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DeKalb County Government
Sycamore, Illinois

**Highway Committee Minutes
February 4, 2021**

A Zoom public meeting of the Highway Committee of the DeKalb County Board was held on Thursday, February 4, 2021, at 6:00pm.

Chairman Plote called the meeting to order at 6:02pm and called for the roll. Committee members present were, Ms. Emmer, Ms. Jones, Vice Chair Luebke, Mr. Osland and Ms. Willis. Mr. Deutsch joined the meeting at 6:11pm. The County Engineer, Mr. Nathan Schwartz, Mr. Wayne Davey, Support Services Manager, Interim County Administrator Gary Hanson and six other guests were also present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion made by Ms. Willis and seconded by Ms. Jones to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed with six yes votes, one absent, with a roll call vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Ms. Emmer moved and Mr. Osland seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the January 7, 2021 regular meeting. The motion passed with six yes votes, one absent, with a roll call vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Two Citizens inquired into the progress of any planned Plank Road safety updates and provided feedback on the implemented safety measures that were put in place during 2020. The comment was that although speeding is still an issue on Plank Road and people are still passing in areas that are restricted, it does not seem as prevalent as before. Time will tell if the reduction is due to the pandemic restrictions or the improved safety measures. Vehicles also still come up behind a stopped turning vehicle at a high rate of speed causing concern. Mr. Schwartz stated he would provide an update on the Plank Road study during his comment period.

RESOLUTION #R2021-07: ENCUMBERING FEDERAL HIGHWAY MATCHING TAX FUNDS

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. This situation has the potential for 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. A similar resolution was prepared last year and will be prepared annually going forward in coordination with the Finance Department. Mr. Schwartz, along with Interim County Administrator Mr. Hanson, recommended it be approved. **Vice Chair Luebke moved and Mr. Osland seconded a motion to forward the resolution to the full County Board recommending approval. Motion passed unanimously with seven yes votes during a roll call vote.**

RESOLUTION #R2021-08: LOCAL AGENCY AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE OF ILLINOIS FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF THE SUYDAM ROAD BRIDGE

When the County is awarded Federal and/or State funding for a particular project, the County must enter into an agreement with the State in order to spend said funds. The State (IDOT) holds the funds and writes the checks during the construction of these projects while billing the County for our share of the cost. The Committee will see a similar agreement in the future prior to our federally funded projects going to letting. This agreement is for the Suydam Road Bridge near Rollo that will be replaced this year. The total estimated cost of construction is \$1,270,000 and the County's share is estimated to be \$430,000. Mr. Schwartz recommended the County enter into this agreement. **Ms. Emmer moved and Ms. Jones seconded a motion to forward the resolution to the full County Board recommending approval. The motion passed unanimously with seven yes votes during a roll call vote.**

RESOLUTION #2021-09: AWARD RESOLUTION FOR FURNISHING AND INSTALLING SNOW PLOW, FRAME, HYDRAULIC SYSTEM, DUMP BODY, WING, SPREADER AND PRE-WET TANK SYSTEM ON A 2022 PETERBILT CAB AND CHASSIS AND ONE NEW UTILITY TRACTOR

The County Engineer explained that bids were received for the furnishing of snow removal equipment for the new cab and chassis the County Board approved during its January Board meeting. Monroe Truck Equipment, Inc. of Monroe, Wisconsin was the sole bid for this equipment in the amount of \$120,973.00. Monroe has outfitted all of our snow plow trucks and the County has been pleased with their finished product. Two bids were received for the replacement of one utility tractor, a 2008 Kubota M8540, and DeKane Equipment Corporation from Big Rock, Illinois submitted the low bid meeting

specifications in the amount of \$48,000.00 for a new Kubota M5-111HD12-1 utility tractor. The County will receive a trade-in amount of \$12,500.00 for our tractor being replaced bringing the net cost to the County to \$35,500.00. Mr. Schwartz recommended forwarding this resolution to the full County Board recommending approval. **Mr. Osland moved and Ms. Willis seconded a motion to forward the resolution to the full County Board recommending approval. The motion passed unanimously with seven yes votes during a roll call vote.**

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS: Chairman Plote commented on the beautiful winter weather and reminded everyone to be safe.

