

## Minutes of the Transportation Committee Meeting

The Transportation Committee of the McLean County Board met on Tuesday, January 2, 2001 at 7:30 a.m. in Room 700, Law and Justice Center, 104 West Front Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

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

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Mr. John M. Zeunik, County Administrator; Ms. Lucretia A. Wood, Human Resources Assistant, County Administrator's Office

Department Heads/  
Elected Officials

Present: Mr. Jack Mitchell, County Engineer, County Highway Department

Chairman Bass called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. and declared that a quorum was present. Chairman Bass asked that if members of the Committee were going to miss a meeting that the members call ahead of time in order to make sure that there is a quorum. Chairman Bass reminded new members to feel free to ask questions.

Chairman Bass presented the minutes of the December 5, 2000 meeting for approval.

Motion by Hoselton/Emmett to accept and place on file the minutes of the Transportation Committee meeting from December 5, 2000 for approval.  
Motion carried.

Chairman Bass presented the bills, which have been reviewed and recommended for transmittal to the Transportation Committee by the County Auditor.

In reviewing the listing of bills, Mr. Hoselton stated that the bills are prepaid, the report is run at the beginning of each month for the previous month. Mr. Mitchell noted that the summary of bills lists four (4) local Highway funds, three of the funds are property tax supported and the fourth fund is the Motor Fuel Tax fund. Township motor fuel tax bills are not on the report, the township motor fuel tax bills are sent to the Auditor's Office for payment.

Mr. Hoselton asked if the account number on the Motor Fuel Tax bill is the same for all townships. Mr. Mitchell replied that the account number is the same.

Motion by Selzer/Johnson to recommend payment of the bills as recommended and presented by the County Auditor. Motion carried.

Mr. Mitchell reviewed the letting results of the December 28, 2000 bids for stockpiling chips. The stockpiling is for the chips needed in the summer. The stockpiling is done in winter when prices are lower.

Mr. Mitchell explained that not all townships stockpile chips due to the distance of the township to the gravel pits. However, if there is stockpiling, the township is assured that it will not have a shortage for the coming summer. There has not been a recent shortage, but shortages have happened in the past.

Mr. Mitchell noted that McLean County stockpiles chips at 5 sites for County roads. There are some areas in the County that are not stockpiled because the chips will come straight from the gravel pits.

Mr. Mitchell explained that the first step in the bid process is for the County to prepare an estimate of the costs of the work. The companies then bid on the proposal if the company is interested.

Mr. Hoselton asked if the companies provide Certificates of Insurance before the bids are awarded. Mr. Mitchell replied that the companies are required to supply a Certificate of Insurance naming McLean County as an additional insurer.

Mr. Owens asked what is the difference between a cover coat and a seal coat. Mr. Mitchell replied that the cover coat aggregate is a CA-14, 5/8<sup>th</sup>-inch chip. The seal chip aggregate is a CA-15, 1/2 inch chip or a CA-16, 3/8<sup>th</sup>-inch chip. Primarily, the 3/8<sup>th</sup>-inch chip is bid for the seal chip because there is a limited supply of the 1/2 inch chips.

Mr. Mitchell noted that the stockpile chip bids for McLean County, 01-00000-00-GM GR 14; Allin Rd., 01-010000-00-GM GR 14; and Anchor Rd., 01-02000-00-GM GR 14, are recommended to be awarded to Carrie Scharf.

Mr. Mitchell noted that the stockpile chip bids for Arrowsmith Rd., 01-03000-00-GM GR14 and 01-03000-00-GM GR 15 are recommended to be awarded to Indian Creek Materials. Mr. Mitchell noted that JMH is the recommended bid for Cheney's Grove Rd., 01-08000-00-GM GR 14.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the bid letting for Dawson Rd. would have to be re-done. The bids exceeded 110% of the estimated costs of the project. The estimate on the project was low. Mr. Owens asked if the companies will need to re-bid after the second estimation is complete. Mr. Mitchell replied that the companies would not have to redo the bids, but the companies would have to re-submit their bids.

Mr. Mitchell explained that the bid process includes a public notification process. The proposals are advertised twice in the State Local Roads Bulletin. The advertisement will be faxed to the State Bulletin for publication in the January 18, 2001 and January 25, 2001. The letting is also posted in the Pantagraph.

Mr. Hoselton asked if the proposals needed to be published in the official State newspaper. Mr. Mitchell stated that all Capitol Development Board work goes through the State Newspaper. All Motor Fuel Tax work goes through the State Local Roads Bulletin. State and Federal project lettings are done in Springfield every six weeks and are posted in the State Newspaper.

