

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY
Highway & Transportation Committee Minutes

Friday, August 9 2013 – 9:00 am
Highway Building Conference Room
1605 E. Main St. St., Urbana, IL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Christopher Alix, Lloyd Carter, Lorraine Cowart, John Jay, Diane Michaels Jim McGuire, Max Mitchell, Michael Richards

MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: Jeff Blue (County Engineer), Deb Busey (County Administrator), Gary Maxwell (County Board Member), Al Kurtz (County Board Chair), Linda Lane (Recording Secretary)

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Cowart called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

ROLL CALL

Secretary called roll and the following members were present: Alix, Carter, Cowart, Jay, Michaels, McGuire, and Mitchell. The chair declared a quorum and proceeded with the meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Cowart asked for approval of agenda for meeting. **MOTION** by Carter to approve agenda; **seconded** by Mitchell. **MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Cowart asked for approval of minutes from the June 7, 2013 meeting. **MOTION** by Alix; **seconded** by Carter. **MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

COUNTY & TOWNSHIP MOTOR FUEL TAX CLAIMS – MAY 2013

MOTION by Michaels to receive and place on file the County & Township Motor Fuel Tax claims for June 2013 and July 2013; **seconded** by Jay. **MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

BID RESULTS FOR COLFAX #12-05989-00-BR

Blue distributed a bid tab and explained that at the July County Board meeting he was given award authority for the Colfax #12-05989-00-BR project. He stated that Newell was awarded the project. Blue noted that bridges have been pretty good lately because of the number of players.

He said the project should be started within the next month and should have it completed by winter. Blue noted that when Newell bids, other bids come in lower than they normally would.

Richards entered the meeting.

HIGHWAY FEDERAL AID MATCHING BUDGET DISCUSSION

Blue started by turning to the levy history page in the packet. He said he had talked to Busey about getting some money back into this fund. Busey said that the 2001 budget included a public health levy capped at 3¢, even though the voters had approved 10¢, was adopted in November 2000 by an outgoing Republican board. She stated that the following November the levy fund was cut by the Democratic board to put money back into public health. Blue noted that if it had remained at \$125,000 with natural growth they would be at \$223,000 in that line item for FY 2014.

Blue noted that there is a State statute 605 ILCS 5/5-603 stating for what the budget can be used for. He noted that it doesn't have to be on the Federal aid systems but said that all Champaign County roads are on Federal aid system and the maximum levy is .05 of the value of all taxable property in the County. Blue stated that if don't have money to match federal aid projects, they have to use motor fuel tax money. He noted the highway fund is used for salaries, operations, equipment, things used for day-to-day business; there is nothing to build or maintain roads. He pointed out that the MFT revenue from 2004-2015 is flat. Blue observed that the 2010 Illinois Jobs Now revenue guaranteed \$100,000,000/year to be allocated to locals to be put into MFT. He said Champaign County is receiving about \$357,000/year from that \$100,000,000. He stated that the last payment will come in 2014 and the fund will drop drastically to about \$2.4 million. Blue noted that they spend about \$1.2 million on engineering services, maintenance and equipment rental, and leaving \$1.2 for roads, which won't go very far. Michaels noted that before the Illinois Jobs Now they had decent revenue and asked what changed and how they could build it back up. Blue said the price of fuel has gone up and people don't drive as much. He also commented that this fund has been siphoned off the top that didn't used to be. He said motor vehicle revenue comes strictly from vehicle registration and doesn't come back locals. They only get a share of the MFT and it peaked at \$200,000.00. Maxwell commented that counties growing faster than Champaign County will end up taking funds away.

Richards asked Blue how much they needed or how much he would like to have. Blue observed that eight projects in the last seven years have been federal shared projects. He noted that some of the projects haven't been the standard federal project; they've received highway safety improvement money and TARP money. He stated they have received Federal money totaling \$20 million (which is not the total cost of the projects) since 2007. He stated the required match is 20% minimum, or about \$5 million and that came from the MFT fund. He provided a handout for the Dewey Fisher project with examples of TARP money totaling \$900,000, STR money at \$2.2 million and HSIP money of \$855,000. He said the balance of \$2.2 million is needed from MFT funds to complete to project. He observed that there will be a day in the not to distant future when the County can't apply for funds because they won't have the needed matching funds. Richards asked if IDOT ever helped to cover the local match. Blue said they did but only for high profile projects. He stated that the TARP money for Dewey Fisher was a special application due to the number of trucks on the road. Blue said that he would like to see the number that they would have had if the funds had continued to grow, but noted that's not reasonable. He said he would like to see some money put into it, \$50,000 - \$100,000, and allow it continue to grow under the normal type of revenue. Blue noted that there is \$3-4 million left in MFT, a lot of it being taken by Dewey Fisher. He said that they won't have matching funds within 3-4 years. He said he doesn't want to get to the point where he is having to save money for several years before doing a project.

Blue explained the map that comes out of their pavement management system, showing road PCIs. He said they like to see everything above 60 and try for an average of 70. He pointed out several roads that were in the yellow and orange. He also noted that there are roadways they have taken over from the State that continue to deteriorate. Blue said that he would like to get more funds in there to start building it back up. McGuire commented that it sounded like they could better manage the ability to access other revenue if those funds are available and the thing to do would be to start now. Alix commented that it would be good to have revenue since all the costs that can't be controlled have gone up more than the tax cap rate. He thought that if the levy was increased then a cut would have to be made somewhere else. Busey confirmed. Alix said he would like the money back in the levy and should consider in the budget process where funds could be cut. He stated that as a committee, if they decide this is the direction they want to go, then they have to convince the Board. He said that maintaining infrastructure is something they need to do. Alix said spending less for roads and more for healthcare, retirement, etc.

