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DeKalb County Government
Sycamore, Illinois

**Highway Committee Minutes
June 4, 2020**

A virtual public meeting of the Highway Committee of the DeKalb County Board was held on Thursday, June 4, 2020, at 6:00pm.

Vice-Chairman Willis called the meeting to order at 6:03pm and called for the roll. Committee members present were Ms. Emmer, Mr. Pietrowski, Chairman Plote and Mr. West. Mr. Osland was absent. Mr. Luebke joined the meeting at 6:20pm. The County Engineer, Mr. Nathan Schwartz, Mr. Derek Hiland, Community Development Director, Mr. Pete Stefan, Finance Director, Mr. Wayne Davey, Support Services Manager and one guest were also present by video. (Vice-Chair Willis conducted the meeting due to Chairman Plote being away and unsure about his participation.)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion made by Mr. West and seconded by Chairman Plote to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Pietrowski moved and Mr. West seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the May 7, 2020 regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

AWARD RESOLUTION: #R2020-35 REPAIRS TO HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT MAINTENANCE LOT AND PAVING OF NEW SALT STORAGE FACILITY

Mr. Schwartz informed the Committee a bid letting was held Wednesday, June 3, 2020 at 9:00am for repairs to the Department's maintenance lot and to pave the floor of the new salt storage facility when it is constructed. Three bids were received for this project with Maneval Construction Company of Ingleside, Illinois submitting the low bid meeting specifications in the amount of \$52,973.00. Mr. Schwartz recommended approval of this award as it was under the Engineer's estimate of \$84,028.75. **Ms. Emmer moved and Mr. Pietrowski seconded a motion to forward the resolution to the full County Board recommending approval. Motion passed unanimously.**

RESOLUTION #R2020-36: ENCUMBERING FEDERAL HIGHWAY MATCHING TAX FOR CURRENT AND FUTURE HIGHWAY AND BRIDGE PROJECTS:

Mr. Schwartz explained to the Committee that from time to time governmental entities have their fund balances scrutinized by concerned tax payers to see if they are taxing needlessly just to build up fund balances. It is generally accepted that a fund balance equal to or less than 2.5 times your average expenditures over the last three years is an adequate amount of funds to have on hand. While this rule may be appropriate for funds with similar expenditures each year, capital funds are a different issue. The Highway Department's Federal Highway Matching Tax budget is utilized for capital projects. In order for this Department to pay for a project we must save up and when we have a sufficient amount saved for a programmed project, we spend it down. During the years of saving up, the fund balance would often exceed the accepted 2.5 Miller Ratio causing the County to be drawn into legal proceedings questioning the reason for such a high balance. This resolution identifies current and future funding for highway and bridge projects that our Federal Highway Matching Tax has been programmed for and therefore should not be considered as excess funds when reviewing that particular balance. The resolution was prepared in coordination with the Finance Department and we consider it an important document to assist the County when these matters arise. Mr. Schwartz recommended it be approved. **Mr. Pietrowski moved and Mr. West seconded a motion to forward the resolution to the full County Board recommending approval. Motion passed unanimously.**

RESOLUTION #R2020-36: ENGINEERING AGREEMENT FOR PHASE I ENGINEERING FOR PLANK ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

This proposed Engineering Agreement is for the Study and Phase I Engineering for the future Plank Road improvements. The "not to exceed" cost in the agreement is \$470,927.69. This amount is considerably higher than our usual engineering agreements. However, the scope of the work is much greater than our usual engineering agreements. Also, the expected construction cost of the project could possibly reach \$10 - \$14 million depending on the final improvements to Plank Road. When comparing engineering costs vs construction costs, the engineering costs are not out of the normal range we might expect. The Plank Road Phase I Engineering Services is a full study for the County's options for the future Plank Road as well as environmental and other studies needed to proceed with the project. The study will include many additional tasks not normally performed in our standard preliminary engineering services. The full extent of each task, and thus the final cost of the study, will depend on the data as it is collected. The engineering agreement with CMT is a "Not To Exceed" agreement meaning the total cost of the work might be less but will not be more than the amount specified. Therefore, the amount, as it's been described with previous agreements, is a "worst case cost" in which every aspect of the engineering agreement might be performed to the fullest.