Chairman Bass noted that the bid for Gridley Rd, 01-18000-00-GM GR 14 and Gridley Rd, 01-18000-00-GM GR 15 is recommended to be awarded to the Towanda Company.

Chairman Bass noted that the bid for Hudson Rd, 01-19000-00-GM GR 14 is recommended to be awarded to Carrie Scharf. The bid for Martin Rd. is recommended to be awarded to Indian Creek. Carrie Scharf is recommended to be awarded the bids for Money Creek Rd. 01-23000-00-GM GR14; Normal Rd, 01-25000-00-GM GR 14; and West Rd, 01-29000-00-GM GR 14.

Mr. Emmett asked why the bids for Carrie Scharf are so much lower than the other companies. Mr. Mitchell replied that Carrie Scharf has its own gravel pit.

Motion by Emmett/Owens to recommend approval of a Resolution for a Bid Letting held on December 28, 2000, for McLean County and ten (10) Road Districts 2001 Motor Fuel Tax Maintenance Sections. Motion carried.

Chairman Bass presented a Joint Agreement between the State of Illinois and McLean County, Illinois regarding Illinois Route 9 and the Lexington-LeRoy Road Intersection. Mr. Mitchell stated that the County is going to improve the Lexington-LeRoy Road from Route 9 to Highway 165. Four miles of the Lexington-Leroy Road are oil and chips. Improvements will be done this year once all the right-of-way is acquired. The two box culverts on Route 9, which have already been extended once, are in bad shape. The County needs to extend the culverts at the intersection for the new truck radius. The State has inspected the culverts and will redo the culverts as part of the County's project.

Mr. Hoselton noted that the Agreement states that the State will pay \$85,000 and 15% of the engineering. Mr. Hoselton asked what would happen if the costs exceed the amounts in the Agreement. Mr. Mitchell replied that the County estimated the costs of the project at \$79,000.00. The State's estimate is \$75,000.00. Mr. Mitchell explained that the Highway Department is comfortable with the Agreement because the estimate includes the extension work. If the State did not do the project, the County would have to pay for the extension work. Chairman Bass asked if the State is firm on the Agreement. Mr. Mitchell replied that the State

has already increased the amount of funding for the project from \$75,000.00 to \$85,000.00. The Highway Department should be able to complete the project within the terms of the Agreement.

Mr. Mitchell explained that the Lexington–LeRoy Road project is necessary because the intersection is frequently underwater during heavy rains. If the State did not participate and rebuild the culverts now, the County would have to build another extension and the State would eventually have to rebuild the culverts anyway.

Chairman Bass asked what is the timeframe for the project. Mr. Mitchell replied that the project is scheduled for summer if all of the right-of-ways are secured. The County will do all of the dirt work, grading and install the culverts other than the ones on Route 9. Mr. Hoselton asked if a bid could be prepared for a contractor to do all of the work in order to compare the costs for the County to do the work. Mr. Mitchell replied that an alternate bid could be prepared. However, on most jobs, if the County has the manpower available for the project it is less costly to do the work than to contract out the work. When comparisons have been done in the past, the County has always been less costly. Chairman Bass stated that if the County contracted out all the work, we wouldn't need a Highway Department. These projects are done during times of the year when the Highway Department is not busy. Mr. Hoselton stated that the Highway Department averages 1.8 people absent each week. There is three years to do this project. Mr. Hoselton asked if this project is done this year, will the Lexington-LeRoy project supercede other projects that the County needs to do. Mr. Mitchell replied that the Lexington–LeRoy project would be done this summer. The project was scheduled last year, but not started because the engineering was not completed.

Mr. Hoselton stated that he feels that it is good business to compare costs. Mr. Mitchell stated that an alternative bid could be obtained. The Highway Department does one project itself once a year. The Department has the equipment and the manpower to complete one project during the summer. In the past, the County doing the work has saved money. Mr. Selzer stated that if the bids are equal, the County should do the work itself, but there is nothing wrong with getting other bids. Mr. Hoselton stated that he doesn't know if McLean County is a contractor or a maintenance contractor. This is a decision that needs to be made. In the last four years, \$1.4 million of equipment has been purchased. The Committee needs to know if it is more economical for the County to do the work or to contract the work out before more money is spent. Mr. Hoselton stated that there are many places in the County that need roadwork. If a contractor does the entire Lexington-LeRoy project, the Highway Department can work on other projects. Mr. Mitchell stated that other projects have been bid out in their entirety, because the County did not have the proper equipment to complete the project. In regards to the Lexington-LeRoy Road, this is not the case. However, if the Committee wants to make a change, the Highway Department will comply. Mr. Emmett noted that the Highway employees would still need to be paid in addition to the contractor. There are no savings unless employees are laid off, which the County would not do. Chairman Bass stated that the County has the manpower and

the funds to do the project itself. Mr. Selzer stated that he agrees with Chairman Bass, but it would be nice to have an alternate bid for comparison.

