

Minutes of the Transportation Committee

The Transportation Committee of the McLean County Board met on Tuesday, September 5, 2002 at 7:30 a.m. in Room 700, Law and Justice Center, 104 West Front Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

Members Present: Chairman Bass, Members Hoselton, Owens, Johnson, Emmett and Selzer

Members Absent: None

Staff Members Present: Mr. Terry Lindberg, Assistant County Administrator; Ms. Lucretia Wherry, Human Resources Assistant, County Administrator's Office

Department Heads/
Elected Officials Present: Mr. Jack Mitchell, County Engineer, County Highway Department

Others Present: Ms. Jennifer Sicks, Planner, Regional Planning Commission

Chairman Bass called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. and declared the presence of a quorum. Chairman Bass presented the minutes of the August 6, 2002 meeting for approval.

Motion by Owens/Selzer to approve and place on file the minutes of the August 6, 2002 meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

Chairman Bass presented the bills as prepared and recommended for transmittal to the Transportation Committee by the Auditor's Office.

Motion by Hoselton/Emmett to approve the bills as presented and recommended by the Auditor's Office. Motion carried.

Mr. Jack Mitchell, County Engineer, presented a proposed Signal Maintenance Agreements for the intersections on Towanda Barnes Road. Mr. Mitchell noted that the City of Bloomington proposed for maintenance and service of the traffic signals lower than the proposal received from Laesch Electric. Mr. Hoselton stated that the City of Bloomington proposal seems to contradict itself, stating that repairs will be done in 24 hours, but the City has thirty days to complete the work. Mr. Mitchell replied that the City will make repairs within 24 hours. However, if the City does not complete the repairs, the County has 30 days to lodge a complaint and bill the City for any repairs not completed.

Motion by Emmett/Selzer to recommend approval of a Signal Maintenance Agreement between the City of Bloomington and the County of McLean for the maintenance of the traffic signals at the intersections of Towanda Barnes Road and Ireland Grove Road; Towanda Barnes Road and General Electric Road; Towanda Barnes Road and Ft. Jesse Road. Motion carried.

Mr. Mitchell presented a Bicycle Permit for State Farm Employee Activities. The Bicycle Ride is the same as last year.

Motion by Selzer/Hoselton to recommend approval of the Bicycle Ride Permit for State Farm Employees Activities. Motion carried.

Mr. Mitchell presented a status report for on going road work. Towanda Barnes Road to Ireland Grove Road, section 97-00165-00 is more than fifty percent complete. The percentage of completion actually reflects the amount of money billed to and paid by the State of Illinois. The section is being surfaced. Once the surfacing is complete, the intersection and shoulder work can be finished. The last step is to do the striping. As long as the rain holds off, the section should be finished in a couple more weeks.

Mr. Hoselton asked what is the delay in the payments made by the Central Illinois Regional Airport. Mr. Mitchell replied that Mr. Sweeney has spoke to a member of the Central Illinois Regional Airport Board. The Board member stated that the payment needs to be made. The Airport is almost three months behind on payments.

Section 96-00168-00, Towanda Barnes Road from Ireland Grove Road to Route 9 is eighty-one percent complete. The section is open with a 55 mph speed limit. Section 98-00113-00-FP, Towanda Barnes Road from Route 9 to Fort Jesse Road is twenty-nine percent complete. It will not be finished prior to this winter, because it will be too late to put the binder on. However, five lanes should be open.

The Lexington/LeRoy project, section 99-00044-06-WR, Route 165 to Route 9 is being graveled. The rock is stock piled and the cold mixing is being done. The project required a lot of base work. Three out of four hills had to be rebuilt to improve the sight distance.

Mr. Hoselton noted that there was a nice letter to the editor regarding the work of the Highway Department on the Danvers project. Mr. Mitchell stated that the Department was able to comply with Danvers in order to make Danvers Days a success.

Mr. Mitchell presented a status report for the Rowe property. The Highway Department has asked Mr. Durbin if he would be willing to work on a cash rent basis rather than the custom farming basis he is working for Rowe. Mr. Durbin is considering this request. If a tentative agreement is reached, the agreement will be brought to the Oversight Committee for approval. Mr. Mitchell added that the Farnsworth Group completed an environmental inspection. No contaminants were found.

Mr. Mitchell advised that Committee that he requested that the Finance Committee allow the Highway Department to upgrade a Civil Engineer I position to a Civil Engineer II position. The Finance Committee recommended approval of the upgrade. However, the vote was split. Mr. Mitchell stated that he would appreciate the Transportation Committee's support on the upgrade when the upgrade is presented to the County Board. The upgrade would reward the incumbent for having the required four years experience, plus, completing the State licensing test. Engineers are currently in high demand.

Mr. Selzer said that he would support the upgrade. However, the County can not upgrade positions every time an employee might resign. Mr. Mitchell noted that this would not create a new position. If the upgrade were approved, the Highway Department would have two positions of Civil Engineer II. Currently, there is one Civil Engineer I and one Civil Engineer II.

Ms. Jennifer Sicks, Planner, Regional Planning Commission, updated the Committee on the Eastside Corridor bypass. All the agencies are in agreement except for the City of Bloomington, which has taken the project under advisement. The City of Bloomington is concerned with the location of the bypass. Mr. Mitchell stated that the consultant looked at multiple alternatives. The only alternative that would qualify McLean County for federal funding is alternative C. The others do not meet the requirements for federal funding. Alternative D serves the function but does not qualify and alternative E would not provide any relief on Veteran's Parkway. Ms. Sicks added that the other alternative would cause environmental problems due to location in wet lands.

Mr. Selzer asked what advantages alternative C offers. Mr. Mitchell replied that alternative C would have a series of interchanges running from Ireland Grove Road to

Fort Jesse Road. If the City of Bloomington does not agree to alternative C, the County would have to wait for six years until the next Highway Bill rolls around. Unless everyone agrees, federal funding would not be given. Chairman Bass admitted that he had some initial concerns about the bypass. However, after reviewing all the options, Chairman Bass agrees that alternative C is the best option.

Mr. Hoselton asked what is the status of the Lexington, Towanda and Shirley overpasses. Mr. Mitchell replied that there is currently no movement. Mr. Hoselton suggested that the Committee send a letter to IDOT explaining the situation and the County's expectations prior to taking over responsibility for the overpasses. Mr. Mitchell stated that he would work with Chairman Bass on drafting a letter.

Mr. Selzer asked how many Illinois First dollars the County received. Mr. Mitchell replied that the County received \$1.4 million.

Chairman Bass suggested that the Highway Department host a grand opening for the South part of Towanda Barnes Road. The Department could invite the Senators and the Governor. The Grand Opening of the Highway Department building was well received. Doing this again would give the Department a chance to voice concerns. Mr. Mitchell replied a grand opening for the south part of Towanda Barnes would be good timing. It is about 6 weeks from being completed.

There being nothing further to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Bass at 8:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lucretia A. Wherry
Recording Secretary