reeves has reviewed and signed the Agreement and that the Highway Department recommends approval of this agreement. Mr. Cavallini asked what is the current weight limit on this road. Mr. Mitchell replied that it is currently 73,280 lbs.

Motion by Hoselton/Dean to recommend approval of Revised Weight Limit Agreement between McLean County and Mr. Barry Reeves. Motion carried.

Mr. Dean stated that he would like to see this roadwork moved up on the Highway Department's schedule. Mr. Mitchell replied that it will be included in the next bid letting.

Chairman Bass stated that the next item is letting results from April 28th for County Projects. Mr. Mitchell informed the Committee that the Highway Department took bids on two resurfacing projects. The first is for the resurfacing of Colfax-Weston Road. The resurfacing will take place from Route 165 at Colfax north approximately 4.5 miles. Rowe was the low bidder at \$713,368.52, which happens to be 20% below the estimate. The other bid came from H.J. Eppel at 11.6% under the estimate. The second project included in this letting is resurfacing of McLean Road, which starts at Route 136 and goes north and then west for approximately a mile until it intersects the Stanford-McLean Road. Rowe was, again, the low bidder at \$290,584.20, which is 5.3% over the estimate. Mr. Mitchell noted that when the projects are rather small, it is difficult to get the estimate extremely close. Mr. Mitchell advised the Committee that the Highway Department recommends the award of both of these bids to Rowe. Mr. Owens asked if because Rowe's bid is 5.3% over the estimate, isn't the Highway Department required to justify the extra cost. Mr. Mitchell responded that the Highway Department will have to justify that extra expense. Mr. Mitchell stated that the main difference is the incidental surface line item, which is where the contractors must bring in a paver to do the side roads and driveways.

Mr. Owens asked at how much over the estimate is the Highway Department required to justify a bid. Mr. Mitchell responded that any bid over 5% of the estimate must be justified.

Mr. Hoselton asked how the estimated cost is generated. He noted that there seems to be a large difference in some of the line items between the Highway Department's estimate and the actual bid. Mr. Hoselton asked if the contractors receive the estimated costs prior to the bid. Mr. Mitchell responded that the Committee decided several years ago not to reveal the estimates until after the bids were submitted. Mr. Hoselton commented that he fails to see how the estimates could be so far off. He asked Mr. Mitchell why he thinks there is such a discrepancy. Mr. Mitchell replied that the Highway Department reviews the costs from the previous year's work and the differential in hauling the asphalt. They also review the price of raw asphalt and the cost of the aggregates and labor, which both increase each year, and many other variables. The Highway Department has no way to predict the number of companies that will be bidding for the project, and that affects the bottom line. Mr. Hoselton stated that if the County's estimates are inaccurate, there needs to be work done to insure that they become more accurate.

Mr. Owens stated that there are two separate projects in this particular letting and he would suggest that the latter project be rebid. That may produce bids which are as much as 1% lower. Mr. Hoselton stated that he doesn't have a problem awarding the bid, because it is not likely to save the County any money to rebid this project.

Motion by Hoselton/Cavallini to recommend
approval of the bids as presented, from the April
28, 2004 bid letting for County Projects, as presented.
Motion carried.

Chairman Bass asked Mr. Mitchell to present the next item, Bridge Petition for Old Town Township for a Non-MFT Culvert. Mr. Mitchell stated that this is a joint culvert project with Old Town Township and McLean County. Mr. Mitchell stated that the project is located south of Tanglewood Subdivision. Mr. Mitchell informed the Committee that this is a road that the Township hopes to improve and realign. This project will construct one drainage structure with approach fills located on the East line of the southeast $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 29, T23N, R3E of the third principle meridian in Old Town Road District. Mr. Mitchell advised that the cost of the structure is \$309,000.00 with the cost divided between the Township (\$104,000.00) and the County (\$96,000.00) and the developer of Sherwood Lakes Subdivision, Mr. Larry Bielfeldt (\$109,000.00).

Motion by Owens/O'Connor to recommend approval of a Bridge Petition for Old Town Township, Non-MFT Culvert. Motion carried.

