

Lincoln County Highway Committee
Minutes of Thursday, December 4, 2008 – 7:30 a.m.
Tomahawk City Hall

Members Present: Bob Lee, Graham Rankin, Arlene Meyer, and Richard Berndt
Visitors: Randy Scholz, Sarah Olson, Galen Reinhart, Phil Rausch, Dorothy Rausch, Russ Habeck, Robert Tomaszewski, Don Linean, Julie Schmitt, Robert McGinnis, Scott Gabrich, Kathy Tobin and Jerry Jagmin.

1. **Call Meeting to Order:**

Meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m. by Chairman Lee.

2. **Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting(s):**

Motion by Berndt, seconded by Meyer to approve the minutes of the last meeting as printed. All ayes. Motion Carried.

3. **Set Future Meetings:**

January 7, 2009, Thursday 7:30 a.m. Commissioners Office – Merrill
February 5, 2009, Thursday 7:30 a.m. Tomahawk City Hall

4. **Claims:**

None

5. **Public Comment:**

No one was present for public comment

6. **Request to have a ATV Route from Somo Area ATV Club on CTH CC from Tomahawk Lodge Resort to STH 8**

– Scholz received a letter from the Somo Area ATV Club requesting that on CTH CC from Tomahawk Lodge Resort to STH 8 be included in the ATV route which is approximately 3.8 miles. Phil Rausch, Somo Area ATV Club, was present and explained that he has been working Kevin Kleinschmidt, Forestry Department, and he suggested that they try to work something out with the Highway Department since it could be 5 - 6 years before something could be worked out since 2 other clubs have a requested routes in that same area. The main reason for the route is to be able to get to the businesses in that area. Julie Schmitt, owner of Tomahawk Lodge, was present and supported the request. The main purpose is for the route is they are not seeing the ATV business like they would like from the Somo Lake area. There are more ATV's registered in the state than snowmobiles and with the economy they need to generate any type of attention that they can. Bob McGinnis, Somo Beach Resort owner and involved with snowmobile clubs, stated that the problem is that both ends of the trail are private landowners and it could cost as much as \$250,000 to be able to put that trail in since there would be a 1,000 feet of boardwalk to go over swampy areas. The likelihood of that happening would be very slim. They felt they have exhausted every other possible alternate route. Scholz showed a video of the proposed route and he reviewed the ATV policy with the Committee. The Committee also discussed the fact even though this could be approved at County Board it could also be rescinded if problems occur. Motion by Rankin, seconded by Berndt to approved the ATV Route from Somo Area ATV Club on CTH CC from Tomahawk Lodge Resort to STH 8, put up necessary signage, and send to the County Board requesting an ordinance change. All ayes. Motion Carried.

7. **Request for ATV Route on CTH CC from Tomahawk Lodge Resort to STH 8; if**

Approved, Authorize County Board Ordinance Change – The discussion and motion was included with item #6.

8. **State Routine Maintenance Agreement**

– Item # 8 and #12(b) were discussed right after Item# 5 Public Comment. Russ Habeck, State DOT, was present to get the State Routine Maintenance Agreement signed by the Committee for 2009. Lincoln County's Contract has increased by 2.7% from 2008. A 3 1/4 percent was put across the State but that amount needs to be prorated by the number of miles of roads within each County and that is why Lincoln

County ended up with 2.7% or an increase of \$37,600. The formula is very complicated to figure out but it really depends upon salary, fringe, and equipment costs of each County since materials costs the same for all Counties. The State understands that the 2.7% doesn't come close to Lincoln County's actual increased costs but it is the reality of what we all are facing. Habeck estimated that 86 million was spent on winter maintenance across the State last year. Scholz indicated that there were a few changes on the back of the RMA #4 and #5 but Habeck indicated that he would have to have the State's attorney clarify what those changes mean. Scholz also indicated that he would have Nancy Bergstrom take a look at the agreement as well. They also talked about in the past taking the State crew off the State payroll during the summer and putting it on the county payroll but that isn't possible anymore with the Counties current budget. Habeck explained that the 5% that was taken from 2008 budget will not be given in 2009. That was taken in order to balance the 2008 budget for the state. He also explained that if Lincoln County goes over with their 2008 budget then they would be going in 2009 with a deficit unless there is a surplus from another County then that money could be used. Motion by Lee, seconded by Rankin to sign the State Maintenance Agreement with the stipulation that the State would follow up with clarification of Items #4 and #5 on the back of the RMA. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

