

Minutes of the Transportation Committee Meeting

The Transportation Committee of the McLean County Board met on Tuesday, September 5, 2000 at 7:30 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 7:30 a.m. and declared a quorum. Chairman Bass presented the minutes of the August 8, 2000 meeting for approval.

Motion by Kinzinger/Emmett to accept and place on file the minutes of the August 8, 2000 meeting for approval. Motion carried.

Chairman Bass presented the bills, which have been reviewed and recommended for transmittal to the Transportation Committee by the County Auditor.

Motion by Lawlis/Hoselton to recommend payment of the bills as presented by the County Auditor. Motion carried.

Chairman Bass presented the three (3) Grant Agreements from the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) for the Towanda-Barnes Road. The first Agreement covers road improvements from Ireland Grove Road to Illinois Route 9, to be identified as Section 96-00168-00-FP, with a grant appropriation as \$414,000.00. The second Agreement covers road improvements from U.S. Route 150 to Ireland Grove Road, to be identified as Section 97-00165-00-FP, with a grant appropriation of \$572,000.00. The third Agreement covers road improvements from Illinois Route 9 to Fort Jesse Road, to be identified as Section 98-00113-03-FP, with a grant appropriation of \$414,000.00. The total grant appropriation is \$1,400,000.00.

Mr. Hoselton asked, in reference to Grant Agreement provision II (2), whether all necessary right-of-way for the project has been obtained. Mr. Mitchell responded that there is one parcel of land remaining to be acquired for the right-of-way.

Mr. Hoselton asked, in reference to Grant Agreement provision II (5), whether the time frame to complete the Towanda-Barnes project was 2 years. Mr. Mitchell explained that the language of this Agreement is in a standardized form and, should the project not be completed within the stated time period, the County would need to ask for an extension. He further explained that the Sections from Ireland Grove Road to Illinois Route 9 (96-00168-00-FP), and from U.S. Route 150 to Ireland Grove Road (97-00165-00-FP) are expected to be finished within the allotted time. Regarding the Section from Illinois Route 9 to Fort Jesse Road (98-00113-03-FP), Mr. Mitchell stated that he did not anticipate a problem with time constraints, as much of the grant allotment will be used for engineering and acquisition of right-of-way.

Mr. Hoselton asked, in reference to Grant Agreement provision III (5), whether the State will disburse the total amount of the funding at the outset of the project, or whether it will distribute the funds incrementally. Mr. Mitchell responded that it is his understanding that three (3) checks, one for each Section, will be disbursed upon the signing of the three (3) Grant Agreement forms. He noted that for some time it was understood that the grant would be administered with the construction contract through DCCA, but that it now would be administered through the Department of Transportation. He noted that this is the grant that was obtained through the help of Senator Maitland, for a total of \$1.4 million. The County split the totality of the grant by mileage, into three (3) sections. The grant will be used for construction costs, as well as right-of-way and engineering.

Chairman Bass asked whether there were any anticipated problems with the State not making payments. Mr. Mitchell responded that the standard language previously referred to, including a non-appropriation clause, began appearing in all local agency agreements, and therefore, should not cause a problem with disbursement.

Mr. Hoselton asked how many such projects has the County been involved in to date.

Mr. Mitchell responded that this project is the first of its kind for the County. He noted that with every Federal job that the Highway Department administers, the terminology regarding non-discrimination appears in all Local Agency Agreements, and has appeared in all standard agreements for some time. Mr. Kinzinger observed that, essentially, if the County does not accept the Agreement as written, it is tacitly implied that the County also does not accept the funds offered in the grant. Mr. Mitchell concurred.

Motion by Hoselton/Emmett to accept the terms and conditions of the three (3) IDOT Grant Agreements for the Towanda-Barnes Road project. Motion carried.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the Arrowsmith Road County Highway 15 Improvement Resolution must be passed in order to proceed with any condemnation for right-of-way proceeding. He noted that an almost identical resolution was previously passed for the Towanda-Barnes Road, providing a precedent for such action.

Mr. Mitchell explained that the absentee landowner, who owns in excess of one mile along one side of the property in question, is over-valuing the property needed for a portion of the right-of-way for the Towanda-Barnes Road project. As a result, the County will need to invoke the condemnation process against this landowner, and noted that the Resolution at hand empowers the County do so.

