

## Minutes of the Transportation Committee

The Transportation Committee of the McLean County Board met on Tuesday, March 3, 2009 at 8:00 a.m. in Room 404, Government Center, 115 East Washington Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

Members Present: Chairman Hoselton, Members Caisley, Cavallini, Soeldner, McIntyre and Wollrab

Members Absent: None

Other Members Present: None

Staff Members Present: Mr. John Zeunik, County Administrator, Mr. Terry Lindberg, Assistant County Administrator, Mr. Bill Wasson, Director of Administrative Services, Ms. Diana Hospelhorn, Recording Secretary

Department Heads Present: Mr. Eric Schmitt, County Engineer

Others Present: Mr. Jerry Stokes, Assistant County Engineer, Highway Department, Ms. Michelle Anderson, Financial Reporting Specialist, County Auditor's Office

Chairman Hoselton called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

Chairman Hoselton stated that the first item for action is approval of the minutes from the February 3, 2009 meeting.

Motion by Caisley/Cavallini to recommend approval of the minutes from the February 3, 2009 meeting of the Transportation Committee.

Motion carried.

Chairman Hoselton asked the Committee to review the bills for February 28, 2009. The prepaid total for February 28, 2009 is \$382,203.33.

Mr. Caisley asked if the department was still within the contract with Cargill on the purchase of salt. Mr. Eric Schmitt, County Engineer answered that the department currently has 700 tons of salt left to order and 2,250 tons of salt in storage.

Ms. Wollrab inquired about the payment to BroMenn. Mr. Schmitt noted that the department uses BroMenn as part of the drug and alcohol random testing program.

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Mr. Soeldner asked if the heating in the floor has produced significant savings in the cost of heating the building. Mr. Schmitt stated that it is too early to calculate any savings. At the completion of the winter months, a comparison to last year's bills should verify any savings in the cost of heating the building.

Motion by Soeldner/Wollrab to recommend payment  
of the February 28, 2009 bills, as submitted by the  
County Auditor.  
Motion carried.

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Chairman Hoselton stated that the first item to be presented for action is the Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) Resolution for improvement to the White Oak Road and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive Intersection.

Mr. Eric Schmitt stated that this is a MFT Fund resolution authorizing \$44,100.00 for the construction of larger turning radii and for the installation of traffic signals at the intersection of White Oak Road and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. He stated that this was a joint safety project between the County and the City of Bloomington. The project started in 1997 and the improvement was completed in 2007. The County has a contract with the City of Bloomington to maintain the County's part of the intersection.

Motion by Cavallini/Caisley to recommend approval  
of the Motor Fuel Tax Resolution for the Improvement  
of White Oak Road Section 96-00306-00-SP.  
Motion carried.

Mr. Schmitt continued with the Matching Tax Resolution authorizing \$44,100.00 for improvement to the White Oak Road and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive Intersection.

Motion by Cavallini/Caisley to recommend approval  
of the Matching Tax Resolution for the Improvement  
of White Oak Road Section 96-00306-00-SP.  
Motion carried.

Chairman Hoselton stated that the next item for action is the Timber Bridge Engineering Agreement with Hampton Lenzini and Renwick, Inc (HLR).

Mr. Schmitt noted that the preliminary engineering agreement is for the inspection of 14 designated timber pile supported bridges. Under this proposed agreement, HLR will calculate the safe load rating for the structures and provide the County with maintenance or repair recommendations for the appropriate structures. He stated that the inspection is done every 24 months on the older structures and every 48 months on the newer structures as a part of the National Bridge Inspection System (NBIS). The structural evaluation is submitted to the State of Illinois.

Motion by Caisley/Soeldner to recommend approval  
of the Timber Bridge Engineering Agreement with  
Hampton Lenzini and Renwick, Inc (HLR).  
Motion carried.

Chairman Hoselton informed the Committee that the last item for action is the White Oak Boat Launch Safety Grant Application.

Mr. Schmitt reported to the Committee that the grant application is for a safety project at the White Oak boat launch into Evergreen Lake. He stated that the department applied for the grant in 2004 and resubmitted the application in 2008. The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) requested that the department do a Road Safety Assessment (RSA). The RSA was conducted on January 7 and 8, 2009 by IDOT, the Federal Highway Administration and the Illinois State Police to provide observations and identify other safety measures that could be implemented to prevent vehicles from entering the lake. The main observation from the RSA was that there was no warning to the motorist that the roadway was ending at Evergreen Lake or that a park setting was being entered. Mr. Schmitt stated that additional warning signs will be added to notify the drivers of the road ending. Instead of adding an arrester bed to slow the traffic, RSA recommends that the road be realigned. Evergreen trees will be planted to change the environment and the appearance that the road continues into the lake. He informed the Committee that the estimated cost of the project is \$200,000.00.

