

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, August 26, 2015

5:30 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Patty Cox
Kevin Greenfield
Kevin Meachum
Kevin Bird
Phil Hogan
Pat Dawson
MEMBERS ABSENT
John Jackson

COUNTY PERSONNEL PRESENT

Joe Moretti, Highway Department
Bruce Bird, County Engineer
Mark Funk, Highway Department
Jay Dunn, County Board
Carol Reed, Auditor
Mark Page, Highway Department
Jeannie Durham, County Board Office

The meeting was called to order by Chair Patty Cox at the Macon County Office Building.

MINUTES

Kevin Meachum made a motion to approve the June 24, 2015 meeting minutes, seconded by Kevin Greenfield, motion carried 6-0.

CLAIMS

Pat Dawson made a motion to accept the report of the claims as presented, seconded by Phil Hogan.

Chairman Greenfield asked about a bill from Deano's for \$1,315. Mr. Funk explained that they had a broken tile under Elwin Road and he had to have them come fix it. Mr. Greenfield asked why we aren't fixing the tiles. Mr. Funk said if they spend so much time fixing tile, they can't get as much work done. He's had the guys out mowing. Mr. Greenfield asked the purpose of having two backhoes if we are not going to fix the tile. \$1,300 is a large bill to fix a tile. Mr. Funk said they had to call in Kelly's. It went underneath the road. They had to locate where it went to because Mr. Funk said he wasn't sure where it went to on the other side of the road. Mr. Greenfield said he thought the whole idea of owning two backhoes was so that we could take care of this stuff ourselves. Mr. Funk said we do take care of stuff with the backhoes. Mr. Greenfield said he sees a lot of bills from Deano. Mr. Funk said he understands, but the crew is smaller than it used to be. Mr. Greenfield said that probably there is not a need for so much equipment then.

The motion carried 6-0.

Public Comments - None

Old Business - None

New Business:

FY16 Budget Presentation

Mr. Bird asked if there were particular questions. Mr. Meachum asked if the 3% decrease had been achieved and went on to say that he knows that it is very difficult. We are self-funded. He said he knows the Finance Committee asked for a 3% cut, but with some of the contractual personnel issues and the rising costs of construction, he asked if the 3% cut was included or if it was flat. Mr. Bird said he did not include the 3% cut because in looking at what could or could not be cut, he set it up like in the past mainly because he thought it would be better from a policy making standpoint to sit down and talk about it at this meeting.

Chairman Greenfield commented that he was glad that the Chairman of Finance was present. Mr. Meachum said with the rising costs of materials, the cost of doing any capital project is going up and it is very hard to reduce a budget when the ability to get work done under contract is going up. He has left this flat, and Mr. Meachum said that to him, being flat & comparing where the prices are coming in at, his point is that flat is good compared to where the construction costs have been coming in at in the past few months. He said he is comfortable with what Mr. Bird has done to try to keep it flat. He said he knows that may not be acceptable to others, but in the construction world, it is pretty tough right now. Ms. Dawson added that it is tough in the world. Everybody has been asked to cut 3%. Mr. Meachum said that a lot of this budget is construction and those are issues that we cannot control. Mr. Greenfield said that a lot of it is not though.

Mr. Greenfield said that from his view, what Mr. Bird can truly control is 081 & 082.