Mr. Kinzinger asked where Arrowsmith is located. Mr. Mitchell stated that Arrowsmith is located near Illinois Route 9 on the Arrowsmith to Colfax Road. He explained that the portion of road that was worked on last year was the northeast section. He also noted that the first two (2) miles coming south off of Route 9 is in need of right-of-way, as it is narrow. The last section of road, from Ireland Grove Road through Arrowsmith has already secured its right-of-way and the road has been widened. Conversely, the road to the north now requires the shoulders to be widened and the slopes on the ditches to be flattened. This work will require additional right-of-way, most of which has been secured. The last remaining right-of-way will be acquired through the condemnation process.

Chairman Bass asked whether there had been adequate discussion with the landowner. Mr. Mitchell responded that there had been adequate discussions with the landowner, but that the landowner had an inflated sense of the value of the land and would not accept the County's terms. The remainder of the property owners have settled their claims for right-of-way acquisition at the same rate that was offered to the landowner who is presently refusing.

Chairman Bass asked what is the most expedient way to deal with a landowner who does not wish to extend land to the County for purposes of right-of-way. Mr. Mitchell stated that, in this

case, the County will invoke statutory as “condemnation.” Civil Assistant State’s Attorney, Mr. Brian Hug, has been consulted and will represent the County in this action in the Circuit Court.

Mr. Mitchell explained that the County does not have the “Quick Take” remedy available in this instance, as it did with the Towanda-Barnes Project. Therefore, the condemnation procedure will need to progress through the required judicial steps. Mr. Bass asked why the County does not have the “Quick Take” procedure at its disposal in this instance. Mr. Mitchell responded that the legislature has never granted local agencies such power in general. It will be given, however, for specific projects, such as the Towanda-Barnes Road project and the Ireland Grove Road project, which took place several years ago. He stated that there is a “Quick Take” Bill that moves through the Senate annually, which addresses various projects. If a project is anticipated to be a problem, it is advised that the County ask to be placed on the current bill.

Mr. Lawlis asked what is the time frame for the Arrowsmith Road project. Mr. Mitchell explained that the condemnation process would cause the project to be postponed until next year. Mr. Lawlis further asked why the project was being considered at this time. Mr. Mitchell explained that the project was begun some time ago, with the plats being prepared by Farnsworth and Wylie, Inc. The delay is primarily attributed to the landowner who has rejected the County’s offer for the right-of-way.

Motion by Kinzinger/Emmett to Approve the Resolution for the Improvement
of a Portion of County Highway 15 Also Known as the Arrowsmith Road.

Mr. Hoselton asked whether the engineering for the work on this project has been approved. Mr. Mitchell stated that Farnsworth and Wylie, Inc. determined what right-of-way was needed. The County is finishing the plans, and provide the grading. There will an asphalt contract to do the widening and resurfacing.

Motion carried.

Mr. Mitchell explained that, with respect to the Randolph Road project, there are two (2) resolutions under consideration. The first resolution addresses the improvement to a section of the Randolph Road extending approximately 1.57 miles, for which the County is responsible. McLean County’s appropriation for its portion of the project is \$750,000.00, with said appropriation being utilized for construction, right-of-way, County engineering costs and engineering costs assessed by Farnsworth and Wylie, Inc.

Mr. Mitchell noted, with respect to the second resolution for the Randolph Road project, that the County’s share of the cost in that portion of the project is \$450,000.00. The cost includes paying for 30% of the construction, 100% of the right-of-way, culverts and grading. The distance for this portion of the project is approximately 2.05 miles and costs will be shared with the

Bloomington Normal Water Reclamation District. He further noted that the resolution at hand sets up the funding so that the engineering bills can be paid and the right-of-way can be begun.

Motion by Emmett/Lawlis to Approve the two Resolutions for Improvements to the Randolph Road. Motion carried.

Mr. Mitchell presented a Summary of Sale of Surplus Equipment. He explained that the highest bid for the 1989 International Tandem was \$5,100.00 and was rejected at that this time, in favor of being rebid at a future date. The 1982 New Idea Power Unit received a high bid of \$50.00, which will also be held over for rebid.

Mr. Emmett asked for a further description of the Power Unit. Mr. Mitchell explained that unit is similar to a harvester without the attached combine.

Chairman Bass asked how old the unit is. Mr. Mitchell responded that it is a 1982 model.

The 1992 GMC Sierra 1 Ton Utility Truck, Mr. Mitchell noted, has now been replaced by a new unit. This item is the mechanics' vehicle. The highest bid received on this item was \$6,000.00 and the Highway Department is recommending that the bid be accepted.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the Pentium Pro 200 CPU did not receive any bids and it will be held over for a new round of bids.

Motion by Lawlis/Kinzinger to accept the bid for the sale of the 1992 GMC Sierra One Ton Utility Truck, and hold over the 1989 International Tandem Truck, the 1982 New Idea Power Unit, and the Pentium Pro 200 CPU for rebids. Motion carried.

