

The regular meeting of the Board of Calhoun County Road Commissioners was held on Wednesday, September 21, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. in their office located at 13300 Fifteen Mile Road, Marshall, Michigan.

**PRESENT:** Commissioner Scott Brown, Chairman  
Commissioner Hugh Coward, Vice Chairman  
Commissioner Christopher Vreeland, Member

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Eric Johnson, Member – excused  
Commissioner Eric Tobin, Member – excused

**ALSO PRESENT:** Kevin Henning, Managing Director  
Jill Forshey, Finance Clerk  
General Public

Chairman Scott Brown called the regular meeting of the Board of Calhoun County Road Commissioners to order at 5:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Motion made by Commissioner Coward and supported by Commissioner Vreeland to approve the September 14, 2011 regular meeting minutes. Voice vote: Motion carried.**

#### **MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

***Brush Chipper Bid:*** Mr. Henning noted that we provided the brush chipper bid package and other information to the Board at last week's meeting. We've been renting a brush chipper and paying by the month, which we can continue to do. The rental is actually the Vermeer 125 HP from Vermeer and they submitted a bid for that exact same unit. Vermeer informed us that we can continue to rent from them, with no obligation to buy, or if we awarded them the bid, they would take the rental payments to date off the price of their unit. Vermeer's unit is relatively the same as what the bid specification called for, as it is a 15" that can take a 15" tree and chew the whole thing in one pass. Mr. Henning stated that it is exactly what we're looking for to replace.

Chairman Brown asked how long the units last. Mr. Henning replied that our last unit was 21 years old and we were unable to get teeth for it anymore so we couldn't service it. Commissioner Vreeland asked how long we have been renting and how much we had spent so far. Mr. Henning stated that we spent \$7,000 for a 3 month rental.

Mr. Henning stated that he was unhappy with where the emergency shut off was located on the Chipper from Bandit Industries. The shutoff on the Vermeer is located right at the opening of the shoot, giving easy access. His recommendation would be to purchase the Vermeer unit at a cost of \$32,970. Due to cash flow issues, he recommended that the Board award the bid, but not purchase until next year, or when cash flow was better. Chairman Brown asked if the motion would need to be worded differently, since awarding the bid would imply purchasing the unit. After further discussion, it was agreed to table the bid award until October.

***Work Week:*** Mr. Henning stated that beginning October 3, 2011; we will be going back to a 5-day work week. He provided the Board with the contact information that we give to Dispatch. He noted that the contact sheet is in a grid format that states what number to call at specific times on a given day. In the event Dispatch cannot reach someone as specified on the contact sheet, Mr. Henning and Mrs. Crumpton's company issued cell phones and personal contact information is provided. Mr. Henning mentioned that occasionally, the pager does not go off. He added that it has happened when he was on call, wearing the pager and his cell phone. Dispatch claimed they paged him five times, but he never received a page. We've gone through pagers two or three times in a year. Commissioner Vreeland asked why we bother with them, and what the cost is. Mr. Henning stated that in some cases, the pager is better than a cell phone and the cost is relatively low at approximately \$50 for 3 months.

***Debris Cleanup:*** Mr. Henning informed the Board that he met today with Pat Dougherty, of Emmett Township, Calhoun County's Kelly Scott and Art Hale, and Commissioner Vreeland. The group discussed the storm debris left in Emmett Township. The group discussed who was contacted for the emergency management meeting, and our desire to have a follow up meeting regarding that process. With regards to the cost for debris clean up, the County's position has not changed. They believe that it is the responsibility of the property owner. If the property owners can't afford to have the

debris removed, it was recommended that they contact 211. Commissioner Coward asked what 211 would do for the property owner. Commissioner Vreeland and Mr. Henning stated that they would connect them with a volunteer group or funding source; Hands on Battle Creek and Southern Baptists did some volunteer work for storm cleanup in Battle Creek.

Emmett Township Supervisor Pat Dougherty would like to hire Boles Tree Service at \$1,250 a day for five days. He stated that Emmett Township has approximately \$6,000 to \$7,000 available for debris clean up. After one week, they would reassess the situation, but Supervisor Dougherty believes that the majority could be cleaned up in a week's time. Mr. Henning stated that his assessment after driving the area this week was at least 2 or 3 weeks would be needed to clean up everything within the right-of-way. It would cost another \$100,000 to \$125,000 if the Road Commission were to do it.

Both the Road Commission (through the County) and Emmett Township have applied for \$30,000 from the Emergency Management Fund. We discussed at one point that we would use the \$30,000 to hire a subcontractor for debris clean up. Emmett Township would like to use their \$30,000 to reimburse overtime and the general fund that was spent for Public Safety. The Emmett Township Board, according to Supervisor Dougherty, doesn't believe it's the Township's responsibility to step up and help with the clean up. Supervisor Dougherty disagrees and that is why he is trying to hire a contractor for at least a week's worth of clean up. Mr. Henning stated that if the Road Commission were to receive the \$30,000, he would like to match Emmett Township, dollar to dollar up to \$30,000, for debris cleanup.

Mr. Henning stated that MDOT has directed us to clean up the debris on Michigan Avenue next week, as they want this to come out of this year's State Maintenance budget and have authorized overtime to get it done. This clean-up effort may cause more debris to get hauled out to the road.