Mr. Bird said that is where all the operational expense comes from. Capital is a little different. Historically, in highway, there used to be enough money left where projects could be done out of County Highway, but that simply cannot be done anymore. Mr. Greenfield continued saying that he looks at funds 081 & 082 as the funds that are not really state controlled. Motor Fuel money is controlled, bridge money is controlled, etc... These are two funds that Mr. Bird oversees. Mr. Bird agreed and said that from a statutory standpoint, they are the only funds that can be used for operational expenses. For example, county bridge & matching have to go towards projects. They cannot go towards operational expenses. Mr. Greenfield said the problem he has, starting with Fund 081, is instead of cutting it 3%, you are up \$115,000. Mr. Bird asked if there was a particularly line item he was looking at. Mr. Greenfield said the overall budget, where you should have cut \$72,000, is being raised \$115,000. Mr. Bird said he had put the numbers out there because he wanted to discuss it. He asked again if there was a particular line item Mr. Greenfield was focusing in on. Mr. Greenfield said 9041 which was raised \$100,000 and he said it was probably for a truck. Mr. Bird said that they can charge equipment rental against MFT, so whenever they use existing equipment on MFT eligible project, they can charge rent against it out of MFT into County Highway. He said he went with \$400,000 on the revenue side and then just transferred the number directly over as an easy way for people to see where it came from. The machinery / equipment line comes from a 5 year plan of replacing equipment. They try to look and see what they are going to need and level it out. Historically, whatever amount is in there, has not ever been close to using all of it. Mr. Greenfield said that then maybe it could be cut to get to the 3%. He said he & Mr. Dunn have been sitting in Finance Budget Hearings and they have not had a pleasant meeting yet. This year is bad, but we're all going to feel the pain. If we have to raise taxes, which he said he thought we'd have to go back to the old levy, there are going to be some major cuts. We are not going to go on any 5 year plan. We're going to have to get serious at least for this year. Mr. Bird said he understood. Mr. Greenfield said the highway expenditures were \$2.4 million and probably should have \$190,000 or so cut out. Mr. Bird asked if the 3% was for each fund or overall and said he could cut wherever the committee would prefer to see the cut and that was what he wanted to discuss. Machinery / Equipment is pretty obvious that if the whole thing comes out of there, equipment will not be replaced. Mr. Greenfield said he thought it could be spread out a little, but it would be Mr. Bird's call. Mr. Bird said that some of the stuff, such as fuel, could be taken down a little, but he has no idea what the price of gas will be. Mr. Dunn said that the County Clerk has two budgets and was over in one but under in the other with the total cut a little more than 3%. Mr. Bird asked if they would be happy with 3% cut between the two of them. Everyone agreed they would be. Mr. Hogan stated that nobody liked to have to cut 3%, but highway is the same as everybody else and they need to cut the 3% too. Ms. Dawson said that was only fair. Mr. Hogan asked if uniforms have always been provided or if it is in the contract. Mr. Bird explained that there is a place in the contract that states that the mechanics can get uniforms. Over the years, it has evolved with one of the main reasons being that the people out on the roads, with the OSHA requirement that they got very particular about who had to wear a vest and when. Mr. Hogan asked if the uniforms are vests. Mr. Bird said no, they give them the visible T Shirts & Sweat Shirts so they have that with them at all times

when they get out of the vehicle and they don't have to keep putting the vest on and off. It's safer to do it that way and is a relatively small expense. There have been some higher expenses this year because they are replenishing since they haven't purchased in 3 years. Mr. Greenfield asked if this is done on top of renting uniforms because the bill from Aramark runs about \$2,800 to \$2,900 a month. Mr. Bird said not anymore and explained that when the chairman started looking at their bills and brought the subject to their attention, they had already started taking a look at expenses and cut it about in half. In pulling the bills and looking at them, they found that starting about a month or two prior to Mr. Greenfield becoming chairman, they started jacking the prices way up. He said they modified the contract and got it cut down. Mr. Greenfield asked if they got the same with less money. Mr. Bird said less items. They had looked at rugs and things and cut a bunch of them out finding it would be cheaper to go to Sam's and purchase them. They can even throw them away after a few months use and still be money ahead. He said they've taken a look at a lot of things and that was one of them. Mr. Greenfield said it seemed like the last bill he'd seen was \$2,200. Mr. Bird said he'd pull the last 3 and take a look at it. Mr. Greenfield asked if we are doing the laundry also. Mr. Bird said the price is basically the same whether they just provide the uniforms or if they provide them & launder too. Mr. Greenfield suggested that we might be better off to give each employee a clothing allowance. Mr. Bird said that with the union contract coming up, we'd be looking at modifying our arrangement with them. We are just cutting what we can now, stand pat, and see what the union negotiations bring. Mr. Funk said if they get uniforms, they don't get the T Shirts. Mr. Bird agreed saying that it is either / or. Mr. Funk added that the T shirts are \$8 or \$10 depending on the size and the price has not gone up in 5 years. Mr. Greenfield said that at the union negotiations, they might look at suggesting or looking at clothing allowance versus uniforms. Mr. Bird said he thought that might be very prudent.

