



**Champaign County Board
Highway & Transportation Committee
County of Champaign, Urbana, Illinois**

MINUTES – Approved 2/5/2016

DATE: Friday, January 8, 2016
TIME: 9:00 a.m.
PLACE: Highway Building Conference Room
1605 East Main, Urbana, IL

Committee Members

Present	Absent
Lorraine Cowart (Chair)	
	Lloyd Carter (Vice Chair)
Christopher Alix	
Shana Harrison	
John Jay	
Jim McGuire	
	Diane Michaels
Max Mitchell	

County Staff: Jeff Blue (County Engineer), Deb Busey (County Administrator), Tracy Wingler (Highway), Linda Lane (Recording Secretary)

Others Present: Patti Petrie (County Board Chair), Ryan Gorham (R.S. Gorham & Company)

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

Committee Chair Cowart called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

II. Roll Call

A verbal roll call was taken and a quorum was declared present.

III. Approval of Agenda/Addendum

MOTION by Mr. Mitchell to approve the agenda; seconded by Mr. Alix. Mr. Blue asked that item XII be moved up the agenda. **Motion** by Mr. Mitchell to amend the agenda; seconded by Ms. Harrison. Upon vote, the **MOTION as amended CARRIED unanimously.**

IV. Approval of Minutes November 6, 2015

MOTION by Mr. Jay to approve the minutes of the November 6, 2015 meeting; seconded by Mr. Alix. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

V. Public Participation

None

VI. Communications

None

VII. County & Township Motor Fuel Tax Claims – November and December 2015

MOTION by Mr. Alix to receive and place on file the County and Township Motor Fuel Tax Claims for November and December 2015; seconded by Mr. Jay. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

VIII. Final Bridge Report

Mr. Blue said that many of the items on the report are small structures and box culverts, but because of the original resolution, the County Engineer is required to report final costs for all bridge projects to the Committee. He commented that the vast majority of projects were within the original estimates. Ms. Cowart asked if the County paid for all the projects. Mr. Blue replied that some were township bridges, which are 80% state, 10% county, and 10% township. He noted that some of the projects were 50% county and 50% township and were mostly the smaller projects. He said that bridges over 20' qualify for the Township Bridge Program because they are bridges that have to be inspected and go into the state system, and are typically under \$20,000.

IX. Township Aggregate Award Resolution (distributed at meeting)

Mr. Blue explained that not a lot of townships participate due to the fact if the overall cost for the hauling and aggregate doesn't exceed \$20,000 there is a mandate to have to bid it in the MFT laws. He said the total of the contract is about \$155,000. Mr. Blue said this isn't something the County participates in and that it's for Township MFT. He noted that this bid is later than normal due to the State budget issues. **MOTION** by Mr. Mitchell to approve; seconded by Ms. Harrison.

Mr. Alix asked if all the aggregate comes from Tuscola. Mr. Blue replied that some comes from Fairmont. He noted that the crushed gravel for Compromise Township is more expensive due to the length of the haul, but that is what they prefer to use. Ms. Cowart asked about the difference in costs. Mr. Blue explained it varies because the haul distance is reflected in the price. He noted that they no longer get a better deal if they purchase more and that everyone pays board price. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED unanimously**.

X. Resolution Appropriating Funds for Lincoln Avenue

Mr. Blue commented that this project has been ongoing for a number of years. He said they are getting ready to do the right-of-way negotiations. He stated they would like the bids to go out this spring and possibly start construction in the summer. He said this resolution is to appropriate money for utility relocation, right-of-way acquisition, and construction. Mr. Blue said there is an intergovernmental agreement in place for up to \$1.1 million, but he has worked with Bill Gray from the City of Urbana, IDOT, and CUUATS to reduce the local costs. He felt the prior resolution of \$150,000 plus this resolution of \$450,000 should be enough to cover the County's local share. He said the City of Urbana will have the same costs as the County and the remainder is being appropriated through CUUATS from the federal aid bill. Mr. Blue felt the need for a closed session to discuss.

