**Board Minutes**

**September 14, 2023**

The regular meeting of the Crawford County Board of Road Commissioners was held at their office at 500 Huron Street on Thursday, September 14,2023, at 4:30 p.m., **Present:** Commissioner Hanson, Vice Chairman Summers, Commissioner Jones and Chairman Halstead. Absent: Commissioner Larson. **Administrative staff present:** Managing Director Don Babcock and Clerk of the Board, Leann Neilson. **Public Attending**: Dorothy Frederick, County Commissioner liaison, Tom Coors, Maple Forest Township Supervisor, Francis with the Grayling Area Snowmobile Club, and Kathleen Jones, South Branch Township.

It was moved by Commissioner Jones and supported by Commissioner Hanson to approve the September 14, 2023, Crawford County Road Commission Agenda as presented. Roll Call: Larson absent, Halstead yea, Jones yea, Summers yea, Hanson yea. Motion Carried.

It was moved by Commissioner Jones, supported by Commissioner Hanson to approve the August 31, 2023, Board Minutes as presented. Roll Call: Larson absent, Halstead yea, Summers yea, Hanson yea, Jones yea. Motion carried.

Accounts Payable Voucher #25 in the amount of $341,885.72 was moved to pay by Chairman Halstead and supported by Vice Chairman Summers. Roll Call: Larson absent, Halstead yea, Jones yea, Summers yea, Hanson yea. Motion Carried.

Accounts Payable Voucher #25-1 in the amount of $1,864.46 was moved to pay by Commissioner Jones and supported by Commissioner Hanson. Roll Call: Larson absent, Halstead yea, Jones yea, Summers yea, Hanson yea. Motion Carried.

**Cash Flow: None**

**Accounts Receivables:** Questions regarding Max Meisner’s outstanding balance. Road Commission attorney will handle this account.

**Blade and Brine Report:** None

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Tom Coors requested some work on potholes on Petersen Roadand inquired as to when the middle portion of Sherman Road would be resurfaced. Managing Director Babcock will have more information in the next couple of weeks as he finishes up the proposed Five-Year Road Plan. Tom inquired of Chairman Halstead how far the gas line will run on M-72. The new gas line will run to Wakeley Bridge Rd.

Francis with Grayling Area Snowmobile Club reported that MDNR has rerouted the snowmobile trail due to scheduled military activity and planned road closures in the area of the previous trail. The new route will include Jones Lake Road, Stephan Bridge Road, and Wakeley Bridge Road. The Club would like to place directional arrow signs along with some stop signs along the route for safety. Signs would be put up December 1 and taken down no later than March 31, but preferably by March 15. The Board agreed to allow the temporary sign placements along the new trail route.

Dorothy Frederick, County Commissioner reported that the County Board is working on the 2024 Budget. A public hearing will be held on September 28th. Dorothy also inquired about the process of getting the Iron Belle Trail funding in motion for Beaver Creek Township. Managing Director Babcock explained the grant application process and matching fund requirements.

**NEW BUSINESS**:

**Annual Certification of Employee Conditions** – It was moved by Commissioner Hanson and seconded by Commissioner Jones to authorize Clerk of the Board, Leann Neilson and Chairman, Ryan Halstead to sign and submit to MDOT the Annual Certification of Employee-Related Conditions Certification Year 2023. Roll Call: Larson absent, Halstead yea, Jones yea, Hanson yea, Summers yea. Motion Carried.

MiBid Truck Purchases – The road commission purchased three used tandem trucks for $49,697.50 from MiBid.

**OLD BUSINESS: None**

**MANAGING DIRECTOR COMMENTS:**

**County Road 612 over the AuSable River Bridge Project** – contractor is working on west side cofferdams.

**County Road 612 over Big Creek** – final inspection is next Tuesday. The contractor is expected to provide a Corrective Action Plan for fixing the pavement.

**County Road 612, Jones Lake Rd. west 1 mile –** working on graveling. Should be finished next week**.**

**Chase Bridge Road, from 7 Mile Road, south, 3000 feet**. – almost finished graveling. Expect to work on catch basins and set culverts next week.

**Pere Cheney Road** – will be moving equipment to the project next week.

**Job Interviews –** will be interviewing for truck drivers, Heavy Equipment Operators, and Mechanic next Monday.

**Misappropriation of Forest Funds accusation by Ronald Larson –** Managing Director Babcock and Clerk of the Board Leann Neilson met with Sheriff Ryan Swope, Thursday September 14, regarding Commissioner Ronald Larson’s accusations of the road commission misappropriating Forest Funds in Fiscal Year 2018-2019. Officer Swope has been provided with an explanation of MDOT requirements for use of Forest Funds as well a copy of County Road Agency Funding Information regarding Forest Funds. In addition, an explanation of Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Act 51 Report was provided. A typo was discovered on page 18 of the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year ACT 51 Report. The road name should have read “County Road 502” rather than “County Road 612”. All records support funds spent correctly on County Road 502. MDOT was notified of the typo, and it will be up to their discretion to correct the report. Discussion commenced regarding solutions to the continuous lies, false allegations, and slanderous comments against the road commission and its administrative staff by Commissioner Ronald Larson.

**County Road Association of Michigan Correspondence –** overview of email correspondence between CRAM and Ronald Larson regarding a Commissioner Handbook.CRAM will mail Ronald a handbook.

**Training wage classifications for new Engineer Tech and new State Foreman –** the Board desires to promote from within the crew and after much discussion it was determined that it will take the new Engineer Tech approximately three years to be fully equipped for the job and approximately two years for the new State Foreman. The Board agreed to set the training wage for the new Engineer Tech at $28.75 an hour with fifty cent increases every six months for three years in addition to the previously scheduled five percent annual wage increases. The Board set the starting training wage for the State Foreman at $26.97 per hour with fifty cent wage increases every six months for two years in addition to the previously scheduled five percent annual wage increases. The Engineer Tech and State Foreman will remain administrative positions and current union employees will be allowed to transfer into administrative MERS division.

**2024 Draft Budget –** final draft of the budget is expected to be presented at the next meeting.

**COMMISSIONER’S COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Larson – Absent.

Commissioner Summers – None

Commissioner Hanson – Inquired about weight restrictions on Old Dam Road bridge. Don will investigate this further. Also inquired about work on Industrial Drive access. There has been little to no work done on this project this year.

Commissioner Jones – thank you for the shoulder work that’s been done on paved roads and for maintaining the hill on Old 144.

Chairman Halstead – None

There being no further business to come before the Board Chairman Halstead declared the meeting adjourned at 5:26 p.m.

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**Chairman, Ryan Halstead Leann Neilson, Clerk of the Board**