

Members Present: Gary Steber, Jeanette Bomberg, Don Gardner and John Halada.

Members Absent: Larry Neuens was excused.

Others Present: Jeff DeMuri and Francie Freeberg.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Steber.

Approval and/or revisions to current agenda: A motion was made by Bomberg, seconded by Halada, and voted four (4) to zero (0) to approve the agenda as submitted.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by Bomberg, seconded by Gardner and voted four (4) to zero (0) to approve minutes of the February 9th, 2015 regular Highway Committee meeting, the special highway meeting on February 16th, 2015 and the Ad-Hoc Bid Opening on February 19th, 2015.

Old Business

CTH "N" Bonding Project: (1) Curve re-alignment and (2) the Ox Bowl ATV Trail: DeMuri said that he did get some prices from Northeast Asphalt for work on these two items. DeMuri presented the Committee with a copy of the quote page of \$189,653.65. Along with that he included a copy of the quote that he and Coleman Engineering prepared. Their quote amounted to \$154,106.20. There are many variables to this project. He reported that there is Fiber Optic cable on the East side of the highway which will need to be moved to the West side. Nsight has agreed to move the cable at no charge to the highway department. There are several locations that DeMuri would like to have the waste dirt stockpiled for future use and this may have an impact on the prices submitted by Northeast. Traffic control is another issue and DeMuri said that he can get the use of some DOT traffic lights, at no cost to us. Curbing will be installed close to the R/W to help with drainage. Considerable discussion was had on the pros and cons of the County doing the work versus Northeast Asphalt doing the work. The size of the workforce and equipment also plays into the equation. They considered the option to bid this section of work but felt it was in the best interest of the taxpayers of Florence County to have Northeast Asphalt complete the work. Since they will already be in the area it was estimated that it would take them five (5) or six (6) days to complete this piece of work. After additional discussion it was moved by Bomberg, seconded by Gardner and voted four (4) to zero (0) to accept the proposal from Northeast Asphalt. By having them do the work then they won't be held up waiting for another contractor come into that area to complete this work before they can proceed.

Status of bulldozer and other equipment purchases/sales: DeMuri said that he had done considerable research into the value of our bulldozer, both on line and with contractors. He decided to see if he could sell it on WI Surplus. He put a reserve of \$45,000 on it. The final bid was for \$44,500 and DeMuri made the decision to accept this offer. This sale price was \$12,500 over what the John Deere salesman offered to buy it for. Florence Utility has their dozer up for sale as the guaranteed buy back is this year. Bob Friberg initially told DeMuri that the guaranteed buy back wasn't due until 2016. Unfortunately it is due this year and he was offered \$78,000 on the buyback offer. Due to Friberg's time-line mistake he said that he would carry the extra cost over to 2016, thus allowing DeMuri to put it in his budget as he initially planned. After discussion it was moved by Bomberg, seconded by Gardner and voted four (4) to zero (0) to pay the \$44,500 that we get from the sale of our dozer and then let the Utility carry the extra \$33,500 until 2016. The main reason for the purchase is that this dozer has a cab where our dozer does not. This is a major asset for winter use.

In addition to the bulldozer, he also put our old brush chipper and a very old drill press up for sale on the WI Surplus website. The brush chipper was sold for \$2,480 and the drill press went for \$256.50. DeMuri said that he has plans to sell the two old air compressors, some computer controllers for the trucks, and our old tar kettle. He will put a reserve of \$5,000 on the tar kettle.

Our one-ton truck that was ordered from Florence Motors is at Monroe Truck Equipment getting the stake body installed. That truck will be here in the very near future.

Gravel Crushing: On February 9th, 2015 we opened bids for the crushing of gravel in the CTH “D” gravel pit. There were only two (2) bids received. One was from Midwest Asphalt for \$7.20 per yard and the second one was from Northeast Asphalt for \$8.20 per yard. The reason for the higher price on this material is that it was specked out with more binder in it. Midwest’s bid is for crushing of gravel in their Spread Eagle pit. The gravel will be used on the Forestry ATV trail on the rail road grade in Spread Eagle and is being paid for with grant money that the Forestry Department received. It was moved by Gardner, seconded by Halada, and voted four (4) to zero (0) to award the bid to Midwest Asphalt.