A general list of tasks include:

- Data collection
- Field investigations and land surveys
- Environmental studies
- Local drainage study
- Traffic analysis
- Alternate alignment analysis
- Intersection analysis and design
- Preliminary design studies
- Public involvement
- Geotechnical investigations and reports
- Preliminary land acquisition
- Draft and final Project Development Report
- Meetings and coordination
- Project administration

This work will be completed over a period of two years. After the Phase I Engineering is complete, it would most likely be a couple years before the Phase II Engineering would be started. That would include the design and creation of plans for any improvements or relocation to Plank Road. Mr. Schwartz recommended approval of this resolution. **Ms. Emmer moved and Mr. Pietrowski seconded a motion to forward the resolution to the full County Board recommending approval. Motion passed unanimously.**

As the Highway Department begins its 2021 budget process, it has been our policy to share with the Committee our scheduled equipment replacement and planned construction projects for next year. This allows time for appropriate review of this information, any questions or concerns, and consultation with the County Engineer. Our formal budget will be presented to the Committee during our August meeting.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS: Vice Chair Willis had no comments at this time. Chairman Plote requested a COVID-19 update concerning any situations at the Highway Department.

COUNTY ENGINEER'S COMMENTS: Mr. Schwartz stated the Department had one employee test positive for the virus. When notified the Health Department took the lead and interviewed other employees to determine if any employees were in close contact with the positive employee. As a result, six employees were ordered to self-quarantine for 14 days. All have returned to work with no signs of any of the symptoms associated with COVID-19. The Highway Department has unlocked its doors to the public. Our office traffic is low and we continue to exercise precautions such as no congregating in break rooms, etc. Social distancing is practiced, masks are required by visitors to our Department and employee's temperatures are taken every morning. This is all in addition to loads of hand sanitizer available, common surfaces wiped down twice a day and the encouragement of hand washing as often as needed.

Monthly updates on projects were shared with the Committee. The McGirr Road Bridge, scheduled to be built during 2021 stands at 15% of the preliminary engineering complete; Motel Road Bridge is on the State letting for next Friday, June 12th; the Peace Road and Route 64 intersection is 99% complete – the contractor is finishing the punch list; Peace Road resurfacing from Bethany Road to Sarah Drive (to include Mercantile Drive for the City of Sycamore) is currently underway. This project is scheduled to be wrapped up prior to the opening of the Meijer Store next month. The Plank Road Safety Shoulder project is also 99% complete with just a few landscaping items remaining. Somonauk Road culvert extensions and South First Street box culvert replacement are both waiting for land acquisition to be completed before these projects can go to letting. If that process is not completed this year these projects will be re-programmed for 2021. The ditch reshaping on Waterman Road is 95% complete with hydro-seeding being done this week. Waterman Road project, 3B, – ditches south of Somonauk Creek, currently stands at 10% preliminary engineering complete.

The legislative update contains one item of interest. Last year when IDOT was concerned they would not have enough funding they reallocated some of the discretionary funding used for local programs and kept it for themselves. When the additional 19¢ MFT tax was approved, the discretionary funding was not transferred back to the local agencies. IDOT agreed to reinstate that funding as well as increase that funding by 68%. The legislature failed to include such funding in last year's budget but have included it in the upcoming year's budget, as well as some of the funding for the current year's budget. This funding affected the County Consolidated Funds and the township's Needy Township Funds. Until the veto session November 17-19 and December 1-3 no one expects much action to be taken except for items dealing with the current unrest associated with the George Floyd incident.

The DSATS fiscal year is coming to an end with work continuing on TIP updates, the long range plan, self-certification and next year's budget.

A question was asked by the Committee concerning the work ongoing on Illinois Route 38 from Malta going west. Mr. Schwartz indicated it appears to be a standard resurfacing project to buy IDOT more time before major repairs are required. The project scheduled to be built west of Kishwaukee College is not scheduled to begin until the spring of 2021. IDOT should be out of the way by then and Route 38 is built to withstand excess truck traffic that will be associated with that project.

ADJOURNMENT: Vice Chair Willis stated there was nothing further on the agenda and asked for a motion to adjourn. **A motion was made by Mr. West seconded by Mr. Luebke and passed unanimously.** The meeting was adjourned at 7:04pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Willis
Vice Chairman