

**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, Michigan on January 29, 2105.

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PRESENT:** Commissioner Timmer and Commissioner Gagnon, Manager Laitinen, Office Mgr. Decker, Clerk McDowell, Project Manager Deatrick, Engineer Krouth, Foreman Erickson, Foreman Pesola, Foreman McConkey, Chief Mechanic Avery and Union President Hopper.

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Ormsbee and Surveyor Wiggins.

Chairman Timmer approved agenda as presented.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Gagnon **SECONDED** by Commissioner Timmer that the Payroll in the amount of \$153,934.38 and Vouchers in the amount of \$132,302.47 be approved and authorized for payment from the County Road Fund subject to audit.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION** by Commissioner Gagnon **SECONDED** by Commissioner Timmer to approve minutes from the Regular Meeting held on January 14, 2015 and place them on file.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Margaret Moore resident and business owner in Hulbert Township addressed the Board regarding her concerns for excess use of sand which is being used on the roads within the township. She stated there are two designated snowmobile trails leading into Hulbert and the overuse of sand at times has shut them down. She feels that this is being done deliberately.

Manager Laitinen indicated after the last phone call from Ms. Moore he did in fact go immediately to Hulbert and take photographs of the entire situation through the town of Hulbert. He also photographed sections of M-28 leading up to Hulbert. He indicated it's unfortunate that snowmobilers do not operate well in the sand, but the sand that he saw applied in the town of Hulbert was not excessive. The entire town is a hill, curve or intersection, which our policy has always been to sand these areas. Our obligation under the law is to prepare and maintain the roads in a reasonably safe manner for wheeled vehicles.

Chairman Timmer recognized that there have been issues in other areas where snowmobile trails exist. We try to minimize the effect and impact on these areas, but we still need to maintain our roads in a safe manner.

Foreman Pesola stated he is up in the Hulbert area at least once a week. He has at times picked up Rex who heads up the snowmobile trail grooming club to discuss other issues and he said nothing about excessive sand being used. He feels the crew in Hulbert is doing a great job.

Mr. Rodney DeWitt addressed the Board regarding cleaning up the built up sand along the shoulders of the roads which has been left from years of winter sanding. He indicated it is becoming such a problem that it is blocking the catch basins. He stated he works for the township and they have received estimates to have it cleaned, which was around \$8,000.00. Mr. DeWitt also feels there is a conflict of interest for Todd Davis owning his own logging company, sitting on the township board and working for the Road Commission.

Manager Laitinen indicated the cleanup of the sand is definitely something we need to address. We will look at getting it scheduled this spring.

Manager Laitinen then addressed the issue of conflict of interest sighted by Mr. DeWitt. He stated Todd does hold a position on the Hulbert Township Board. This issue has been visited many times over by the Attorney General and deemed not to be a conflict because he holds no decision making position at the Road Commission. Todd is the garage foreman at Hulbert, but is under direct supervision of our west end Foreman, Randy Pesola. We are also aware that Todd operates his own log trucks, that being said, we also help out loggers all over the county when they need sand placed to get in and out of job sites.

Manager Laitinen and Board agreed to go and view the streets of Hulbert for excessive sand.

#### **STAFF REPORTS**

Foreman Pesola

- Winging and blowing back banks with old sno-go's.
- Patching holes
- Winter maintenance
- Received our new truck

Foreman Erickson

- Winging and pushing back banks
- Clearing on 13 Mile Road
- Equipment maintenance

Foreman McConkey

- Equipment maintenance
- Burning brush piles
- Winter maintenance

Engineer Krouth

- Reviewed Resolution #2015-1 for FLAP Grant for Lakeshore Drive resurfacing between Salt Point Road and M-123. Application for this grant is due February 15<sup>th</sup>. Waiting on other letters of support.
- Held phone conference on Causeway project. The project continues to move forward. They are working on soil borings and once these are complete will be revising this section of the bid and putting them back out to the contractors.
- Tribe has asked for a letter of support to submit with their plan to implement a new transit plan they are working on.
- Received word from Sault Tribe that the reimbursement for monies for storm damage has been approved by the BIA and Tribal Board.

Office Manager Decker

- Year end is about complete and would like to schedule auditors in here the third week of February.
- Gave update on garage lighting.

Project Manager Deatruck

- Held GI preliminary plan meeting last Friday for the Mackinac Trail project from Gaines Hwy to 12 Mile Road.
- Gave an overview of the differences of opinion between MDOT and us regarding the hot mix asphalt.
- Will be leaving next week and back March 5<sup>th</sup>.

Chief Mechanic Avery

- Busy in the shop
- Mechanics are doing a great job

#### **COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

Commissioner Johnson indicated he had calls from residents in Hulbert but they addressed their concerns already.

