

Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Transportation Committee

The Transportation Committee of the McLean County Board met in a Special Meeting on Tuesday, August 15, 2000 at 8:30 a.m. in Room 700, Law and Justice Center, 104 West Front Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

Members Present: Chairman Bass, Members, Hoselton, Lawlis, Emmett, Kinzinger

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Mr. Terry Lindberg, Assistant County Administrator; Ms. Martha B. Ross, Executive Secretary, County Administrator's Office

Department Heads/
Elected Officials

Present: Mr. Jack Mitchell, County Engineer, County Highway Department

Chairman Bass called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Mr. Jack Mitchell, County Engineer, Highway Department, distributed the bid tabs for the letting of August 10, 2000, for the Dale Road District and the Yates Road District projects. He stated that the Dale Road project would be a hot mix, and extend from an area on Six Points Road to Covell. The bid that was accepted was that from Freesen, Inc., in the amount of \$129,957.95. That amount represents 10.83% under the estimate for the project. Mr. Mitchell stated that the seal coat bid on the Dale Road project, however, was rejected, as it was in excess of 18.07% of the estimate.

The Yates Road bid for an aggregate surface was accepted. The bid, at \$111,000.000, was 1.33% under the estimated cost for the project. The project was awarded to Towanda Co.

Chairman Bass asked who were the low bidders for each project. Mr. Mitchell responded that Freesen, Inc. submitted the low bid for the Dale Road project, and Towanda Co. submitted the low bid for the Yates Road project. He then gave his recommendation to the Committee to accept both of those bids.

Motion by Lawlis/Hoselton to accept Freesen, Inc.'s bid for the Dale Road project and Towanda Co.'s bid for the Yates Road project. Motion carried.

Chairman Bass asked for clarification on the bid figures, to which Mr. Mitchell responded that Freesen, Inc.'s bid was 11% under the estimate for the Dale Road project. He noted that the Towanda Co.'s bid for the Yates Road project was 1% under the estimate.

Mr. Kinzinger asked what are the guidelines on adjudicating bids. Mr. Mitchell replied that if a company's bid is up to 5% over the estimate, Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) funds can be utilized to cure the deficit. A bid that falls between 5-10% over an estimate can utilize non-MFT funds.

A bid that is over 10% of the estimate, however, usually disqualifies the bidder from consideration.

Mr. Lawlis asked what is the status of the Rowe bid? Mr. Mitchell responded that it is a non-MFT bid.

Mr. Mitchell explained that the Village of Ellsworth has accepted the County's offer of splitting the cost of materials for roadwork to be done in that location. It is agreed that the cost to the Village of Ellsworth is not to exceed \$412,500. It is further agreed that the County will perform the work on the ditches at 403 and 405 North Main Street in Ellsworth, and that all labor, equipment, dirt cover, and seed will be the sole responsibility of the County.

Mr. Mitchell then explained that his office has been approached by a California man who is interested in locating a dairy farm operation in an area southeast of Bellflower on Mansfield Road, one mile south of County Highway 136. It is anticipated that approximately 3500 head of cattle would be located at this facility, making it the largest dairy farm operation in the State of Illinois.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the County would be willing to further explore the proposed dairy farm, but that Mr. George Kasbergen, the proposed owner of the dairy farm operation, would need to invest in upgrading the road in order to gain access to it.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the upgrade in the road would cost approximately \$560,000, with the County doing the grading and culvert work. The road surface would be increased to 80 thousand pound, and the County would provide the grading.

Chairman Bass asked how much the road improvements would cost. Mr. Mitchell responded that the improvements would cost approximately \$560,000.00, assessed to Mr. Kasbergen, for contract work to widen the existing road and apply hot mix to strengthen the existing road. An additional \$50 to \$60 thousand dollars of County funds would be utilized for the acquisition of the right of way, culvert installation, and grading of the ditches.

Mr. Lawlis asked if only two (2) miles of road would need to be improved. Mr. Mitchell responded that he was correct. He further stated that Piatt County is considering the site as well. There may be money from other sources available to fund the County's portion of the necessary improvements, specifically Economic Development money.

Mr. Emmett stated that the projected investment quoted by the dairy operation developer may very likely be quite a bit less than what the actual cost will be. He noted that the developer may be attempting to circumvent stringent regulations against large-scale dairy farms in California by

moving operations into Illinois. One reason for the strict rules in California, he stated, is to address the levels of environmental pollution generated by large dairy operations.

Mr. Emmett noted that one large-scale dairy operation is located near Elmwood, and that operation could be observed carefully to determine the extent of what might be experienced in the event that such an operation located near Bellflower.

Mr. Hoselton asked whether the County has set a precedent in providing road improvement services for any other operation. Mr. Mitchell responded that the County has not provided road improvement services for any other operation in this manner. He noted that, if Mr. Kasbergen must pay road construction costs in advance, then the County's involvement in the project will be limited.

Mr. Lawlis asked whether the County would be asked to improve two (2) miles or four (4) miles of road. Mr. Mitchell replied that McLean County would improve two (2) miles of road, with Piatt County being responsible for the remaining four (4) miles.

Chairman Bass asked if the purpose of Mr. Mitchell's presentation regarding the proposed large-scale dairy farm was to alert the Committee in the event that the issue received more attention in the future. Mr. Mitchell responded that this was correct, and that he would be in communication with Mr. Kasbergen to advise him of some of the steps he would need to take in order to prepare a presentation in Illinois.

Mr. Kinzinger asked what the economic impact would be to the locality. Mr. Emmett addressed this question by saying he believed that there would be no economic benefit.

Chairman Bass stated that he did not wish to be in the position of making a decision on a large-scale dairy operation in too rapid a fashion.

Mr. Mitchell asked the Committee for their consent for him to notify Mr. Kasbergen to the effect that any necessary road improvements would be his responsibility. Mr. Lawlis asked about Piatt County and what their plans were with regard to the proposed dairy operation. Mr. Mitchell responded that Piatt County would need to speak with Mr. Kasbergen regarding their requirements.

Mr. Hoselton stated that he would not like to make any decision regarding any phase of a large-scale dairy operation at this time.

Chairman Bass asked Mr. Mitchell whether he would be in contact with Mr. Kasbergen to update him as to the Committee's reaction to his proposal. Mr. Mitchell stated that he would.

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Mr. Lawlis noted that there is more at stake in this situation than just a road. Mr. Mitchell replied that the County, at this point, is only concerned with the road.

Motion by Lawlis/Kinzinger to adjourn the special meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

There being nothing further to come before the Committee at this time, Chairman Bass adjourned the meeting at 8:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha B. Ross
Recording Secretary