

## **Washtenaw County Board of Road Commissioners**

555 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48103

### **Virtual Board Meeting Minutes of November 17, 2020**

Board Present: Road Commissioners Douglas Fuller, Barbara Fuller, Rod Green, Gloria Llamas, Jo Ann McCollum

Staff Present: S. Siddall, M. MacDonell, J. Harmon, D. Ackerman, C. Ryan, C. Quinter, N. Peterson, B. Schlack

Others Present: C. Rugg, P. Brown, J. Petz, R. Wilson, Ziggy

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Douglas Fuller, Chair.

#### **Roll Call of Attendance**

Doug Fuller, Chair – remote from Scio Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan  
Barb Fuller, Vice Chair – remote from Sharon Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan  
Rod Green, Member – remote from Superior Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan  
Gloria Llamas, Member – remote from Pittsfield Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan  
Jo Ann McCollum, Member – remote from Ypsilanti Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan  
Sheryl Siddall, Managing Director  
Matt MacDonell, Director of Engineering/County Highway Engineer  
Jim Harmon, Director of Operations  
Dan Ackerman, Director of Finance & IT

#### **MOMENT OF SILENCE**

It is our standard practice to begin our board meetings with the pledge of allegiance. Since we are hosting this meeting virtually today, instead we will start this meeting with a moment of silence.

Today's moment of silence is to honor everyone impacted by the coronavirus pandemic, including the nurses, doctors, other medical professionals and emergency responders who are working tirelessly to care for us under extremely difficult circumstances.

#### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

RC20-322 J. McCollum moved, R. Green seconded to approve the agenda as presented.

Roll Call Vote:

YEAS: B. Fuller, R. Green, J. McCollum, G. Llamas, D. Fuller

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Motion Carried.

## **ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES**

RC20-323 B. Fuller moved, J. McCollum seconded to approve the Board Meeting Minutes of November 3, 2020 as presented.

Roll Call Vote:

YEAS: B. Fuller, R. Green, J. McCollum, G. Llamas, D. Fuller

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Motion Carried.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

### **Ford Lake Village Subdivision – Road Maintenance**

Petula Brown, President of Ford Lake Village Homeowners Association, addressed the Board regarding road improvements within the Ford Lake Village Subdivision. Ms. Brown stated that there are several roads within Ford Lake Village that need road improvements. Ms. Brown stated specifically that High Ridge Drive has not been worked on. Ms. Brown was asking how to get roads within Ford Lake Village Subdivision on the road project list for road work. Commissioner Doug Fuller stated that a WCRC staff member will contact Ms. Brown directly to discuss the next steps on road improvements for Ford Lake Village subdivision.

### **Earhart Natural Beauty Road**

Rob Wilson from Mid-Michigan Materials stated that they recently purchased Washtenaw Sand & Gravel in July 2020. Mr. Wilson stated that after obtaining a permit, and several conversations with Matt MacDonell and Mark McCulloch of WCRC he has a good understanding with this road being a Class B road. Mr. Wilson acknowledged that if they were ever to seek anything further than what's in place they would work with the township. Mr. Wilson was questioning the timing on designating Earhart Road as a natural beauty road shortly after Mid-Michigan Materials purchased Washtenaw Sand & Gravel. Mr. Wilson wants to be a good neighbor and work with the Road Commission and township but feels the Earhart Road Natural Beauty Road designation is an attack on their company and could cause further delays on their business in this location.

## **COMMISSIONER AND STAFF FOLLOW-UP TO PUBLIC COMMENT**

Commissioner JoAnn McCollum appreciated the Public Comment during this meeting.

Commissioner Gloria Llamas stated that a follow up to Mr. Rob Wilson's comments on Earhart Road Natural Beauty Road designation would be in order so that he completely understands the process for a natural beauty road designation and this designation can be overturned in the future if the road does not meet certain criteria.

Commissioner Rod Green thanked Mr. Wilson for his comments regarding the Earhart Road Natural Beauty Road designation.

Jim Harmon, Director of Operations, stated that regarding Ford Lake Village Subdivision road improvements, the Road Commission has been committed to improvements within this subdivision. Mr. Harmon stated that there are statutory limitations to the Road Commission on funding towards these roads. Mr. Harmon stated that if the township is committed to participate in the funding for road improvements, the Road Commission can bring forward a Road Improvement Agreement for improvements within the Ford Lake Village Subdivision. Sheryl Siddall, Managing Director, stated we will continue to work with Ypsilanti Township. Sheryl has spoken with Brenda Stumbo, Ypsilanti Township Supervisor and Ms. Stumbo stated that Ypsilanti Township does intend to participate in funding, but they also have to limit the number of township projects they select due to funding constraints. Sheryl stated that we will continue to work with Ypsilanti Township. Sheryl also stated that the Road Commission will be hosting a Roads Funding 101 session in January to educate public officials on road funding.

