

## **DRAFT**

### **HIGHWAY COMMITTEE**

**September 8, 2005**

The regular monthly meeting of the Highway Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Thursday, September 8, 2005 at 12:00 Noon in the Conference Room of the DeKalb County Highway Department, DeKalb, Illinois.

Vice-Chair Faivre called the meeting to order. Committee members present were Mr. Anderson, Vice Chair Faivre, Ms. Fauci, Mr. Gudmunson, Mr. Osborne and Mr. Whelan. Also present were County Administrator Ray Bockman, Deputy County Administrator Gary Hanson, County Engineer William Lorence, Stacy Richardson, Highway Department, Mr. Greg Millburg, Farm Bureau and Mr. Steve Slack, County Board Member.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**Motion made by Mr. Whelan and seconded by Mr. Osborne to approve the minutes of August 4, 2005. The motion to approve the minutes carried unanimously.**

#### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

**Motion made by Mr. Anderson to approve the agenda and Mr. Whelan seconded this motion. The motion carried unanimously to approve the agenda.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** There were no public comments.

#### **PRESENTATION OF 2006 BUDGET:**

Vice-Chair Faivre introduced Mr. Hanson to the Committee for the presentation of the 2006 DeKalb County Budget. Mr. Hanson provided an overview for the Committee. Highlighted areas included Item #2 of the Budget Narrative which explains the Equalized Assessed Value for the County is expected to increase by 9.5%. This would mean a yearly increase in property taxes on a \$200,000.00 home of \$19.40. Item #5 provided for a continuation of the pay plan in effect for non-union employees. Employees will receive a 3.3% cost of living increase and would be eligible for a mid-year merit increase of up to 2%. Item #6 indicated that two separate labor unions have sought recognition to represent some of the employees of the County Highway Department. No further progress has been made on that issue as of this writing. Item #7 highlights the anticipated cost of health insurance for next year. This year's budget will include the non-budgeted shortfall of 2005 and the anticipated increase of 15% for 2006. Item #10 recommends a change to the Paid Hours Off System that would reduce the number of PHOs earned for employees hired after December 1, 2005 from 33 days to 28 days during their six months to four years of employment. Item #11 identifies investment losses for the Illinois Municipal Retirement Funds and explains how these losses will be recouped. Item #29 provided for an amount of up to \$120,000.00 per year for two years to hire a lobbyist to earmark Federal dollars back to DeKalb County. If this two-year experiment proves to be successful this item will become a permanent part of future budgets. Mr. Hanson referred the Committee to the projected Tax Levies assigned to the Highway, Aid to Bridges and Matching Tax budgets. Also highlighted was the Highway Departments Road Improvements plan and equipment

replacement schedule for the coming budget year.

Mr. Anderson stated that if the Fund balance continues to be depleted by a half-million dollars a year what will prevent this Fund from being completely depleted in a short time. Mr. Hanson and Mr. Bockman explained that these funds are usually self-correcting. Funds are built up to cover the costs of planned projects. When the funds have accumulated in that particular fund to a point where they can cover the cost of a planned project that project is let. Then the funds will be built back up to cover the cost of another project. These Funds will show fluctuations but expenditures will be regulated based on the balance of the accounts. Timing of projects would have some effect on the fund balances but these funds are built up in anticipation of projects and then expended at the completion of these projects.

Ms Fauci asked if Mr. Lorence was disappointed in the federal money that DeKalb County has received over the years. Mr. Lorence indicated that District 2 was very good in letting DeKalb County spend Federal Funds that were earmarked for other Counties in order to spend these funds. However, effective immediately we are now assigned to District 3 in Ottawa. DeKalb County will take its negative balance of Federal funding with us and this might result in less Federal funds being available for DeKalb County. Mr. Lorence informed the committee that by using lobbyist hopefully we could earmark additional Federal funds for DeKalb County and especially receive more of the 100% Federal funding.

Mr. Whelan asked if we have enough funds to cover the cost of the increase in fuel prices, Ms Fauci asked about the possibility of using ethanol and Mr. Anderson inquired if we could bid our fuel and if the Department tracks miles per gallon. Mr. Lorence answered that we are looking at a shortfall of \$75,000 in our fuel budget for this year. If these trends continue our fuel budget for 2006 will also more than likely have a shortfall. Mr. Lorence explained that our fuel quotes are only good for 24 hours. We have not normally contracted our fuel due to the fact that the Department can receive better prices as a whole over the year by purchasing fuel from our local distributors. Mr. Lorence further explained that the Sheriffs department has requested not to use ethanol because of their increase in maintenance vehicle cost. Due to the fact that the Sheriffs Department uses 40% of our fuel total we are working with them to honor that request. The software the Highway Department utilizes for fleet management tracks the miles per gallon used for our vehicles. We also track consumption and the Highway Department's consumption is down 2% over last year. Even with this conservation effort our fuel budget will be in the red this year.

