

**A REGULAR MEETING** of the Board of Chippewa County Road Commissioners was held in their offices located at 3949 S. Mackinac Trail, Sault Ste. Marie, MI on January 19, 2023.

Chairman Gagnon called the meeting to order at 8:00 A.M.

**PRESENT:** Chairman Gagnon, Commissioner Moser, Commissioner Sprague, Manager Laitinen, Office Manager Decker, Engineer Boileau, Superintendent Erickson, Foreman Rye, Clerk Livermore, Clerk Christensen, Chief Mechanic Marsh, Union President Cheney.

**ABSENT:** Foreman Goodman

**GUEST PRESENT:** Trout Lake Township Clerk David Hillman, County Commissioner Jim Traynor, Kinross Township Supervisor James Moore, and Rudyard Township Supervisor Barry Davis.

Manager Laitinen asked for the CRA Board of Directors Ballot be added to the agenda under New Business item b.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Moser **SECONDED** by Commissioner Sprague to approve the agenda with the added item under New Business b.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION** by Commissioner Moser **SECONDED** by Commissioner Sprague that Payroll in the amount of \$176,930.05 and Vouchers in the amount of \$564,066.96 be approved and authorized for payment from the County Road Fund subject to audit.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION** by Commissioner Moser **SECONDED** by Commissioner Sprague to approve the regular meeting minutes from January 5, 2023 and place them on file.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

James Moore, Kinross Township Supervisor, commented it is impressive the way our crews are taking care of the roads this winter but that Mackinac Trail is in rough shape and needs to be considered for repair. Manager Laitinen commented that Mackinac Trail is scheduled for resurfacing in 2024.

**STAFF REPORTS**

Office Manager Decker

- The inspection of the new fuel tanks in Goetzville and Drummond Island is complete. There are a couple of things to address before the state inspector comes.

- Working on year end prep for the auditor. Our local auditor retired and the local firm is not doing road commission audits. The auditor is from the same firm but will be coming from Marquette this year. We may have to send an RFP for next year's audit.
- Found a discrepancy in the fuel bill for Eckerman. The supplier has not been following the price structure on the bid as awarded. The local vendor sold the business. Contacted the new corporate office. Their representative confirmed changing the price structure without notice to us, noting sticking to the agreed price structure would cause a major loss to their company and would cause them to have to cancel their contract. The change has resulted in an increase in cost to the Eckerman and Brimley garages which are serviced by Shute Oil & Propane. A couple of spot checks indicate a price per gallon increase of \$0.73 to \$1.156 for #2 diesel as compared to deliveries made by Autore Oil. Manager Laitinen reviewed the bidding process, the bid award history, and pricing with the board. Office Manager Decker recommend a special meeting between the board and the vendor to discuss. A special meeting will be called for Wednesday, January 25<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.

Superintendent Erickson

- Busy with maintenance due to the frequent freeze/thaw cycle which is currently creating water issues.
- Side roads are still glare ice.

Foreman Goodman

- No Report

Foreman Rye

- Same as the Sault Garage.
- Kevin Gouza gave a special thank you to the crew.

Engineer Boileau

- Working on bids for up-coming year.

Clerk Christensen

- John Bodner with MIOSHA CET will be onsite February 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> to meet with the safety committee. The first day is job safety analysis and the second day is hazard recognition. Both meetings will be from 10:00 a.m. until 2:30 p.m.
- Annual safety meeting is planned for April 19<sup>th</sup> at the Bruce Township Hall. More to come.
- Fire extinguisher inspection scheduled to begin April 3<sup>rd</sup>, beginning with Goetzville, Pickford, and Rudyard. The Sault will be next and island garages will bring them to the Sault.

Union President Cheney

- Nothing new to report.

