

Minutes of the Transportation Committee

The Transportation Committee of the McLean County Board met on Tuesday, February 3, 2014 at 8:00 a.m. in Room 400, Government Center, 115 East Washington Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

Members Present: Chairman Soeldner, Member Harris, Metsker, Buchanan, Martin and Finch

Members Absent: None

Other Members Present: None

Staff Members Present: Mr. Bill Wasson, County Administrator, Ms. Hannah Eisner, Assistant County Administrator, Mr. Don Knapp, First Assistant State's Attorney Civil, Ms. Diana Hospelhorn, Recording Secretary

Department Heads Present: Mr. Eric Schmitt, County Engineer

Others Present: Mr. Jerry Stokes, Assistant County Engineer

Chairman Soeldner called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. He stated that the first item for action is approval of the minutes from the January 6, 2015 Transportation Committee Meeting.

Motion by Metsker/Harris to recommend approval of the minutes from the January 6, 2015 Transportation Committee Meeting.
Motion carried

Chairman Soeldner asked the Committee to review the bills and transfers for January 31, 2015. The prepaid total is \$641,835.62.

Motion by Robustelli/Buchanan to recommend
Payment of the January 31, 2015 bills and
transfers as submitted by the County Auditor.
Motion carried.

Chairman Soeldner presented Mr. Jerry Payonk, Clark Dietz for an update on the East Side Highway.

Mr. Payonk presented some background information for new members of the Transportation Committee. He stated that in 1994 the long range transportation plan was to either widen the Towanda Barnes Road or look at another road east of Towanda Barnes Road to accommodate the increased traffic from expected growth. The plan continued with a Feasibility Study done in 1999. That was followed by a Corridor Study done in 2006. A Corridor Study was done to establish a location. Environmental Assessment was started in 2010 and is almost complete. At the completion of the Environmental Assessment we will have the centerline of an East Side Highway identified.

Mr. Payonk advised that this does not mean that the road will be built. It only means that if the growth continues to occur, we will know the best location for it. If we wait until the growth occurs to make the determination, there will be significantly more impacts than there are now.

Mr. Payonk stated that the purpose of the East Side Highway is to improve local and regional mobility and access that accommodates growth forecasted on the east side. The need is based on the inability of the current transportation system to accommodate projected traffic volumes and provide access for future growth on the east side. He pointed out the preferred alternative beginning at Interstate 74, west of Downs with an interchange at Route 150, Cheney's Grove, Ireland Grove Road, Empire Street, GE Road, Ft Jesse, Towanda Barnes and one connecting to Interstate 55.

Mr. Payonk advised that the East Side Highway will be a freeway interstate type facility with 2 lanes in each direction separated by a 55 foot grass median. There will also be a bicycle trail the entire length of the freeway.

Mr. Payonk presented a map comparing the corporate limits of Bloomington Normal in 1970 through 2010. Since 1990 McLean County has seen an increase in population of over 30,000. In 2010 the Census Bureau identified Normal as the fastest growing community in the State with a population over 50,000 and Bloomington as the fourth fastest growing community. McLean County is the second fastest growing county in the State. Another indication of growth is unemployment. Unemployment for Bloomington-Normal is 5.2%, the lowest in the State. He pointed out the corporate limits of Bloomington-Normal as forecasted by McLean County Regional Planning, 2 ½ times larger than in 1970. This boundary is the basis for an East Side Highway if growth continues to occur.

Mr. Payonk stated that Clark Dietz is currently finishing up the Environmental Assessment Document. Once completed, it will be available to the public. A Public Hearing will be held in June – July 2015 to make the Environmental Assessment Document available to the public as required by the National Environmental Policy Act. He asked if the Committee had any questions.

Chairman Soeldner asked if there would be any impact on the arterial roads along the corridor. Mr. Payonk responded that there are interchanges at each. There will be no impact on the roads.

Mr. Robustelli stated that when public feedback was solicited at one of the public hearings, why was “no build” not given as an option? Mr. Payonk responded that “no build” does not meet the purpose of the study. He added that many “no build” responses were received in the comments.

Mr. Robustelli asked with this current alternative, how many acres of farm land are being taken. Mr. Payonk reported that the current alternative uses 3,000-3,300 acres of farm land. Some options were eliminated for taking much more farm land.

Ms. Harris stated that she submitted a form asking for a bicycle path. She is glad to see a bicycle path has been added.

Ms. Metsker asked if the public hearing promotes developers to purchase land along the corridor in anticipation of an East Side Highway; in turn encouraging growth outward verses redeveloping the areas within Bloomington-Normal. Mr. Payonk responded that you will always have the situation “If you build it, they will come.”

Ms. Harris asked if the type of work the Highway Department is doing on Towanda-Barnes would be necessary once an East Side Highway is built. Mr. Schmitt advised that if an East Side Highway is built, it will significantly reduce the traffic on Towanda-Barnes.