Mr. Caisley asked how many incidents have occurred since we looked at this safety project two years ago. Mr. Schmitt responded that there have been no additional incidents.

Mr. Caisley stated that by placing two sets of curves on the road, it would make it difficult for vehicles towing trailers with boats. He stated that the curves could create a problem with the possibility of collisions. Mr. Schmitt responded that the turning radius allows for vehicles towing boats. The shoulder is also paved to allow for additional space to make the turning maneuver.

Mr. Soeldner asked if Mr. Schmitt thought the department had a good opportunity to receive the grant. Mr. Schmitt pointed out that part of the reason the grant was not received before is that IDOT wanted the department to complete the RSA to determine if the countermeasures the department was proposing were sufficient. The RSA is completed and Mr. Schmitt believes the department has a very good chance of receiving the grant.

Mr. Soeldner stated that he believes, if a person was not familiar with the area and was not paying attention to the environment around them, there is the possibility of accidentally driving into the lake.

Mr. Caisley responded that to accidentally drive into the lake, one would have to overlook double stop signs and rumble strips. Mr. Caisley does not support spending \$200,000.00 to protect someone under the influence of alcohol or drugs. He does not believe the project is a wise expenditure. Mr. Schmitt added that there is also the risk that an innocent person who may be launching or removing their boat from the lake could be seriously injured or killed.

Chairman Hoselton stated that, over years, not a lot of money has been spent at Lake Evergreen.

Mr. Wasson, Director of Administrative Services, and the former Director of Parks and Recreation, pointed out that the mission of Comlara Park is to provide an economical provision for outdoor recreation for the citizens of McLean County at the most cost effective manner possible. This proposal has been on the table for several years. He stated that Mr. Schmitt has voiced the Parks and Recreation Department's past concerns. While we understand that there may not be significant empathy for impaired drivers, the fact of the matter is, this area is used regularly and that use has grown dramatically over the past 10 – 15 years. Mr. Wasson pointed out that, because of this heavy use, the park's concern is to protect, not only the impaired driver, but all of the recreational users. He added that there is a need for the addition of a second parking lot. The use of the boat launch is so heavy, that on weekends, it is common to have boat trailers lined on both sides of the road. This kind of a situation increases pedestrian traffic and reduces visibility. Mr. Wasson noted that this project will benefit the park in a number of ways, not only addressing the impaired driver, but also by increasing overall safety.

Mr. Caisley asked if this is the best way to spend \$200,000.00 to improve Comlara Park. Mr. Schmitt stated that this a federal safety grant through the State of Illinois. The Highway Safety Improvement Program's formula determines the cost/ benefit ratio and qualified the improvements for this grant. The County's share of the project is \$20,000.00.

Mr. Jerry Stokes, Assistant County Engineer, stated that the main concern of this safety program is with class A injuries (significant injury to the person or damage to the vehicle) and fatalities. The White Oak boat launch is the only area at Comlara Park with a significant number of accidents involving fatalities.

Chairman Hoselton noted that it is a grant application. He reminded the Committee that the County's share of the project would be \$20,000.00.

Motion by McIntyre/Cavallini to recommend approval  
of the White Oak Boat Launch Safety Grant Application.  
Motion carried with member Caisley voting "No."

Chairman Hoselton stated that the first items to be presented for information are the project summaries.

Mr. Schmitt noted that the construction and final paperwork on Henning Bridge (Sec 05-00130-12-BR) and Spady Bridge (Sec 05-00130—11 BR) are complete. Final payment has been made.

Mr. Schmitt continued with the Colfax / Weston Road, reporting that the construction and paperwork on this project are complete. This project was funded with federal dollars and TARP (Truck Access Route Program) dollars.

Mr. Schmitt stated that the construction and paperwork on the Kath Bridge (Sec 03-00148-05-Br), located on the Danvers/Carlock Road, are complete. Final payment has been made.

Mr. Schmitt updated the Committee on the East Side Highway Corridor Study. He reported that the final draft of the report is scheduled to be received by the department today.

Mr. Schmitt noted that, last month, the Committee asked why the expenditure from Fund 0120 Line Item 05-75-0001 was at 23% at the end of January. He stated that the reason for this high percentage is the department pays Simplex-Grinnell for the security and fire alarm monitoring for the entire year in January.

Mr. Schmitt referred to the Stimulus handouts. He stated that the circular letter from IDOT outlines the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. He noted that there are two ways money will be distributed to the local agencies in McLean County.