Mr. Bird said one of the other things he was wondering about and wanted the committee's thoughts on was on the motor fuel / lube & maintenance of equipment lines. He explained that they provide a fuel source for the departments and they also work on other department's cars. The highway department has to budget that amount up front. They do get a revenue back on the back side, but it still has to be put into their budget. Line 7110, Maintenance of equipment covers the maintenance of all the equipment, not just highway equipment. There is a revenue component to that, but if you are looking for a place to cut, that is a potential place. We will just have to tell the other departments that they will have to buy their fuel elsewhere and someone else will have to work on their cars. Ms. Dawson asked if it wouldn't have to be taken from the revenue side too. Mr. Bird confirmed, saying when you look at the cut in the cost. Ms. Cox said if you cut it on revenue and then cut the same amount from expenses, you are right back where you started. Mr. Bird said that looking at a 3% cut in expenses, that is one of those things. Mr. Greenfield said he did not think that was an area to look at. Mr. Dunn asked where the money comes from for fund 082. Mr. Bird said both 081 & 082 are under 030 and they are both County Highway. Mr. Dunn said he had been looking at the cut on revenue minus expenses. In 081 he is bringing in \$400,000 more than he is going to spend, but in 082 there is \$900,000 that there is not revenue for. He asked Mr. Bird if the revenue in 081 covers the expenses in 082. Mr. Bird said the way it is laid out here, yes. Mr. Dunn said it looked to him like he needed to get 3% of a million or \$30,000. Ms. Reed said in taking the very bottom line of revenue minus expenses, a -\$423,000 and 3% of that is \$12,696. Mr. Dunn said that there is actually more revenue coming into 081 than he is proposing to spend. Ms. Reed agreed that is true for 081, but 081 & 082 together is \$400,000. Mr. Bird said that minus the tax levy, most of the outside revenue lines are in 081. That is just how it is set up. Ms. Reed asked about the revenue on the repairs and asked if that was the revenue coming in from the repair of the other department's cars. There is only about \$5,000 budgeted there, but every year it comes in at \$23,000 - \$25,000. That is additional \$20,000 revenue that could help you. Mr. Dunn explained that he is proposing about the same revenue as last year, but on the expenditure side, it is \$2.5 million which is about \$115,000 more expenses than last year so his revenue is down \$30,000 and his expenses are up about \$115,000, but on his bottom line, there is still more money coming in than going out in 081 which sounds like he uses that.

Mr. Bird said that the line items in 081 are going to be a lot easier to cut than items in 082. Mr. Greenfield said that he and Mr. Bird had talked about him needing a new truck. Mr. Bird agreed. Mr. Greenfield went on to say that the Sheriff's Department has laid off 3 or 4 people. The State's Attorney may have to lay one off. The Circuit Court has 2 positions she has not filled and the Sheriff is not replacing any of his police cars. He said he thought it would be in poor taste for the committee to approve the purchase of a brand new truck this year. Mr. Bird said he understood. Mr. Greenfield said that he thought next year would be better and he thought it might be very possible that it can be pulled off next year, but he did not think this year would be the time to do it. Mr. Bird said that is the reason they are at the round table. Mr. Meachum asked if the truck that would be on the table to get rid of this fiscal year could be made mechanically safe enough to operate for one more year. Mr. Bird said they would find a way to do it. Mr. Meachum asked how many trucks they have. Mr. Funk said 11. Mr. Hogan asked what year it is. Mr. Funk said he thought it was a 1999 – somewhere around 16 years old. Mr. Meachum asked what the annual maintenance cost was for that truck alone. Mr. Bird said that truck was a little out of the ordinary. He'd have to pull up records to find out for sure. Mr. Hogan said that with the other office holders cutting back and not having new vehicles, it would be better if we could wait another year. Mr. Bird said he totally understands. Mr. Meachum asked what that would take it down to on the equipment line item. Mr. Bird said there is \$400,000 in the equipment line. You've got that truck and he thought 2 pickup trucks to be replaced and he could guarantee that he would not use \$400,000. He said they never use the whole line item anyway. Mr. Dunn asked why he didn't just cut it if he wasn't going to use it. Ms. Cox said that if that line were cut and the extra \$20,000 in revenue added in, it may put it at the 3%. Mr. Bird said that the truck permit revenue would be up just due to all the stuff being hauled in for the Farm Show. Mr. Meachum asked about the pickups. Mr. Bird said there are two new pickups budgeted, but he would take a look at it to see what he could come up with. Mr. Dunn said to be the best he'd have to beat the County Board. They came up with a 5% cut. Mr. Meachum said this is not a contest. Mr. Greenfield suggest Mr. Bird tweak and modify the budget and he would make the motion to pass it on, with the tweaks to get the 3%, to the finance committee budget hearing. Mr. Meachum asked if the 3% would come out of 081. Comments were that he would tweak it wherever he could come up with the 3%. He said he just wanted the highway budget to make it through Finance, even though there are others that don't he really wants this one to make it. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hogan and the motion carried 6-0.