In turning the discussion to bridge petitions, Mr. Mitchell stated that a culvert located in Downs Township is in need of replacement. He noted that the replacement proposed is for a drop box, large pipe, and a large tile that will run across the road, which will increase the cost. The County's share of the cost for this project is \$22,500.00.

Mr. Mitchell explained that the second bridge petition addresses a culvert in the Hudson Road District that needs to be replaced. The total estimated cost for this project is \$25,000.00, with the County's portion of this project being \$12,500.00.

The Old Town Road District has an old culvert with headwalls that needs to be replaced. Mr. Mitchell stated that, at this time, it is estimated that a new concrete box, along with a drop box, will need to be installed. The total estimated cost for this project is \$70,000.00, with the County's half being \$35,000.00.

Mr. Mitchell stated that within the Towanda Road District there is a concrete culvert with the concrete deteriorating from the inside. This project is characterized as a twin pipe project with a total estimated cost of \$14,000.00. The County's half of the project is estimated at \$7,000.00.

Mr. Mitchell explained that the Transportation Committee receives annually various petitions from the townships. The townships will generally inspect the culverts in need of repair. If those culverts in need of repair span more than 20 feet, the area qualifies for state township bridge funding, which is 80% funding. He stated that this is a very desirable type of funding, and will be utilized whenever possible.

In the event that the culverts needing repair span less than 20 feet, the project qualifies for joint project funding, which is paid by the Township and the County in equal shares. On the smaller projects, the County provides its own engineering services, labor, and equipment. Mr. Mitchell explained that the Highway Department would work with the various Townships to haul in any backfill that may be needed to complete a project. He further explained that, in the case of a concrete box culvert, a set of plans and a proposal would need to be drafted and opened for bids.

Mr. Lawlis asked whether a "drop box" is a prefabricated concrete unit that can be inserted into place. Mr. Mitchell responded that, although drop boxes are different sizes, they are generally not prefabricated units, but rather, are composed of concrete that is poured into place.

Chairman Bass asked whether there are any instances requiring a replacement drop box that must be made larger than the original. Mr. Mitchell stated that approximately 90% of the time, it is necessary for the replacement drop box to be larger than the original. He further stated that many of the culverts that are being replaced are quite old and there are no records available for them.

Mr. Lawlis asked whether it is known how many bridges and culverts there are throughout the County. Mr. Mitchell responded that the number of bridges is noted, based upon the state's required inspection records.

Mr. Lawlis then asked whether records are kept chronologically regarding the repair cycles of bridges and culverts throughout the County. He further asked about the status of the four (4) culverts currently set for repair, with respect to how long each culvert has been identified as needing repair. Mr. Mitchell responded that the Townships frequently identify those culverts in need of repair, and notify the County to that effect. In other instances, input from other sources is utilized. In the past, an inventory of culverts within the County which are over 20 feet, and their status, has been attempted.

Mr. Mitchell stated that, in order for bridges to be eligible for County funding for repairs, the

cost of the project must be over .02% of the assessed valuation in the Township where the unit is located.

Mr. Lawlis asked whether the County Highway Department goes to any of the Townships to complete a comprehensive survey of Township roads. He further asked how the Townships determine their levies. Mr. Mitchell noted that, in order for a township to be eligible for County matching funds, the Township must be levying at the maximum amount in the road and bridge fund. The Townships can levy a road and bridge fund, a joint bridge fund, a special gravel tax, a building and equipment tax, and issue bonds if they have them. The key, Mr. Mitchell explained, is that the Township must be levying at .125% in their road and bridge fund. He stated that the only Township not currently levying at the maximum amount is Normal, with the reason being that they already have such a high assessed valuation that they do not need such a large amount of money. Normal Township currently levies at .08%, which is the minimum required levy to receive motor fuel tax monies.

Mr. Lawlis then noted that it appears that there is not currently an ongoing program wherein the County can anticipate how many bridge and culvert repairs will be anticipated. Mr. Mitchell concurred. However, he stated, there are petitions from Townships every year to replace culverts and the levy is figured accordingly.

Mr. Lawlis suggested that each Township submit to the County a prioritized list of bridges that are anticipated to need repair on an annual basis in order to facilitate planning for costs. Mr. Mitchell responded that there is a system, of sorts, in place at this time for the bridges. He explained that there is not a system for the culverts at this time, due to the fact that funding for culvert repair has always been adequate.