9. **Financial Reports** - There were no reports due to the accounting period. The winter maintenance is at -\$50,000 through November and they anticipate it to be around -\$250,000 at the end of the year.
10. **Set Material Pricing – Treated Sand** – Olson distributed copies of the material pricing for treated sand. It cost \$87,000 to mix the sand and they mixed almost 17,000 tons. The actual cost is \$5.24 per ton plus the 15% handling fee it comes to \$6.03 per ton. This is a 16% increase from last year. Motion by Meyer, seconded by Berndt to set the price for treated sand to \$5.24 for actual cost per ton and \$6.03 for all other governmental units per ton. All ayes. Motion carried.
11. **Report by Superintendents** – Jagmin was present and he talked about his concerns with the state deficit and starting 2009 in a deficit if we are over in 2008. Since there are 10 state beats, Scholz wants 10 state employees on those beats which will be hard on the State budget next year. He predicts we will be way over budget for 2009. Someone is going to have to come with a solution and the state isn't giving us any solutions. Lemmer was present and he explained that the Treated Sand price went up from 2008 in 2009 because where we get our sand from the price went up a dollar a yard along with the cost of the salt increasing.
12. **Commissioner's Report on Highway Operations**
 - a. Safety Report – One reportable. Scholz will give an annual report next month.
 - b. Letters received back about Bridge Posting on STH 64 and Speed Limit on STH 8 – The concern with STH 64 bridge repair would be that County Road M would have increased traffic due to the detour and should be logged. When the state logs a road they would repair any damage done to that road during the detour. Lincoln County is not the only county that has expressed concerns regarding logging roads during detours. Since the State isn't directing the traffic on County Road M they have no control over the traffic finding alternative routes and then the state isn't required to log the road. Habeck said he did see correspondence regarding trying to bring the detour bridge up to a heavy load bridge but he doesn't know the out come of that discussion. The state would detour the road if the road was closed but the road isn't closed in this situation. This situation is posting of the road not closing the road. The County has the option of posting a road limit on County Road M. It was asked if the State could put up signage leaving the City of Merrill limits that there is a road limit on Hwy. 64 so an alterative route could be taken before they get to County Road M. Scholz explained that the State had decreased the area that it's 45 miles an hour. There were concerns from the citizens in Tripoli and the citizens also thought it used to be a

no passing zone in that area. Habeck said there is a state process for posting speed limits. The reduced speed limit was set in the past for that area was due to the school that was in that area but with the school closing they took that into account for their decision as well. Part of their job is to move traffic as safely and quickly as they can. The state will continue to monitor that area.

c. Discuss Cash Flow – Scholz explained that we are not able to keep a positive cash balance, because of the increased cost of the inventory items. One of the things that they have done is not purchase equipment this last year to help with the problem. In the last 5 years they have average \$470,000 spent in equipment, this year they purchased a 120,000 roller and a skid loader. The other problem was that the state wasn't reimbursing them in a timely manner; they were 3 or 4 months behind. Scholz met with Dan Leydet and told him they can't go every year without purchasing equipment and they discussed how far the cash can go into the negative that Finance would be comfortable with. When we are short with our cash flow we temporary get it from the General Fund and Dan looks at this as a short term loan. Scholz will be meeting with the Finance Committee to discuss this issue.

13. **Adjourn**

Motion by Rankin, seconded by Berndt to adjourn at 9:06 a.m. All ayes. Motion Carried.