**Presque Isle County Road Commission**

**Minutes**

**February 21, 2024**

The regular meeting of the Board of Road Commissioners for Presque Isle County was held at the Road Commission office at 657 South Bradley, Rogers City, Michigan. Chairman Thomas Catalano called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

**Board Members Present:** Norman Quaine, Thomas Catalano, Robert Macomber

**Also Present**: Supt./Mgr David Kowalski, Clerk Anne Wirgau

**Visitors:** Clifford Tollini-Presque Isle County Commissioner, Steve Reisner, Toby Kuznicki, Ray Claus

***Minutes:***

A motion was made by Macomber (Quaine) to approve minutes from February 7, 2024 regular meeting as presented.

Ayes: All

***Accounts Payable:***

A motion was made by Quaine (Macomber) to approve the February 21, 2024 accounts payable in the amount of $95,055.09

Ayes: Catalano, Macomber, Quaine

***Visitors:***

Steve Reisner appeared before the Board to discuss access to his property (Pulawski Twp, Section 8) via the Road Commission deeded right of way between Williams Road and the DNR railroad grade. Mr. Reisner stated he did not believe it was a fair trade for the Road Commission to accept a developed road into jurisdiction for a trade of an undeveloped road with many obstacles to construction. Currently property owners must obtain a permit from the DNR to use the trail to access their land and the permits have restrictions. Mr. Reisner would like open access to their land and is seeking a permanent solution.

Chairman Catalano spoke to the 1977 land exchange most likely occurring so land owners would not be land locked. Building the undeveloped road would not be a benefit to the Road Commission as it does not lead to another county road. Discussion was held.

Supt./Mgr Kowalski spoke with our MCRCSIP attorney, Bill Henn, regarding the possible abandonment of our right of way. Mr. Henn advised the property would have to be offered to the Township and adjacent property owners before it could be sold and/or given to Reisner. This would not be a good option. Another option would be to issue a driveway permit to Reisner allowing them to construct a usable driveway to their properties. There would not be any liability to the Road Commission doing it this way. Supt./Mgr Kowalski suggested another option for Mr. Reisner would be to approach Cadillac Ferndale Group and seek an easement from the railroad spur east to the county right of way bypassing some of the obstacles and ditches.

Mr. Reisner said Williams Road was used in the past to travel north of where the gate is now to access their property and it was public. Commissioner Quaine noted the only way to know if that section of road was public or ever deeded as such would be having a title search done.

Mr. Reisner thanked the Board and left the meeting at 9:12 a.m.

County Planning Representative, Ray Claus, appeared before the Board seeking information regarding the use of the county road system for the construction of the Little Trout Solar farm. Chairman Catalano explained where the Road Commission is at in the negotiation process with DTE to fund repairs of the roads they will be hauling on. Lengthy discussion was held. Belknap Township Supervisor, Toby Kuznicki, asked what the Road Commission is looking to obtain from DTE. Chairman Catalano stated good or better roads when the construction phase is done. A discussion of PASER ratings and the truck traffic impact was held.

Commissioner Macomber spoke to the Road Commission position on the funding noting the importance of not spending all our funds in one small area of the County. If the Road Commission must take on the cost of repairs our 5-year project plan for all areas of the county would be greatly impacted in a negative manner.

Erik Stone appeared before the Board to discuss a proposed driveway location for the Little Trout Solar farm on 441 Highway near his family’s property. Mr. Stone is greatly concerned about the installation of a driveway in the area of Mill Highway and 441. The proposed driveway is several hundred feet in length and at a substantial grade from the solar array downhill to 441 Highway. The planned road/culvert crosses a wetland and runs between a perched pond and Swan River. The DTE plans do not show the full extent of the wetlands and Mr. Stone believes the runoff from the roadbed will migrate to Swan River and the perched pond, polluting both. Mr. Stone said he did send comments to EGLE during the public hearing period for the wetlands permit. Mr. Stone noted alternate routes the trucks could use and stay off 441 Highway completely, eliminating the traffic congestion, pollution to Swan River and the need for road repairs on 441 Highway.

Commissioner Macomber stated DTE is revisiting their proposed transportation plan and the Road Commission is waiting to see if changes have been made. No driveway permits have been issued yet.

Mr. Stone asked why there were no traffic, noise or wetlands studies done to gauge the environmental impact. Mr. Claus said all requirements to file for a Planning Committee permit were met.

Mr. Stone advised he would keep the Road Commission updated if any information was received from EGLE regarding the wetlands permit.

The three gentlemen thanked the Board for all the information provided and left the meeting at 10:40 a.m.

