

**CHAMPAIGN COUNTY**  
**Highway & Transportation Committee Minutes**

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*Friday, January 4, 2013 – 9:00 am*  
*Highway Building Conference Room*  
*1605 E. Main St. St., Urbana, IL*

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Christopher Alix, Lorraine Cowart, John Jay, Jim McGuire, Diane Michaels, Max Mitchell, Michael Richards

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Lloyd Carter

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Al Kurtz (County Board Chair), Jeff Blue (County Engineer), Tracy Wingler (Highway Maintenance Supervisor), Gary Maxwell, Debby Wagner (Highway Accountant)

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Cowart called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

**ROLL CALL**

Secretary called roll and the following members were present: Alix, Cowart, Jay, McGuire, Michaels, and Mitchell. The chair declared a quorum and proceeded with the meeting. Richards arrived after roll call.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chair Cowart asked for approval of agenda for meeting. **Approved unanimously.**

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr. Kurtz welcomed the committee to the first meeting under the new structure of the County Board. He congratulated Cowart on her continued leadership of the Committee.

**COUNTY & TOWNSHIP MOTOR FUEL TAX CLAIMS – NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2012**

Blue explained that the reason for the split payments to Open Roads for the CHS. 8 & 30 Project was because of different fiscal years. **Motion** by Jay to receive and place on file the County & Township Motor Fuel Tax claims for November and December 2012; **seconded** by McGuire. Cowart questioned item #98. Blue explained that engineers are paid out of the highway fund, but at the end of the year, the submitted time cards showing the projects worked on are used to bill the motor fuel tax. The motor fuel tax then reimburses the highway fund. Michaels asked if that was something that was seen annually or monthly. Answer was annual. **Motion carried unanimously.**

## **HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT POWER POINT**

Blue gave a 45 minute Power Point presentation on the County Highway Department functions and funding structure and briefly explained what each employee function was. He said they work basically with three funds: highway fund, which is the primary operating fund; the bridge fund; and the motor fuel tax fund. Other funds are: federal aid matching funds; TARP funds; STR funds, which are federal funds through IDOT; HSIP which are highway safety improvement funds that are applied for; EDP funds which are economic development funds; HPB funds for bridges over \$1,000,000 that have to be applied for.

Blue listed several items that were paid for out of the highway fund budget. It was asked if they were pretty busy with maintenance or if they were looking for additional business. Blue answered that they are capped out. They just added Head Start, so there are all their busses, plus the Sheriff, RPC, ILEAS, Nursing Home, Animal Control; about 150 vehicles for 2 guys. Richards asked if the outside funds such as RPC were being billed for the maintenance. Blue answered they were. Kurtz asked how the dump truck fleet was. Blue answered that they don't wear out because of mileage but rather from corrosion and they have to replace about one per year. He noted that the stainless steel beds help with reducing the corrosion as well as the undercarriage wash at the facility.

Blue explained that the County Bridge Fund money came mostly from property tax. Currently taxing at .027%, ½ of maximum statutory rate of .5% and the money is to be used to match township funds. He explained there is a township bridge program that the State funds which allows money to be used up to 80% of total cost of the bridge. Kurtz asked if the new tax on the wind farm would be part of the matching funds. Blue stated that they work with townships that don't have a lot of tax dollars allowing them to pay over a period of 5 years. He also explained that they will let federal money build up over several years to pay for a large federally funded county highway or township bridge, which are 80/20.

Blue stated the price at the pump does not affect the amount received for the motor fuel tax fund; it is \$.19/gallon. The fund is used for construction and engineering for county highway and roadway projects, road maintenance, shoulder work, etc. Discussion continued regarding State legislature and future amounts of motor fuel tax. Blue explained how money filters from pump to Department of Transportation, thru computed allotment, filters to various agencies, and then to County. He explained that the allotment is based on the number of registered motor vehicles. He continued saying that there is a lot that gets taken off the top, like the State Voting Act Fund, Grade Crossing Protection Fund, administrative costs, Vehicle Inspection Fund, etc. The remaining money is split such that the State gets 45.6% and the locals get 54.4%. Blue then explained how that 54.4% was split between municipalities.

Blue went on to explain how the State is divided into regions and districts, stating that Champaign County is in District 5 which is in Region 3. The main IDOT office for this area is in Paris, IL. He said that District 5 is one of the most underfunded districts in the State. He also noted that all County roads will have a sign on them designating them as such. He explained that all roads are color coded according to what condition the road is in and they are evaluated every two years. Blue stated they do all bridge inspections, and based on condition they have to be inspected every two (2) or four (4) years. They also oversee the construction of all new bridges, about 8-10 per year. He went on to explain the process of replacing roadways. It was asked if the work was done by County employees. Blue answered that the work is contracted with local contractors. Blue stated that they also assist the cities with joint construction projects, usually by supplying an engineer to help with construction inspections. He also explained a bit about the materials used.