1. \$45 million will be sub-allocated to urban areas with populations between 5,000 and 200,000. The Bloomington-Normal Urbanized Area will receive \$3,869,449, with this amount to be shared between the County, the City of Bloomington and the Town of Normal. A meeting with the City of Bloomington and the Town of Normal is scheduled to discuss the division of these funds.
2. \$33 million will be sub-allocated to the ninety-six downstate Illinois counties based on non-urban population, non-urban area (square miles), and non-urban centerline mileage. Township and municipalities with populations less than 5,000 can coordinate with the counties for use of this \$33 million. McLean County's share is \$601,520.

Mr. Schmitt stated that in response to the Township and municipalities with populations less than 5,000 being able to coordinate with the counties for use of this \$33 million, the department has received a Stimulus Funding request from the City of Chenoa for the City of Chenoa Bike Trail. He referred to the memo from the Farnsworth Group. He stated that the City of Chenoa is requesting \$43,000 for improvements along the abandoned lanes of Old Route 66 from Township Road 300N to a commercial entrance just north of U.S. Route 24, which is 1.13 miles in length. The estimated cost of this phase of the bike trail project is \$265,000. The City of Chenoa has \$221,500 of Federal Funds available for the project. As part of the project, the plan is to turn the intersection of Old 66 and Route 24 into a 4-way stop. Mr. Schmitt informed the Committee that because of the possible safety

hazard, he asked if flashers were going to be installed at the intersection. The State, at this time is not requiring flashers to be installed on the stop signs. The Project Development Report is complete and the preliminary plans are near completion.

Mr. Schmitt stated that McLean County's share of the \$33 million allocated is \$601,520. He noted that he has talked to IDOT concerning the eligibility of the City of Chenoa's Bike Trail. The ARRA of 2009 states "Highway construction projects utilizing stimulus funds will need to be located on federal-aid routes functionally classified as urban collectors, rural major collectors or higher. However, since ARRA funds are to be implemented using federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding guidelines, bridge projects and safety projects on any public road are eligible for the stimulus funds." Mr. Schmitt stated that he wants to make sure these funds can be used for bike trail projects. In addition, Illinois is receiving approximately \$28 million in stimulus funding allocated to the local agencies for Enhancement projects. Bike trails do qualify as Enhancement projects.

Mr. Schmitt pointed out to the Committee that the \$43,500 request from the City of Chenoa would come from the \$601,520 rural funds allocated to McLean County. He stated that it is not certain the amount the County will receive from the urban funds to be shared with the City of Bloomington and the Town of Normal.

Mr. Schmitt stated that as part of the federal guidelines, the County is required to have their list of projects to IDOT by March 25, 2009. IDOT will make the determination as to which projects qualify for the stimulus monies. Projects such as the City of Chenoa, which are ready to go, are projects which will qualify. The County has the previously designated Horse Farm Road project as eligible for stimulus funding. If funds are not allocated by March, 2010, the funds will be reallocated by the State. Mr. Schmitt stated that the department recommends the money be used for the Horse Farm Road

Mr. Caisley wanted to clarify that the City of Chenoa is asking for \$43,500, however they do have Motor Fuel Tax funds available that could be used. He stated that giving the City of Chenoa a lesser amount is an option for the Committee. Mr. Schmitt stated that this is what the Committee must decide. He stressed that, if the department is going to accept requests to fund projects, then the department should only accept projects that are ready to go to avoid losing the Stimulus Funds. He noted that he is not aware at this time of any other possible township or municipal project request for the Stimulus Funding.

Ms. Wollrab stated that if some of the \$601,520, is going to go back, it would be a good idea to allocate the \$43,500 to the City of Chenoa. This would, at least, be good for the economy and keep the money in McLean County.

Mr. Schmitt referred the Committee to the resolution passed in January, 2009. The resolution listed the projects the County had ready to fund with the stimulus money. He stated that the County Highway Department recommends the following projects:

- The Towanda Overpass, which is eligible for the Surface Transportation Program Urban (STU) funds which the County will split with the City of Bloomington and the Town of Normal.
- The Horse Farm Road project, which is eligible for the Surface Transportation Program Rural (STR) funds of \$601,520.
- The Towanda-Barnes Road
- The Pipeline Road

Mr. Schmitt pointed out the County has projects ready that would spend all of the STR funds of \$601,520. He stated that the amount of money the County will receive from the STU funds is unknown. He would hope the money would be split three ways. The City of Bloomington and the Town of Normal are not eligible for the STR funds. The County would use the STU funds for various projects in this year's program such as:

- The shortfall on the Horse Farm Road.
- The Intergovernmental Agreement with the Village of Danvers to bring the Danvers- Carlock Road up to an 80,000 lb road.

Mr. Schmitt stated that the request for \$43,500 from the City of Chenoa for the bike trail is an information item and will need to be presented for action at a Stand Up Committee Meeting.

Mr. Caisley acknowledged that it would not be unreasonable to expect the City of Chenoa to use some of their MFT funds for the bike trail project.

