



## MACON COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

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### MINUTES

July 24, 2013

The Macon County Transportation Committee meeting was held on Wednesday, July 24, 2013 at 5:30 p.m. located at the Macon County Office Building, 141 S. Main St., Decatur, IL.

#### **Transportation Committee Members Present:**

David Williams

Gary Minich

Kevin Meachum

Jerry Potts

#### **Transportation Committee Members Absent:**

Keith Ashby

Susanna Zimmerman

Kevin Bird

#### **Highway Department Support Staff Present:**

Bruce Bird, County Engineer

Amanda Askew, Office Assistant

Mark Funk, Road Supervisor

#### **Others Present:**

Mike Baggett, Asst. States Attorney

#### **Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair David Williams at 5:50 p.m.

#### **Roll Call:**

David Williams

Gary Minich

Jerry Potts

Kevin Meachum

#### **Approval of the Minutes:**

Kevin Meachum made a motion to approve the minutes from June 26, 2013, seconded by Jerry Potts. Motion Carried 4-0

#### **Approval of the Bills:**

Gary Minich made a motion to accept the bills as presented, seconded by Kevin Meachum. Motion Carried 4-0

#### **No Public Comments**

#### **Old Business**

##### ***Temporary bridge crossings:***

Bruce stated this goes back to the issue we have had the last couple of months with Rick Harris in wanting a temporary run-around. He provided a copy of the email that he sent to Dave. He had also talked to a gentleman by the name of Wes Anderson. Phil Coberline was the County Engineer up through April of 1999 in Dewitt County and then he moved on to Sangamon County where he retired as County Engineer. I met with Phil and talked with him one on one. Phil does not recall intentionally putting in a run-around. It is not uncommon that there is a low water crossing that the contractor will

put in to get their equipment from side to side. It is not uncommon for people to just go ahead and use it. I am thinking that maybe that is what occurred in this situation. That may be what they are remembering. Everybody I have run into said, it was not a formal official thing that they put in. David Williams stated I will check with Wes Anderson, he is a friend of mine. According to Mr. Harris Wes granted them a right-of-way through his field. Bruce replied I know that he said that the State had done that on a couple of locations along 54. Phil said at least as far as when he was there with the County he did not recall doing that. The other thing I checked was with IDOT, I said if you put a bypass bridge in you cannot do a stage construction, because we are talking a width issue it is not a weight issue. You cannot do that, if you cut the bridge in half that is not going to help. IDOT said that they very rarely do a bypass structure anymore. It is in very rare cases like if there is an extreme amount of traffic. Basically the way the standards are right now, if you have a \$400,000 bridge are you going to put a run-around bridge in. Now you have an \$800,000 project. It doubles the cost of the project. David Williams stated I also checked with Tim Stock at the Farm Bureau to see if there is some type of Ag exemption or something. He has not gotten back with me. Bruce asked you mean for the permits and what not. Dave Williams replied yes. Bruce stated anything that we would do the plans, which would include the bypass, have to go through IDOT. They require us to do that. I do not see a way around this. We can do it but it is going to cut the number of bridges we can build in half. Kevin Meachum stated what Bruce is saying is absolutely right. Yeah, it would be great to build a bypass bridge. The last job I did for the state of Missouri we were doing a stage construction and we put in a bypass bridge but it was between two towns and was a State Highway. Like you said it is very rare but it doubles the price. This day and age we cannot afford it. We are struggling for every dime we get. The state has taken 20% of our Motor Fuel Tax money over the last five years. We are doing a lot more with less. Yeah I would like to help these farmers but they are going to have to be a little better schedulers and get there equipment trucked over where they need to be well in advance before they want to go to work. I can sympathize with them but I just can't allow us to spend that kind of money for one bridge that is only going to affect 25 houses when we have to look out for the well fare of the whole County. We need to be economically sound and spend our money wisely. I do not think this is a point that needs to be spent. I sympathize with them but I think they need to suck it up for 8 months and let us build a bridge. Bruce stated we really try to target to get those particular structures put on IDOT's June letting so the vast majority of time it is closed for construction is in the middle of the summertime, after planting and prior to harvest. We always try to do our best to try to get the things open prior to harvest. That is something we have always done and going forward we plan on still trying to do that to try and lessen the impact especially when it comes to harvest. David Williams stated we try to coordinate with the various road commissioners when we have bridges closed. Bruce agreed. David Williams stated there are alternative routes. Of course I know Austin Township is an extreme case. Bruce replied we do not ever sign alternative routes. There are some people that take them and like I said we have always worked with the Township Road Commissioners so that is there are issues we will swap things like a load of rock or something like that. David Williams thanked Bruce for his efforts on this matter.