Motion by Hoselton/Selzer to request an alternate bid on the time and costs of the County's portion of the Lexington/LeRoy Road project.

Mr. Mitchell stated that he had envisioned completing the project in three parts. He would like to take a bid for the hot mix on the widening of the road, a bid for the gravel needed, and a bid for the dirt work and grating. A working day contract is set up with contractors to allow for flexibility so that no one is penalized as long as the project is moving along.

Chairman Bass asked what would be the impact of hiring an outside contractor on the Highway Department's budget. Mr. Mitchell stated that the costs of the contractor would impact other projects. Mr. Emmett asked if doing a bid letting for the project would change the timeframe for the project. Mr. Mitchell stated that it would take some extra time, but would not effect the start time. Securing the right-of-way will ultimately set the timeline.

Mr. Emmett asked if the motion includes recommending the Agreement between McLean County and the State. Mr. Selzer replied that there needs to be a separate motion for the Agreement.

Mr. Owens asked if the totals in the Agreement would be used as an estimate for the bid letting. Mr. Mitchell replied that the Agreement uses approximations that the State uses based on program numbers. A fuel estimate can not be done until the engineer's plans are completed.

Mr. Owens asked if the State covers the costs for the removal of the old box culverts. Mr. Mitchell replied that the costs of the removal and replacements of the box culverts would be covered by the State.

Mr. Selzer stated, instead of doing a bid letting, the Highway Department could ask the companies for estimations. Mr. Mitchell stated that it is a lot of work for the companies to develop estimates if the company is not being considered for the work. Mr. Selzer stated that companies would do it in order to prove that they are cheaper. Mr. Emmett stated that if an estimational bid is all that is wanted, then the Agreement should be voted on first. Estimated costs for the project can be looked at after the fact. Mr. Hoselton stated that he still feels that the savings should be looked at. Chairman Bass stated that he feels that a contractor would be an additional cost and Highway manpower would not be needed.

Mr. Mitchell stated that a base bid could be done for the culvert work. An alternate bid can be prepared for the remaining work. Because this is Motor Fuel Tax money, we can not ask for quotes without intending to contract the work out.

Motion by Selzer/Emmett to recommend approval of a Joint Agreement between the State of Illinois and McLean County, Illinois regarding Illinois Route 9 and Lexington-LeRoy Road Intersection. Motion carried.

Mr. Selzer suggested that the Highway Department take time and put together a comparison of comparable jobs. The Committee members concurred with the suggestion and directed Mr. Mitchell to prepare a comparison of the costs for comparable jobs.

Mr. Mitchell noted that the McLean County Highway Department is in charge of 377 miles of County Highway. This is second only to Cook County in Illinois. McLean County is the largest county in Illinois with 1,186 square miles, which is approximately the size of the State of Rhode Island.

In addition to the County roads, the Highway Department helps the 30 townships with their 1,539 miles of roads, when requested. We also administer the Township Motor Fuel Tax and Township Bridge Program Funds. The County interchanges the words "road district" and "township". These are actually two separate entities. The township is the congressional six square mile township, which has a Township Board of Trustees and a Township Supervisor. The road district has an elected Road Commissioner, who is in charge of the township roads. By law, the Highway Department approves their purchases over \$5,000.00, approves the engineering for their projects, do the engineering for the Motor Fuel Tax projects. Road District bridges are funded jointly between the Road District, the County, the Township, the State and the Federal Government. The Highway Department works closely with the Road Commissioner, but does not oversee all their work.

Mr. Mitchell stated that besides these roads, McLean County has 89 bridges and the townships have 247 bridges over 20 feet in length that we inspect bi-annually and supervise the design and replacement of when necessary.

Funding for the County Highway Department comes from three (3) local property tax levies (County Highway, Bridge Matching, and County Matching), and the County Motor Fuel Tax. The Federal Bridge and STP funds average approximately \$5,550,000 per year. The township funds that we administer average about \$2,000,000 per year.