County Engineer's Report:

Bruce Bird reported that Spacemark Drive was finished the day before and it is now an actual open, passable Township roadway.

The intersection project with Argenta was finished before school. It looks really nice.

For the Wise Road bridge being replaced, the box culvert, the first portion of the box culvert sections were delivered today. They are going to start setting those tomorrow. That is the one where the bridge deck had to be taken out because it had swallows under it. Schmidt is working on that and they are being paid weekly. Once they start setting those sections that should go pretty quickly. They should have that thing done in about 3 or 4 weeks. When they get done setting those, they'll move down to the bridge on Boody Road, South of Boody. That is a federal aid project. They'll be bringing in the crane and getting that taken care of there. Mr. Hogan asked what the projection was. Mr. Bird said they will be closing it the day after Labor Day. The County contract was out of Quincy and they are quick. They had to wait for Ameren to move two power poles out of the way and they just got those moved out a couple of weeks ago in Cossick. He said they couldn't go drop the pilings because OSHA would not let them.

Signs are getting all set up for Farm Progress. Paving will be done prior to the show. They will close down and get off the road to make sure everybody can get in and out. Initially IDOT wasn't going to do that, but changed their minds.

The guys are out trimming back brush on a lot of county highways. Lost Bridge in particular.

The guys have been putting in field entrance culverts and they've been trying to get all those requests to get them done before people get out in the fields done.

The rumble strips have been recut on Dalton City Blacktop, CH36 and CH32 this a.m.

Mr. Bird said they've been working with the State to come up with extra things that can be put at that intersection there because of all the accidents. The stop signs are the state's responsibility. They came in and put a 2nd stop ahead sign, they are going to put a 2nd stop sign and they put a bigger double arrow sign on the other side of the intersection the day of the accident. The guy that went through there clobbered a brand new sign the state had just put up. Mr. Greenfield asked about putting a culvert in the ditch knowing it won't help anyone traveling east /west, but if you blow through it, at least you probably won't kill yourself. Mr. Bird said the only entity he thought might have an issue with it might be the railroad and the way they solve things is to put big concrete blocks in the way to be sure their tracks are not affected. He said that was one of the things that had crossed his mind too, that if they just shoot out into the field, they'd have a better chance of surviving. Mr. Hogan asked if the place where the culvert would go would be a railroad easement. Mr. Bird said it would be half state and half railroad, so they'd have to come to some kind of an agreement which involved the railroad's attorneys in Jacksonville, FL.

Mr. Bird said the county project at CH30 & CH41, everybody knows we let that, can't be awarded because of them holding the MFT money and they don't have any bonded money for the other half of the project. The State, on their portion of that work, has their project scheduled for November 6 letting and they are definitely going ahead with that. That project will carry over. We had one bid on that project that came in at 10% under. He wants to make sure he has something for his guys to do next year. They'll be doing both of those. We might get to get started on our portion this year. That is really up to Springfield. There was a House amendment yesterday that went directly to the floor about getting the MFT money back, except it is only for the first 3 months and ends at the end of September and then we're right back to where they are not going to give the MFT money. The issue with that is that right now is when we're doing our programs for next year and putting together rock and oil bids, etc... and without having an idea of how much money is left over to start with and then being able to realistically project revenue for next year, we really can't program. It's nice they're thinking about us and they're going to give us 3 months, but for next year, it doesn't help at all. If anyone asks your opinion of HB4149 is, we appreciate the money we've already earned that they are holding, but we really need to know what we can spend for next year.

Miscellaneous Business:

Mr. Kevin Bird said the guys had done an asphalt job at the end of Greenswitch and they did an amazing job. It is really nice. Mr. Bruce Bird said he'd pass that on.

Closed Session: None needed

Adjourn:

The next Transportation Committee Meeting will be Wednesday, September 23, 2015 at 5:30 p.m.
Kevin Meachum made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Kevin Greenfield, the motion carried 6-0 & meeting was adjourned @ 6:05 p.m. Minutes submitted by: Jeannie Durham, Macon County Board Office