MOTION by Mr. Jay at 9:38 a.m. to enter into executive session pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (5) to consider the purchase of real property for use by Champaign County. He further moved that the following individuals remain present: County Engineer, County Administrator, and Recording Secretary; seconded by Mr. Alix. **MOTION CARRIED by roll call vote with Mitchell, McGuire, Jay, Harrison, Alix, and Cowart voting yes.**

The meeting returned to open session at 10:16 am. Mr. Blue asked for approval of the resolution. **MOTION** by Mr. Mitchell to approve; seconded by Mr. McGuire. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED unanimously**.

XI. MFT Appropriation Discussion

Mr. Blue reported that the State approved the release of MFT funds. He said they received the money very quickly, and have received all of the 2015 funds totaling \$2,441,000, which is similar to what they expected. He noted that they lost some money since the Illinois Jobs Now money is no longer available.

XII. Tuskegee Airmen Signs

Mr. Blue noted that there was a presentation made by Ryan Gorham at the Full County Board meeting regarding putting Tuskegee Airmen signs on roads at the County lines. He said he talked to IDOT in Paris and was told they don't typically allow private individuals or organizations to make the applications to put signs on state highways. He said IDOT would allow the County to be the representative to make the application. He stated that signs can only be placed on interstates if there is a State legislative bill passed,

but they can be placed on the 2-lane roads. Mr. Blue noted that the County would be responsible for maintaining the signs. He said there are 12 locations where the signs could be placed; five on the interstates and seven on non-interstate roads. He said the goal is to place them on the same posts the County signs are on. He explained that if the Highway Committee and the County Board want to pursue this, he will need to make the application to IDOT.

Mr. Mitchell wanted to know if all the signs would be uniform so they appear under the Champaign County signs. Mr. Blue replied they will be uniform. Mr. Mitchell asked if they will be reflective. Mr. Blue answered that they have to be retro-reflective. He said the cost would be about \$35 each. Mr. Gorham said many veterans groups have volunteered to pay for the signs. Mr. Blue said they would get the signs through their current sign company to keep the costs down, and forward the bill to Mr. Gorham. Ms. Busey felt that if the committee directs Mr. Blue to proceed it doesn't need to go to the Full Board. Mr. Mitchell asked how difficult it would be to have a third party pay for the signs and to put in a resolution. Ms. Busey replied she doesn't think they need a resolution. She also said the simplest thing if there are contributors who want to pay for the signs is to have them write a check to the County.

Ms. Cowart asked how often the signs needed to be replaced. Mr. Blue responded every 10 years unless they are vandalized or run over.

Ms. Harrison wanted to know if the resolution with the General Assembly needed to be resolution or a bill. Mr. Blue replied that our State legislators would have to pass a resolution. Ms. Harrison asked if any Governor approval was needed since it's a resolution. Mr. Blue replied he'd have to ask IDOT. Mr. Blue said the costs for the interstate signs would be higher because they need to be larger.

Mr. Gorham said they tried to do this for the Tuskegee Airmen during their 70th anniversary, and said a sign did appear on I57 near Kankakee. He said the Tuskegee Airmen originated in Champaign County and that putting these signs up speaks volumes for Champaign County. Mr. McGuire suggested sending a letter to legislators to pass a resolution for signs to be placed on interstates. Ms. Harrison asked if the State representative and senator would have to do an application to IDOT. Mr. Blue thought so once a resolution is passed, but explained that once it gets to the interstate system it goes to Springfield. Mr. Gorham said he has talked to four congressional representatives, and feels it's important this remain with the County.