Mr. Anderson inquired how the Life Insurance and Unemployment Tax dollar figures were calculated. Mr. Hanson explained that the County pays all fulltime employees life insurance at a cost of \$150 per person and approximately the same cost of \$150 in which we pay unemployment on the first \$9000 of each employee.

Ms. Fauci asked if the Federal Highway bill passes would it affect us. Mr. Lorence responded that the IDOT funding that DeKalb County applied for was not approved. Mr. Whelan asked how the widening of Peace Road was funded. Mr. Lorence indicated that there is \$150,000 in truck access route money between Rt 64 south to Rt 23 of Peace Road. Much discussion at this time on clarifying who is funding the four lanes and turn lanes was held. Mr. Faivre asks that we check the tapes from that meeting that Mr. Bill Nichols was asked the direct question of who was funding that expansion and Mr. Nichols stated "the developers". Mr. Lorence stated that the four lanes have been a project for years and that only a double left hand turn and the intersection improvements are at the cost of the developers. Mr. Faivre and other committee members expressed a need to review the County Board meeting tape. There being

no further discussion on the budget a motion was made by Ms. Fauci to approve the Budget as submitted and forward it to the Finance Committee. Mr. Osborne seconded this motion and the motion carried unanimously. Vice-Chair Faivre thanked Mr. Hanson for his time.

#### INFORMATION CONCERNING THE COUNTY ENGINEER'S EVALUATION:

Mr. Bockman stated that the committee needs to decide today if they were in agreement with his recommendations concerning the County Engineer's performance. A Standard Work Plan that was adopted by the County Board during November, 2003 was passed out to each member and discussed. Discussion on the three components of this Plan includes the CPI adjustment that is a 3.3% rate provided by the State of Illinois, completion of the Standard Work Plan, and the completion of the Professional Development Plan. The Professional Development plan is giving the County Engineer 40 hours credit in professional education. That figure is negotiated with the County Administrator and he is the one who certifies to the Committee that this requirement of the Standard Work Plan has been met. If the County Engineer meets that requirement then he would be entitled to an additional 3.3% salary increase. The third opportunity for a salary increase would come from the exceptional components of this plan. In this situation none is being recommended for the County Engineer this year. The total recommended salary increase for the County Engineer is a 6.6% salary increase. Mr. Faivre inquired if the dollar amount of 6.6% salary increase and the increase in insurance cost was known. Mr. Bockman stated that those numbers were in the budget books provided and if the Committee needed additional information he would be happy to provide the Committee with that. **A motion was made to go into closed session per 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) to discuss the performance of the County Engineer by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Mr. Whelan. A roll call vote was taken: Vice-Chair Faivre, yes; Mr. Gudmunson, yes; Mr. Osborne, yes; Mr. Whelan, yes; Mr. Anderson, yes, and Ms. Fauci, yes. Mr. Lorence and Ms. Richardson and all public guests were asked to leave the meeting during at this time. Mr. Bockman was requested to attend the closed session.**

THE COMMITTEE ENTERED CLOSED SESSION.

THE COMMITTEE RETURNED FROM CLOSED SESSION.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS: None

COUNTY ENGINEER'S COMMENTS:

Mr. Lorence provided his progress report to the Committee. Of note was that the Bethany Road extension project is a 100% Road District project. No County funds are being used for this project. Bethany Road from IL Route 23 to Somonauk Road is scheduled to be completed by November 1st of this year. The County's cost of this project will be for one half of the traffic signals at Peace and Bethany Roads. We anticipate this cost to be \$200,000. The paving of this intersection will also be completed by the City of Sycamore. Cherry Valley Road Bridge Preliminary Engineering is at 60%, Brickville Road culvert is waiting to be finalized by IDOT. This Department will anticipate an October 18, 2005 letting for this project. This Department would like to have this project completed before winter if we let it this year.

Mr. Lorence requested that the October regular meeting of the Highway Committee be rescheduled for 7:00 P.M. October 19, 2005. The only item to be discussed would be a resolution to award a bid for the Brickville Road culvert project. **The Committee had no**

**objection to this change.**

Mr. Lorence stated that no bids for snow removal were received and indicated the Department was planning on the hiring of a second temporary snow plow driver to assist with the northern routes left vacant by the contract. Mr. Gudmunson inquired if all trucks plow the same amount of lane miles and wouldn't under frame plows and rubber blades help decrease the salt use and help keep roadways clearer. Mr. Lorence stated that our trucks are outfitted with all steel blades. Mr. Lorence indicated that each snow storm is never the same and snow removal operations have to be tailored to the storm.

Vice-Chair Faivre asked if there was anything else that needed to be brought before the Committee and hearing none asked for a motion to adjourn. **A motion was made by Mr. Anderson to adjourn and this motion was seconded by Mr. Whelan. The motion passed unanimously and the September 8, 2005 meeting was adjourned at 2:05 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted

Pat LaVigne  
Chairman