

Members Present: Gary Steber, Jeanette Bomberg, John Halada and Larry Neuens.

Members Absent: None.

Others Present: Jeff DeMuri and Francie Freeberg.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Steber.

A moment of silence was observed in memory of Don Gardner.

It was noted that Larry Dzekute was appointed to fill the vacancy of Don Gardner until the expiration of his term.

Approval and/or revisions to current agenda: A motion was made by Halada, seconded by Bomberg and voted unanimous to approve the agenda as submitted.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by Bomberg, seconded by Halada and voted unanimous to approve the minutes of the March 9th, 2015 Highway Committee Meeting.

Old Business

CTH “N” Bonding Project: (1) Curve re-alignment and (2) the Ox Bowl ATV Trail: DeMuri noted that he received a letter from the DNR today and that most of the permits have been approved for the Ox Bowl. He has been in contact with Nsight and they hope to start on the moving of the fiber optic and telephone cables as soon as possible when the weight limits come off. They will have to make two (2) bores across CTH “N” and shifting their lines to the West side of the highway. The right of way and culvert location have all been marked by Coleman Engineering.

DeMuri said that he has been considering increasing the blacktop from 3” to 4” for the length of the project. This would increase the cost by close to one half million dollars. It would be much more durable than the three (3) inches originally proposed. In addition when the road needs to be resurfaced in the future they will be able to grind and relay a full two inches instead of just the planned inch and a half. The approved work for the Ox Bowl area added approximately \$189,000 to the original cost of the project. Upon thinking it over, he would also like to change the guard rail posts from wood to metal adding approximately \$2,000 to the cost of the project. Then when they require removal in the future, they can scrap the metal, instead of just having to dispose of old wooden posts. DeMuri submitted a summary to the committee showing his proposed changes along with the financing. The total cost of the CTH “N” project with the above proposed changes would be approximately \$2,501,860.

One of the counties in our region, that was supposed to do a CHIP-D project this year, has now bowed out. It was noted that a new commissioner has taken over in that county and he doesn’t feel they are ready to complete such a project. Rather than letting the money go back to the State, DeMuri contacted the State to see if the monies could be used by another county in our region. Florence County was the only county in the region that had a project ready to go. DeMuri said that the Highway Commissioners in our region met and agreed to transfer these funds to Florence County. This is giving us an additional \$144,000 in CHIP-D reimbursements. DeMuri presented the committee with a summary showing his CHIP/CHIP-D reimbursements now at a total of \$349,000. He also summarized the highway funds that we have been carrying over since 2010. With the additional funds he proposes to be added for 2014 and 2015 that would bring our carry over balance to \$604,000. Considerable discussion was had and it was then moved by Neuens, seconded by Bomberg, and voted unanimous to approve the four (4) inches of blacktop and the metal guard rail posts, and have DeMuri issue a change order for these items. DeMuri said that he is going to do the Michigan center line joint in the blacktop and also a safety edge (for the shoulders) in some of the areas.

Update on the meeting between the Town and County for gravel pit location: DeMuri said that he felt the meeting with the Town and County went well. It was decided that there will be a royalty charge of \$1 per yard to help fund the reclamation of the pit when that time comes. That way, the bigger users will pay the bigger share to have the pit reclaimed. The Town of Fern will also be included in this endeavor.

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Gravel Crushing: Bids will be opened tomorrow (April 14th) at 12:15 PM for the crushing of gravel. Steber said that he will be in attendance. DeMuri sent bid out to six (6) possible bidders.

Aurora Bridge: DeMuri met with personnel from (MDOT) Michigan regarding the Aurora Bridge. There were also a couple of personnel from WisDOT. Michigan doesn't want to look at anything long term at this time for major repairs. Being a state bridge on the Michigan side, it will be easier for them to get funding when the time comes. They had considerable discussion on numerous items regarding the bridge and it was decided that both parties will set priorities and then meet again to discuss their ideas. Just to repair the beam ends it will cost \$10,000. DeMuri and representatives from WisDOT feel that a deck replacement is in order and to get it into the bridge aid funding program. The last overlay was done in 1990 and normally has a 15-year life span. DeMuri said that he likes to be pro-active on projects of this nature.

New Business

Sale/Purchase of Equipment: We will be starting to use the tar kettle that we purchased tomorrow. Our old tar kettle was sold for \$4,500. Our 2005 one (1) ton pickup truck is on the action block now with a reserve of \$15,000. DeMuri said that they will be selling the flail mower that the Forestry and Highway Department purchased together, as it doesn't work well in tall grass. He also noted that he is waiting to get additional information regarding the auger system the Utility Commission is planning to sell. He is also looking at a used hot patcher as the hot box we have is too small to do the job efficiently.

Approval for going to four (4) 10 hour days for summer: We've been doing the 10 hour days for quite some time in the summer. It really helps to cut costs for travel by eliminating the one day. After discussion, it was moved by Bomberg, seconded by Halada, and voted unanimous to allow DeMuri proceed with the 10 hour days as he has in the past. DeMuri said that he is looking at starting this on April 27th if the weather is conducive to it.

STP Project Selection: DeMuri said that he would like to apply for another STP (Surface Transportation Program). The last time he applied Florence County was ranked # 30 and they only had funds for 29 projects. These types of projects have to be designed by an engineering firm. The guidelines will be coming out in the very near future. He is considering a project for downtown Aurora or on CTH "N" South of Aurora.

Commissioner's Report: The contractor finished the work on the cold storage building and they did their walk-thru today. He plans to get the electrical work done in the next month or so. The see-thru ridge cap really provides a lot of light but we will still need electricity for night time. The DOT sent out information on a proposed project for resurfacing US '2 from "NN" to the Menominee River Bridge. Our new State salt shed will be built at the same time. The work has been completed for shifting of the property line to accommodate the new salt shed. Coleman Engineering has set the pins and now it just basically needs to be recorded. The weight limits are still in effect on our County Roads.

Distribute monthly financial statements: Freeberg said that she wasn't able to complete the financial report as there are some discrepancies between the Clerk's office and the Highway Department. It was then moved by Neuens, seconded by Halada and voted four (4) to zero (0) to table action until next month.

Present bills: The current monthly bills were presented to the Committee for their review. DeMuri went over the list explaining the bills, as this month's total is very large. Everything came due, or was completed, at the same time. The bills include payment for the materials and completion of the cold storage building; the 2nd payment on the Volvo loaders; the F350 Ford Chassis; construction & roofing materials for the salt sheds; the stake body for the F350 truck; gas and diesel fuel; the new angle broom; rock salt and normal monthly bills. After review and discussion of the bills, it was moved by Bomberg, seconded by Neuens and voted unanimous to approve payment of the bills not to exceed \$244,189.80.

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 gravel crushing bid opening, and an update on the Aurora Bridge discussions.

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Since Neuens has been gone all winter, he asked about the status of the CTH "N" project and was told that Northeast Asphalt plans to start work on the Ox Bowl area as soon as the frost comes out. Once that is completed, he will then start in Florence and work his way south. CTH "N" will remain open during the course of the project. Neuens also asked about the problems with the invasive species (Wild Parsnip) along the highways, in particular highway "101". The DOT does not have funds available now. There is discussion of allowing mowing several times a year in these problem areas, but timing is critical. DeMuri has been working with M. Yadro and the DOT to try to come up with a plan that will help eradicate the invasive plants.

Adjourn to next regular meeting: There being no further business, it was moved by Neuens, seconded by Bomberg and voted unanimous to adjourn to May 11th, 2015 for the next regular highway meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Francie Freeberg,
Office Manager