**No New Business:**

**County Engineer's Report:**

Bruce stated our guys started two days ago doing the chip seal work. They do the chip seal work prior to doing the micro surfacing down on County Highway 32 west of Macon. That is complete they are going to be heading north on the other chip seal roads that they have set up. That work should be done in about 2 weeks, weather permitting always. This kind of weather is very permitting by the way. The pipe project that we had let, started yesterday.

County Club Rd. is within a month and a half of completion and the storm sewer is in the ground. The bridge on Kinney, the contractor Stark, is moving right along. They are really moving quickly and are making great progress. I like what I see out of them.

The Farm Progress Show is right around the corner. We have an interesting thing that we are going to be doing at Farm Progress. I mentioned a little bit, the University of Illinois has a professor that has developed a traffic counting program called the Traffic Turk where you use Android phones for people out in the field to do traffic counts. He was actually able to get a little bit of research money so we will have counters out there for the morning of the first two days of the show. We are just on the ground floor of getting this coordinated. One of the things we will need is volunteers. Volunteers will get paid and they will also get a fancy t-shirt. They have to have an Android smart phone that is running Android 2.2 or later. David Williams stated so in other words you download the app on your own personal phone. Bruce replied yes, they download the app on their personal phone and they get paid to sit out there and count traffic. They count it basically by swiping their finger across the phone in the direction the traffic is going. It gets fed down into a program and we will have a very accurate representation of the traffic coming into the show. With the target of trying to further improve the traffic plan for future shows. We are pretty excited about it. The Professor at the U of I, and the folks at Richland are excited about it as well. They are looking for about 40-50 people. They will have the thing out there to get people to volunteer.

Bruce stated the budget really is not that much different from last year. The only big difference is following the instructions from the Finance Committee Chair and included the contractual proposed raises, the non-union raises that mirror the contractual raises by percentage. The construction line that is where there is any big changes either additions or subtractions. That mirrors what contracts we have going on and which lines they are coming out of. We kept the levy amounts the same as the previous year. That has been a trend that everybody has asked about and requested. If any of the members have any questions about any particular line items I would be more than happy to answer those questions. Kevin Meachum made a motion to accept this budget and move it forward to Finance for their approval, seconded by Gary Minich. Motion carried 4-0

Bruce stated I did bring along the County Engineers spreadsheet that we have been using to track the MFT monies from the State, it shows the decrease amounts from year to year. It shows all the stuff that gets pulled off the top before we get it. It shows that in the past five years our MFT revenues have decreased 15% the total receipts are down 12% over the same time period and diversions to the state off the top the Secretary of State Highway Administration and the Department of Revenue have increased 72%. Kevin Meachum asked so really when it is all said and done we have lost about 20% of what we used to get. Bruce replied yes, it also brings home the fact that something has to change for road funding on the State level. David Williams stated and your organization is working on that. Bruce replied yes they are on top of it.

David Williams stated we need to remind committee members that we are meeting a week early next month and we are meeting out at Progress City August 21<sup>st</sup> we will probably be in the same location. As soon as we find out we will let everyone know.

### **No Miscellaneous Business**

### **No Closed Session**

### **Adjourn:**

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Jerry Potts made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Kevin Meachum. Motion Carried 4-0

Meeting adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

***The next Transportation Meeting held at Farm Progress Grounds will be  
Wednesday, August 21, 2013 at 5:30 p.m.***

Minutes submitted by:  
Kathy Gerhold & Amanda Askew  
Macon County Highway Department