

Members Present: Gary Steber, Jeanette Bomberg, Don Gardner, and Larry Neuens

Members Absent: John Halada was excused.

Others Present: Tom Olsen Jr. representing FABCO Equipment; Jeff DeMuri and Francie Freeberg.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Steber.

Agenda: It was moved by Gardner, seconded by Bomberg and voted four (4) to zero (0) to approve the agenda as submitted.

Minutes: A motion was then made by Neuens, seconded by Gardner and voted four (4) to zero (0) to approve the minutes of the last regular meeting held on December 9th, 2013.

Old Business

Discussion and/or action on the Wheel Loader bids: DeMuri reviewed the bids that were submitted for the Wheel Tractor Loaders with Quick Coupler. There were only three bids submitted. One bid was for a Volvo from Airing Equipment; one was for a Caterpillar from FABCO Equipment and one for a John Deere from NorTrax Equipment. The bid from NorTrax was eliminated due to the net cost of the machines. DeMuri explained that both the Caterpillar and the Volvo machines were at our shop last week for demoing by our employees. DeMuri and our employees tested both machines. Everyone noted their likes and dislikes of each machine but basically they both were acceptable. It is Volvo's plan to trade out the machines every six months unless the market gets flooded with machines. DeMuri said that he has to look at the long term financial aspect of this purchase instead of the immediate financial advantage. He noted it is hard not to consider a bid that gives the same dollar amount you paid for it today at the end of five years for a buy back. DeMuri said that they checked to see if the loaders worked in our applications. The critical factors are for operating our broom, bucket capacity, overall power, lifting capacity, power of the hydraulics and mounting of the scales each time a loader is traded out. The Caterpillar and the Volvo were good in all applications except for one. The Volvo still needed to be tested for its lifting capacity. After the Caterpillar representatives left last week, it was decided to test their machine to see if it would lift our shouldering machine onto tag trailer. We had to hire someone to do this in the past as we did not have the capability of doing that. Moving the shouldering machine by trailer to a job site, made it much more efficient, operation wise. To everyone's surprise the Caterpillar lifted the shouldering machine high enough to be put onto our trailer without any problems. This is a major asset to our department. Since the Volvo machine was already left we could not test it in the same capacity. Airing Equipment did plan to bring their machine back, before today's meeting, but was delayed due to the snow south of us. The machine will be here tomorrow morning for one last test. DeMuri also noted that there was some difficulty in getting our broom to work with their machine but Mr. Olsen and their representative did go out of their way to fit our application and he wanted to thank him for doing that. After considerable questions and discussion, it was moved by Bomberg, seconded by Neuens and voted four (4) to zero (0) to wait until the test of the Volvo machine tomorrow and then allow DeMuri make the decision based on the results of the test (ie: If the Volvo machine does what we need it to do for lifting then we will purchase those machines and if not, then DeMuri will purchase the Caterpillar machines).

Update on STP Project for CTH "N": The DOT contacted DeMuri on the results of their selections for STP projects. STP Projects are a 80/20 split with the county share being the 20% of the costs. There were 110 projects submitted for this program cycle and only 29 were selected. Unfortunately, Florence County's project was rated # 30 so we did not get chosen in this go around. There were some counties that received two or three projects, which really didn't seem fair to us but we had no control over the selection process. Both the State and the Feds have been making cuts and there was only 22.6 million dollars to go around. So if split equally that would mean each project would be eligible for less than \$800,000. The next solicitation of projects will be for the 2016 funding cycle. DeMuri did talk to the person that oversees the program in Madison and asked what she suggested we do. It was her opinion that we continue doing what we are now. We can then reapply in the future. The CHIP/CHIP D projects were due today and DeMuri said that our project(s) have been submitted. DeMuri said that he will have to take another look at his five (5) year plan as he's not sure CTH "N" north of the Pine River Bridge will hold up for another two to three years.

Update on hiring process: The ad was in the local papers (Mining News, the Daily News and the Iron River Reporter) for a common laborer/truck driver position. Applications are due at 3:00 PM on January 24th, 2014. DeMuri and Steber will then review the applications and make a list of candidates to be interviewed.

Discussion on bonding for roads: DeMuri has been in contact with Jeff Belongie to gather information on the possibility of bonding for construction/reconstruction of county highways and or buildings. Marinette County is in the process of bonding for repairs of some of their County Roads. Mr. Belongie has agreed to attend our next highway committee meeting and explain the process.

Info from the Winter Highway Conference: Larry Neuens was the only person from our county to attend the Winter Highway Conference. He gave a brief overview of the conference. He felt that it was worthwhile and he had talked to several key people including DOT Secretary Mark Gottlieb. Neuens said that the state is still working on the guidelines for the Performance Based Maintenance (PBM) program as there are still lots of questions to be answered. Neuens will leave his notes for DeMuri to review.

New Business

Bridge Ratings: The DOT contacted DeMuri that we are required to get the Little Popple River Bridge re-rated since we put on an epoxy overlay this past fall. DeMuri did some checking and found out he can get it done for approximately \$500. That will be done ASAP.

End of Year Accounting Assistance: In the past few years we have had Jeff Cohen come in and assist with the paper work necessary for the year end closing. The County Auditor said that they have hired a person who has done this for years, as she worked in a County Highway Department. They are recommending that this person do the work instead of Mr. Cohen. They charge \$110 per hour plus mileage and expenses. After discussion it was moved by Gardner, seconded by Neuens and voted four (4) to zero (0) to approve contracting with Schenck for the extra work.

Commissioner's Report: DeMuri said that the inventory process was completed during the sub zero weather in January and the snow has been keeping us so busy that we haven't had time to do any brushing yet this winter. He noted that the DOT Routine maintenance agreement (RMA) budget for 2013 was for \$424,000 plus an additional \$82,000 for a 13.10 quest from the Governor. With all that, we were still over budget by \$30,000 thanks to the snowy December.

Distribute monthly financial statements: The monthly financial statements were distributed and reviewed by Freeberg. It was moved by Neuens, seconded by Gardner, and voted four (4) to zero (0) to approve the financial report as submitted.

Present bills: The bills were presented for review. After discussion and review, it was moved by Gardner, seconded by Neuens and voted four (4) to zero (0) to pay this month's bills for a total not to exceed \$86,764.82.

Committee Members comments, concerns and future agenda items: Next month's agenda should include the discussion on bonding by Mr. Belongie, the five (5) year plan, results of the loader test and status of the hiring process.

Adjourn to next regular meeting: There being no further business it was moved by Gardner, seconded by Bomberg and voted four (4) to zero (0) to adjourn to February 10th, 2014 for the next regular meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Francie Freeberg
Office Manager