Blue reasoned that he is not asking for funds in the Highway fund for personnel, equipment, etc. He wants it only to build roads. Cowart asked how to raise the levy. Blue stated that is up to the Board. Michaels stated that there were not Federal funds noted in 2013 and 2014. Blue stated that is because they don't do Federal aid projects every year. Maxwell said he liked Blue's proposal that the money could only be used for roads. He thinks the Board needs to talk about priorities. He suggested trying to get $\frac{1}{2}\%$ and thinks the fund can be built up over 2-3 years this way. He noted that there are other strains with highway money and the need to set aside facility money. Maxwell asked Busey if the growth included the growth in property and sales taxes. Busey said property tax revenue is \$400,000 but is spread over 13 different areas. Busey commented that in the general corporate budget process an operation change request is submitted if there are new funds being requested. She recommended the highway department, at the direction of this committee, present a request with the budget request for what they would like to see in FY2014 so the finance committee has something concrete to evaluate at in September. McGuire asked Blue if this was the direction he wanted to go. Blue answered yes. Carter felt that the MFT is leaving the County because people are moving out of Illinois. Alix felt they should take Busey's approach. He stated that during the budget process they needed to decide what they want to accommodate. **Motion** by Alix to direct the County Engineer to submit an operational change request as part of the 2014 budget to increase the federal match tax levy; **Seconded** by Mitchell. Jay felt the highway department is headed for some serious problems in the future, but also doesn't want to see highway and facilities competing for funds, but thinks that is what is going to happen. He felt they needed to keep that in perspective when trying to figure out what's fair. Cowart asked Busey if they will have to cut the levy somewhere else to raise this levy. Busey said they have to decrease one levy if they increase another. **Motion approved unanimously.**

TOLONO TOWNSHIP BRIDGE PETITION AND RESOLUTION

Blue stated that the petition and resolution was to replace a bridge on Duncan Road that is similar in scope to one just awarded. **Motion** by Jay to approve; **seconded** by Mitchell. Michaels stated that \$250,000 seemed reasonable and asked what the County portion was. Blue stated \$50,000. Mitchell asked who the engineer is. Blue said one hasn't been selected yet. **Motion approved unanimously.**

CONSENT AGENDA

Item IX is to be placed on the consent agenda.

OTHER BUSINESS

Kurtz gave an update regarding IDOT District 5 funding. He stated that the discrepancy from the neighboring district is \$175 million. He stated that he has sent a letter, had phone calls, and received a letter from IDOT that he said had a lot of "double talk." He noted that IDOT's criteria was included in the letter, that he and Blue had recalculated using IDOT's criteria, and came out #7 instead of #9. Kurtz said he sent another letter about two weeks ago to IDOT noting that based on their own criteria Champaign County should not be last in the district. He said they haven't heard anything back. Kurtz said he is going to call every representative in IDOT District 5, which includes six counties and five major interstates. He said he is not going to let the issue go until Champaign County receives more funds. Maxwell asked when it might be productive to release this to the media. Blue commented that it is a political issue. Kurtz stated he wanted to wait until they get a response from IDOT. Blue commented that the District 5 IDOT outreach meeting is October 2 and is in Champaign County. Blue wants to make sure that they aren't pointing the finger at District 5, because they are doing a good job with what they get, and noted that the problem is in Springfield. Kurtz stated that Springfield gives District 5 the number to work with rather than District 5 giving Springfield the numbers they need. Alix felt they were on the right track with legislature. Blue stated they have had meetings with Transportation for Illinois Coalition with Frerichs and Jackobsen. He said Rose is scheduled to have a meeting in August regarding 57/74 interchange and the \$60 million issue. McGuire said he was part of a discussion with Rose regarding the interchange and it was never part of Mahomet to Champaign change, it was the road. He noted that it was never part of the plan but all of a sudden it popped up as something that was going to be built. He commented there were a number of roads going to be built and bridges replaced at that time; some were completely out and needed to be replaced rather than the interstate being done. When program pushed forward and interstate did pass and was signed to be constructed between Mahomet and Champaign, it was just never implemented.

McGuire asked if this meeting is what they've talked about before where the legislators get together. Blue said they have tried to set up a meeting twice before but both were cancelled. He is still trying to set up a meeting for September. He explained that the October 2 meeting is different and that it's where District 5 brings its 5-year program and it is a public input meeting. McGuire asked if the 57/74 interchange study was on the radar. Blue said it is taking place now.

Mitchell asked if it would be possible to have the Uofl Chancellor come talk to the County Board about the future and growth at the university since it will impact the County. Kurtz felt that might be a good idea. Alix noted that the Uofl has the initiative to encourage more businesses to relocate to the area to utilize its research facilities. He felt the intentions were good because businesses will pay taxes and more people will come into the community and pay taxes. Mitchell believes they need to work together. Michaels felt they needed to fix what they had to before marketing the community to other groups.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting declared adjourned at 9:34 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Lane
Administrative Assistant