The Committee was informed that the Town of Florence had approached NE Asphalt about purchasing crushed gravel from the pit by the old Club Felix. Northeast Asphalt told them that the County Highway Department was buying the gravel in that pit. The town is in need of a large quantity of crushed gravel for some planned road projects. Thus they would like to get it out of the CTH “D” pit. This pit is on County Forest land and is owned by Florence County. Pat Smith asked DeMuri to oversee the operations in the pit as he really doesn’t know anything about gravel. Thus the highway department has been managing the necessary permits and the operation plans, including the reclamation plan, as well as overseeing the bidding and crushing of material. Considerable discussion followed. The Town needs something done ASAP. Bomberg said that when it was discussed about opening up the pit on CTH “D” that it was presented to the zoning committee as a joint plan between the County and Town. She said that this is County Land but the Board oversees what happens with the land. She further stated that she makes her decisions based on the best interests of Florence County as a whole, not just her voting district. It was said that we need to work as a team and that Chris Steber and Tim Bomberg from the Town of Florence and DeMuri and possibly Pat Smith from the County should sit down together and work out a plan that would meet everyone’s needs. DeMuri said that he will be taking bids for the crushing of gravel in the “D” pit this spring.

Governor’s Transportation Budget: Discussion was had on the impact of the Governor’s Transportation Budget on our department. Prior to 2010 we’ve been cut by about 2-1/2% yearly from our general transportation aids. As it appears now, our aids may actually get an increase of 4%. Our RMA’s (Routine Maintenance Agreements) are supposed to be maintained at the same level as they were this past year. The DNR has a contract with us for pick-up of the deer killed on the state/county highways. That proposal appears to be in jeopardy. We’ll have to wait to get additional information on this at a later date. The removal of the mandatory bike and pedestrian facility requirements on road projects is good for us as it does not require us to put extra money into wider paved shoulders on a road.

Snow Cross/Hill Climb at Keyes Peak Ski Hill: The 2nd annual Snow Cross/Hill Climb was had at the Keyes Peak Skill Hill the last weekend of February. The Forestry Department, Highway Department and the Ski Hill Committee all worked together to prep the facilities for this. There were 41 participants overall. It appeared to be a success.

Aurora Bridge: Both MI and WI provide inspections on the Aurora Bridge on opposite years. Thus the bridge is actually inspected annually. Our rating for the bridge is now low enough that we need to be looking at a rehabilitation project on the bridge. DeMuri said that he would like to apply to get this bridge into the state bridge program. It will take approximately four (4) to five (5) years to get funding. The last major work on the bridge was a deck overlay in 1990. The bridge is 329 feet long and 30 feet wide. It is estimated to cost \$75 a square foot, in today’s dollars, to do an overlay/rehab project. DeMuri said that he will be meeting with personnel from both Michigan and Wisconsin, tomorrow, to discuss their options for this bridge. Being a state bridge on the Michigan side and a county bridge on the other, makes funding of a major project more difficult.

Commissioner’s Report: The weight limits will be going into effect in the very near future. DeMuri said he’s having the guys check the frost tubes regularly. March 19th there will be a presentation on culverts, by Con-Tech, at the rescue squad hall. The Towns and Utility departments have been invited. A & M said they would possibly start work on our cold storage building this week or next.

Gardner asked about the drawdown of funds for the construction projects. DeMuri said that he had Joanne Friberg invest the funds in different accounts and for different lengths of time. He thinks that the CTH “N” project will be nearly complete by early July, if all goes well

DeMuri said that we have to contract for our estimated salt needs and we still have some tons of salt that needs to be purchased and stored. We are obligated to take both the early and seasonal fill amounts but we are not obligated to take the amount we requested for the vendor reserve.

Distribute monthly financial statements: Freeberg presented the committee with a financial statement of our cash flow for both January and February. After review by Freeberg, it was moved by Gardner, seconded by Bomberg and voted four (4) to zero (0) to approve the reports as submitted.

Present bills: The current monthly bills were presented to the Committee. After review of the bills, it was moved by Bomberg, seconded by Halada and voted four (4) to zero (0) to approve payment of the bills not to exceed \$118,609.29.

Committee Members comments, concerns and future agenda items: Next month's agenda should include discussions and/or action on the CTH "N" project, results of the meeting between the Town and the County, and an update on the Aurora Bridge discussions.

Adjourn to next regular meeting: There being no further business, it was moved by Bomberg, seconded by Gardner and voted four (4) to zero (0) to adjourn to April 13th, 2015 for the next regular highway meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Francie Freeberg,
Office Manager