

**HANCOCK COUNTY HIGHWAY, ROAD AND BRIDGE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**August 30, 2021**

The Hancock County Highway, Road and Bridge Committee meeting was called to order by Ms. Davis on Monday, August 30, 2021 at 8:30 A.M. Committee members present were Patsy Davis, Wayne Bollin, Harry Douglas, Gary Stansbery, Mark Menn and Randy Bergmeier. Also present were Brianna Schneider with Ramsey Financial Services, Tim Drury with Bliss-McKnight, County Board Chairman Delbert Kreps and County Engineer Elgin Berry. Absent was Pat Cramer.

Welcome Visitors

The committee had some questions for the insurance company representatives regarding the county's liability for accidents on the Connable road. On the one hand, the road is narrow and has frequent drop-offs along the shoulder because the large trucks blow out the gravel when they run off the edge. On the other hand, if a sub-standard repair project is attempted, it could create a different hazard, such as a steeper foreslope that might contribute to a roll-over accident.

Mr. Berry stated that most large-scale projects are completed with state and federal aid and are required to meet certain design standards that are published by the Illinois Department of Transportation. Therefore, the county would normally be satisfying its reasonable standard of care requirement by complying with the published design standards.

Mr. Bollin read a portion of the Illinois Highway Code which indicated that the county could perform work at its own discretion, without supervision of the Illinois Department of Transportation, as long as state or federal funds are not being used.

Mr. Drury recommended that the county keep records of its deliberations so it would be able to show its basis for making any decisions. Time, cost and intent to improve a bad situation are all valid considerations. Then, if one safety issue is prioritized by the county over another, discretionary immunity would apply. That basically means that the county tried to make the best possible decision with the available resources. In the event of a lawsuit, the records would explain why a particular safety decision was made. Mr. Drury also said that it's generally better to attempt an improvement instead of ignoring a bad situation, even if the improvement isn't completely ideal.

Mr. Bollin stated that there will be approximately \$3.2 million in APRA funds available to county within the next two years. If the Connable Road project is not directly eligible for ARPA funds, then those funds could be directed to regular items in the county budget that are eligible for ARPA. The money saved from the regular budget items would then be designated as indirect ARPA funds and could be spent at the county's discretion.

Ms. Davis said that Kris Pilkington and Holly Wilde-Tillman had watched videos about the use of ARPA funds and both of them said that there has to be a process that involves the community to identify needs.

Mr. Bergmeier stated that the board should look at other departments and projects before committing all of the ARPA funds to the Connable Road project. He doesn't want to rule out other projects without even considering them and he doesn't necessarily want to spend \$3 million of \$3.4 million on one single project.

County Engineer's Report:

Mr. Berry presented another design alternative for the Connable Road that was developed using FHWA-approved 3R guidelines. This alternative would widen the base and surface to 24 feet without creating a joint or thickness change. The widened road would be constructed on a single, integrated base course by digging a 24" wide x 9" deep trench along the existing edge of road and performing Full Depth Reclamation of the existing road base and widening it into the trench. This would also lower the surface 1" – 2" which will help flatten the foreslopes. Two courses of new hot mix asphalt would be placed on the reclaimed base without a great increase in the road surface elevation.

In order to meet the 3R design standards, white edge line stripes would be placed at 22' width to define the edge of roadway and the excavated shoulder material would be placed along the pavement edge to provide 4' shoulders outside of the white stripes. This will result in steeper foreslopes, but the ditch bottoms and back slopes can be reshaped within existing right-of-way to minimize this if needed. As long as the total width is at least 30' from out-to-out of the shoulders, the design would still be acceptable under the 3R standards.

The 3R design standards also allow the use of lower design speeds to reduce the required stopping sight distance at certain hilltops which might be a problem. If stopping sight distance cannot be achieved with the 3R standards, then some right-of-way might have to be acquired in those areas.

The use of 3R Design guidelines would qualify the project for state or federal funding. The total cost of the new proposal is estimated at \$6.2 Million, with the proposed federal share at \$4.7M for 80% of construction and construction engineering costs and the proposed local share at \$1.5M for engineering, ROW (if needed) & matching funds.

Hancock County is allocated roughly \$680,000 / year in STP-Rural funds and \$200,000 / year in State Matching Assistance funds, of which about half of the STP funds are dedicated to the annual pavement preservation projects. Federal competitive grants are also available for more expensive projects that will have a significant local or regional impact, but these grants are not guaranteed. The county could apply for these grants when the design and estimate have been further developed. The federal funds wouldn't be needed until the construction phase in several years.

Mr. Menn asked what the proposed timeline would be for completion of the proposal. Mr. Berry indicated that he thought funding might be available by 2026, but otherwise the project could be ready for construction by 2024, if funding wasn't an issue and if engineering is started soon.

Mr. Berry stated that the county should consider establishing an account for the indirect ARPA funds. Also, if engineering needs to be started soon on any of the proposed design alternatives, then funds for engineering expenditures would need to be budgeted for FY 2022.

The Rebuild Illinois funds (\$853,000) could still be re-directed toward the Connable Road project, but construction would have to be completed by 2025 with all other funding in place. The Rebuild Illinois funds are tentatively designated for an improvement on the Ferris Road.

There are two more county bridges on the county highway system with posting restrictions that should be considered for replacement using federal STP-Bridge funds:

- S.N. 034-3034 approximately one-half mile north of Burnside (Posted at 26 tons)
- S.N. 034-3170 approximately three miles northwest of Fountain Green (Posted at 26 tons for single-unit vehicles and 33 tons for multi-unit vehicles)

The county has seen large increases in the amount of federal aid for bridge repairs and Mr. Berry said that he would start working on Engineering Agreements and Resolutions for Improvement of those two bridges, if no one objected.

Mr. Berry reported that the following roads have been selected for pavement preservation work over the next three years:

1. 2022 Contract Microsurfacing:
  - a. Adrian Road (1700E – IL Route 94)
  - b. Burnside Road (IL Route 94 – 2100E)
  - c. Fountain Green Road (IL Route 336 – 1590N)
2. 2022 Day Labor Oil & Chip
  - a. Disco Road
  - b. Burnside-North Road
  - c. Durham Road
  - d. La Crosse Road
3. 2023 Day Labor Oil & Chip
  - a. Warsaw-East Road (currently gravel from Warsaw Corp limits to IL 96; 1.9 mi.)
  - b. Sutter Road
  - c. Tioga Road
  - d. Middle Road (250N from IL 96 to Bluff Road)
  - e. West Point Road (IL Route 96 to 1500E)
  - f. Stillwell Road (Adams County Line to West Point)
4. 2024 Day Labor Oil & Chip
  - a. Warsaw-East Road
  - b. Wythe Church Road (Basco Road to IL Route 96)
  - c. Basco-West Road
  - d. Bluff Road
  - e. Warsaw-Hamilton Road

Review and Approval of Claims and Expenditures

Claims and expenditures for the month of August were presented to the committee for approval. A motion was made by Mr. Douglas and seconded by Mr. Stansbery to pay all bills as presented. All committee members present voted 'Aye'.

Old Business

None Presented

New Business

None Presented

Adjournment

As no further business was brought before the Committee at this time, a motion was made by Mr. Douglas and seconded by Mr. Stansbery to recess until Wednesday, September 29, 2021 at 8:30 A.M. All committee members present voted 'Aye'. The meeting adjourned at 10:15 A.M.

*Respectfully  
Submitted,*

*Patsy Davis  
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