Mr. Mitchell recommended Mr. Blue work towards facilitating the permitting and the transmittal letter to the State and elected officials. Ms. Busey felt for the non-interstate signs the Committee can direct Mr. Blue to do it completely. She suggested a resolution be sent to the Full Board requesting this go to legislature indicating the County Board's request that the legislators approve this. Mr. Alix felt the request should be specific enough to indicate that they are asking them to be placed on the signs identifying Champaign County. **MOTION** by Mr. Mitchell to approve resolution to request State Legislators to pass a resolution to have Tuskegee Airmen signs placed on the Champaign County signs along the interstates; seconded by Mr. Jay. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED unanimously** and Mr. Alix requested it be placed on the consent agenda. Ms. Busey stated that she and Mr. Blue will put a resolution together that will be sent out with the County Board packet.

XIII. Approval of Truck Purchases for 2016

Mr. Blue stated there are a number of vehicles in the budget for 2016. He said they would like to get three that are all on the State of Illinois joint purchasing contract through CMS. He said they are looking at a pickup truck for the maintenance department, a service truck for the mechanics, and a smaller flatbed dump truck, which they haven't had for years. Mr. Blue noted the total for all vehicles is about \$200,000 and they have \$335,000 in their budget for vehicles. He said they need a pickup for one of the engineers, but it isn't on the State of Illinois joint purchasing contract right now for the size they need. He said probably after March there will be a bid for those. Mr. Blue didn't think any formal approval is needed since the money is already in the budget. He said he just wanted to let the Committee know what they were doing.

Ms. Cowart asked if they would trade in the current vehicles. Mr. Blue said they will if they can get a good value, otherwise they will put them on eBay or in an auction.

XIV. Other Business

Mr. Blue reported that the joints on the building have not been completed due to the weather, but that they will be completed in the spring. He said the cracks were repaired.

Mr. Blue said they had an issue with the 8" sanitary sewer line collapsing. He said it's the old sewer, from the old nursing home, that they tapped into when they build their building. He stated they will have a company come in and line the sewer. Mr. Alix asked if that will add strength or just prevent leaks. Mr. Blue replied that it will keep the lines from collapsing. He said they will put in an asphalt coating that's supposed to provide some structure as well as prevent leaks. He said the City of Urbana came out and cleaned the lines and put a camera through. He pointed out that the City of Urbana has a sewer-lining contract with a contractor out of Peoria that the County was able to hook on to. He also stated that Facilities will be paying for the repairs.

XV. Chair's Report

None

XVI. Designation of Items to be Placed on Consent Agenda

Ms. Cowart stated that items IX, X, and XII are to be placed on the consent agenda

XVII. Adjournment

There being no further business, Ms. Cowart adjourned the meeting at 10:30 am.

***Please note the minutes reflect the order of the agenda and may not necessarily reflect the order of business conducted at the meeting.*

1 **CHAMPAIGN COUNTY**
2 **Highway & Transportation Committee**
3 **Closed Session Minutes**
4

5 *Friday, January 8, 2016 – 9:00 am*
6 *Highway Building Conference Room*
7 *1605 E. Main St. St., Urbana, IL*
8
9

10 **MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chris Alix, Lorraine Cowart, Shana Harrison, John Jay, Jim McGuire, Max
11 Mitchell
12

13 **MEMBERS ABSENT:** Lloyd Carter, Diane Michaels
14

15 **OTHERS PRESENT:** Patti Petrie (County Board Chair), Jeff Blue (County Engineer), Deb Busey
16 (County Administrator), Linda Lane (Administrative Assistant)
17

18 **MOTION** by Mr. Jay at 9:38 AM to enter into executive session pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (5) to
19 consider the purchase of real property for use by Champaign County. He further moved that the
20 following individuals remain present: County Engineer, County Administrator, and Recording Secretary,
21 **seconded** by Mr. Alix. **MOTION CARRIED by roll call vote with Alix, Cowart, Harrison, Jay, McGuire, and**
22 **Mitchell, voting yes.**

23 Mr. Blue started by saying that the appraisals for property needed for the relocation of Lincoln Avenue
24 have been completed. He said they've received approval from IDOT to begin negotiations. He noted that
25 80% of funding for this project is federal aid money, resulting in savings to the County. He said six
26 parcels need to be acquired and packets were sent to those landowners. Mr. Blue said he's received
27 inquiries from the landowners about starting negotiations immediately.