Mr. Finch asked if the 2035 land use plan is projected based upon what we anticipate occurring or was it developed with some sense of vision of the municipalities and other

land use planning entities. Mr. Payonk responded that Regional Planning looked at population growth and the trend that is occurring.

Mr. Finch stated that the bulk of the projected use appears to be residential traffic. Mr. Payonk stated that trips to and from major employment centers were looked at and a travel-demand model was developed.

Mr. Buchanan stated that it is his experience that precise projections are complex.

Mr. Payonk reported that growth forecasts are constantly being adjusted.

Chairman Soeldner thanked Mr. Payonk.

Chairman Soeldner stated that the first item for action is the Resolution and Bid Tab for the January 27, 2015 Letting for 2015 Equipment Purchase.

Mr. Schmitt stated that the Department recommends approval of the following:

- 3 – 2015 Henderson 14' Mark-E 201 Stainless Steel Dump Bodies & Hoists for \$83,928.00 from:
Koenig Body & Equipment
2428 Farmington Road
Peoria, IL 61604

Mr. Schmitt reported that Koenig Body and Equipment was the lowest bid meeting all of the specifications. The three dump bodies and hoists will be used on the tandems approved in January for hauling materials for maintenance and construction work during the summer and to plow snow during the winter. The stainless steel dump bodies significantly reduce maintenance costs.

Mr. Schmitt advised that the low bid on the Central Hydraulic Systems and Hydraulic Wing Plows was withdrawn immediately after all bids were read. The bid proposal as submitted did not include the cost of the entire package. He added that the second bid was over \$10,000 per package above our budgeted numbers. The Department made some modifications to the specifications this year and recommends returning to the bid specifications used last year. He recommended rejection and rebid of the Central Hydraulic Systems and Hydraulic Wing Plows.

Motion by Robustelli/Harris to recommend approval of is the Resolution and Bid Tab for the January 27, 2015 Letting for 2015 Equipment Purchase.
Motion carried.

Chairman Soeldner presented the Update of the McLean County Ordinance Establishing Special Permit Fees – Overweight, Over Height, and Over Length Permits (1) Proposed Ordinance Effective April 15, 5015.

Mr. Schmitt referred to the existing Ordinance enclosed in the packet. He stated that the existing ordinance and fee schedule was adopted in January, 1995 and fees have not been updated since that time. The proposed fee increases are:

- Single Trip Permits \$5.00
- One Day Permits \$10.00
- Limited Continuous Operation Permits \$50.00

Mr. Schmitt advised that the permit fees are collected to cover the administrative costs incurred by the Highway Department to oversee the program.

Ms. Harris asked if the funds generated by the permit fees go into the General Fund. Mr. Schmitt responded that the permit fees go to the Highway Fund.

Ms. Metsker asked if by allowing overweight, length and width, we see increased deterioration of the roads and bridges. Mr. Schmitt advised that bridges are actually checked to assure there is not an overload on the structure. He added that travel frequency causes deterioration on roads and bridges more than weight. The Department has a very strong spring weight limit enforcement to protect county roads.

Mr. Robustelli believes that the fee structure should take into account the amount of damage overloads cause to roads and the costs of inspection. Mr. Schmitt responded that the damage comes more with axel loads. Spreading out over more axels distributes the load. He noted that permit language states that the applicant is responsible for any damage done to the roads. Mr. Schmitt stated that the Department is required by law to issue these permits.

Mr. Robustelli asked if this fee structure actually covers all of the administrative costs. Mr. Schmitt stated that the fees do cover administrative costs.

Chairman Soeldner stated that some overweight permits are denied. Mr. Schmitt stated that during the spring posting the County's weight limits are posted 20,000 lbs. The Department works with the Sheriff to enforce the posted weight limits.

Mr. Robustelli stated that he does not believe the highest fee covers the time spent processing the paperwork and field inspection. He believes these fees should reflect the actual costs. Mr. Schmitt responded that typically 95% of the permits require very little time. Permits rarely require field work. If the permit requires that traffic be stopped, the applicant is billed for time spent.

Motion by Buchanan/Harris to recommend
approval of the Ordinance Establishing
Special Permit Fees.
Motion Carried

Chairman Soeldner presented the 2015 Allin Road District Joint Culvert #1 – Bridge Construction Petition.

Mr. Schmitt stated that the two existing 18" corrugated metal pipes and one 30" corrugated metal pipe located on 150 E Road will be replaced with twin 54" precast arch corrugated metal pipes. He advised that the estimated cost of the projects is \$35,000. The County's share will be \$17,500. Allin Road District is taxing above 0.125% in Road and Bridge Fund and the project is more than 0.02% of the EAV of the road district qualifying them for joint participation. Mr. Schmitt added that the culvert project should take an estimated 5 days to complete.