## **WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Fiber Installation**

- Carpenter Road between Ellsworth Road and Packard Road in Pittsfield Township

### **Culvert Removal/Replacement Projects**

- Barker Road between Timbercrest Lane and Wildwood Lake Drive in Northfield Township. Barker Road will be closed on Thursday, October 29<sup>th</sup>.
- Jennings Road between Kearney Road and Valentine Road in Webster and Northfield Townships. Jennings Road closed.
- Whittaker Road between Greene Farm Road and Martz Road in Ypsilanti Township. Whittaker Road closed.
- Petersburg Road between Day Road and Mooreville Road in York Township. Petersburg Road closed.
- Arkona Road between Sanford Road and Gooding Road in York and Augusta Townships. Arkona Road closed.

### **Bridge Inspections**

- The East Delhi Road Bridge between Delhi Court and Huron River Drive in Scio Township. East Delhi Road Bridge temporarily closed.
- The Maple (Foster) Road Bridge between Huron River Drive and Country Club Road in Ann Arbor Township. Maple (Foster) Road Bridge temporarily closed.

### **Road Resurfacing**

- Bartlet Road between the county line and Allen Road in Bridgewater Township.
- Oak Valley Drive between Waters Road and Scio Church Road in Pittsfield Township
- Completion of culvert and resurfacing project – Pleasant Lake Road between Zeeb Road and Ann Arbor-Saline Road in Lodi Township. Pleasant Lake Road reopened on November 6<sup>th</sup>.

### **Curb Repair**

- Curb repair at the roundabout Intersection of Stony Creek Road and Whittaker Road.

### **Completion of Hill Adjustment**

- Trinkle Road between Herrst Drive and Tara Lane in Lima Township reopened.

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### **OTHER COMMUNICATIONS**

**RECEIVED FROM:** Macomb County Department of Roads

**WHY:** Thank you for the letter and notes of condolences from the Washtenaw County Road Commission for Zach Morisette, a Macomb County Department of Roads employee that was tragically killed while performing his duties on the job.

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**RECEIVED FROM:** Shelton Park Church of God

**WHY:** Thank you letter for WCRC's contribution in memory of Rev. Watson Allen, the stepfather of WCRC employee Darrin Schwalbe.

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### **CONSENT AGENDA**

The items approved on the Consent Agenda are as follows:

RC20-324 B. Fuller moved, J. McCollum seconded the approval of the Consent Agenda for November 17, 2020 as presented.

Roll Call Vote:

YEAS: B. Fuller, R. Green, G. Llamas, J. McCollum, D. Fuller

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Motion Carried.

### **2021 Capital Equipment Purchase – Gradall XL4100**

RC20-325 B. Fuller moved, J. McCollum seconded that upon the recommendation of the Director of Operations, and the concurrence of the Managing Director, the Board hereby approves the purchase from AIS Construction Equipment, 3600 North Grand River Avenue, Lansing, MI 48906 through the State of Michigan MiDeal Contract for the purchase of one (1) new 2021 Gradall XL4100 6x4 Hydraulic Excavator for a total cost of \$421,527.20.

Roll Call Vote:

YEAS: B. Fuller, R. Green, G. Llamas, J. McCollum, D. Fuller

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Motion Carried.

### **Oak Park Estates No. 3, Saline Township – Acceptance of Roads**

RC20-326 B. Fuller moved, J. McCollum seconded that upon the recommendation of the County Highway Engineer/Director of Engineering and the concurrence of the Managing Director, the Board hereby accepts Oak Park Drive and Clara Louise Court roadways, located in the Oak Park Estates No. 3 platted subdivision in Sections 13 and 14 of Saline Township, as public roads.

Roll Call Vote:

YEAS: B. Fuller, R. Green, G. Llamas, J. McCollum, D. Fuller

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Motion Carried.

### **8 Mile Road at Currie Road Roundabout Right-of-Way Acquisition – Cost Participation Agreement**

RC20-327 B. Fuller moved, J. McCollum seconded that upon the recommendation of the County Highway Engineer/Director of Engineering and the concurrence of the Managing Director, the Board hereby approves and authorizes the Managing Director to sign the Cost Participation Agreement for the 8 Mile Road at Currie Road roundabout project right-of-way acquisition.

Roll Call Vote:

YEAS: B. Fuller, R. Green, G. Llamas, J. McCollum, D. Fuller

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Motion Carried.