28 Mr. Blue pointed out that they set a ceiling of \$35,000/acre on the east of Olympian Drive, but the west
29 end ended up being \$40,000/acre due to the school district purchasing property there. He said the
30 residents, (Bill Cope, Squire Farms, Larry Corum, and Shirley Squire), would like to negotiate as a group.
31 Mr. Blue reported that the appraisals came in at about \$25,000/acre, which is what the offer in the
32 packet was.

33 Mr. Mitchell asked how much land they're negotiating. Mr. Blue replied 21.5 acres and passed out a
34 map showing where those parcels are. He said that Bill Gray negotiated with Mack and they already
35 have a signed agreement. He summarized how much land is needed from each owner, and hoped that
36 negotiating as a group would allow a quicker settlement.

37 Mr. Blue said he wasn't sure they could get the project done in one construction season, and that it
38 depends on how early they could start. He noted they are purchasing enough land for a future four-lane
39 road, but they are only doing a 2-lane road now. He said they plan to do tree lining to cut down on the
40 noise. Mr. Blue said he doesn't know what, beyond the dollar figures, the individuals would want to
41 negotiate. He said face-to-face negotiations could begin as soon as next week.

42 Ms. Cowart asked if the amount is deducted for the trees. Mr. Blue replied no, that those are part of the
43 overall project costs, but it will be negotiated in the right-of-way that those things will happen. He said
44 there is a federal mandate that for every tree they remove they have to replace it with two. He noted
45 there is 3.6 acres on the Squire property that he doesn't think they will want to give up as they'd

46 indicated in the past when it was only going to be an acre or so of remnant property. Mr. Mitchell asked
47 if they could ask for that. Mr. Blue replied that they could. Mr. Blue commented that everyone knows
48 the dynamic of the Squire family, and that two want this project and one really doesn't. He said they
49 have a signed farm agreement that said all three have to agree in order to sell property.

50 Mr. Alix asked where each appraisal came in. Mr. Blue said it varies from \$20,000 to \$27,500, but isn't
51 sure why it varies so much in this small area. Mr. Alix asked if the same appraiser did them all. Mr. Blue
52 answered yes, and that by law the appraisers have to be approved by IDOT, and the appraisals have to
53 be reviewed by a review appraiser. Mr. Alix asked if there is a trend in farmland value now. Mr. Blue
54 replied he thinks it's flattened out. Mr. Jay said an argument could be made that farmland doesn't have
55 anything to do with this project. Mr. Blue agreed. He also doesn't think the owners know the County
56 paid \$40,000/acre for the Lo property.

57 Ms. Cowart asked how much has been offered. Mr. Blue said they have offered the appraised value as
58 they are obligated to do. Mr. Blue said the appraiser didn't use the Unit 4 property as a comp. Mr.
59 McGuire thought they should place a cap at \$40,000, but if negotiations go to the residual land they
60 should keep that land at the appraised value. Mr. Alix said he would like to keep it at \$35,000 max. Mr.
61 Mitchell asked if Mr. Blue would have to come back to the committee if negotiations stall at that price.
62 Mr. Alix answered yes. Mr. Mitchell suggested looking at the residual component and going lower. Mr.
63 Alix agreed. Mr. McGuire asked how many acres the project savings could purchase at \$35,000. Mr. Blue
64 replied they have a federal aid agreement with IDOT for land acquisition at a total cost of \$800,000. He
65 said Mack isn't going to get the \$40,000/acre. He said that anything over \$37,200 would have to come
66 out of a split between the locals.