COUNTY ENGINEER'S COMMENTS:

Speaking of beautiful winter weather, the County Engineer shared a couple of short videos showing the County's snow blower in action and our loader pushing back snow in the rights-of-way to get ready for the next storm. Very impressive and the snow blower was purchased just for such occasions.

The transportation improvement progress report was reviewed with the Committee.

- McGirr Road Bridge will be constructed during 2021. The preliminary engineering is 100% complete and the design engineering stands at 98% complete.

- Plank Road Study is 8% complete. This study will provide the County with valuable information on how to proceed with concerns over the road's capacity and safety of the traveling public on Plank Road, especially around the Moose Range Road curves. An overview of this project was provided for attendees.

- Suydam Road Bridge is through the preliminary and design engineering stages and now working on temporary right-of-way acquisition needed during construction.

- Suydam Road resurfacing from Illinois Route 23 east to Gletty Road is 100% completed for the preliminary and 95% complete for the design engineering phases. This project is scheduled for an April letting in Springfield.

- Waterman Road, Phase 3B and 4, will continue with the extension of the box culvert south of McGirr Road. The preliminary engineering is 100% complete and the design engineering is 95% complete. This is a 2021 project and the road will also be resurfaced this year. We are currently looking at a May/June letting.

For a legislative update, not much is happening in Springfield yet. In Washington, things are happening behind the scenes to get an infrastructure plan in place. Nothing official to report as of yet.

DSATS is very busy. Mr. Geber continues to be very committed to DSATS and is working hard to keep everything on schedule.

The Department's Annual Report will be pushed back to March due to other pressing commitments.

The County Engineer explained the New Lebanon Road Bridge, east of Genoa, was recently closed by IDOT due to failing beams. This structure was scheduled to be replaced during 2022 but due to the current situation the County has moved it forward to this year. The Qualifications Based Selection process has begun and an engineering agreement with the selected firm will need to be approved by the County Board. In order to move this project forward as expeditiously as possible the County Engineer requested a special Committee meeting be held prior to the County Board meeting on the 17th. The Committee agreed and a special meeting will be held at 6:15pm on February 17, 2021 to review the proposed agreement.

The Committee inquired into the status of Covid shots for the Highway Department. Mr. Schwartz indicated he has the Department signed up on the waiting list and ready to go as soon as group 1C was cleared to move forward. Group 1C is the appropriate group for our highway workers per the State's guidelines.

As a salt update, the County currently has an ample supply on hand. We were very fortunate to have the County's approval to construct an additional salt storage facility during the fall of last year that doubled our storage capacity. Deliveries have been steady this year and we have another 1,000 tons of salt on order to be delivered in the coming weeks. Contracted salt is at 90-95% delivered as of this date. Operations is testing a new plow blade, that if successful, will wear longer and cut the snow and ice better to clear the roads quicker. This will save on the amount of salt needed to be spread in order to get to the bare pavement.

The Committee inquired about State Highways, (i.e. 23, 34, 38, 64 and 72). Those roads are under the jurisdiction of IDOT and the County does not maintain those roads. The lack of snow fence installation also was brought up as to why that is happening these days. We cannot answer for the State, however the County used to place more snow fence in past years than we currently do. Our equipment has been improved over the years to the point where snow can be pushed back much farther now. With that being said snow fences are seen as less beneficial than they once were.

ADJOURNMENT: Chairman Plote asked if there was any additional items that needed to be presented tonight and hearing none asked for a motion to adjourn. **A motion was made by Mr. Osland, seconded by Vice Chair Luebke and passed unanimously by a roll call vote.** The meeting was adjourned at 7:08pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Roy Plote
Chairman