

## **CASS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**FEBRUARY 1, 2010**

The Cass County Commissioners met at 1:00 p.m. In attendance were Dave Arnold, Jim Sailors, Gene Powlen, John Hillis, Attorney and Vaneen Ide, Auditor. Dave Arnold opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **MINUTES**

Gene Powlen made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 19<sup>th</sup> as presented, Jim Sailors seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

### **CLAIMS & PAYROLL**

Jim Sailors made a motion to approve the payroll and claims as presented, Gene Powlen seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

### **HIGHWAY**

Steve Easley appeared before the Commissioners with his monthly report. January so far has been a busy month with snow removal. The CCHD is well into the second 300 ton shipment of road salt. The salt barn is full of mixed materials and a small amount of unmixed salt. The CCHD Winter Weather Plan is a "work-in-progress". Some of the weather events we had in January exposed some shortcomings that the CCHD has since addressed. Twenty one drivers covered 3,000 miles which is an average of 143 miles per driver. Pat Brown will continue to work with the younger, less experience drivers on how to clear roads effectively and in a timely manner.

A Stimulus II – Jobs Bill is in the works. INDOT plans to hold orientation meetings throughout the State to prepare and direct local agencies on what road projects qualify and what needs to happen when and if this bill passes Congress. There is a risk involved at the local level and INDOT cautions and reminds all potential participants of those risks. Cass County is putting provisions in place to be able to react quickly if this bill passes with projects ready to begin.

Jeff Smith from the CCHD gave his update to the Commissioners about the ongoing and upcoming road projects for the County. Chase Road has been awarded Group II funding in the amount \$1,458,000. This completes the federal funding needed for this project. Bridge #13 opened on January

15<sup>th</sup>. Seeding and sealing of the deck will be done when weather permits. Construction is underway on the Hoosier Heartland segment near Clymers. Road 400 w. is to be closed between State Road 25s. and County Road 325S. for the duration of the project. Right-of-Way is in the process of being certified and final tracings submitted for the County Road 300S project near the Anderson's Ethanol Plant, the project is now scheduled for the May, 2010 bid letting. 300S. project will be done in late 2010.

The CCHD submitted a claim to INDOT LaPorte on January 19, 2010 in the amount of \$127,020 for road damages on CR 400 S that resulted from using this route as a detour this past summer while a small structure on State Road 25S near the State Hospital was replaced. INDOT has reviewed the claim and advised they will pay \$35,200 contingent on the Cass County Commissioner's acceptance and approval. The original dollar amount the CCHD submitted would have provide the opportunity to "wedge and overlay" the entire road from SR 29 S to SR 25S. Based on a quote we received the \$35,200 should cover repair of the most obvious damaged areas, primarily on the road edges. The Commissioners need to evaluate this offer so that we can respond to INDOT as to whether the amount is acceptable or further discussion and negotiations will be required.

The CCHD received information that INDOT plans to move forward with the replacement of a small structure on US Highway 35, .69 miles south of the intersection of SR 16 in Royal Center. CCHD received a letter advising the project was in the environmental review stage.

Steve Easley presented the Commissioners with a request for one of his employees for FMLA. Gene Powlen made a motion to approve the FMLA, Jim Sailors seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Steve Easley also made a request to fill the vacancies at the CCHD that resulted in the retirement of two employees. These are positions that are already in the budget. Jim Sailors made a motion to approve the hiring of two employees, Gene Powlen seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Steve Easley presented the Commissioners with a final bill that will need to have a transfer of appropriations. Gene Powlen made a motion to give the County Council a positive recommendation for the transfer, Jim Sailors seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **SHERIFF**

Gene Isaacs appeared before the Commissioners with the request to fill two Correction Officer positions at the jail. Jim Sailors made a motion to approve the request, Gene Powlen seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Gene Isaacs stated to the Commissioners that Lori Forrer was a great asset when she worked dispatch at the Sheriff's department and has continued to be while working combined E-911 dispatch.

#### **PARKS DEPARTMENT**

Sandy Heckard appeared before the Commissioners. Sandy informed the Commissioners that a timber management firm had been to the park and made a presentation to the Park Board. Trees were marked for removal. The Park Board reviewed what was tagged for removal and removed some of the trees tagged. The Commissioners were unhappy with this procedure. The property is owed by the County and before any trees were cut down, the Commissioners should have been informed. Proper procedures were questioned. Sandy informed the Commissioner's there are two companies bidding on the trees. The bids should be in writing and the company should be bonded. John Hillis, county attorney, requested that the check issued be certified and the lumber not leave the park property until received. John Hillis also requested Sandy contact the Park Board attorney and have him get in touch with John as soon as possible. The question remains as to what fund the monies are to be placed. This will be presented to the Cass County Council at their meeting on February 19<sup>th</sup>.

#### **OFF ROAD VEHICLES**

Henry Schroder presented the Commissioners with a petition signed by local people concerning the use of off road vehicles. The petition read:

We being residence of Cass County petition the commissioners of Cass County to pass ordinance to allow off road vehicles going from one farm to another to be operated on the county highway system.

The petition contained 28 signatures. Miami County has an ordinance that addresses this issue. The need for more research before adopting an ordinance was expressed by the Commissioners. Gene Powlen made a motion to take this matter under advisement, Jim Sailors seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

**DAY OF PRAYER**

Mr. MelvinPice was not at the meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS & ADJOURN**

Chod Gibson noted that Lori Forrer has been a strong leader for the County and Cass County was fortunate to have her serve. There were no other public comments. Gene Powlen made a motion to adjourn, Jim Sailors seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

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Dave Arnold, President

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Jim Sailors, Vice President

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Gene Powlen, Member

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Vaneen M. Ide, Auditor