

apetSCHOOLCRAFT COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION
332N EAST ROAD, MANISTIQUE, MI 49854
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
November 9, 2022 - 7:00 a.m.

000508

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Approval of Agenda
5. Approval of Minutes
6. Public Comment
7. Unfinished Business:
 - A. Policy A6.00 Policy for Removing a Road from Seasonal Designation
8. New Business:
 - A. CR 432 Proposed Trail System
 - B. Vouchers 23-04, 23-05
 - C. Jack's Safety Gift Card
 - D. September Financial Statements
 - E. MDOT Permit Resolution
 - F. Approve Cooperative Forest Road Agreement
9. Manager's Report
10. Engineer's Report
11. Department Heads
12. Meeting Notices
 - A. December 14, 2022, RTF Regional Meeting, Munising, MI
13. Public Comment
14. Adjournment

1. Call Meeting to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman T. Klarich at 7:00 A.M.

2. Roll Call Information: The roll was called for the Commissioners.

Present: Randy Lund
Robin LaCroix
Dale DuFour
Thomas Klarich
Keith Rochefort

Absent: None

Also in Attendance: Jean Vanderville, Managing Director; Tanya Hoar, Finance Director; Ian Stampfly, Highway Engineer, Ann Peterson, Payroll/HR Coordinator, Kim Rochefort, Road Foreman, Roger Martin, Shop Foreman, Troy Basset, County Commissioner, Winch Diller, Connie Diller, Bob Williams, Jean Williams, Michael McKenzie, Wanda McKenzie, John Hogan, Mike Gall, Doug Richmond, Joseph Takala, Patrick Stewart, Mrs. Stewart, Marilyn Fischer, Glenn Fischer

3. Pledge of Allegiance: The pledge was recited.**4. Approval of Agenda:**

It was moved by Commissioner D. DuFour, seconded by Commissioner R. LaCroix, to approve the agenda as presented.

Ayes: Five
Nays: None

Motion Carried

5. Approval of Minutes:**A. Regular Session 10/26/22:**

It was moved by Commissioner K. Rochefort, seconded by Commissioner D. DuFour, to approve the minutes of the meeting held on October 26, 2022.

Ayes: Five
Nays: None

Motion Carried

6. Public Comment: None

7. Unfinished Business:

- A. **Policy A6.0 Policy for Removing a Road from Seasonal Designation:** No update at this time.

8. New Business:

- A. **CR 432 Proposed Trail System:** This topic was added to the agenda after Winch and Connie Diller attended the board meeting held on 10-26-22, proposing connecting Trail 2 via CR-432. A number of residents from that area were in attendance at this meeting to protest the proposed trail, as they had concerns about snowmobilers riding so close to their homes.

Winch Diller began the discussion, noting that J. Vanderville and I. Stampfly had ridden the route and did not see an issue with the proposed trail as far as SCRC was concerned. They indicated that they appreciated the snowmobile association bringing it to their attention, although since the trail is in the right-of-way, the SCRC does not have a say whether the trail can be located there. The main concern was that crossings need to be repaired every year (Commissioner K. Rochefort). Mr. Diller noted that groomer drivers are trained not to leave any snow on roads when crossing. Significant discussion was held.

Marilyn Fischer was the first resident to speak, who noted safety issues if the snowmobiles should cross CR-432. She stated that there are 63 houses, trailers, and cottages on the route. There is a deaf/blind child as well as a mentally challenged person on that road. There are two school busses, large trucks going to Graymont at a high rate of speed every ½ hour, and several accidents have occurred on that road. After citing her concerns, she moved that the proposed trail be dropped, requesting a delay while more research is completed.

Mike McKenzie spoke next, stating that snowmobiles are continually louder and faster. He asked why property owners have to have a snowmobile trail in their front yards. He indicated that snowmobilers are continually on the news for fatalities that are many times due to alcohol and speed. He felt property values would decrease as a result of the trail going through their properties.

Mike Gall addressed the board noting a combination of snowmobiles and semis is asking for death and injury. He felt it was not a good place to combine the two and that there was too much traffic for a trail there.

Bob Williams asked who will monitor the trail and provide snowmobile enforcement 24 hours per day. He was also concerned about water lines, etc. He asked if the DNR or the Sheriff's Department would be patrolling the trails.

