

Work Session of the Board of County Road Commissioners for the County of St. Joseph, State of Michigan, was held in the Board Room at the St. Joseph County Road Commission, 20914 M-86, Centreville, Michigan at 8:00 a.m.

Present: Chairman David Allen, Vice Chairman Eric Shafer, Commissioner Vince Mifsud, Commissioner Rodney Chupp, Commissioner Coleman, Clerk Julie Mayuiers, Manager John Lindsey

Guests present: Garrett Myland, Assistant Manager, Project Engineer
Robert Tomlison, TR Commercial
Bill Russell
Mr. Bush, Attorney for Bill Russell

Motion by Commissioner Chupp seconded by Commissioner Mifsud to approve the agenda and the Consent Agenda consisting of minutes of the February 3, 2021 Board meeting as presented. Motion carried.

Motion by Vice Chairman Shafer seconded by Commissioner Mifsud to approve the January Payroll vouchers in the amount of \$205,345.62. Roll Call Vote taken: Ayes: Coleman Mifsud, Shafer, Chupp, Allen
Nays: None Absent: None Abstained: None Motion carried.

Motion by Vice Chairman Shafer seconded by Commissioner Coleman to approve the January A/P vouchers in the amount of \$143,440.23. Roll Call Vote taken: Mifsud, Chupp, Coleman, Shafer, Allen
Nays: None Absent: None Abstained: None Motion carried.

Motion by Commissioner Chupp seconded by Commissioner Coleman to resume the Public Hearing on Haybridge Road Abandonment that was recessed on February 3, 2021.

Roll Call Vote: Chupp, Coleman, Mifsud, Shafer, Allen Nays: None
Abstained: None Absent: None Motion carried

Discussions took place on the Public Hearing of Haybridge Road Bridge Abandonment as follows:

Manager Lindsey shared a letter he received on February 16, 2021 from Florence Township following their meeting on February 15, 2021 where their Board made a Resolution to "NOT TAKE OVER THE ROW AND MAINTAIN THE ROAD AS A 'PUBLIC ACCESS SITE'".

Commissioner Coleman – he has been doing some research and reviewing old maps and they showed a potential ROW off Haybridge Road.

Mr. Russell – there is a fence line on the west side.

Manager Lindsey – nothing indicates this on the GIS maps we have reviewed.

Garrett Myland – nothing on the GIS maps and the ROW is 33' from the centerline of Haybridge Road.

Tim Carls – Florence Township discussed the possible abandonment of Haybridge Road bridge but did not vote on that subject. Tim’s personal opinion is that the ROAD should stay open. He asked if the Board has done anything to look for Grants to replace the bridge? This Board is responsible for maintaining the bridge not the Peterbilt showroom. Why can’t a culvert be installed? Another road on that property closed 50 years ago. This was plotted years ago. There are evil eyes in the County Courthouse stacking money. Did our Board go to them and ask for money because they can pay for it? Have all resources to get it fixed been reviewed? Abandoning will not stop the partying issue, only move it to the other side. County Commissioners too busy paying for the Sports Parks and stealing money. It is better that nothing be done to try to establish money to go in there, but we do not need \$1 million to fix it.

Commissioner Chupp has received a call from a resident asking if a culvert could be installed.

Garrett Myland said EGLE would not allow a culvert to be installed due to regulations.

Tim Carls stated that Ben Russell has deceived them before and until he hears from the state will not believe a culvert cannot be installed. There is so much abuse of funds in this county. The job has not been done to check on all resources. Does the road commission budget include all the money at the courthouse?

Vice Chairman Shafer stated that yes, all our money is included in our budget.

Garrett Myland said that if the bridge is on the National Bridge Registry, we must pay a minimum 5% plus all engineering costs. There are specifics to follow and some bridges are not able to receive money for repairs.

Commissioner Chupp asked Mr. Carls if he felt it was a good investment to put \$1 million into this bridge.

Tim Carls said I wouldn’t call it a bad investment. Have we taken bids to remove the bridge or just going to allow Ben Russell to remove it? Scrapers could take it out.

Vice Chairman Shafer asked Mr. Carls if ultimately, he had \$1 million would he spend it on the bridge? Question is do we want to abandon it...if we keep it, we need to spend the money to make it safe again.

Commissioner Coleman said he has recently viewed the bridge and it has several holes in it and if a kayaker goes under it and concrete falls on them the road commission would have an issue. He understands Mr. Carls frustration and does not see it feasible to fix.