Mr. Hoselton suggested that the County provide a map to each Township with the request that each culvert within that Township be identified with its approximate age. The County could then send an inspector to verify the information, thus resulting in better communication between the Townships and the County with regard to anticipated culvert and bridge repair.

Chairman Bass noted that, because of the nature of the rapid changes to bridges and culverts exposed to the elements, a prioritized list of anticipated repairs would be a helpful source of information to the County.

Mr. Emmett noted that Township personnel would likely have a thorough knowledge of the location and condition of the bridges and culverts in their area. He suggested that a map be utilized to locate all bridges and culverts in the County and then computerized records could more easily be maintained regarding the upkeep of the specified areas.

Mr. Kinzinger stated that strong verification of the information provided by the Townships is needed in order to curb costs.

Mr. Lawlis stated that he envisioned first identifying the number of culverts within each Township. Then they could be categorized and assigned a priority for repairs, with the County assisting in the evaluations. He noted that the benefit to both the County and the Townships would be additional planning time and information.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the prioritized list is a possibility, but it will take time to accomplish. Mr. Lawlis then explained that he would begin by asking for just a list of all the culverts, by Township, toward which the following perimeters would be applied: 1) state the width of the road; 2) state the size of the culvert. He emphasized that the County should state that this is for informational purposes, so that when petitions come in requesting repairs to the culverts, the County will have adequate information to adjudicate each situation and form a basis for future record-keeping.

Mr. Kinzinger asked whether the Townships would cooperate willingly with such a request. Mr. Mitchell responded that most of the Townships are cooperative. Chairman Bass noted that the County does not have the power to mandate such a request.

Mr. Hoselton suggested that a letter could be directed to each Township from their County Board representative and the County Engineer jointly, explaining the request for information about the culverts in each Township. Mr. Mitchell then suggested that, in the interest of uniformity, one letter be composed and that it should originate with his office.

Mr. Lawlis suggested that perhaps an Illinois State University intern from the Industrial Technology Department could be utilized to create a computerized map showing all the culverts and bridges within the County. Mr. Mitchell responded that he would be open to looking into such a suggestion. Mr. Lawlis stated that he would contact the Industrial Technology Department at ISU to locate a someone who might be able to fulfill the Committee's need for a computer-based map of bridges and culverts in McLean County.

Motion by Hoselton/Lawlis to Approve Bridge Petitions for Downs, Hudson, Old Town Culvert, and Towanda Road Districts. Motion carried.

Mr. Mitchell explained that Mr. Gary Kasbergen has been contacted via letter to advise him of the necessary improvements to McLean County's Mansfield Road (County Highway 3) prior to locating his large scale dairy operation in McLean County. Mr. Mitchell noted that he has written to the Illinois Department of Transportation's Economic Development Department to determine what qualifications are necessary to apply for funding through that office in order to relay such information to Mr. Kasbergen in California. He has not yet received a reply.

Mr. Hoselton noted that the Committee reacted very quickly regarding the expenditure of County money to assist in the dairy operation project. Mr. Emmett explained that the County has no local control over any portion of the project, with the exception of the necessary road improvements. Mr. Emmett stated that there would be a meeting of concerned citizens at 7:00 p.m. on September 5, in the Village of Bellflower to discuss the ramifications of allowing a large scale dairy operation to locate within McLean County. He explained that the proposed location of the dairy would be directly over the Mahomet aquifer, from which the dairy would potentially draw between 150-200,000 gallons of water per day. He further noted that there would be other experts who would be speaking in various capacities, and he would be speaking as well.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the dairy issue was discussed at the Stand-Up Meeting of the Transportation Committee on August 15, 2000, immediately prior to the August County Board Meeting, wherein the Committee was advised by Mr. Mitchell that Mr. Kasbergen would be required to pay for improvements to the roads that his operation would utilize. It was also noted that Mr. Kasbergen has met personally with Mr. Kasbergen.

Chairman Bass asked whether any of the Committee members had received feedback from their respective constituencies concerning public opinion regarding the proposed dairy operation. Mr. Emmett stated that, since the proposed location for the dairy operation is within his district, he has received quite a lot of feedback from residents in the local area. Generally, he noted, the feeling among the local residents is to block the dairy operation from locating in McLean County, and specifically in the Bellflower area. Mr. Emmett noted that there is ample statistical data to support the contention that such a large operation would have a significant negative impact on the environment in the general area. It is thought that the state regulations governing such operations in California have become more stringent, and that Illinois' more relaxed regulations provide a more liberal climate in which to operate.

Mr. Hoselton noted that he had received letters from citizens regarding their displeasure with a large dairy operation located west of Peoria in Elmwood, Illinois.

