

Minutes of the Transportation Committee

The Transportation Committee of the County Board met on June 3, 2003 at 7:30 a.m. at the Law and Justice Center, Room 700, 104 West Front Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

Members Present: Chairman Bass, Members Cavallini, Dean, Rodgers, Hoselton and Owens

Members Absent: None

Staff Members Present: Mr. John Zeunik, County Administrator;
Ms. Lucretia Wherry, Administrator's Office;
Mr. Jack Mitchell, County Engineer; Mr. Leif Epperson, Fleet Manager, Highway Department

Others Present: Ms. Christine Brauer, Regional Planning Commission;
Ms. Jennifer Sicks, Transportation Planner, Regional Planning Commission

Chairman Bass called the meeting to order at 7:37 a.m.

Chairman Bass presented the Minutes of the May 6, 2003 meeting for approval.

Motion by Owens/Cavallini to approve the minutes of the May 6, 2003 meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

Chairman Bass presented the bills for approval.

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Mr. Owens asked Mr. Mitchell what is New Matrix. Mr. Mitchell replied that New Matrix is the company that provides the distance measurement machines, which are mounted on the antilock brakes. Mr. Owens asked where is the Company located. Mr. Mitchell replied that New Matrix is the manufacturer and he is not sure where it is located.

Mr. Owens asked what equipment was purchased. Mr. Mitchell replied that the County has purchased a tractor.

Mr. Owens asked why \$25,000 was paid to Nicor Gas. Mr. Mitchell replied that Nicor Gas moved a gas line near the Oakland Avenue Bridge. The line was moved last fall per an agreement between Nicor and McLean County Government. Mr. Cavallini asked how long it takes to move a line. Mr. Mitchell stated that he is not sure how long it takes to move a gas line.

Motion by Cavallini/Dean to approve the bills for
May 2003 as transmitted by the County Auditor. Motion carried.

Mr. Leif Epperson, Fleet Manager presented a report on BioDiesel Fuel. There are two kinds of BioDiesel Fuel, animal fat/cooking oil and soy-diesel. Mr. Epperson recommended that the Committee consider using the soy diesel if the Committee is interested in trying a BioDiesel product. The BioDiesel based on animal fat is not as safe for vehicles. Mr. Epperson stated that the soy diesel can be used in temperatures above 40 degrees and that FS Evergreen is the only supplier of BioDiesel in our area.

Mr. Owens stated that it looks like the disadvantages of BioDiesel are greater than the advantages. The County could not request competitive bids if FS Evergreen is the only supplier. Mr. Epperson reminded the Committee that most of the diesel fuel purchased by the County Highway Department is bought from FS Evergreen. Mr. Owens asked how often bids are requested on fuel. Mr. Mitchell replied that fuel is bid each time the fuel is needed.

Mr. Owens noted that using BioDiesel would require changing the fuel filter in the vehicles more often. Mr. Mitchell stated that, at first, a couple extra filter changes would be needed. Mr. Epperson added that fuel filter are relatively inexpensive, usually about \$10.00 each.

Mr. Cavallini asked if the national trend is to use BioDiesel. Mr. Epperson responded that many larger counties, airports and trucking companies are using BioDiesel. Minneapolis, Minnesota is using BioDiesel. The use of BioDiesel decreases emissions. The BioDiesel also acts as a lubricant, which may be needed in the future as sulfur levels in fuel are decreased. In the future, BioDiesel may be mandated.

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Mr. Cavallini asked if the Highway Department would have to test the BioDiesel on the entire fleet or if the test could be run on a couple of the trucks. Mr. Epperson replied that since the Highway Department has only two fuel tanks, it would be impossible to limit the test to just a couple of the trucks. Mr. Epperson noted that the Bloomington Normal Public Transportation System tested BioDiesel on the Bus fleet last summer. The Public Transportation System noticed a decrease in emissions, but no increase in performance.

Mr. Dean stated that the Farm community has accepted BioDiesel. However, if it gets too cold, there are problems with the BioDiesel fuel jelling up. Mr. Cavallini asked if the Highway Department could use BioDiesel fuel in the summer and switch to regular diesel in the winter.

Mr. Hoselton asked how long BioDiesel fuel has been available. Mr. Epperson replied that BioDiesel fuel has been available since 1992. Mr. Hoselton stated that the County has to be fiscally responsible to the taxpayers. With BioDiesel fuel there is an increase in cost. Mr. Hoselton asked Mr. Epperson to find out how many months of the year Minneapolis is using the BioDiesel and what additives Minneapolis is using if the BioDiesel is being used year round.

Ms. Rodgers asked if the increased cost of the BioDiesel fuel is feasible. Mr. Mithcell replied that while he does not like to see an increase in costs, by testing the BioDiesel, the County would be able to see if there are advantages to the County using the product. The Highway Department has sufficient funds to purchase BioDiesel fuel. Ms. Rodgers stated that she feels the Community would support the changes to BioDiesel.

Chairman Bass suggested that if the Committee agrees to test the BioDiesel fuel, the Highway Department document the advantages and disadvantages of the fuel and report back to the Committee.

Mr. Owens asked what are the consequences of the fuel jelling up in a truck. Mr. Epperson explained that each situation is different. The fuel filter may need changed, the gas siphoned off, or additives added. Additives can be expensive at \$8.00 per quart. One quart would be needed for every 10 gallons of fuel in the truck.

