

# MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY ROAD COMMISSIONERS - MONROE, MICHIGAN

August 14, 2023

1 At a Regular Meeting of the Board of County Road Commissioners at their offices located at the Monroe County Road Commission (MCRC) 840 S. Telegraph Road, Monroe, Michigan, the meeting was called to order by Chairman Stewart at 2:00pm

2 **ROLL CALL** by the Deputy Clerk as follows:

William Kipf	Present
James Jacobs	Present
Danny Minton	Excused
Jack Thayer	Present
Greg Stewart	Present

A quorum being present, the Board proceeded to transact business.

3 **The PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** was lead by Chairman Stewart.

4 **AN OPENING MOMENT OF SILENCE OR PRAYER** was lead by Chairman Stewart.

5 **REGULAR MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL**

Moved by Commissioner: Thayer Supported by Commissioner: Kipf  
to approve the agenda as presented.

**Vote:** Ayes: 4 Nays 0 Excused: 1 Motion Carried

6 **PUBLIC COMMENT** - None

7 **CONSENT AGENDA** (with immediate effect)

7.1 Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting July 24, 2023  
Special Meeting August 3, 2023

7.2 Journal Entries

Entry No.	Date	Description	Transfer Amount
533	7/27/2023	Vendor Checks 80899 - 80926	\$ 723,487.64
544	8/1/2023	Paychecks 66855 - 66868 Advices 35922 - 36021	\$ 357,311.23
545	8/2/2023	Vendor Checks 80927 - 80953 Bank Service Fee July 2023	\$ 171,800.53
567	8/9/2023	Vendor Checks 80954 - 81008	\$ 665,451.41

7.3 Township Contracts

Township	Project #	Road	Location	Work Type
Ash	489.001.249164	Calkins	At Little Swan Creek	Culvert Replacement
Erie	504.005.230509	Gaynier		Single Chip Seal
Exeter	504.006.230609	Newburg	Rawsonville to Timbers	Cross Tile Replacement

7.4 Approve the Dedicated Highway & Utility Easement for no monetary consideration on Luna Pier Road in Erie Township with SNS Property Investment LLC.

7.5 Approve the Dedicated Highway & Utility Easement for no monetary consideration on Sterns Road in Bedford Township with The Kroger Co.

7.6 Approve an amendment to the Capital Improvement Plan to change the item purchased from a drain camera to a trailer with the budgeted line item remaining at \$10,000.00.

7.7 Approve the bid for 2023 planer bids with Wear Parts and Equipment in the amount of \$446.50.

Moved by Commissioner: Thayer Supported by Commissioner: Jacobs  
to approve the consent agenda

Vote: Ayes: 4 Nays 0 Excused: 1 Motion Carried

## 8 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### 8.1 MCRC Samaria Road Property - Viewing of "Little Sink" drone footage

A two (2) minute video containing aerial drone footage was played showing the MCRC property nicknamed Little Sink located on Samaria Road in Whiteford township. Mr. Leach reported he will put a request in with the Monroe County Sheriff to have them fly the drone over the area once leaves have fallen later this year. Commissioner Thayer asked if "Big Sink" was viewable in the footage. Mr. Leach reported it was not but it is hoped to capture it during the fall fly over. Commissioner Stewart commented what was striking to him was during the presentation from Mr. Birkey and Mr. Whitney, they appeared to of assumed the site is truly a "Karst" site and concern was presented over whether the quarry portion was being mistaken for Karst. Mr. Leach reported he has not heard back from the Karst Conservancy as they were going to be completing the full title search. There is nothing further for the MCRC to complete at this time.

### 8.2 Monroe Campus Facility Expansion

Mr. Leach reported on follow up items from the last meeting. The last bond payment will be made in August 2024 in the amount of \$727,537.00. When discussing the possibility of the Monroe facility expansion, the current bond payoff will be completed just as funding would be needed for the expansion. The thought is the bond could be renewed or continued to fund the expansion project. Commissioner Kipf asked if other planning and processes related to the expansion would be occurring in the mean time. Mr. Leach confirmed. Commissioner Thayer asked if the West District property balloon payment would coincide with the time frames indicated. Mr. Leach confirmed, \$2.56 million will be received by December 19, 2024 for the sale of the West District.

## 9 NEW BUSINESS

9.1 Approve the lease renewal for the West District Salt Barn for an additional five years and authorize the Managing Director to sign on behalf of the Board.