Mr. Emmett stated that, in Elmwood, there are only 1500 head of cattle, where the newly proposed operation would have a projected 3500 head of cattle. He further noted that some of the residents of Bellflower, who are opposed to the opening of a large cattle operation, visited the operation in Elmwood and had an unfavorable reaction to the size and scope of that unit. Based upon what they had seen at the Elmwood facility, the residents are prepared to voice grave concern over the proposed new operation near Bellflower and the ecological impact it is expected to have on the local area.

Mr. Mitchell asked Mr. Emmett whether there will be a public hearing required prior to a large dairy operation locating within McLean County. Mr. Emmett responded that a hearing could be

held if citizens request that one be held, but that it will be only an informational hearing. The hearing would be scheduled following the dairy operation's application for a permit.

Mr. Emmett explained that Peoria County has passed a resolution mandating that a public hearing be held automatically, in response to the filing of a permit on the state level by any large livestock operation. He noted that, at this time, Peoria County is the only such county in Illinois to provide an automatic public hearing in such a circumstance.

Mr. Mitchell asked if information garnered from a public hearing would then be sent to the State Department of Agriculture. Mr. Emmett responded affirmatively. He noted that the State Department of Agriculture has been encouraging large livestock operations to consider Illinois as a place to locate, and therefore, is not a completely unbiased entity.

Chairman Bass asked whether the proposed large-scale dairy operation could be compared to a large-scale swine operation. Mr. Emmett answered affirmatively, and stated that, in the case of the dairy operation, the waste containment lagoon that is being proposed is 15 acres in size. He made an illustrative comparison by saying that a lagoon of that size would create as much waste as a town the size of LeRoy, Illinois. This situation, he further stated, would not be environmentally sound.

Chairman Bass asked whether the Town of Kewanee, known locally as the Hog Capital of the World, has difficulty in managing their waste containment systems. Mr. Emmett responded that the units in Kewanee are not so large as to pose a problem. He cited two operations that he is aware of, those being Premium Standard in Missouri and Murphy Family Farms in North Carolina, as being examples of large livestock operations that have both had significantly negative impacts on their local areas.

Chairman Bass asked Mr. Emmett whether he had any restrictions placed upon his herd of buffalo. Mr. Emmett responded that his herd of between 60-70 head of buffalo is kept in an open grazing situation, which differs significantly from a large confinement operation. He stated that it isn't the type of animal, but rather the large numbers of livestock, that is a threat to the environment wherein those livestock are kept.

Mr. Lawlis asked why Mr. Kasbergen's didn't attempt to locate the new dairy operation in the State of Wisconsin, rather than in Illinois, due to the prevalence of dairy farming in Wisconsin. Mr. Emmett noted that both Wisconsin and California have tightened their regulations concerning large livestock operations, as well as several other states in the general region.

Mr. Lawlis asked whether the County is prepared in terms of the roads in area of Unit 5's new grade school. Mr. Mitchell responded that the Towanda-Barnes Road would not experience quite as much of an impact as will Airport Road. He noted that Airport Road is a Township road

(Towanda Township). As the annexations take place, the portion of the road that is annexed will fall under the jurisdiction of the Town of Normal. Mr. Mitchell explained that the difficulty would be with the future addition of a new high school building, which will further increase an already heavily traveled road. He noted that the Township does not wish to spend money to improve the road at this time, only to have it annexed later by the Town of Normal.

Chairman Bass asked for an update on the Towanda-Barnes Road project. Mr. Mitchell explained that there is only one (1) parcel of land left to acquire for the right-of-way on the road. In order to obtain that one parcel, the County will need to proceed with Court action.

Chairman Bass observed that there would not likely be any ground broken to begin the Towanda-Barnes project this year. Mr. Mitchell concurred and stated that there is a benefit to the situation in that the utilities will be relocated in before the contractor arrives on site.

Chairman Bass asked what the time line is from start to finish, once the project has begun. Mr. Mitchell responded that the working days will span more than one season, and the length of time spent on the job will depend upon how much manpower and equipment the contractor wants to dedicate to the job.

Motion by Hoselton/Kinzinger to go into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter. Motion carried.

The Committee went into Executive Session at 8:55 a.m. Those attendees to remain are: Chairman Bass, Members Lawlis, Hoselton, Emmett, Kinzinger. Also remaining was Mr. Terry Lindberg, Assistant County Administrator.

The Committee returned to regular session at 9:35 a.m.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Lawlis/Emmett. Motion carried.

There being nothing further to come before the Committee at this time, Chairman Bass adjourned the meeting at 9:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha B. Ross
Recording Secretary

