

The regular meeting of the Board of County Road Commissioners of Benzie County was called to order by Chairman Rosa at the Road Commission offices in Honor, Michigan on Thursday **May 13, 2021** at 9:30 a.m.

Present: Chairman Robert Rosa
Member Ted Mick
Finance Manager/Clerk Joe Nedow

Vice-Chairman James Bowers
Manager Matt Skeels

Guests attending: Gary Sauer, County Commissioner, Annie Browning and Weldon Township Supervisor Ron Hitesman. The public was also invited to attend via telephone conferencing due to COVID concerns.

The agenda was accepted as presented.

April 22, 2021 regular meeting and May 4 special meeting minutes were approved.

Motion by Commissioner Bowers and supported by Commissioner Mick to pay bills #50481 to #50525 in the amount of \$243,383.98 and approve Payroll #9-9A and #10-10A for \$124,611.98.

Discussion: None.

Ayes: Commissioners Rosa, Bowers and Mick. Nays: None. - Motion is hereby adopted.

Cash Summary: Reviewed – Nedow reported he recently received this past winter's road millage receipts from the County Treasurer's office.

Work Summary:

-Reviewed written report summarizing the tasks and activities completed or in-progress for the Manager and for each department head.

Standing guest: Gary Sauer, County Commissioner – Presented an oral report for items/issues the Benzie County Board of Commissioners is dealing with as well as events impacting local government from around Benzie County.

Appointments: None

Public Input: Heard comments from Annie Browning and from Bob and Donna Kondek (via telephone) who inquired about various aspects of the Saffron Road culvert replacement projects including how the utility lines will be temporarily relocated during construction. Skeels informed Kondek that he would be in contact after the meeting to provide updates on this project. Sherry Tayler also addressed the Board (via telephone) that the sound quality of the new phones is much better.

Items Before the Board:

Bid awards: Saffron Road over tributary & Carmean Road over Kinney Creek - structures, and sheet piling for Saffron Road culvert project.

Skeels reported bids were opened and read on May 12th and is recommending awarding all bids to the lowest bidder.

Motion by Commissioner Bowers supported by Commissioner Mick to accept the bids submitted by Contech Engineered Solutions LLC of Zeeland Michigan for the Saffron Road over tributary-culvert structure (\$32,850.00) and Carmean Road over Kinney Creek-culvert structure (\$14,250.00).

Discussion: None.

Ayes: Commissioners Rosa, Bowers and Mick. Nays: None. – Motion is hereby adopted.

Motion by Commissioner Mick supported by Commissioner Bowers to accept the bid submitted by Adams Marine of Construction of Pentwater Michigan for providing and installing approximately 1,350 square feet of sheet piling for the Saffron Road over tributary to Little Platt Lake project (\$39,250.00).

Discussion: None.

Ayes: Commissioners Rosa, Bowers and Mick. Nays: None. – Motion is hereby adopted.

Review driveway permit application: parking area on north side of Crystal Drive:

Submitted by Eames Gilmore who resides at 3855 Crystal Drive, this application is seeking permission for him to construct a thirty-six feet long by twenty-five feet deep gravel parking area on the north side of Crystal Drive.

Motion by Commissioner Bowers supported by Commissioner Mick to approve the driveway permit application submitted by Eames Gilmore for a gravel parking area (36' long X 25' deep across from 3855 Crystal Drive) on the north side of the road provided staff verifies that the proposed construction will include drainage culvert(s) sufficiently sized to match the culvert(s) diameters already there to ensure sufficient drainage so that water will not flood into the roadway.

Discussion: Skeels stated that he would get with the road foremen to verify the Board's wishes in this matter.

Ayes: Commissioner Rosa, Bowers and Mick. Nays: None. – Motion is hereby adopted.