#### **MANAGERS REPORT**

- Attended UP Road Builders Meeting. Good information was presented on the Road Funding package which was passed. Chairman Timmer was reelected to a one year term on the CRAM Board of Directors.

- Have posted video to our website of the old snow blowers and our trucks out in action have also sent them to CRAM.
- Held Rural Task Force conference call regarding MDOT's 2<sup>nd</sup> distribution of catch up federal aid.
- Working with Kevin our Maintenance Coordinator to begin planning and scheduling for non winter maintenance activities. Culverts on M-123 are being looked at.
- On January 19<sup>th</sup> Foreman Pesola, Keith Swendsen and himself took a truck over to the Brimley Schools for their safety day presentation.
- On Monday, January 26<sup>th</sup> St. Mary's School was hosting Career Day and invited us to set up a display on Transportation and Engineering. Engineer Krouth and himself attended and felt it was very informative for students.
- Have received the 100,000.00 in monies for deep freeze damage. Thanked Tim McKee for all his efforts with the grant application.
- Continue talks with Senator Casperson's office regarding federal aid buy out.

Manager Laitinen indicated on February 1<sup>st</sup> the contractual obligation for a 2% pay raise for the union membership will take place. He stated typically in the past even though it is a contractual agreement we have asked for approval of this and along with it have extended the same 2% wage increase to all non union staff as well.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Gagnon **SECONDED** by Commissioner Timmer to approve the 2% wage increase for both union and non union employees effective February 1, 2015.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Project Manager Deatrick presented Title Sheet for federal aid project Mackinac Trail between Gaines Hwy and 12 Mile Road for approval and signing.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Gagnon **SECONDED** by Commissioner Timmer to approve the submittal of the Mackinac Trail project and sign the Title Sheets as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Manager Laitinen presented request from I-500 committee to use our grader and two arrow boards for the I-500 on February 7, 2015. He indicated this has been an annual request, in which we have a volunteer from our staff who operates the grader and they provide any fuel for the event.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Gagnon **SECONDED** by Commissioner Timmer to approve the use of our grader and two arrow boards for the I-500 race.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Manager Laitinen requested authorization to take bids for three new pickups which will be assigned to the area foreman. He indicated we are looking at investing the 100,000.00 we received in emergency relief monies into the purchase of them.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Gagnon **SECONDED** by Commissioner Timmer to authorize Manager Laitinen to receive bids for three new pickups.

**MOTION CARRIED**

CRAM Board of Directors Ballot was presented for one vacancy for a three year term. Douglas J Mills, from Baraga was the only name placed in nomination.

Chairman Timmer indicated Doug does a great job on this Board.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Gagnon **SECONDED** by Commissioner Timmer to cast our vote for Douglas J. Mills for the CRAM Board of Directors seat.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Manager Laitinen presented and reviewed bid tabulation received on January 26, 2015, for hydraulics and equipment for 6 tandem axle dump trucks. Bids were sent out to three bidders, but only bid received was from Truck & Trailer Specialties for a total package amount of \$404,539.00. He stated this amount is a little more than we had anticipated, but will have the revenue to cover it.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Gagnon **SECONDED** by Commissioner Timmer to award the hydraulics and equipment for 6 tandem axle dump trucks to Truck & Trailer Specialties.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Manager Laitinen presented Resolution #2015-01 to support the application for funding through Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) for Lakeshore Drive resurfacing between Salt Point Road and M-123 for a distance of 10.61 miles.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Gagnon **SECONDED** by Commissioner Timmer to approve Resolution #2015-01 in Support of FLAP funding for Lakeshore Drive resurfacing as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS ROLL CALL VOTE.**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Kinross Township Supervisor Jim Moore stated his appreciation for the scheduling of the Mackinac Trail project.

Office Mgr. Decker stated in todays voucher total we did payoff one of our loans to Old Mission and plans is to have the other loan with Old Mission paid off prior to going out for bids for the financing of new trucks.

Manager Laitinen stated the videos which were posted to our website (chippewacountyroads.org) are under the dashboard and financial information tab.

County Commissioner Johnson asked what other options might be available for Lakeshore Drive.

Manager Laitinen stated he has been working with the Forest Service and the new District Ranger to see if there might be support from them for the resurfacing of Lakeshore Drive/Curley Lewis Hwy. When this roadway was originally built it was funded 100% by U.S. Forest Service.

**ROAD COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS-None**

There being no further business to come before the Board Chairman Timmer adjourned the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

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Christine A. McDowell  
Secretary for the Board

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Richard B. Timmer  
Chairman