Mr. Henning asked Commissioner Vreeland if he had anything to add from the meeting. Commissioner Vreeland thought Mr. Henning's statements were accurate and agreed with Mr. Henning's thought on matching Emmet Township for debris removal. He added that we all took a budget hit.

Commissioner Vreeland attended the meeting to find out from Kelly Scott how much money we were getting out of the \$30,000, thinking that the Sheriff's Department would be getting the majority for overtime. At the meeting, Mrs. Scott stated that all \$30,000 would be going to the Road Commission. Commissioner Vreeland noted that he asked Art Kale what expenses the County had and Mr. Kale responded that the County didn't have too many expenses.

Commissioner Brown asked the total spent on debris clean up to date. Mr. Henning responded that we have spent \$300,000. Commissioner Brown stated that maybe he speaks alone, but he's not in favor of spending anymore money on cleanup. Let someone else pick up some of the expense. He said that it sounds like the County hasn't picked up a nickel since the initial emergency. Our emergency is fixing potholes. Commissioner Coward agreed. Discussion continued on debris cleanup and tree stumps in the roadway in some subdivisions.

**All Employee Day:** We are planning our All Employee Day scheduled for Friday, October 21, 2011. This day is spent focusing on training, discussing what we did well this past year, and planning for this coming year. We will be providing lunch to our employees and all Commissioners are invited to attend for the entire day, if available. If not available for the entire day, Commissioners were encouraged to join us for lunch between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. We will also be recognizing employees for their years of service in milestones with the Road Commission, and will be providing gift cards.

### **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Mr. Joe Bramble, Convis Township resident, asked if we were still having Township Supervisor meetings. Mr. Henning replied that they are held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of every month at 9:00 a.m. The next meeting is on Wednesday, September 28<sup>th</sup> and he was welcome to attend. Mr. Bramble also commented on some loggers that pick up debris right from the rig. He said there have been loggers that are parking in the road and loading from the road, and we may want to check out 17 Mile Road. Mr. Henning stated that it is illegal for them to load from the road.

**COMMISSIONER TIME**

Commissioner Vreeland referred to information that Mr. Logan has provided electronically to the County Commissioners over the last week or two. Mr. Logan has given a detailed recounting in his perspective of the Road Commission's work on a cul-de-sac in one of his developments. It was noted that this developer builds in stages, and when you develop in stages you need roads there, and they must be approved by the Road Commission. However, the Road Commission does not approve the construction of roads that stop in the middle of nowhere with a cul-de-sac at the end, which is what happened in Phase I of this development. When Phase II was developed, which is the next plot, the cul-de-sac was extended out the other end to the new houses that were built. When that was completed a number of years ago, the road was certified; however, the Road Commission should have made the developer remove the cul-de-sac before certifying the road but this was not done. There was a bulge in the road and when plowed in the winter, we only plow straight through, not the entire cul-de-sac. This causes a problem for the residential driveway off the north side of the cul-de-sac. The north side is the part where we cut out the tar and returned it to grass, basically giving that piece of land back to the owner. Both adjoining landowners have not complained. Mr. Logan, the developer, who no longer owns the affected driveway or any of the affected parcels, is annoyed for some reason and has written a letter to the Commissioner's saying that we wasted \$20,000 to \$30,000 of taxpayer dollars cutting away a cul-de-sac. Mr. Logan also mentioned some excessive erosion in Phase II. Commissioner Vreeland stated that he has seen some erosion, but nothing excessive. Mr. Logan is planning to speak at the County meeting on October 6<sup>th</sup> and Commissioner Vreeland noted that he plans to attend. Discussion continued.

Commissioner Vreeland commented that the residents on 26 Mile Road in Homer Township were very pleased with the patching that was done on their road, and he believes the residents brought out watermelon, so they would patch longer.

The other ongoing issue Commissioner Vreeland has commented on is the tree stumps in the road on Hidden Forest Lane, which is not a cul-de-sac, but a semi-circle, that goes in, loops around and comes back out. The stumps have police tape around them. Commissioner Brown asked if there were liability issues. Commissioner Vreeland mentioned that he and Mr. Henning had the very same discussion with Pat Dougherty. Mr. Henning stated that he told Supervisor Dougherty that he wanted to file a report with Emmett Public Safety, stating someone or vandals put stuff out in the road, but Mr. Henning believes that Public Safety put the tape around it. Mr. Henning mentioned that we purposely haven't moved it because if we do, it is saying to the township that if it sits there long enough, the Road Commission will pick it up. Discussion continued.

Commissioner Brown asked if it would be worth filing a complaint with Emmett Public Safety regarding the tree stumps. Someone put them there, and it's going to cost us money to pick them up. It's going to cost the taxpayers' to pick something up that came off private property. They intentionally put it in the road. Mr. Henning mentioned that the last time we had something similar to this situation was when damage was done to our roadway by the Fairgrounds. We filed a police report and we knew who did the damage, so we turned everything over to the Prosecutor's office. They decided not to move forward because it is not against the law to damage a public roadway. We were told that there was no precedence and nothing the Prosecutor's office could do.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Calhoun County Road Commissioners will be held on Wednesday, October 5, 2011 at 5:30 p.m.

There being no additional business before the Board, Chairman Brown adjourned the meeting at 6:11 p.m.

Submitted by:

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Jill Forshey, Finance Clerk

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Scott A. Brown, Chairman