The Highway Department also reviews subdivision plans for conformity to the County's subdivision regulations and works with the Building and Zoning Department on subdivision matters.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the Highway Department works closely with many County agencies. The Highway Department is involved in developing the GIS project with Regional Planning.

The Highway Department sells stockpiled supplies, such as signs and salt to the townships and municipalities. Mr. Emmett asked if the supplies were sold at cost. Mr. Mitchell replied that the supplies are sold at cost plus a 5% handling fee for storage, stocking and delivery.

Mr. Mitchell reviewed the County maps with the Committee. He indicated that improvements are made on the oil and chip roads approximately every 5 years. These roads have a lot of traffic and are fairly narrow. The hot mix roads are laid with a paver. The hot mix is made at a plant. These roads carry a high volume of traffic and are wider.

Mr. Mitchell reviewed the map of the Department's five-year capital improvement plan.

Mr. Mitchell stated that for this year, the Highway Department is over budget on overtime, repairs, and fuel. To date, the Department is under budget on salt. The Department has not been able to salt the roads during the high winds. Since December 11, 2000, the Highway Department has plowed everyday except three. The employees start plowing around 4 a.m. prior to the school bus and commuters being on the road. On some days, the employees have been out into the evening. The Department has not had to run double crews, but due to the heavy traffic on many County roads, double crews may be necessary in the future.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the hot mix roads that have traffic of over 500 cars a day are salted. Some of the seal coat roads are salted if they have high volume traffic. The Highway Department's 14 trucks and 4 Road Graders are used to plow the roads.

Chairman Bass noted that the extended time that the employees are out in the weather, plowing the roads could be dangerous. Blowing snow and fatigue are problematic. Mr. Mitchell stated that during whiteout situations, the drivers are called in. The drivers are called in as early as possible without endangering the public.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the reversible plows have help cut some of the visibility problems.

Mr. Selzer suggested that the Committee send a thank you note to the Highway Department employees for their efforts during the bad weather.

Mr. Owens asked what is the number of staff at the Highway Department. Mr. Mitchell replied that there are 34 employees. The maintenance crew has 19 maintenance men, a fleet manager, a mechanic, and a maintenance foreman and sign foreman. If the Department is short on the maintenance crew, the managers or technicians help out.

Chairman Bass asked for an update on the Towanda-Barnes Road. Mr. Mitchell stated that the project is broken into 3 pieces. The first piece is Route 150 to Ireland Grove Road, which is 2  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles. The second piece from Ireland Grove Road to Route 9 is 2 miles and the third piece is

Route 9 to Fort Jesse Road. This piece is 2 miles in length. The two pieces from Route 150 to Route 9 are going to be part of the next State letting in the Spring. The project was initially held up because the project report from the State was not approved. Right-of-way acquisition could not be started until the State approved the project report. Once it was approved, the properties were appraised and negotiations began. There have been two setbacks in acquiring the right-of-way. One property owner signed a contract for the right-of-way and then sold the property. Another property was in a trust and a warranty deed was prepared instead of a trust deed. The trust deed has been completed and sent to the beneficiary of the trust for signature. Unfortunately, the beneficiary passed away. Assistant State's Attorney, Brian Hug, is working on this problem with the family of the beneficiary. The State has requested several changes in the paperwork, which have also caused delays.

Mr. Mitchell explained that the project will improve Towanda-Barnes Road to 4 lanes with a center flush median turn lane. The road will have traffic signals at Ireland Grove Road, GE Road and Fort Jesse Road.

Mr. Mitchell explained that the issue regarding the railroad has been worked out with the State. A separate easement agreement is not needed with the railroad.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the Towanda-Barnes Road is a high priority project. The County has received \$5.82 million dollars from the last Federal Highway Grant and a \$1.4 million grant from the State. The rest of the project is jointly funded by the County and the Airport Authority. Chairman Bass stated that the original letting was scheduled last year.

Mr. Mitchell explained that the Department wants to bid out the first two pieces of the project together in order to receive a better bid. This project is planned to take more than one construction season.

Mr. Hoselton stated that the first part of the State's contract for the Lexington/LeRoy project states that payment is made in a lump sum amount. He asked if the interest earned in the Highway Department is deposited in the Highway funds. Mr. Zeunik replied that the interest earned is credited to the Highway funds. Mr. Mitchell stated that 90% is paid up front.

Mr. Mitchell invited the Committee members to visit the Highway Department.

Chairman Bass stated that from time to time, the Committee does take field trips to visit sites of future work projects.

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There being nothing further to come before the Committee at this time, Chairman Bass adjourned the meeting at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lucretia A. Wood  
Recording Secretary