Mr. Robustelli asked if the Department is aware of the Township's fund balance. If there was a fund balance to cover more than their share of the costs, would they be required to inform the County? Mr. Schmitt responded that by statute, when a Township petitions the County Board, the first obligation of the County Bridge Fund is to fund the project. If they qualify, statute says the project is funded 50% Township and 50% County.

Motion by Finch/Martin to recommend
Approval of the 2015 Allin Road District Joint
Culvert #1 – Bridge Construction Petition.
Motion carried.

Chairman Soeldner continued with the Route 66 Bike Trail – Sec 14-00001-04-BT, 1.14 Miles South of Shirley to Quinn St, Shirley – Engineering Agreement – Hanson Professionals Services, Inc.

Mr. Schmitt stated that in April, 2014 the County received notification that we would receive Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) funding for Phase II of the Historic Route 66 Bike Trail, from Shirley to 1.14 miles south of Shirley. He advised that the County received \$420,000 for the engineering and construction of Phase II of the trail. The engineering cost is \$72,181.75 and will be funded:

- 80% Federal Funding – ITEP
- 20% Local Match

Mr. Schmitt reported that the 20% local match of \$14,436.35 will be shared by the parties in accordance with the Intergovernmental Agreement for the Route 66 Bikeway Development and Maintenance from November 1999. The County's 24.9% share will be \$3,594.65. Funds for the County's portion of the project have been included in the County Parks and Recreation Department's budget. The project will be done the summer of 2016.

Ms. Harris noted that with all the press the bike trail has received, is there any way possible to generate funding through community support? Mr. Wasson responded that the communities do participate through the Intergovernmental Agreement. Friends of the Constitution Trail solicit funding from community members for additional amenities for the trail. He added that the trail project is restricted by obtaining highway matching grant funds that support 80% of the project. Construction of the Bike Trail is anticipated to be built in phases as funds are available.

Motion by Robustelli/Harris to recommend approval of the Route 66 Bike Trail – Sec 14-00001-04-BT, 1.14 Miles South of Shirley to Quinn St, Shirley – Engineering Agreement –Hanson Professionals Services, Inc. Motion carried.

Chairman Soeldner continued with the Engineering Services Agreement – Chastain & Associates LLC – Randolph RD – Donovan Culvert – Sec 15-27145-00-BR.

Mr. Schmitt reported that the current structure located in Randolph Township approximately 1925 feet north of 300 North Road on 1700 East Road is very narrow and is a safety issue. The box culvert will be replaced with a wider culvert. The project is a joint bridge project to be built in late 2015 or early 2016. He advised that the cost of engineering services is \$37,262. Funded by:

- 50% McLean County
- 50% Randolph Road District

Mr. Buchanan asked if Randolph Road District is a component of Randolph Township. Mr. Schmitt responded that Randolph Road District is controlled by the Randolph Road Commissioner. Chairman Soeldner added that the Road District files its own levy independent from the Township.

Motion by Buchanan/Harris to recommend approval of the Engineering Services Agreement – Chastain & Associates LLC – Randolph RD – Donovan Culvert – Sec 15-27145-00-BR. Motion carried.

Chairman Soeldner continued with items for information, project summaries.

Mr. Schmitt reported that the Yuton Road Extension Resurfacing project is complete. Final paperwork is done. The project came in 96.74% of the bid.

Mr. Schmitt advised that the CH 36 Holder Bridge project is complete. The project was 2.71% over the bid. There were problems with the road base. Excess dirt needed to be hauled away and more right-of-way was purchased.

Chairman Soeldner continued with the Stormwater Education Program – 2014, 4th Quarter Report.

Mr. Schmitt presented the Ecology Action Center Stormwater Education and Public Participation Program Report for the 4th Quarter October 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014 and the Stormwater Education Program, Annual Report for 2014. He advised that the

Ecology Action Center has completed the following tasks as part of the Stormwater Education and Public Participation program:

- Education Programs
- Informational Events and Presentations
- Yard Smart Program
- Other Efforts – Storm drain stenciling, Watershed website, Bloomington/Normal Clean Up Week, Stormwater Runoff Awareness, Fund raising for Household Hazardous Waste Collection.

Mr. Schmitt noted that the Ecology Action Center completes the education components of the County's MS4 Permit. He presented pictures of storm drain stenciling done by volunteers for the Ecology Action Center.

Chairman Soeldner recessed the Committee meeting for a 4 minute break at 9:15 a.m.

Chairman Soeldner reconvened the Committee meeting at 9:23 a.m.

