

EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES

Group/Committee: Highway Committee

Date: March 7, 2019 **Time:** 7:52 pm **Place:** Conference Room, Highway Department

Exception(s)	<u>XX</u>	Personnel	_____	Collective Bargaining
(Check as many	_____	Land Sale/Acquisition	_____	Pending Litigation
as apply.)	_____	Other:	_____	
			(Specify)	

Moved By: Vice Chair Willis **Seconded By:** Larry West
to go into Executive Session per 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), for discussion on a stipend for DSATS Director Responsibilities. A roll call vote was held. 7 Members voted Yes; 0 Members voted No. Motion carried.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT (P)

ABSENT (A) :

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| 1. Laurie Emmer | P |
| 2. Jim Luebke | P |
| 3. Jerry Osland | P |
| 4. Mark Pietrowski | P |
| 5. Larry West | P |
| 6. Vice Chair Suzanne Willis | P |
| 7. Chairman Roy Plote | P |

General Description of All Matters Discussed:

Discussion held to determine an appropriate stipend to be given to Nathan F. Schwartz as he assumes DSATS Director responsibilities in addition to continuing to be the County Engineer. DSATS is now the responsibility of DeKalb County as of January 1, 2019. Nathan provided the Committee with examples of his contributions to the County since his employment in 2011. (Attached) Also provided was his justification for receiving a 15% increase in his current salary. Nathan left the room at 8:15pm. The former DSATS Director received the same % amount, but probably based on a much higher salary. The Committee made note that Nathan has gone above and beyond what has been accomplished by prior County Engineers. He is detailed oriented and data driven. The DSATS position is akin to a second job. He should be compensated appropriately. There was concern about increasing a Department Head's salary and not being able to do the same for other Department Heads. These additional responsibilities align themselves very well with those of the County Engineer. These funds are also grant funds and do not come out of the general fund. If other Department Heads have a similar opportunity the County would be behind them 100% as well. These funds were already being allocated to the Director of DSATS – that person just so happens to be Nathan now. The Committee sees no reason not to continue providing additional compensation for added responsibilities. The Committee will be in a good position to notice if his Highway Department duties and responsibilities are declining as a result of his DSATS responsibilities and appropriate action will be taken at that time. 15% of his current salary of

\$123,052.80 is \$18,457.92. The Committee was leaning towards recommending \$18,000.00 prior to Nathan's presentation. The Committee felt that number should be raised to \$18,500 or even \$19,000 now and not argue over \$457.00. That could potentially have bad feelings and Nathan's performance just since 1/1/2019 certainly indicates that the current 15% should go forward. It was the consensus of the Committee that a 15% increase seemed appropriate and a MOU should be prepared by the County Administrator putting forth requirements that would allow the County Engineer to receive such an increase.

No action or votes taken.

It was moved by Vice Chair Willis and seconded by Jim Luebke to return to open session. A roll call vote was held.

7 Members vote yes; 0 Members voted no. Motion Carried at 8:35PM.

Minutes taken by: Wayne Davey

**OTHERS PRESENT: Gary Hanson
Nathan Schwartz**

Nathan F. Schwartz, P.E.
DeKalb County Engineer as DSATS Director

Nathan started at DeKalb County in June 2011. Since then, he has increased and improved the services the Highway Department performs using the same manpower.

Nathan has updated multiple practices to improve workflow & efficiencies in the support services, engineering, and operations divisions of the Highway Department to accomplish more work with similar resources. This has improved attitudes of the employees and public opinion of the Highway Department. Some of these accomplishments include:

- Updated organization of projects on the computer network
- Completing EPA reports in-house instead of by a consultant
- Restarted in-house crack filling program and shoulder stone program
- Updated use of technology in the office
- Started annual report and annual construction tour for the county board
- Created a 25 year preventative maintenance & paving schedule for county highways
- Started a formal qualifications based selection for selecting consultants

Nathan has gone beyond the status quo to start new programs, receive outside funding, and help other agencies. Some of these accomplishments include:

- Started implementation of joint county-township road use agreements when working with developers & utility companies
- Created a county & township bridge prioritization schedule
- Implemented use of online documentation for bid documents
- Started charging IDOT an overhead rate in addition to benefits when getting federal funds for construction inspection
- Instrumental in getting the County removed from a major, on-going lawsuit (Whitfield)
- Started reconstructing Waterman Road (discussions occurred since the 1980s)
- Started additional material lettings for the county, townships, and municipalities
- Instrumental in replacing or repairing several township bridges with a year of when they received reduced weight limits
- Received the direct benefit of \$14.5M through external grants and outside funding for the County & other local entities

Applying the same practices to DSATS as applied to the Highway Department, DSATS will provide more services to the County and the other member agencies in the area. The services will be of higher quality which will provide more benefit to the members while utilizing less of their time.

Historically, the DSATS Director's stipend was based on 15% of his normal salary. The stipend is fully reimbursed using DSATS funds. 15% was chosen under the assumption the Director would spend 15% additional hours overseeing DSATS and DSATS staff. Recently, the City of DeKalb budgeted for that number to be increased to 25%.

On average, approximately 50+ hours are spent each week as the County Engineer. Since January 1, approximately 8 ½ hours per week have been spent by Nathan fulfilling the Director duties of DSATS. The hours spent each week is above the historical 15% expectation. Based on past performance and accomplishments, Nathan can handle the additional duties will not diminishing future Highway Department achievements.

Current salary as County Engineer	\$123,052.80
Proposed salary as DSATS Director	\$18,457.92 (15% of County Engineer salary)