**Wagner Road Safety Project – MDOT Contract 20-5416**

RC20-328 B. Fuller moved, J. McCollum seconded that upon the recommendation of the Director of Engineering/County Highway Engineer and the concurrence of the Managing Director, the Board approves the MDOT Agreement (Contract No. 20-5416) and authorizes the Chair and Managing Director to sign said agreement for the Wagner Road Safety project.

Roll Call Vote:

YEAS: B. Fuller, R. Green, G. Llamas, J. McCollum, D. Fuller

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Motion Carried.

**M-52 at Pleasant Lake Road – MDOT Cost Agreement for Traffic Signal Control**

RC20-329 B. Fuller moved, J. McCollum seconded that upon the recommendation of the Director of Engineering/County Highway Engineer and the concurrence of the Managing Director, the Board hereby approves and authorizes the Managing Director to sign the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Cost Agreement for Traffic Signal Control at M-52 at Pleasant Lake Road, agreeing to the conditions set forth in the MDOT Cost Agreement for Traffic Signal Control.

**Payroll & Bills for October 28, 2020**

RC20-330 B. Fuller moved, J. McCollum seconded the Board hereby approves Voucher #10428 totaling \$286,469.12 for payroll of November 11, 2020, and Voucher #10429 totaling \$2,588,274.25 in payment of bills for November 11, 2020.

Roll Call Vote:

YEAS: B. Fuller, R. Green, G. Llamas, J. McCollum, D. Fuller

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Motion Carried.

## **ACTION ITEM**

### **Earhart Road Natural Beauty Road Designation**

Brent Schlack, Assistant Director of Engineering, provided a review of the Natural Beauty Road Act. Brent stated that the goal of this program is to acknowledge the natural beauty road features of the road. There are seven guidelines that are followed in determining if a road meets the Natural Beauty Road requirements. This petition was received in July. A process was followed through the township and a Public Hearing has to be held within six months of the accepted petition which was done on October 27<sup>th</sup>. This Public Hearing was advertised through the appropriate venues. Brent stated that the Road Commission Board is required to act on the approval or denial of a Natural Beauty Road petition within 30 days of the public hearing. Brent stated this road does not meet the local road requirement and the development on this road with Washtenaw Sand & Gravel can also be questioned on designating this road as a natural beauty road. Brent stated Earhart Road meets the Natural Beauty Road criteria with the exception of function of the road and traffic volume.

#### Discussion:

Commissioner Barb Fuller appreciated the conditions the residents are very fond of on Earhart Road. Commissioner Fuller agreed that this road does not meet three of the required criteria. Commissioner Fuller acknowledged the concern that citizens have very few tools for control of local roads they wish to have some say over.

Commissioner Rod Green stated that with the volume of traffic and considering post-COVID traffic volumes increasing, this road does not meet the criteria.

Commissioner Gloria Llamas stated that she does not feel this road meets all the required criteria to designate it as a natural beauty road. Commissioner Llamas asked if the designated portion of this road was shorted would it meet the criteria. Sheryl Siddall, Managing Director, responded that in this case the traffic volumes exceed all parts of this roadway.

Commissioner Jo Ann McCollum stated that she does not feel this road meets all the required criteria to designate it as a natural beauty road.

Commissioner Barb Fuller asked if it would be within the authority of a township to designate a road as a natural beauty road through the township. Matt MacDonell, Director of Engineering, stated that within the township authority, he has seen references to a scenic route in a township land use master plan. This document would be under the township's authority. Mr. MacDonell stated that this land use plan would be a good place to acknowledge designation of a road.

RC20-331 B. Fuller moved, G. Llamas seconded

WHEREAS, this Board has received a petition from twenty-five (25) or more property owners of the Township of Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, Michigan, praying for the Natural Beauty Road designation of Earhart Road between Warren Road and Joy Road, a distance of approximately 1.32 miles in Sections 1 and 2 of Ann Arbor Township.

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held virtually on the 27th day of October 2020, to determine the advisability of designating the above described local road as a Natural Beauty Road pursuant to Act 451 of the Public Acts of 1994, and

WHEREAS, although Earhart Road meets some of the criteria defining a Natural Beauty Road, the character of the natural vegetation and features within and associated with the road right-of-way is typical of many similar roads in this portion of Washtenaw County, and

WHEREAS, the Washtenaw County Road Commission does not anticipate any changes in its current maintenance practices that would adversely impact the natural character of Earhart Road regardless of whether the road was designated as a Natural Beauty Road, and

WHEREAS, Earhart Road as above described, is under the jurisdiction of the Washtenaw County Road Commission as recorded in Washtenaw County records.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Road Commissioners of the County of Washtenaw, that the petition requesting Natural Beauty Road designation of Earhart Road as above described, is hereby denied in accordance with the provisions, rules and regulations enacted by Act 451 of Public Acts of 1994.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

No roll call vote. Motion dies.