Review Road Commission's first quarter 2021 MERS Statement of Fiduciary Net Position – request additional voluntary contributions:

In the report presented, Nedow pointed out that the present calculated monthly payments plus the additional extra monthly contributions are only sufficient enough to offset the pensions paid out. As such, the only headway toward reducing the Road Commission's unfunded pension liability has been by investment gains and additional contributions from trunkline audit refunds and Pool refunds. In order to gain any headway toward reducing the unfunded liability sooner, Nedow is requesting permission to increase the existing \$20,000.00 additional monthly voluntary contributions to \$40,000.00 per month.

Motion by Commissioner Bowers supported by Commissioner Rosa to authorize the Finance Manager to increase the monthly MERS defined benefit additional voluntary pension payment from \$20,000.00 per month to \$40,000.00 per month effective with the May 2021 obligation.

Discussion: None.

Ayes: Rosa, Bowers and Mick. Nays: None. – Motion is hereby adopted.

Proposed right-of-way display advertisement for publishing in the local newspaper:

Reviewed proposed display advertisement which is intended to be published in the local newspaper on an annual basis. This public notice states which activities within the road right-of-way require a permit; placement of mailboxes/posts and notes the Road Commission's responsibility when physically struck/damaged directly by our equipment; activities that are not allowed in the right-of-way, road ends or lake access sites; informing the public the Road Commission will not replace sprinkler lines within the ROW damaged during routine maintenance activities. In addition, the notice also serves notice of our intent to maintain the public right-of-way in an efficient and cost effectiveness manner while ensuring public safety. The ad also includes provisions whereby property owners wishing to maintain the public right-of-way in front of their residences can contact the Road Commission to discuss possible options, none of which are to be funded by the Road Commission. Nedow stated if there are no objections, he will have the notice published around the July 4th holiday in the Record Patriot newspaper.

No objections were offered; Commissioner Bowers suggested publishing the notice again, possibly during the Christmas holidays.

Recommendation to solicit demolition bids for Platte River Elementary building prior to the property transfer:

Staff is recommending that we should seek demolition bids now so that we can have a better idea as to the actual cost instead of a rough estimate prior to the transfer. Possible options to explore is timing of the demolition; possibly utilizing our equipment and manpower in the process, or possibly negotiate a plan whereby an outside contractor can remove the debris on a back-haul which could be a savings to us. After further discussion, no action was taken and staff was instructed to include this topic on the next meeting agenda for possible consideration.

Correspondence/Information/Discussion: None.

Board Round Table:

Topics discussed:

-Skeels updated the Board on his discussions with the Benzie Schools and with a Henry Road resident as to how the new elementary construction will impact what happens with Henry Road. Skeels is waiting for the land owner, who wants a portion of the road abandoned, to meet with Superintendent Erfourth to discuss what to do with Henry Road before proceeding.

-Labor negotiations are proceeding with the next face-to-face meeting scheduled for May 26th.

-Skeels reported speaking to the Benzie County Administrator about our request for reimbursement to Benzie County Board of Commissioners for qualified COVID-19 related costs under the County's American Rescue Plan Act federal funding; the request was taken under advisement and forwarded to the County Board without the Administrator's recommendation for approval.

-River Road federal aid project bids came in approximately \$65,000.00 under the engineering estimate, which is good news.

-Esch Road/FLAP grant project is proceeding, and Skeels confirmed we received \$115,000.00 COVID relief funding for this project. Bid letting is expected for July with construction anticipated later this fall.

-Commissioner Rosa offered his suggestion to County Commissioner Sauer as to how the County could equitably disburse the COVID-19 funding to the various departments that would be based on budgeted expenses.

Public Input: County Commissioner Sauer asked if we had received Blaine Township's brine contract and asked when the first brining is expected. He also asked for clarification from Nedow as to where the funds for increasing the monthly MERS pension payments will come from to which Nedow replied from the general fund balance.

Weldon Township Supervisor Hitesman asked about the status of the Pioneer/King Road curve project and about brining.

Chairman Rosa then adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m. so that the Board could tour the Platte River Elementary school building.

Robert Rosa, Chairman

Joel Nedow, Clerk