

**A REGULAR MEETING** of the Board of Chippewa County Road Commissioners was held in their offices located at 3949 S. Mackinac Trail, Sault Ste. Marie, MI on May 9, 2024.

Chairman Gagnon called the meeting to order at 8:00 A.M.

**PRESENT:** Chairman Gagnon, Commissioner Moser, Commissioner Sprague, Manager Laitinen, Engineer Boileau, Office Manager Decker, Superintendent Erickson, Foreman Goodman, Foreman Rye, Union President Eavou, Clerk Livermore, Fleet Manager Donajkowski, Chief Mechanic Marsh

**ABSENT:** Clerk Christensen.

**GUEST PRESENT:** Chippewa County Commissioner Jim Traynor, Rudyard Township Supervisor Barry Davis.

Engineer Boileau requested the addition of the Chip Seal Bid award under Old Business, immediately following new business.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Sprague **SECONDED** by Commissioner Moser to accept the agenda with the additional item added under Old Business.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION** by Commissioner Moser **SECONDED** by Commissioner Sprague that Payroll in the amount of \$181,237.08 and Vouchers in the amount of \$515,729.28 be approved and authorized for payment from the County Road Fund subject to audit.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION** by Commissioner Moser **SECONDED** by Commissioner Sprague to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes from April 25, 2024 and place them of file.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- None.

**STAFF REPORTS**

Office Manager Decker

- The off-schedule payment included with the vouchers was for a time sensitive purchase of the conveyer.

Superintendent Erickson

- Busy trying to keep the roads shaped up with all the rain.
- Stock piling stone at Nine Mile Road for the upcoming Mackinac Trail shoulder project.

Foreman Goodman

- Resumed work on Tahqua Trail.
- Grading gravels as weather permits.
- The crew has been working roads in Whitefish Township in anticipation of them getting ready for their first application of brine.
- M-28 Shoulder work.

Foreman Rye

- The pipe on M-48 has been changed and is waiting for a black-top patch.
- Working on manholes in DeTour.
- Same as the Soo.

Engineer Boileau

- Superintendent Erickson and Foreman Rye covered.

Clerk Christensen

- Clerk Livermore reported the MSHA schedules are in the mail boxes.

Union President Eavou

- Nothing new to report.

Fleet Manager Donajkowski

- Tag trailer delivered.
- The conveyor purchased will replace the current one and will be safer and easier to use.
- Tractor and mower were delivered.
- Participating in a workgroup with the software vendor to develop changes to the inventory side of the software.

Payroll/H.R./Board Clerk Livermore

- Due to a scheduling conflict, please have all timecards entered and approved for the next pay by Friday, May 17, 2024.

Chief Mechanic Marsh

- Finding older units experiencing structural issues as the fleet ages. Manager Laitinen added we are exploring frame rail replacement as an option on some of the older single axle trucks. Due to lead time and cost of new units and the better reliability the older engines provide, this type of replacement might prove to be a good alternative.

**MANAGER'S REPORT**

- The Annual Spring Safety Meeting was last week. Thank you to all for participation.

- MSHA training is next week, May 14<sup>th</sup>.
- Attended Straits Area Council. Good meeting with good reports, much of it focused on the upcoming budget.
- Continuing to work through a land title issue with Bay Mills Tribe at the Bay Mart location.
- Continuing to finalize the UP Road Builders Summer agenda.
- A new issue is starting to come to our attention. UPS drivers are starting to avoid delivering to the door of residents with long driveways in rural areas. A resident in Whitefish Township has constructed a non-standard structure next to the mail-box in the right-of-way (ROW). In this instance, the resident's mailbox is on the opposite side of the road from the driveway, thereby putting the structure on the property of a neighbor. Recommending the Road Commission take the stance that this type of additional structure not be permitted in the ROW and to notify the resident by letter that the structure be removed, indicating the more appropriate location for it would be on the resident's property, near the end of their own driveway, outside of the ROW.
- Oxcart Right-of-Way permits are now live on the website. Working with the company to allow for "Guest" access to apply for one-time permits like residential driveway.
- Received an email invitation from the Lions Club to participate in their "Touch a Truck" event on Drummond Island.
- Townships are starting to receive their brine deliveries.
- Matt Tuori has been moved from Neebish Island Garage to the office and will be assisting Engineer Boileau with engineering, inspection, asset management, and permit work. This is work previously performed by Dan Jere. His position was not filled when he left the Road Commission. Consultant engineer inspection costs incurred last year warrants filling this position. Filling this position creates a need for another pickup truck. A used ½ ton has been identified at O'Connor's in Pickford for \$33,000.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Sprague **SECONDED** by Commissioner Moser to approve the purchase of the identified used ½ Ton from O'Connor's.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**NEW BUSINESS**

- A. RESOLUTION 2024-13 - MDOT Contract #24-5089 Mackinac Trail (3 Mile to 6 Mile).