Joe Takala noted that residents live here for the space and the peace and quiet. He suggested that the trail be routed around Reed Road as the suggested trail is invading

their privacy. He cited the amount of garbage that could potentially be left by snowmobilers, flat tires from picks that come off the snowmobile studs, noise, etc. He felt that Schoolcraft County caters to tourists over their residents.

Doug Richmond stated that some people sleep during the day due to health issues, and daytime snowmobiles, along with trucks and trains, give off too much noise. He suggested a new route be found, as residents all pay taxes and he felt it was not right.

Marilyn Fischer again spoke about the safety issues, the potential garbage that could be left, etc.

Mike McKenzie again spoke, indicating that this is a very busy road, with heavy traffic to Seul Choix Pointe during the shift change at Graymont. He also felt that a better trail could be found, as snowmobiles at 2 am after drivers have been drinking is a bad idea.

Winch Diller addressed all voiced concerns, noting that he does not have an answer for everything. However, he stated that there are four crossings on M-94, where there has not been one fatality. There are the necessary trail markers, 'stop ahead' signs and stop signs on all trails.

Mr. Diller stated that the nearest bars to the concerned residents were 40 miles in either direction, and did not feel that their concern about drunk driving was warranted.

He also noted that the Bear Creek Swamp does not freeze, so the trail cannot go through there. The snowmobile association has investigated using the power line at Enbridge line through Cooper Swamp. However, this is state run and state law prohibits the route.

He stated that law enforcement monitors the trails every day, so speed and drunk driving are addressed. He also felt that garbage would not be an issue, as most would likely be stopping for breaks way before that trail. He stated that they haven't been able to connect the east end for five years. They would go around nice lawns and around culverts, with signs going in all directions.

Michael Pincher asked about compensation for property value loss and also indicated concern with the noise. He expressed concern with liability as well, should anything happen, such as a snowmobiler fatality, on their property. He felt residents were sacrificing their property and putting up with the noise for a small group.

Winch Diller addressed these concerns, noting that they would monitor snowmobile traffic with counters. He also noted that the trail would run via the county right-of-way. He stated that after three years of searching for a way to connect Trail 2, this was the best solution. He indicated that, in order to use the five miles of Bear Creek Swamp, it would cost \$40k per ¼ mile to improve the trail for use. As the snowmobile club is non-profit, this is not a viable option for them. Residents from the area felt they should raise the funds to pay for it.

Avi Shalom from the DNR stated that, with the current situation, Bear Creek Swamp would be impassable and the DNR supports an alternative route connecting the trail system.

J. Vanderville noted that more research can be done using the counters and data. In addition, we can find out what is happening on the other snowmobile trails.

Some members of the audience felt that the Snowmobile Association was trying to add this trail in an underhanded fashion. However, Mr. Diller noted that they did not have to come to the SCRC for permission, as they have the right to ride in the right-of-way.

Commissioner K. Rochefort indicated disapproval of the trail. The SCRC board felt that, although they cannot stop the snowmobilers from using bridges or right of ways on the roads and they appreciate the notification, they disapprove of the route overall.

B. Vouchers 23-04 and 23-05:

i. 23-04 and 23-05:

It was moved by Commissioner K. Rochefort, seconded by Commissioner D. DuFour, to approve vouchers 23-04 and 23-05 as presented.

Roll Call:

Rochefort - Yes
 DuFour – Yes
 Lund - Yes
 LaCroix – Yes
 Klarich – Yes

Motion Carried

C. Jack's Safety Gift Card: As provided in previous years, the board was asked to approve a \$25 gift card to Jack's Fresh Market for all employees for safety appreciation.

It was moved by Commissioner R. Lund, seconded by Commissioner K. Rochefort, to approve the Jack's Safety Gift Cards as requested.

Roll Call:

Lund – Yes
 Rochefort – Yes
 DuFour – Yes
 LaCroix – Yes
 Klarich – Yes

Motion Carried

Discussion was held regarding potentially providing a different employee gift that would remind them of safety rather than a Jack's gift card. J. Vanderville noted that employees receive safety hi-vis t-shirts in the spring, sweatshirts in the fall, jackets, headlamps, hats, etc., which is all part of employee PPE. In addition, there are different requirements as to what we can and cannot provide.