67 Mr. Alix felt it's fair to pay more than the appraised value in general to avoid court. He also felt rather
68 than saying they wouldn't pay more than appraised value for the residual property, they should say they
69 don't want the property at all. He said that if the landowner wants to negotiate for that property they
70 should pay closer to the appraised value, but he felt they shouldn't set the appraised value as a cap. He
71 thought they could go \$5,000 higher than the appraised value for that property. Mr. Blue stated that the
72 3.8-acre residual property would have to be appraised on its own as it hasn't been appraised yet, and
73 that would cost \$2,800. He said that the landowners have the right to have their own appraiser and the
74 County would have to pay for that. Mr. Mitchell noted that appraisers, at least for banks, have to go
75 through an independent clearinghouse. Mr. Blue explained that we choose our appraisers because there
76 are only a few that are certified by IDOT. Mr. Mitchell asked if Mr. Blue thought 2/3 of the value would
77 be fair if the 3.8 acres becomes a point of issue. Mr. Blue replied that he wasn't sure. Mr. Alix thought it
78 might be a good guideline. Mr. Alix asked if there will be full access to the fields. Mr. Blue said they will
79 build access and will be part of the deal.

80 Ms. Cowart asked for a vote to give Mr. Blue permission to negotiation to \$35,000/acre. Mr. Alix said
81 that would be his vote. Mr. Jay pointed out they always have the right to go to court if negotiations get
82 ridiculous. Mr. McGuire said he thinks Mr. Blue will do his best to get the best price. He said these
83 people will see some advantages once Olympian opens up and some opportunity to develop. Mr. Blue
84 said one of the Squires will accept \$35,000 now, one will be on the fence, and one will say they want
85 \$40,000. Mr. Jay asked if the County will have to pay their legal fees if this goes to Court. Mr. Blue
86 replied no. Mr. Jay thinks we should let them fight and felt that \$35,000 is generous. He felt they should
87 set limits with the Squires and Los to let them know we are willing to take it to court. Mr. Blue said the
88 landowners would be at a loss if they went to court because the court is going to set a fair value and
89 look at the appraised value. He said the court won't give them \$35,000-\$40,000 per acre.

90 Mr. Mitchell asked if we could put the same conditions on the appraiser. Mr. Blue said we could and
91 that it would have to be a State approved appraiser. He said if they wanted to get their own appraisal
92 and pay for it they can get anyone they want. Mr. Alix wanted to know if a private appraisal would have
93 any weight in court if they're not IDOT certified and would it be legal to present in court. Mr. Blue said
94 he didn't know. Mr. Mitchell stated the trend for appraisers is they have to be qualified. Mr. Blue
95 commented that if it goes to condemnation it could be a trial by jury or a trial in front of a judge. He
96 thought that would be the landowners' choice.

97 Mr. Blue said it sounds like \$35,000 is the max and 2/3 for the residual property. He noted that the
98 landowners have talked about not bringing an attorney into the process until the very end. Mr. Mitchell
99 asked if Mr. Blue would be speaking for Bill Gray. Mr. Blue answered that they divided the people they
100 were going to have direct negotiations with before the landowners decided to negotiate as one group.
101 Mr. Mitchell asked what Bill Gray can bring to the table and what is he governed by. Mr. Blue said his
102 City Council has to approve the bill he brings to them. Mr. Mitchell asked if the City of Urbana is on the
103 same page as the County and felt they need to present a unified front. Mr. Blue thinks they are very
104 similar.

105 Mr. Alix asked the status of the residual part of Lincoln Avenue that will be north of the curve. Mr. Blue
106 said it will remain in place. Mr. Alix asked who owned it. Mr. Blue answered the Township by
107 prescriptive easement. Mr. Alix asked if that would be viewed as a value or a detriment to the
108 landowners if that road went away. Mr. Blue said they want the road to stay. Mr. Alix felt there's no
109 reason to pay to maintain it if the landowners would like it back. Mr. Blue said he will ask. Mr. Alix
110 thought it would save the township some money not having to maintain it. Mr. Jay said as a property
111 owner, he would like the road to remain and felt it would add value.

112 Cowart asked for any other discussion. As there was none, she declared the meeting re-opened at 10:16
113 a.m.

114 Respectfully submitted,

115

116 Linda Lane

117 Administrative Assistant