

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 March 3, 2022.

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 A.M.

PRESENT: Chairman Timmer, Commissioner Gagnon, Commissioner Moser, Manager Laitinen, Office Manager Decker, Engineer Boileau, Superintendent Erickson, Foreman Goodman, Foreman Rye, Clerk Livermore, Clerk Christensen, Union President Cheney.

ABSENT: Chief Mechanic Marsh.

GUEST PRESENT: County Commissioner Erik Barron and Superior Township Trustees George Kinsella and Paul Fox

Chairman Timmer accepted the agenda as presented.

MOTION by Commissioner Gagnon **SECONDED** by Commissioner Moser that Payroll in the amount of \$211,425.79 and Vouchers in the amount of \$215,618.93 be approved and authorized for payment from the County Road Fund subject to audit.

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION by Commissioner Gagnon **SECONDED** by Commissioner Moser to approve the regular meeting minutes from February 17, 2022 and place them on file.

MOTION CARRIED

PUBLIC COMMENTS

George Kinsella, Superior Township Trustee, addressed the board. He thanked the Brimley crew for keeping the roads clean and informed the board that the township is coming into their budget planning. He recognized the township had an unpaid balance for past work completed on Six Mile Road and offered a desire to get it paid, potentially in two installments. He also thanked the Road Commission for their work to clean up the Brimley garage basement so work can be completed on the water lines. Trustee Kinsella wants to work to restore the relationship between the township and the road commission. Discussion ensued.

STAFF REPORTS

Office Manager Decker

- Audit field work is complete.
- Fuel tanks for Drummond Island and Goetzville are ordered. There was a \$6-7K increase in cost per site over last year.
- Finishing year end reports.

Superintendent Erickson

- Busy with winter maintenance.
- Got the old grader out to do some work on cutting back banks.
- Thinking about potential water problems for next week with forecasted rain.
- Starting to see pot holes develop.
- Frost: 67" Sault, 56" Brimley, 55" Paradise

Foreman Goodman

- Weather keeping us busy.

Foreman Rye

- Keeping busy.

Engineer Boileau

- Nothing new to report.

Clerk Christensen

- Worked with auditors and catching up.

Union President Cheney

- Nothing new to Report.

Payroll/H.R./Board Clerk Livermore

- MERS 4th quarter 2021 and annual Statement of Fiduciary Net Position were received on March 1. Net Investment income for 2021 was \$1.56M. Our balance grew by nearly \$1.56M after contributions, benefits paid, and investment income to \$12.53M. The valuation for 2020 showed the road commission's defined benefit was 47% funded. It will be interesting to see with the new assumptions where \$12.53M puts the 2021 valuation.

Chief Mechanic Marsh

- No Report.

MANAGER' S REPORT

- Attended the UP Road Builders Winter Conference. Appointed to CRA Board.
- Attended MSPS Surveyors Conference. Good networking event.
- Finishing presentation for Highway Conference on utilizing search/hiring firm.
- Received the call for bridge applications.
- Received the call for Category F funding packages. Preparing to submit an application for Mackinac Trail for 2024.
- Working with Central Dispatch and the National Guard to assist with a mid-April exercise/war game in winter like conditions. Locally they will use the gravel pit known as the Petkis Pit in Kinross for a mock chemical response.

- Small urban meeting today. The program has been awarded an additional \$385K.
- HB 5054 has been passed by the House Committee and has been sent on to the house floor. This bill, if passed, will provide \$1.5B in one-time funding toward unfunded liability pension plans. Road commissions are specifically included as potential recipients of these funds through grants. Discussion ensued.
- While attending the Highway Conference next week, an invitation has been extended to Senator Wayne Schmidt to attend and join for dinner.

NEW BUSINESS

A.) Resolution 2022-04 - MDOT Contract #2021-0343/A1 Amendment

MOTION by Commissioner Gagnon **SECONDED** by Commissioner Moser to accept approve Resolution 2022-04 and authorize Manager Laitinen to sign.

MOTION CARRIED by UNANIMOUS ROLL CALL VOTE

B.) Award Culvert Bid - All bids received for plastic culverts were identical and only bid received for metal culverts came from Cadillac Culvert. Because all bids were equal and Pickford Builder was awarded the culvert purchase for 2021, it was recommended ETNA be awarded the initial 2022 plastic culvert purchase and Cadillac Culvert the metal culverts. Subsequent orders can be obtained from any of the vendors.

MOTION by Commissioner Gagnon **SECONDED** by Commission Moser to award the bid for the initial plastic culvert order to ETNA and metal culvert order to Cadillac Culvert with subsequent orders from any of the vendors.

MOTION CARRIED

OLD BUSINESS

- NONE

County Commissioners Comments

- Commissioner Baron reported the county is looking into combining the Register of Deeds with the County Clerk's office. This could save the county \$50-70K per year. He is asking the county to put a information package together for the community explaining the benefits of this.
- Commissioner Baron informed the Road Commission the county is planning an ARPA workshop and now is the time to lobby for funding before it is all allocated at the county level. Manager Laitinen expressed an interest in approaching the county for funding to improve Three Mile Road as this is a road that serves both City and County Residents. If done now it can be managed as a lesser cost repair rather than later as a full construction project.

- Commissioner Baron reported on the meeting of the St. Mary's River Keepers. Ice Breakup will begin around March 21st and will likely not see an early opening for shipping.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- None.

ROAD COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

Chairman Timmer asked everyone to keep up the good work.

MOTION by Commissioner Gagnon **SECONDED** by Commissioner Moser to enter into Closed Session at 9:02 a.m. to discuss the performance evaluation of Manager Laitinen.

MOTION CARRIED by UNANIMOUS ROLLCALL VOTE

Open session resumed open session at 9:32 a.m. No decisions were made during closed session.

MOTION by Chairman Timmer **SECONDED** by Commissioner Gagnon to grant a 5% salary increase retroactive to January 1, 2022 for Manager Laitinen. Chairman Timmer noted a favorable performance evaluation of Manager Laitinen.

MOTION CARRIED

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 9:46 A.M.

Bobbie Livermore
Clerk for the Board

Richard Timmer
Chairman