**MOTION** by Commissioner Moser **SECONDED** by Commissioner Sprague to approve RESOLUTION 2024-13, authorizing Engineer Boileau to sign the contract.

**MOTION CARRIED by UNANAMOUS ROLL CALL VOTE**

B. RESOLUTION 2024-14 - MDOT Contract #24-5095 Mackinac Trail (6 Mile to M-28).

**MOTION** by Commissioner Moser **SECONDED** by Commissioner Sprague to approve RESOLUTION 2024-14, authorizing Engineer Boileau to sign the contract.

**MOTION CARRIED by UNANAMOUS ROLL CALL VOTE**

C. RESOLUTION 2024-15 - MDOT Contract #24-5177 Mackinac Trail over Chub Creek.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Moser **SECONDED** by Commissioner Sprague to approve RESOLUTION 2024-15, authorizing Engineer Boileau to sign the contract.

**MOTION CARRIED by UNANAMOUS ROLL CALL VOTE**

D. RESOLUTION 2024-16 - Extinguishment of Encroachment Agreement

**MOTION** by Commissioner Moser **SECONDED** by Commissioner Sprague to approve RESOLUTION 2024-16, authorizing Manager Laitinen to extinguish the agreement recorded at Liber 741, Page 140, of the Chippewa County Records, as it is no longer needed.

**MOTION CARRIED by UNANAMOUS ROLL CALL VOTE**

E. Award 2024 Culvert Bid - Manager Laitinen reviewed the bids received and recommended all bids be accepted and the initial order of plastic pipes be awarded to ETNA and the initial order of metal pipes be awarded to St. Regis.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Moser **SECONDED** by Commissioner Sprague to award the bids as recommended.

**MOTION CARRIED**

F. Award Prentis Bay Road Culvert Bid - Engineer Boileau reported no bids were provided. Con Tech will be contacted directly for pricing.

G. Reaffirm Policy #13 - Township Contract Work - Manager Laitinen reviewed the history of the policy and recommended it be reaffirmed with no changes.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Moser **SECONDED** by Commissioner Sprague to affirm Policy #13 regarding Township Contract Work.

H. Reaffirm Policy #15 - Investment Policy - Manager Laitinen reviewed and recommended reaffirmation with no changes.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION** by Commissioner Moser **SECONDED** by Commissioner Sprague to reaffirm Policy #15 - Investment Policy with no changes.

**MOTION CARRIED**

I. Staffing Discussion - Manager Laitinen reported to the board that vacancies due to attrition and upcoming retirements in 2024, there will be a need to fill as many as nine (9) positions by the end of summer. Some of these vacancies were created at the beginning of the winter season and the organization has been running on a lean crew through an unusually mild winter. This will not create any new positions. Manager Laitinen indicated where the short staffing is or will occur but indicated that could change with the position posting process. A request for authorization to fill up to nine positions.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Sprague **SECONDED** by Commissioner Moser to authorize Manager Laitinen to fill up to nine (9) positions with Full-time and temporary hires as he sees fit.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**OLD BUSINESS**

- Engineer Boileau revisited the Chip Seal bid award. At the March 28, 2024 Board Meeting this item was tabled noting more information was needed regarding an unexpected 30% increase in cost. Engineer Boileau and the contractor inspected the sites together and they reworked the scope of the project, reducing the cost share to an 80/20 split with the townships. Engineer Boileau recommended the project be awarded to Farner. Commissioner Moser made inquiry to the current match policy requiring 85/15 township match. Engineer Boileau and Manager Laitinen requested the award to Farner as an exception to policy, noting chipseal work is new for the road commission and this application would be a trial run to assess its effectiveness in the area. Commissioner Moser noted this exception is not to be considered a change to policy or precedent for future projects.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Moser **SECONDED** by Commissioner Sprague to award the chip-seal project to Farner, noting the match exception to policy.

**County Commissioners Comments**

- Commissioner Traynor reported additional weekend ferry trips have been added to the Neebish Island schedule but the residents are hopeful to see additional trips added back to the schedule.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- Rudyard Township Supervisor Barry Davis expressed appreciation for the work done to shape up Hantz Road and inquired about the timing of the five-way intersection. Engineer Boileau did not have a start date for that project.

**ROAD COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

Commissioner Sprague received a call from a resident regarding the M-48 detour. He referred them to MDOT.

With no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Gagnon wished everyone "stay safe". The meeting adjourned at 8:43 A.M.

---

Bobbie Livermore  
Clerk for the Board

---

Jerrey Gagnon  
Chairman