Commissioner Chupp has spoken to Director McDonald at the Parks Department and they have found a much better location for the access and this new access would serve the public better. The area is on Haybridge Road and known as the “swimming hole”. The area has been available for years.

Mr. Bush reiterated that their position was clear, and he agreed with the discussions and Mr. Russel was seeking abandonment because the bridge has not been used for a long time and he is not trying to deny access. As previously said, the bridge is a hazard and an accident waiting to happen and that is the reason Mr. Russel is seeking to have it abandon.

Manager Lindsey asked about the wording on the previous timing indicated in the documents he received and asked if this was still workable looking at four months from this day or end of June. It was reiterated that all costs the road commission has endured will be passed on to Mr. Russell such as newspaper postings, copies, recording fees, etc. and Mr. Russell understood.

Ben Russell stated that he knows what it is going to take a crane to get the bridge out of there. Could they put the bridge in the ROW until they could get it donated or hauled away because he cannot put it in his field due to farming. The other option was to put the bridge on the road.

Commissioner Chupp asked if it were placed on the road if we could put some barricades up?

Garrett Myland said we could close the road farther out than the current barricades.

Commissioner Chupp asked Garrett if the road was platted and Garrett said the road was not platted ground. We are just giving up the ROW. It would have markers out if it were platted.

Ben Russell said the road commission could have all the gravel there if they wanted it.

Chairman Allen stated he would be abstaining from voting due to Mr. Russell is a Board member where he is employed and feels it would be a conflict of interest.

RESOLUTION TO ABANDON A PORTION OF HAYBRIDGE RD FLORENCE TOWNSHIP

WHEREAS, Section 18, of the Michigan County Road Law, being MCL § 224.18; MSA § 9.118, as amended, provides for the absolute abandonment and discontinuance of any highway or part of highway under the jurisdiction of a county road commission; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Road Commissioners of St. Joseph County, Michigan, has further determined that it is to the best interests of the public that the highway or portion of highway described in this resolution shall be absolutely abandoned and discontinued.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the following described highway or portion of highway be and hereby is absolutely abandoned and discontinued as a public highway:

Haybridge Road, commencing at the East edge of Sevison Road located in Section 28, Florence Township, St. Joseph County, Michigan; thence Eastly, approximately 4,870 feet, following existing road centerline, to the middle of the Fawn River.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that notice of this abandonment be given as required by law.

**BOARD OF COUNTY ROAD COMMISSIONERS
OF ST. JOSEPH COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

By: _____
David H. Allen
Its: Chairman

MOTION BY Commissioner Chupp Seconded by Vice Chairman Shafer

ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN:

Aye Votes Cast: Chupp, Coleman, Shafer

Nay Votes Cast: Mifsud Abstained: Allen

Motion carried. Resolution adopted.

I, Julie A. Mayuiers, Clerk of the Board of County Road Commissioners of St. Joseph County, State of Michigan, hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy as recorded in the minutes of the meeting of February 17, 2021.

*Julie A. Mayuiers
Clerk of the Board*

MOTION

Motion by Commissioner Chupp seconded by Commissioner Mifsud to vote for Commissioners Larry Brown, Allegan CRC & David Solmes, Barry CRC to serve four (4) year terms and Mark Worden, Kalamazoo CRC & Ken Harris, Washtenaw CRC to serve two (2) year terms.

Motion carried.

I, Julie A. Mayuiers, Clerk of the Board of County Road Commission of the County of St. Joseph, State of Michigan, hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy as recorded in the minutes of the meeting of February 17, 2021.

Julie A. Mayuiers

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Clerk of the Board

Commissioners Comments:

Coleman: Looking forward to the New Commissioners Seminar on Feb. 22 and he is learning from what the other Commissioners are sharing with him.

Chupp: Appreciates the honest conversation. We are civil and get along and this is a good Board. He had received lots of comments on the good job done on the cleaning up from the snowstorm earlier this week.

Mifsud: He as been in this county since 1997 and worked until 2008 and drove through the snow to work. We are getting road plowed out in good time now. Great discussions today.

Shafer: Greatly appreciates discussions on all the topics today. He has learned a lot about Road Abandonments. Great job and congratulations to Garrett Myland on his award.

Allen: Appreciates Tim Carls comments, however, did not appreciate the insinuations of the Boards wrong doings. We are trying to do more with less. Last year we did a great job with all the projects.

Chairman Allen then presented Garrett Myland with the Rural Engineer of the Year Award from CRA (County Road Association).

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 am

David H. Allen Chairman

Julie Mayuiers, Clerk of the Board

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