

**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 January 21, 2021.

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 A.M.

**PRESENT:** Chairman Timmer (via ZOOM), Commissioner Ormsbee, Commissioner Gagnon (via ZOOM), Manager Laitinen, Office Manager Decker, Clerk Livermore, Clerk Christensen Foreman Rye.

**ABSENT:** Superintendent Erickson, Foreman Goodman, Chief Mechanic Marsh, Union President Mills.

**GUEST PRESENT:** County Commissioner Erik Baron and Trout Lake Township Supervisor Dave Hillman

Manager Laitinen requested the addition of Resolution 2021-01, Modification of the MDOT contract for the Goetzville salt barn be added as item f.) under new business. Commissioner Ormsbee accepted the agenda with the additional item.

**MOTION** by Chairman Timmer **SECONDED** by Commissioner Gagnon that Payroll in the amount of \$161,231.06 and Vouchers in the amount of \$408,973.26 be approved and authorized for payment from the County Road Fund subject to audit.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION** by Chairman Timmer **SECONDED** by Commissioner Gagnon to approve the regular meeting minutes from January 7, 2021 and place them on file.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- None at this time.

**STAFF REPORTS**

Office Manager Decker

- Working on finalizing year end reporting. It goes much faster now with the electronic timekeeping system. Rather than wait for a week for time cards, the information is there in days.
- The audit is scheduled for the third Tuesday in February.
- Working to identify actuary needs for the OPEB audit.

Superintendent Erickson

- No report.

Foreman Goodman

- No Report.

Foreman Rye

- Busy brushing on Gaines Highway when time is available.

Clerk Christensen

- Submitted a grant application to the Michigan Small Business Survival Grant program for \$15,000 to offset COVID related payroll expenses.
- Received a grant for eyewashes through MIOSHA. It's a match grant allowing for 120 days to complete.
- Have the information packets ready to put in the road commission vehicles. Our crew will have insurance information, telephone numbers, radio channel information, reporting forms, etc. at their fingertips.

Union President Mills

- No Report.

Payroll/H.R./Board Clerk Livermore

- No new COVID information to report.
- W2s went out last week.

Chief Mechanic Marsh

- No Report.

#### **MANAGER'S REPORT**

- Last week we received terrible news of a fatal accident in Iron County involving a motorist and road commission flagman. As more details become available to the pool, we will use the information for training purposes down the road. Manager Laitinen took the opportunity to thank our local union for contributing \$500 and the management staff and commissioners for just over \$400, which was sent in a sympathy card to the widow in Iron County.
- Working with the engineer tech to put together a request for demolition bids for the buildings in Paradise and Trout Lake, as well as the existing salt barn in Goetzville. The next step will be to get RFPs for the plan set and project documents for the new building.
- Met with Mackinac Environmental to review the reports for three sites (Strong's, Trout Lake, and Paradise). Strong's and Trout Lake look good for closure soon. EGLE shows the Paradise site looking good. Mackinac Environmental is recommending implementing an oxygen injection system to break down the hydrocarbons and move the site to closure sooner. The injection system will require a larger up-front expenditure, but the savings in monitoring time to closure will offset it. Discussion ensued.
- Had a ZOOM meeting with Jessica Fitzgerald at Morgan Stanley regarding our OPEB trust investment portfolio performance. The timing of the Road Commission's additional investments into the fund was not intentional, but proved to be beneficial to the fund

performance. We will continue to work closely with Jessica, intentionally looking for opportune timing to send the intended additional investment into the fund.

- Virtually attended the Wetland Board meeting. 38 projects have benefited so far from the mitigation acreage available. 20 of them are local agency projects, as part of MDOT's bridge bundling initiative.
- Virtually attended the JATC meeting. No major news, however, the monarch butterfly will not be added to the protected list.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

- A.) Spoke with attorney, Wendy Hardt, regarding the approved extension of paid leave for COVID-19 as approved at the last meeting. She did not see any issue in doing this, but suggested that clarification of the intentions be put on the record. This time has been made available to the staff in the absence of any state or federal mandate after the expiration of the Families First Corona Relief Act (FFCRA) and will follow the same rules of use as the FFCRA. Should a mandate be issued here after, the mandate will take the place of this provision and will not be an addition to any unused time awarded by our board.
- B.) Award  $\frac{3}{4}$  Ton Pickup Truck Bid - The bids were received from O'Connors and Soo Motors, with O'Connors bid being approximately \$4,000 less than Soo Motors for the package of two pickup trucks.

**MOTION** by Chairman Timmer **SECONDED** by Commissioner Gagnon to award the  $\frac{3}{4}$  ton pickup truck bid to O'Connors in the amount of \$80,530 for two crew cab diesel pickups.

#### **MOTION CARRIED**

- C.) Kinross Township Road Agreement - Obtaining a signed road agreement for the work done on Gaines Highway in 2020 was a detail missed prior to the work being done. We have received the signed township agreement and the payment this week.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Gagnon **SECONDED** by Chairman Timmer to sign and accept the township road agreement for Gaines Highway.

#### **MOTION CARRIED**

- D.) CRA ballot for Upper Peninsula Road Builders Association candidate. This is for a three year term. Doug Mills from Baraga County is running unopposed.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Gagnon **SECONDED** by Chairman Timmer to vote for Doug Mills for UPRBA.

**MOTION CARRIED**

- E.) Review / Reaffirm Policies -
  - i. Policy #3 - Seasonal Road Policy
  - ii. Policy #4 - Accepting a Road to County System

**MOTION** by Chairman Timmer **SECONDED** by Commissioner Gagnon to reaffirm Policy #3 and #4.

**MOTION CARRIED**

- F.) Resolution 2021-01 amendment to MDOT contract for the construction of the salt barn in Goetzville, increasing the contract amount by \$150,000 from \$700,000 to \$850,000 due to anticipated increased material pricing.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Gagnon **SECONDED** by Chairman Timmer to approve Resolution 2021-01 that authorizes Manager Laitinen to sign an amended contract with MDOT and increases the contract amount to \$850,000.

**MOTION CARRIED WITH UNANIMOUS ROLL CALL VOTE**

**County Commissioners Comments**

Commissioner Barron reported that the Board of County Commissioners passed a their COVID Resolution in a 4 to 1 vote. Sugar Island Township has started a project to build a hiking trail and create a paddle board/kayak/fishing area/park on Island #1 near the ferry dock and our Little Rapids Bridge.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

**ROAD COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS**

Chairman Timmer requested we reach out to Superior Township regarding the request for road work this year to find out the status and estimated timing on receiving a signed road agreement.

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 9:02 A.M.

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Bobbie Livermore  
Clerk for the Board

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Richard Timmer  
Chairman