Mr. Owens stated that he would like more information on BioDiesel before testing it. Ms. Rodgers reminded the Committee that regular diesel fuel jells up too. Mr. Hoselton asked why the County should spend the money to test the BioDiesel fuel when others are doing it. Mr. Hoselton stated he would prefer to see other studies before trying it ourselves.

Chairman Bass asked the Committee if the Committee would like to direct the Highway Department to test BioDiesel fuel. Mr. Epperson indicated that the fuel tanks would be

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low enough to order fuel by the end of the month, and the order would last through September.

Mr. Owens suggested waiting until more research is done. Mr. Epperson stated that if the Committee decides to wait, the test could not be done this year. Locally, Olympia School District has run its buses on BioDiesel from March through November.

Mr. Dean pointed out that ethanol was not received well at first, but now it is hard to find gasoline that does not have ethanol in it. Mr. Dean added that using a soy based BioDiesel fuel would support area farmers. Ms. Rodgers stated that she would like the Committee to be proactive in the use of BioDiesel.

Motion by Cavallini/Rodgers to recommend that the Highway Department test one order of BioDiesel fuel on the Highway Department fleet.

Mr. Owens voted "present".

Mr. Hoselton voted "no".

Mr. Cavallini voted "yes".

Ms. Rodgers voted "yes".

Mr. Dean voted "yes".

Chairman Bass voted "yes".

Motion carried. 4-1-1.

Chairman Bass asked that Mr. Epperson request a copy of the results of Olympia School's BioDiesel test. Mr. Epperson replied that he would ask for the information and report back to the Committee.

Mr. Mitchell presented the letting results from the May 28, 2003 Purchase of Equipment of Snow Wings. Monroe was the only company to bid and did not meet the specifications. The Snow Wings will be re-bid. Mr. Cavallini asked what are snow wings. Mr. Mitchell explained that the Snow Wings go on the side of the vehicles. The Snow Wings allow the driver to cut through the snow in fewer passes. The Snow wings either cut the snow to the ground or shelve it depending on how deep the snow is. Mr. Hoselton asked if this is a replacement or an additional purchase. Mr. Mitchell replied that the Snow Wings are an additional purchase.

Mr. Mitchell presented the results from the sale of surplus vehicles. There were 7 bids for the 1997 Ford Crown Victoria, which was sold to Mr. Joe Raycraft for \$4,500.00. There were 5 bids on the 1998 Dodge Ram Pickup Truck, which was sold to Mr. Randy Zimmerman for \$5,900.00. Mr. Hoselton asked who establishes the minimum price. Mr. Epperson replied that he based the minimum bid price on the Blue Book's average trade-in price.

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Motion by Hoselton/Cavallini to recommend approval of a resolution awarding sell of the 1997 Ford Crown Victoria to Mr. Joe Raycraft and the 1998 Dodge Ram Pickup Truck to Mr. Randy Zimmerman.

Mr. Cavallini asked who could bid on the surplus equipment. Mr. Mitchell replied that the sale is advertised in The Pantagraph. Anyone, the public or employees, can bid.

Motion carried.

Mr. Mitchell presented a budget report. Mr. Mitchell asked the Committee if there were any questions. The Committee reviewed the report and had no questions.

Mr. Mitchell updated the Committee on the status of the Yoltan Bridge and the problems on the surrounding properties. The Yoltan Bridge is a joint project between McLean County and the Village of Downs. The bridge is located on 400 North Road and 2150 East Road. Mr. Mitchell explained that the problems began due to a large amount of rain. Stark Excavation needed to cover a second manhole. The second mahole was needed due to the placement of the tiles, which were clogged with corn stalks. However, Stark did not place the manhole cover in time to prevent flooding during the heavy rains experienced this spring. Mr. Mitchell, Chairman Bass, Mr. Brian Hug, Civil Assistant State's Attorney, Stark Excavation, the property owners and their attorneys met to discuss the situation. While, the situation is not resolved, all parties are feeling better about the situation. Hopefully, Stark will pay for the damages. The bridge itself is coming along well.

Mr. Mitchell reminded the Committee that the next Transportation Committee Meeting will be on July 8, 2003, in Room 700, McLean County Law and Justice Center.

Mr. Mitchell presented a status report of road work. Mr. Mitchell indicated that he passed out a letter from IDOT regarding the Route 9-Covell Road project. He asked that the Committee review the letter.

On Towanda Barnes Road, Section 113, the Frost Heave bumps were milled off, level binder and surface placed, dirt shaped and seeded. A punch list for the contractors is complete and the speed limit was raised once again to 45 mph.

Mr. Mitchell stated that on May 15, 2003, he met with IDOT personnel from Springfield and Ottawa to look at the Frost Heave problems on Towanda Barnes Road, Section 165. IDOT is going to request use of the IDOT Road Inventory Van to check the extent of the roughness. Grinding may be a possible solution.

On the Leroy/Lexington Road, Section 99-00044-06-WR, the ditch slopes have been shaped, seeded and erosion control placed. Currently, chips are being stock piled for completing the cold mix surface.

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On May 27, 2003 the County Highway Department moved into the project to begin replacing cross road culverts, widening shoulders and grading ditches on Arrowsmith Road, Section 99-00140-02-WR.

There being nothing further to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Bass at 8:50 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lucretia Wherry
Recording Secretary

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