After significant discussion on the resolution, the Chair requested a 30-minute recess and asked staff to modify the resolution for the Earhart Road Natural Beauty Road Designation.

The Board Meeting reconvened at 2:30 p.m.

RC20-332 B. Fuller moved, J. McCollum seconded to withdraw the motion for Earhart Road Natural Beauty Road Designation.



**Earhart Road Natural Beauty Road Designation – Revised**

RC20-333 B. Fuller moved, G. Llamas seconded

WHEREAS, this Board has received a petition from twenty-five (25) or more property owners of the Township of Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, Michigan, praying for the Natural Beauty Road designation of Earhart Road between Warren Road and Joy Road, a distance of approximately 1.32 miles in Sections 1 and 2 of Ann Arbor Township.

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held virtually on the 27th day of October 2020, to determine the advisability of designating the above described local road as a Natural Beauty Road pursuant to Act 451 of the Public Acts of 1994, and

WHEREAS, although Earhart Road meets some of the criteria defining a Natural Beauty Road, it does not meet all the criteria, including roadside development, function of the road or traffic volume according to the guidelines developed under Act 451 of the Public Acts of 1994, and

WHEREAS, the Washtenaw County Road Commission does not anticipate any changes in its current maintenance practices that would adversely impact the natural character of Earhart Road regardless of whether the road was designated as a Natural Beauty Road, and

WHEREAS, Earhart Road as above described, is under the jurisdiction of the Washtenaw County Road Commission as recorded in Washtenaw County records.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Road Commissioners of the County of Washtenaw, that the petition requesting Natural Beauty Road designation of Earhart Road as above described, is hereby denied in accordance with the provisions, rules and regulations enacted by Act 451 of Public Acts of 1994.

Roll Call Vote:

YEAS: B. Fuller, R. Green, G. Llamas, J. McCollum, D. Fuller

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Motion Carried.

**REPORTS**

**COUNTY COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

**County Commissioner Ruth Ann Jamnick**

County Commissioner Ruth Ann Jamnick stated that she will not run for another term as County Commissioner. Ruth Ann expressed her thanks for working with her as a County Commissioner. The Road Commissioners thanked Ruth Ann for all her efforts as a County Commissioner.

## **ROAD COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

### **Commissioner Doug Fuller**

Commissioner Doug Fuller attended the MCRCSIP meeting last week.

### **Commissioner Barb Fuller**

No report.

### **Commissioner Rod Green**

No report.

### **Commissioner Jo Ann McCollum**

Commissioner McCollum attended the County Parks & Recreation meeting. The National Areas Preservation Millage was approved with 72% support. Coy Vaughn, Parks & Recreation Director, is proposing a naming policy allowing anyone wishing to rename a Washtenaw County Parks facility the opportunity to submit that request to the Director. The Commission approved the proposal to use the Mary Lou Recreation Center as an overflow homeless shelter until spring of 2021.

### **Commissioner Gloria Llamas**

No report.

## **MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

### **Sheryl Siddall, Managing Director**

- The draft tree policy is out for public comment and is on the WCRC website along with the comment form. There will be a public information meeting on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, accepting additional public comments. This policy was also posted on social media sites and included in the weekly road schedule and emailed to all township officials.
- Due to additional changes from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services with the increase in COVID-19 cases, at this point in time all staff who can work remotely from home have been instructed to do so until further notice.

## **ENGINEERING REPORT – Matt MacDonell, Director of Engineering**

- Miller Road Bridge Project – this project was delayed due to a DTE gas relocation project. A portion of this work will carry over into 2021. The box culvert has been installed.
- Engineering is preparing for 2021 projects.

**OPERATIONS REPORT – Jim Harmon, Director of Operations**

- As of this morning all 2020 construction projects are complete. The crews are prepared for winter maintenance and working on routine maintenance and service requests.

**FINANCE & IT REPORT – Dan Ackerman, Director of Finance & IT**

Dan Ackerman stated that he appreciates the Board’s time and attention and input on the budget. Dan acknowledged all the technology enabling staff to meet through Teams and other remote avenues.

**ADJOURNMENT**

RC20-332 J. McCollum moved, G. Llamas seconded to adjourn the November 17, 2020 meeting at 3:05 p.m.

Roll Call Vote:

YEAS: B. Fuller, R. Green, G. Llamas, J. McCollum, D. Fuller

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Motion Carried.

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Douglas E. Fuller, Chair

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Sheryl Soderholm Siddall, Deputy Clerk

Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_