***Supt./Mgr Report:***

* Supt./Mgr advised the Board the Fecon shear head has been ordered from McCarthy Farms. McCarthy Farms split the shipping cost so the final price was $15,662.50.
* The mulching head for the second 309 CAT Mini excavator has an expected delivery date of early April.
* Supt./Mgr is requesting a firm quote from Flint New Holland for a mowing tractor with the mid mount flail mower. Last year the estimated price was $110,000.00. Flint New Holland is a vendor with Michigan MiDeal so no further quotes are required. Seeking a quote for a 90 Hp, 2 WD with a cab. This style of mower eliminates the sickle bar and the hydraulic pumps which are costly to repair.
* Supt./Mgr is working with NEMCOG, Nico Tucker, to obtain funding to perform PASER rating on our non-federal eligible roads this spring or summer.
* Supt./Mgr attended Straits Area Council on Tuesday, February 13, 2024 and spoke to the following points of interest: Marijuana tax is 3% of our MTF, Brine permits have been approved for all county Road Commissions for 2024 and work is being done on the abandonment laws to make it easier for Road Commissions.
* The employee who violated the substance abuse policy has completed all required substance abuse training and has returned to work.
* Supt./Mgr contacted Roy Tulgetska regarding the possible contract to crush gravel at the Fleis pit. A request was made to Mr. Tulgetska to include proof of mineral rights in the proposal.
* Allis Township has requested an estimate to apply permazyne to Hackett Lake (1 ¾ miles) and 638 Highway (Belding Road to South Porter Road). Supt./Mgr is preparing the agreement, total cost to Township will be $28,321.00 and Road Commission cost will be $15,448.00.
* Supt./Mgr received and signed an environmental clearance from MDOT regarding the closed 638 Highway bridge over Little Trout River. Supt./Mgr believes it may be looked at again for funding to remove it.
* Three bridges in our system have been approved for preventative maintenance in 2024. Ocqueoc Bridge at Ocqueoc River, Hagensville Road Bridge at N Branch Thunder Bay River and Leer Road Bridge at N Thunder Bay River will be getting $862,000.00 of repairs done by the State.
* Zaremba Equipment has a used 2016 International Pro Star available for $19,500.00. The truck has 300,000 miles and air ride suspension. We would have to put a wet kit (hydraulic pump ran off transmission PTO) on it at a cost of approximately $4,000.00. Zaremba believes the owner of this consignment truck would accept $17,500.00. Discussion was held regarding the possible purchase of a gravel train trailer from Bill Avent for $25,000.00. Supt./Mgr Kowalski intends to haul our own product from the quarries instead of paying an outside contractor. A worksheet detailing hauling cost was presented to the Board. Item moved to new business for action.
* A map showing 2023 completed projects and maintenance work was given to the Board. Supt./Mgr will be giving to the Townships as well.
* Supt./Mgr requested the Board to look at our bridges in need of maintenance and prioritize the repairs. A worksheet detailing the structures was reviewed and five bridges were selected to be included for 2025 repair work. 441 Highway at Swan River, Ocqueoc Lake Road at Ocqueoc River, Spile Dam Rd at Ocqueoc River and Ocqueoc Falls Highway at Ocqueoc River.

***Unfinished Business:***

A quote received from Renick Brothers Mechanical Contractors for office boiler replacement was reviewed and discussed.

A motion was made by Macomber (Quaine) to purchase a Navien NFC 250/17511 Combination Hydronic Heating Boiler System and Tankless Domestic Hot Water Heater from Renick Brothers for $27,490.00.

Ayes: Catalano, Quaine, Macomber

***New Business:***

A motion was made by Quaine (Macomber) to enter an agreement with Belknap Township to crush/shape/pave South Rogers Road (one mile from Hawks Highway north) for an estimated cost of $194,989.00 with the Township share of $126,742.00 ($42,247.33 per year for three years) and the Road Commission cost of $68,246.15.

Ayes: Macomber, Catalano, Quaine

A request to provide equipment and labor for work to the Bismarck Township ball field was discussed and denied.

A motion was made by Macomber (Catalano) to purchase from Zaremba Equipment one (1) 2016 International truck for up to $19,500.00 and one (1) gravel train trailer from Bill Avent for $25,000.00.

Ayes: Catalano, Quaine, Macomber

The next scheduled regular meetings of the Presque Isle County Road Commission are set for Wednesday, March 6, 2024 at 8:30 a.m. and Wednesday, March 27, 2024 at 8:30 a.m.

With no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Catalano adjourned the meeting at 11:55 a.m.