- D. September Financial Statements:** T. Hoar provided an overview of the September Financial Statements.

It was moved by Commissioner D. DuFour, seconded by Commissioner R. LaCroix, to approve the September Financial Statements as presented.

Roll Call:

DuFour – Yes

LaCroix – Yes

Lund – Yes

Rocheffort – Yes

Klarich – Yes

Motion Carried

- E. MDOT Permit Resolution:** J. Vanderville provided an overview of the MDOT Permit Resolution, which in part, resolves that the Managing Director and the County Highway Engineer are authorized to apply to the Department for the necessary permit to work within state highway right of way of behalf of the municipality.

It was moved by Commissioner R. LaCroix, seconded by Commissioner D. DuFour, to approve the MDOT Permit Resolution as presented.

Ayes: Five

Nays: None

Motion Carried

- F. Approve Cooperative Forest Road Agreement:** J. Vanderville reported that the agreement was not accurate, as it did not represent the agreed-upon changes in Schedule A from August of 2020. There were no other changes. She will provide updated copies to the board once received.

It was moved by Commissioner D. DuFour, seconded by Commissioner K. Rocheffort, to approve the pending updated Cooperative Forest Road Agreement once received.

Roll Call:

DuFour – Yes

Rocheffort – Yes

LaCroix – Yes

Lund – Yes
Klarich – Yes

000514

Motion Carried

9. Manager's Report:

Township Meetings: There have been no meetings since the last board meeting.

Website Updates: Due to a need to post a road closure, our website has gone live. It is a work in progress, and J. Vanderville still intends to have it completed by the end of November.

GLTPA: We met with Denny Olson, Director of Michigan Affairs for the Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association. We are working on building a stronger relationship and open line of communication between the road commission and the loggers in our area. Topics for further discussion will include collaboration of use of Category E Forest Funds, how to increase Category E funding, permitting of seasonal roads, etc. J. Vanderville has reached out to all local loggers with no response.

Safety Incentives: We recently purchased hi vis winter hats, headlamps, and sweatshirts. So far, the headlamps have come in handy while tackling last weekend's windstorm. We would also like to provide the annual Jack's gift card as appreciation for all their efforts in keeping our workplace safe. (See Item 8.C. above)

Seney Salt Shed: The electrical is still in progress. Andy (MDOT) stopped to inspect the project on November 1st. He stated that MDOT is looking into a funding source for the new driveway. The anticipated method for reimbursement of the new driveway would be through a TWA. After the inspection visit with Andy, we had a Teams meeting with Cory Gardner (MDOT) to discuss the driveway and funding. Cory requested measurements and an estimate of cost, so he could put together a drawing. MDOT has no issue with the new driveway and is recommending downsizing of the existing driveway and using that strictly as the snowmobile trail. I. Stampfly and J. Vanderville completed the survey for Cory. MDOT will be waiving the permit fee for this project.

800 Radios: Sheriff Willour has received our radios and will be conducting a training overview on Wednesday at 2:00 pm for the crew.

2023 Chloride Pricing: From 2019 until now the pricing stayed at \$0.075. Based on the nominal increase, J. Vanderville recommended we continue utilizing Michigan Chloride Sales for our chloride needs and forego competitive bidding this year. New rates were provided in the board packet (\$0.085 per gallon).

Raft Issue on Indian Lake: J. Vanderville spoke with Wheaty Wiethoff regarding his concerns on a resident who has left his raft within the ROW at the road ending on Indian Lake (Manistique Ave). Kim Rochefort has reviewed the placement and it is near the shore

and outside of our maintenance area. J. Vanderville explained to Mr. Wiethoff that it did not impede with our operations, and we would not be pursuing any complaints. He was not satisfied with the answer, so she reached out to Sheriff Willour and provided him with the pictures and the name of the alleged owner. Charlie will talk to the alleged owners and ask if he is able to move it to satisfy his neighbors. She has not received a response from Charlie on the outcome. Charlie is not interested in pursuing any infractions for this issue. Mr. Wiethoff has indicated that he wants us to produce a policy that states how we will handle these issues. J. Vanderville is working on a policy for board approval.

Cooperative Forest Road Agreement: (See Item 8.F. above)

10. Engineer's Report:

CR-433 River Road Project (2022)

I. Stampfly is still working on the remaining documentation to submit to MDOT for review. The final inspection meeting went well, and no other remarks were noted.