Payroll/H.R./Board Clerk Livermore

- The next board meeting will be Wednesday, February 1<sup>st</sup> at 8:00 a.m. to allow staff and commissioners attendance at UP Road Builders conference in Marquette.
- For next pay on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, all time cards need to be entered and approved by the Monday morning before payday. Payroll will be processed early.
- W2's were included with paychecks.

Chief Mechanic Marsh

- Busy in the garage, mostly emissions related.
- Had an engine failure on one truck.

**MANAGER'S REPORT**

- Attended a press event in Lansing with CRA to present a study on Electric Vehicles and the effect on road tax collection. The event was not focused on proposing a solution but to identify the problem and educate.
- Attended the Michigan Wetland Bank board meeting while in Lansing. Working on establishing some office space in the building with CRA.
- Attended the joint agency Transportation Committee meeting regarding stream mitigation and some proposed rules from EGLE.
- Received a call from Regional Planning regarding the blighted property grant for the Paradise garage site. This site does not qualify for this grant.
- Received the video material from EUPTA regarding the Christmas Eve event. The video clearly shows ferry crew arriving and clearing the ferry for the morning run. The video shows our employee arriving prior to the scheduled ferry run and waiting. The video shows clear visibility from both docks and down the river. Our cost for the event was wages paid to a seasonal temporary employee on the island, overtime wages and fringe to our regular employee. Manager Laitinen looked to the board for direction on next steps to take. Chairman Gagnon would like a meeting between Chairs and Managers of EUPTA and the Road Commission scheduled to discuss.
- Had a conversation with DNR regarding a situation on I-75. There is an abnormal number of deer hits occurring at the I-75/M-80 exchange. The DNR is going to look into the matter to see if a resident in the area is feeding the deer.
- The Drain Commission position has been filled. The County Commission has appointed Anthony Stackpoole to fill the position.
- Received resignation notice from Jim Girvin, one of the mechanics this week. His last day will be January 27<sup>th</sup>. He has accepted a position as a civilian worker with the Coast Guard.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- A.) Reaffirm Policy #1 (Purchasing) and Policy #2 (Commuting Use of Road Commission Vehicle).

- Manager Laitinen reviewed current purchasing policy and history of thresholds with board and recommended reaffirming policy.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Moser **SECONDED** by Commissioner Sprague to reaffirm Policy #1 - Purchasing Policy.

**MOTION CARRIED**

- Manager Laitinen reviewed current Commuting policy and history of the policy, recommending the board reaffirm policy.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Sprague **SECONDED** by Commissioner Moser to reaffirm Policy #2 - Commuting Use of Road Commission Vehicle).

**MOTION CARRIED**

- B.) CRA Board of Directors Ballot - Manager Laitinen explained that with the retirement of Marquette County Engineer-Manager, Jim Iwanicki, a seat on the CRA Board needs to be filled. The candidates are Engineer-Manager Robert Lindbeck from Alger County and Commissioner Ray Roberts from Marquette County. Manager Laitinen noted both are great candidates. Chairman Gagnon noted a preference for Candidate Lindbeck.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Moser **SECONDED** by Commissioner Sprague to cast vote for Robert Lindbeck for CRA Board.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**OLD BUSINESS**

- NONE

**County Commissioners Comments**

- Commissioner Traynor voiced support for the work being done in Goetzville, indicating "they are doing a good job".

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- None

**CLOSED SESSION FOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT NEGOTIATION DISCUSSION**

**MOTION** by Commissioner Moser **SECONDED** by Commissioner Sprague to enter closed session for discussion regarding negotiation of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

**MOTION CARRIED** by UNANAMOUS ROLLCALL VOTE

**MOTION** by Commissioner Sprague **SECONDED** by Commissioner Moser to re-enter open session.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Resumed open session at 9:20 a.m.

No decisions were made during the closed session meeting.

**ROAD COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

Chairman Gagnon wished everyone to be safe. With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 9:21 A.M.

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Bobbie Livermore  
Clerk for the Board

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Jeremy Gagnon  
Chairman