Mr. Schmitt presented Motor Fuel Tax – MFT in Illinois and its Impact on Mclean County Roads. He started with the history of MFT in Illinois pointing out how the user fee started. Motor fuel tax is based on per gallon of fuel not the price. In 1929 the fee was \$.03 per gallon and the split was 65% locals and 35% State. The fee continued to increase to \$.075 per gallon in 1969, 40 years later, with the split remaining the same.

Mr. Schmitt stated that in 1982 under federal legislation, trucks were allowed to weigh 80,000 lbs. on the Interstate System. In 1983 Illinois passed legislation allowing trucks to weigh 80,000 lbs. on most of the state routes. Between 1983 and 1985 MFT increased from \$.11 per gallon to \$.13 per gallon, however redistribution changed the split to 30% locals and 70% State along with a \$.025 per gallon of Diesel Differential Tax which goes to the State only. He reported that MFT increased again in 1989 to \$.16 per gallon and in 1990 to \$.19 per gallon which is the current rate. 75% of the new revenue went to the State and 25% of the new revenue went to locals. The split became 41.6% Locals and 58.4% State. Mr. Schmitt advised that at this time administrative programs were implemented to help offset the gap between the State and locals.

Mr. Schmitt reported that Illinois First was passed in 1999 and that changed the distribution again. There was no MFT increase but Motor Vehicle Registration (MVR) fees were increased. Additional revenue was generated; however the municipalities and counties did not receive any MVR fees directly. He stated that the County's share of MFT is based on the County's MVR fees compared to MVR for the rest of the counties in the State. The redistribution changed the split to 54.4% locals and 45.6% State. The administrative programs were continued. The County also receives \$396,000 as a one-time payment from the County Consolidated Program. Mr. Schmitt added that no increase has occurred in Illinois Motor Fuel Tax since 1990.

Mr. Schmitt continued with McLean County's Monthly MFT Allotments ranging from \$230,887 in 2002 to \$186,657 in 2014 pointing out the highest allotment of \$235,112 received in 2005 and the lowest allotment of \$178,547 received in 2012. This decrease from 2005 is \$57,000 a month or a decrease in revenue of \$675,000 a year in MFT. He noted that the continual decrease reflects the economy, less money for MVR in McLean County, higher gas prices, higher fuel efficiency vehicles and less vehicle miles traveled. The MVR Program is also funding projects not road related.

Mr. Schmitt reviewed McLean County's Annual Oil and Chip Unit Costs Trends pointing out the increased cost per gallon of CRS-2 Oil. He noted that due to decreased revenue, chip maintenance was deferred in 2007 – 2011. In 2012 Illinois Jobs Now provided \$500 million funding to locals that allowed for increased oil and chip work to be done in 2012 – 2014. Mr. Schmitt compared MFT Allotments versus CRS Prices noting that CRS prices continue to increase and MFT funds continue to decrease. The last Illinois Jobs Now funding was received in 2014.

Mr. Robustelli asked how this trend has affected the oil and chip maintenance to County Roads. Mr. Schmitt responded that as a result of this trend, road maintenance has increased from a 6 year rotation to an 8-9 year rotation.

Mr. Schmitt reported that the average annual investment needed to maintain the County Highway System is \$2,809,000. The average annual funding available to maintain the County Highway System is \$2,282,000. The average annual shortfall is \$527,000. As the Department continues to develop a model for a long term maintenance plan and road sections are tracked, long term surface maintenance on low volume roads may change from hot mix to oil and chip, increasing the life span of the road from 25 years to 40-45 years.

Ms. Metsker noted that the Counties are not able to generate additional revenue as are the Cities by increasing their motor fuel tax. Mr. Schmitt advised that maximizing the tax levy would only generate an additional estimated \$208,000. This is not the solution.

Mr. Wasson added that the County has been a proponent of the legislative agenda for a State wide increase in MFT or an increase in user fees to be shared with local governmental units. He stated that the County Board will be making a recommendation for a legislative request to expand local government's authority to implement a County MFT funds in a similar manner as is available to home rule units.

Ms. Harris asked if there has been a response from legislation. Mr. Wasson responded that they are listening to our concerns as we continue to work with them on legislative alternatives.

Mr. Robustelli stated that with the limited ability of local government to fund the maintenance of and planning for the County Highway System, it is our responsibility to be open and transparent to these challenges. We simply do not have the resources to maintain the County Highway System that has been inherited. He commended the

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Department for their efforts in planning very carefully for the future and making the citizens aware of the potential impact.

Chairman Soeldner advised that he attended the Mayor's Association Meeting. MFT was discussed and the need for additional funding was recognized by the municipalities and local governments.

Mr. Schmitt referred to the distributed list of unfunded County Highway Department projects not in the 2015-2019 Five Year Plan.

Chairman Soeldner asked if there was anything further to come before the Committee.

Chairman Soeldner adjourned the Transportation Committee meeting at 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Hospelhorn
Recording Secretary