CR-433 River Road Project (2023)

All comments from MDOT have been addressed and the project has been finalized as of November 2nd. Based on MDOT's submittal timeline, our project should be in the February or March bid letting.

CR-436 & CR-449 Force Account Projects

CR-436 was submitted to MDOT for review on November 3rd and I. Stampfly has not heard any updates since. CR-449 comments have all been addressed and the project is now closed.

EGL E Surveys

We have been taking advantage of the nice weather and completed 4 culvert surveys for EGL E permits. The crossings surveyed include Schuster Road at Bursaw Creek (both crossings), Ross Lake Road at the south crossing, and CR-437 at Leg Creek. I. Stampfly's plan is to get the permits on the shelf then start applying for funding and or plan projects that we can budget for (i.e., the smaller crossings).

USFWS Fish Passage

I. Stampfly applied for fish passage money again from Fish and Wildlife Service. We applied for three crossings last year and he did the same this year. The three crossings are CR-442 at Spring Creek, Ross Lake Road at the south crossing, and CR-437 at Iron Creek. The funding requested was \$6k, \$10k, and \$110k respectively.

RTF 5-Year Plan

I. Stampfly has been working on updates to our 5-year plan for federal aid in preparation for the upcoming RTF meeting in December and the MDOT federal aid buyout call for projects. Changes to highlight include pushing the asphalt overlay on CR-453 out to 2025 and moving up our CR-442 chip seal to 2024. The chip seal project is also changing in size; originally, we were planning to chip seal all of CR-442, now we are planning to chip seal from US-2 to M-

149. We will plan to do the remaining portion in a later year. Once the plan is finished it will be shared with you.

11. Department Heads:

Ann Peterson, Payroll / HR Coordinator: Reported that two of the Temp CDL drivers started on October 31st. The other four will be starting sometime this month, based on their availability.

Noted that the recent Letter of Agreement pertaining to the Union Contract wages affected four employees. All updated wages were effective November 6th, 2022.

Tanya Hoar, Finance Director: Noted that members of management attended the Lew Bender leadership training at the Comfort Inn on October 14th. She appreciated Dr. Bender's training style, which is good for our blue-collar industry.

T. Hoar noted that she and Ann Peterson attended the Finance / HR Conference in Iron Mountain on October 19 and 20. One topic that was discussed was employee retention. There were no great solutions offered yet. T. Hoar is trying to come up with a program for Finance Directors.

MCRSCIP was on-site yesterday and provided a training program for anyone with less than five years of experience. SCRC hosted, and various other road commissions were able to attend.

Troy Bassett, County Commissioner: Congratulated Keith Rochefort and Dale DuFour for being reinstated as Schoolcraft County Road Commissioners after yesterday's vote.

Reported that the Schoolcraft County Board meeting will be held tomorrow, November 10th, beginning at 4:30 pm. A snowmobile grant will be reviewed for approval.

Kim Rochefort: With the nice weather recently, they were able to put smaller culverts in recently, with another scheduled for this Friday. They are still working on picking up trees and did a berm removal on CR-437.

Roger Martin, Shop Foreman: The new SCRC logo is complete after bringing it to a new company. The logo is fully reflective.

They are still moving along in the shop, although a little slowly with one less mechanic. E542 has more issues, with a broken clamp reactor SCR, which is an \$8k part. E543 and E545 are about the same age and are expected to need repairs soon as well.

12. Meeting Notice:

A. December 14, 2022, RTF Regional Meeting, Munising, MI

13. Public Comment: J. Vanderville congratulated Commissioners Keith Rochefort and Dale DuFour on being reelected to the SCRC Board.

Commissioner K. Rochefort asked what was done with our old equipment. R. Martin stated that it is out for auction. T. Hoar is finding items that are no longer on our books.

Commissioner K. Rochefort asked if the cable on CR-437 was buried deep enough. J. Vanderville will follow up. We need a deadline, or we will fix it and send the cable company a bill.

Commissioner K. Rochefort thanked I. Stampfly for the slideshow that he created showing SCRC projects. J. Vanderville noted that the slideshow and other videos showing SCRC accomplishments will be showing in the lobby on the new TV.

14. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 am.



Thomas Klarich, Chairperson



Jean Vanderville, Managing Director