Chairman Bass stated that the next item is the reauthorization of a Surveying Agreement between the County and Lewis, Yockey & Brown. Mr. Mitchell informed the Committee that for the last several years, the County has entered into an agreement with Lewis, Yockey & Brown to provide various land surveying and platting services throughout the year. The agreement is before the Committee for renewal. Mr. Mitchell stated that this contractual agreement has worked well in the past. Whenever the Highway Department needs to have survey work done, such as a section corner to be found on a resurfacing project, the work is required to be done by a registered land surveyor. Lewis, Yockey & Brown complete the survey work for the County. Ms. O'Connor asked if this comes out of the Motor Fuel Tax Fund. Mr. Mitchell replied that it usually comes out of that fund. Mr. Owens asked if the rates have gone up as compared to last year's contract. Mr. Mitchell replied that there is an increase in the hourly rate that is paid to some of the employees who perform the contracted work. Mr. Owens asked if Mr. Mitchell would put the amount that the services increased on the new contract so that the Committee can compare to the prior year's figures. Mr. Mitchell stated that he would be happy to provide that information. Mr. Cavallini asked how often these services were utilized. Mr. Mitchell stated that the Highway Department is required to use the surveyors to find the section corners on all road resurfacing jobs. They also provide right of way plats to assist with right of way negotiations. Ms. O'Connor asked how much was spent with Lewis, Yockey & Brown last year. Mr. Mitchell replied that he does not know. Ms. O'Connor commented that she would like to see that information at the time of renewal next year. Mr. Mitchell responded that he would provide that information.

Mr. Hoselton asked Mr. Mitchell to explain the services that Lewis, Yockey & Brown is providing in a bit more detail. Mr. Mitchell responded that originally there were section corners at every mile within a Township. At a later date, quarter corners were placed. Mr. Mitchell explained that there was a law passed which requires the preservation all section corners. Therefore, anyone responsible for paving a road must hire a registered land surveyor to find all the section corners and tie the section corners back to the road to be surfaced or widened.

Motion by Dean/O'Connor to recommend approval Of Surveying Agreement between the County and Lewis, Yockey & Brown. Motion carried.

Chairman Bass stated that the last item on the agenda is the Bio-Diesel report. Mr. Mitchell stated that he felt obligated to report to the Committee on the pricing for Bio-Diesel fuel this year. Mr. Mitchell advised the Committee that there were no adverse affects, and no positive affects to report from using Bio-Diesel last year. Ms. O'Connor noted that she sees a 5% increase in the cost of Bio-Diesel. She asked how that impacts the Highway Department's budget. Mr. Mitchell replied that the increase is approximately 5% of the Highway's fuel budget. Mr. Hoselton stated that reflects today's price. There is always the possibility that the price will go up even higher. Mr. Hoselton stated that the Committee approved the move to Bio-Diesel to test how the County's equipment would run using it rather than pure diesel. Mr. Hoselton noted that, at that time, there was no additional cost to the County. Mr. Dean asked how much higher bio-diesel was last year as compared to pure diesel. Mr. Mitchell stated that it was \$.02 higher per gallon than pure diesel, but F.S. agreed to sell it to the County at the same price as pure diesel. Mr. Mitchell stated that this year, the cost is \$.03 higher per gallon and F.S. is not offering the County any discount. Mr. Mitchell stated that there is another vendor offering diesel fuel that is \$.08 cheaper than the cost of Bio-Diesel fuel.

Mr. Hoselton asked how the Highway Department makes the decision to purchase its gasoline. Mr. Mitchell responded that they call around to find the lowest price. Mr. Hoselton stated that he believes that is how the diesel fuel should be purchased as well. The Committee agreed.

Motion by Hoselton/Cavallini to accept the lowest bid when purchasing fuel for the Highway Department's Vehicles. Motion carried.

Chairman Bass stated that there are a couple of information items. He asked if Mr. Mitchell would give the Committee a brief summary. Mr. Mitchell stated that work has resumed on Randolph Road. This is primarily ditch and shoulder work.

Chairman Bass informed the Committee that the next item is the budget report. Mr. Mitchell stated that there is nothing significant to report, but noted that he would be happy to answer any questions that the Committee may have. Mr. Hoselton stated that it may reach the point that it would be more advantageous to hire a person on staff that is a registered land surveyor, rather than contracting with Lewis, Yockey & Brown. Mr. Hoselton asked if there is anyone on staff that is qualified to step into that position. Mr. Mitchell replied that the Highway Department does not have a registered land surveyor on staff. Mr. Mitchell stated that the requirements to become a registered land surveyor are fairly strict. You must have the proper education and then complete four years apprentice work with a registered land surveyor. Ms. O'Connor stated that it may

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be advantageous to have someone on staff. Mr. Mitchell replied that he would look into the matter and report to the Committee during the budget cycle.

Chairman Bass asked if there were any other questions. Mr. Owens asked about the possibility of the Highway Department hiring an Engineering Intern. Mr. Mitchell replied, each summer the Highway Department hires 7 – 10 individuals to help with maintenance work. Mr. Mitchell noted that the Department has never hired an Engineering Intern.

There being nothing further to come before the Committee at this time, Chairman Bass adjourned the meeting at 8:59 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Northcutt
Recording Secretary

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