

HIGHWAY COMMITTEE

November 2, 2006

A meeting of the Highway Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Thursday November 2, 2006 at 6:00pm in the Conference Room of the DeKalb County Highway Department, DeKalb, Illinois.

Chair LaVigne called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Committee members present were, Vice-Chair Faivre, Ms. Fauci, Mr. Osborne and Mr. Whelan. Also present were Mr. William Lorence-County Engineer, Wayne Davey-Support Services Manager, Highway Department, Chief Russ Stokes, Cortland Police Chief, Mr. Steve Slack-County Board member, Miles Pfefferle and Kathy Giles NIU Students.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion made by Mr. Whelan and seconded by Ms. Fauci to approve the minutes of the regular October 5, 2006 meeting. The motion to approve the minutes carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion made by Mr. Osborne to approve the agenda and Vice-Chair Faivre seconded this motion. Discussion followed to amend the agenda by adding a new item 2: **Resolution to allow the County Engineer to enter into a Reimbursement Agreement with Guardian Pipeline to Repair Plank Road and to renumber the remaining items accordingly. The motion carried unanimously to approve the agenda as amended.**

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

SPEED ZONE CONCERN: Cortland Chief of Police Russ Stokes was introduced to the Committee. Chief Stokes requested that the speed limit on Somonauk Road from 500 feet north of Carol Avenue to Pleasant Street be reduced to 40 miles per hour. Chief Stokes stated he is attempting to be pro-active and stop a serious accident before it happens. The traffic on this road has increased dramatically over the last few years. The speed limit is 55 miles per hour coming into Town and then is reduced to a 30 miles per hour speed limit with no slowing speed limits in between. Motorists are traveling 50 miles per hour when they hit the Town's posted 30 miles per hour speed limit. During the rush hours vehicles are coming bumper to bumper and if the Town puts law enforcement in this area during this time they are afraid of causing a chain reaction when the first vehicle applies their brakes to reduce their speed. Chief Stokes further stated that pedestrians are using the road as a sidewalk to get to downtown Cortland as well as pushing baby strollers down the street due to lack of sidewalks in this area. With the speed of the traveling public and pedestrian traffic on this road this

is an accident waiting to happen. Chief Stokes indicated he was not appearing before the Committee to request sidewalks or speak for the Town of Cortland but merely as a public servant who is very concerned about the safety and welfare of the traveling and walking public on Somonauk Road. By reducing the speed limit on this portion of roadway it may not prevent a serious accident but it would surely give motorist more time to react to a given situation.

Mr. Lorence stated that the County couldn't just post an enforceable speed limit upon request. Statutes require that any altered speed limits must be based upon an engineering and traffic investigation. Altered limits established on the basis of opinions of either public officials or private individuals have no legal authority. There are two statutory speed limits that apply to this situation and they are 30 miles per hour for urban districts and 55 miles per hour outside an urban district. These are found at 625 ILCS 5/11-601. The establishment of altered speed zones is specified by Federal regulations that have been adopted by the State of Illinois to allow for a consistent application of these requirements. To establish an altered speed zone speeds will be observed for 100 passenger cars and pickup trucks in each lane of traffic. Truck over four tons will not be included in the determining data. In order to obtain a true indication of normal conditions speed studies are to be conducted under good weather conditions, on dry pavement, following morning rush hours and prior to the evening rush periods, on any day of the week except Saturdays, Sundays or holidays. If the speed study finds that 85 percent of the vehicles on the roadway are traveling at or greater than 55 miles per hour it would be very difficult if not impossible to reduce the speed limit if no other factors such as accident rate, access control, pedestrian activity and parking are non factors.

Chief Stokes requested a speed study be conducted and the Committee directed the County Engineer to do so. Mr. Lorence indicated that Wayne Davey would be in contact with Chief Stokes with the results when completed. The Committee thanked Chief Stokes for addressing the Committee.

RESOLUTION TO ENTER INTO A REIMBURSEMENT AGREEMENT WITH GUARDIAN PIPELINE FOR THE REPAIRS TO PLANK ROAD:

Mr. Lorence stated that the gas pipeline that was bored under Plank Road during 2001 has caused that area to sink and is taking the road with it. This section has been repaired once before and again it has settled. Guardian will pay for this repair. Vice-Chair Faivre expressed concern that this is the second time and that apparently there is still a problem and the problem should be fixed, not simply put more asphalt over the road. Mr. Lorence stated they would monitor the road and if it continues to sink steps would be taken to have the road cut and see if the pipeline installation inadvertently cut through an existing field tile. There has been no evidence of this but something is causing the sinking. **A motion was made by Vice-Chair Faivre and seconded by Ms. Fauci to forward the resolution to the full County Board recommending approval. The motion carried unanimously.**

CHAIR'S COMMENTS:

A call was received from Mr. Carl Heinisch concerning the safety improvements promised at Glidden and Rich Roads. Mr. Heinisch stated he was pleased with the

double yellow lines through the intersection but was wondering when the flashing lights would be installed. The contractor has indicated that installation should be completed by Thanksgiving as they are still awaiting delivery of the equipment.

COUNTY ENGINEER'S COMMENTS:

The Transportation Improvement Progress Report was provided to the Committee for their review. Mr. Lorence highlighted the Peace Road widening project, which stands at 45% completed; the Cherry Valley Bridge design stands at 60% completed and the Chicago Road Bridge is at 4% of construction. The vendor who is completing the casting of this bridge has agreed to store the castings should the County decide not to install the bridge this winter but wait until next year. The Suydam Road bridge project will not begin until next spring due to the availability of the steel.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Vice-Chair Faivre inquired who is in charge of the traffic signals at Fairview and Peace. They seem to stop traffic on Peace for no reason and he would like someone to look into it. Mr. Lorence provided Vice-Chair Faivre with the telephone number of the City of DeKalb point of contact for such matters.

Vice-Chair Faivre wanted to know why the State could issue overweight/over length permits for a year at a time and the County could not. Mr. Lorence stated that if the requesting party is hauling the same piece of equipment, over the same route, on the same truck then a permit could be issued for a longer period of time. The County currently does this for Johnson Controls. Permits are obtain free of charge at the Highway Department and information is gathered over the phone and faxed to the requesting party. Permits are usually in the hands of the requesting party within fifteen minutes of the request. County roads are different widths and depending on the load and road with, escorts may be required to transport a certain load, thus the requirement for most of our individual permits.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chair LaVigne inquired 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. Whelan to adjourn and this motion was seconded by Mr. Osborne. The motion passed unanimously and the November 2, 2006 meeting was adjourned at 6:45p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted

Pat LaVigne
Chair