Blue stated that the plow policy was in place before he got here and said that the County plows 24/7 during snow events, in 12 hour rotations until the snow event is over. He noted that they have to hire "snow birds" for this.

Blue ended the presentation by encouraging Board members who aren't part of the Highway Committee to come to the Highway building to see what all they do.

### **BRIDGE PETITION – OGDEN ROAD DISTRICT**

Blue explained that this is a 50/50 petition, \$22,000 replacement of a culvert in Ogden Township. **Motion** by McGuire to recommend approval of a Petition and Resolution Approving Appropriation of Funds from the County Bridge Fund Pursuant to 605 ILCS 5/5-501 for Ogden Road District, Ogden Township #12-17994-00 BR; **seconded** by Jay. **Motion carried unanimously.**

### **BRIDGE PETITION – OGDEN ROAD DISTRICT**

Blue explained that this is a similar petition but is a \$30,000 culvert replacement also in Ogden Township. **Motion** by Michaels to recommend approval of a Petition and Resolution Approving Appropriation of Funds from the County Bridge Fund Pursuant to 605 ILCS 5/5-501 for Ogden Road District, Ogden Township #12-17995-00 BR; **seconded** by Alix. **Motion carried unanimously.**

### **TOWNSHIP ROCK LETTING REVIEW**

Blue stated that the County Board gave him the authority to award the township MFT rock prices. He explained that the bid tab in the packet shows the different types of stones and suppliers for the different townships, the majority of which came in below the estimate. He noted that the majority of the aggregates come from Tuscola Stone.

### **LAKE OF THE WOODS ROAD SPEED LIMIT ORDINANCE**

Blue explained that the bridge over I74 on Lake of the Woods road has been down to one (1) lane for a couple of years due to the deterioration. He stated that it is an IDOT owned bridge. He noted that it should be on the January letting for IDOT and hopefully replaced this summer with walking/bike path that the Village of Mahomet has built from Route 150 to Lake of the Woods Park. Blue stated the bridge is designed at 35 mph by IDOT and that the current posted speed is 40 mph and that IDOT has asked the County to pass an ordinance reducing the speed limit prior to construction of the bridge. **Motion** by Jay to accept the ordinance; **seconded** by McGuire. It was asked if they would be ready to go from 40 to 35. Jay stated people can't go flying thru there because of the light and was sure it would be signed. Blue said that signs would be posted as soon as the ordinance passed. **Motion carried unanimously.**

### **OLYMPIAN DRIVE UPDATE**

Blue gave an update on the project stating that they are in the Illinois Commerce Commission's judicial process with the administrative law judge, which is a process they have to go through in order for the administrative law judge to make a recommendation to the Illinois Commerce Commission, who can then make an order to spend the money from the Grade Crossing Protection Fund. Blue felt there was a very good chance the project will be approved and once that happens they can put it on a bid date with IDOT. Blue stated that they have the

right-of-way negotiations done and have signed agreements, but are waiting for the lawyers to draw up the actual sales contracts. He then gave a timeline of the project. Jay gave some history concerning the project with regards to opponents. McGuire asked about timing for the signing of right of way contracts. Blue stated that they have signed agreements and felt were pretty solid with the negotiations and signed agreement. Jay complimented Blue on his efforts with the project. Mitchell asked if the Lincoln Avenue project could run concurrently with the bridge project. Blue stated the money isn't there to run both projects in the same year and that both projects have some federal money in them. He also noted that there will probably be a stipulation that the bridge project can't open until the Lincoln Avenue project is done due to safety reasons. Discussion continued.

### **ENGINEERING POSITION – PART TIME/FULL TIME**

Blue informed the Committee of his desire to bring in a part-time Engineer, who is currently working at IDOT, with the intent of moving him up to full-time when one of the senior engineers retires at the end of the year. Alix questioned about advertising for a full-time position. Blue said that he asked the County Administrator and was told that as long as there is someone on staff part-time, it isn't a union position, and the person meets all job requirements, it wouldn't be a problem to move them into the position full-time. Alix asked if the part-time position needed to be advertised. Blue stated they've never advertised for part-time positions. Alix said he was going to check with the County Administrator just for clarification.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Items VII, VIII, and X are to be placed on the consent agenda.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

McGuire asked if there was a comprehensive plan and when it was last updated. Alix said Urbana's was done in 2005 and thought Champaign's was done around the same time. McGuire thought the committee might want to re-acquaint themselves with the plan. Blue stated there is a 5-year plan through the pavement management system.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting declared adjourned at 10:28 am. Blue gave the committee a tour of the Highway Facility.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Lane  
Administrative Assistant