Mr. Cavallini asked if the \$43,500 is taking money from the Horse Farm Road project. Mr. Schmitt answered that the \$43,500 would be taken from the \$610,520 STR funds, leaving the County to appropriate \$43,500 of County funds for the Horse Farm Road project.

Mr. Caisley noted that it is either the City of Chenoa using \$43,500 of their Motor Fuel Tax on the bike trail or the County using \$43,500 of its Motor Fuel Tax on the Horse Farm Road project. Mr. Schmitt stated that the City of Chenoa does have the Motor Fuel Tax funds to pay for the bike trail project. It would just take away funds from their maintenance budget for the next couple of years.

Mr. Schmitt asked the Committee how did they want him to prepare for the Stand-Up Committee Meeting. Chairman Hoselton suggested that the dollar amount be left open for discussion at the meeting.

Mr. John Zeunik, County Administrator stated that the dollar amount can be left open as long as the resolution is on the agenda as an action item. He asked if Mr. Schmitt would have the information determining if the City of Chenoa is eligible for the Enhancement funds, prior to the County Board meeting. Mr. Schmitt stated that projects concerning Enhancement funding, are being addressed in March, 2009.

Mr. McIntyre pointed out that part of the bike trail at Towanda and Lexington was privately funded. He asked if maybe this was an option for the City of Chenoa. Mr. Wasson, Director of Administrative Services, noted that the County has an Intergovernmental Agreement in place that includes the County, the City of Bloomington, the Town of Normal, and all rural communities along the trail. That Intergovernmental Agreement includes long term planning, development and maintenance of the trail sections. The Intergovernmental Agreement does not address doing projects on an individual basis. Because of the fact that the last two cycles of the Enhancement programs have taken several years, and because private funding has become available, some of the rural communities have gone forward with small internal sections of the trail benefiting their own personal community.

Mr. Terry Lindberg, Assistant County Administrator, reminded the Committee that the County Board passed a resolution prioritizing and allocating \$7.7 million in projects that would be eligible for the Stimulus funds. He pointed out that the County will receive \$610,520 specific County money and estimated \$900,000 to \$1.3 million County money from the urban funds. If you look at the \$7.7 million in projects and look at the County receiving between \$1.3 million and \$1.8 million, the point now is to determine how the money will be applied. Mr. Lindberg noted that all the projects in the resolution were based on an 80%-20% matching funds, the County's share being 20%. Any monies the Committee allocates to someone else will reduce the monies the County has available to apply to the projects previously approved in the Resolution.

Mr. Schmitt again presented the request from the City of Chenoa for \$43,500 of the ARRA rural allotments. He stated that the City does have Motor Fuel Tax funds to cover the project. They are requesting the \$43,500 so they will be able to save the Motor Fuel Tax funds for maintenance. The projects recommended by the Department are stated in the Resolution.

Mr. Caisley stated he was not familiar with the Horse Farm Road and asked for details on the project. Mr. Schmitt pointed out the Horse Farm Road on the map and explained that the project would update the road to an 80,000 lb access road. He stated that updating the road to an 80,000 lb road benefits the farmers and

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businesses along the road. The Horse Farm Road is also an access road between Interstate 74 and

Route 136. It is the plan of the County to eventually have all County Highways updated to 80,000 lb access roads.

Mr. Schmitt stated that it is the decision of the Committee how to spend the STR funds. After hearing from IDOT on the eligibility of the City of Chenoa project, he will prepare the resolution allocating the STR funds. The amount of the monies can be determined by the Committee at the Stand-Up Committee Meeting on March 17, 2009.

Mr. Schmitt informed the Committee that there will be a joint meeting with the Land Use and Development Committee on Friday, March 13, 2009. He asked members of the Committee that would be going on the field trip to let him know. The ShowBus will leave the parking lot on the east side of the Government Center at 1:00 p.m.

Mr. Schmitt reported to the Committee that there was an accident involving one of the department's employees. The accident occurred on the Towanda Overpass. There was a fire and Mr. Frank Tharp suffered burns on his hands. Mr. Tharp is doing well. The County vehicle was totaled. It was burned beyond repair.

Chairman Hoselton stated that he received a telephone call from the Red Cross. They stated that the reaction of the County employees probably saved the life of the driver of the SUV. They complimented the calm reaction of the employees in quickly responding to the situation. Chairman Hoselton suggest that a letter of appreciation be sent to the men on site at the accident for their quick response which saved the life of the man driving the other vehicle involved in the accident. The Committee concurred with the Chairman's recommendation.

Chairman Hoselton asked if there was further business to come before the Committee. Hearing none, he adjourned the meeting at 9:17 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Hospelhorn  
Recording Secretary