Mr. Leach reported details of the lease were explained in the Managing Directors communication and are in relation to the sale of the West District property. We have the option to extend the lease for an additional five (5) years for the use of the salt barn. Written notice to exercise this option is due one year before the current lease expires. Mr. Leach reported it is his recommendation to the Board to extend the lease an additional five years. Commissioner Stewart asked if follow up could be held to see if there is any flexibility moving forward in regards to other options. Mr. Leach stated he would contact Visio Clara to inquire about any additional lease options at the end of the next five year term. Commissioner Thayer asked for the salt status which is stored in the West District barn. Mr. Leach stated the barns are currently full for this winter with additional salt which is ready for us to accept. Commissioner Thayer stated he would like to see an additional five year extension past the current one; if that can not be obtained, we will have to put up another salt barn. Mr. Leach confirmed, with the current proposed extension, we will have the salt barn for six years total. Mr. Leach stated if Visio Clara decides not to have any further discussion surrounding another extension after the six years is up, we will have to look to purchase property and build another smaller salt barn facility. Commissioner Thayer asked what the possibility would be to utilize the Samaria road property

Mr. Leach stated it logistically would be a very long run to get up towards Milan Township and is too far away to efficiently service the north west corner of the county. Mr. Leach reported it would be in the best interest of the Road Commission to gain funding from the sale of the Karst property if that is a possibility. Additionally there is a MCRC property owned in Berlin Township which serves us no purpose. The value of this property is currently unknown but it may be an opportunity to acquire more funding if it is sold. Commissioner Thayer stated five or six years goes by quickly and concern is presented over where we will be at that time.

Moved by Commissioner:           Thayer           Supported by Commissioner:           Kipf            
to approve the lease renewal for the West District Salt Barn as presented.

Vote:           Ayes:           4             Nays           0             Excused:           1             Motion Carried

10 REPORT OF OFFICERS

**David Leach (Interim Managing Director/Superintendent of Maintenance) -**

Mr. Leach reported a refund check was received from the Michigan County Road Commission Self Insurance Pool in the amount of \$96,489.00. The refund was the result of a surplus.

Mr. Leach reported at the last South East Council meeting, the topic of a state grant was discussed which served to bail out road commissions and governmental agencies that were behind in their OPEB funding. On a positive note, we were a responsible party and did not need the grant as we are properly funded.

Additionally, the draft version of the 5-Year Primary Road Plan was included in the Managing Directors Communication for review. The goal was to divvy dollars in equal portions to townships however this gets difficult with various larger projects being completed in different years in each township. The goal is to look at spending in each township over a five year span. Mr. Leach requested the review of this document with an open mind as it is a moving target. Adjustments are continuously made even through the construction season. Commissioner Thayer commented that the plan is a great tool which must be flexible. Appreciation was given to the team for putting the plan together. Mr. Leach reported in the future, there are ideas of other items such as cross country tiles and drainage that they would like to include in the budget; these items have not been budgeted for in years past. Commissioner Stewart asked if there were any townships who are getting more involved in the planning process. Mr. Leach confirmed many townships have a local road plan. The plans do not necessarily address the worst roads first, but they aim to protect their roads from a maintenance perspective and gain the longevity of their investment. Some townships work with Mannik and Smith to formulate their plan. Additionally, annual township meetings will begin next month to review road related recommendations. Commissioner Stewart reported he encourages this plan to be utilized as it is a positive tool.

**Jim Morgan (Assistant Superintendent of Maintenance) -**

Mr. Morgan reported all chip seals have been completed outside of one road which is on the agenda today for approval. The first round of dust control has been completed and the second round will begin on August 28th in Erie and Bedford townships. In mean time, the focus has shifted back to maintenance with shoulder work and ditching. The upcoming snow removal is also in mind. Mr. Morgan reported it has been a successful season for chip seals and dust control. Appreciation was given to all crews during management transitions. Mr. Morgan reported we have a great group of employees who know their jobs and keep moving forward. Commissioner Stewart asked what work was currently occurring on Smith Road. Mr. Morgan reported a cross tile will be getting replaced. With all the construction and detours in that area, the cross tile repair was put on hold. Mr. Leach reported chip sealing completed on a section of Smith Road as a reseal which may have been the reference seen on social media. The cross tile, however, is not listed as an emergency. Some barricades were in place for the chip seal which only generated a two hour delay.

**Kim LaRocca (Director of Finance) -**

Ms. LaRocca reported three of four staff members are within their first year of employment here. Ms. LaRocca reported she is pleased with their performance and training ongoing. Ms. LaRocca reported she is in final stages of the 2024 budget and the 2023 budget amendment.

**Matthew Snell (Director of Engineering/County Highway Engineer) -**

Mr. Snell reported the culvert replacement on Sterns Road which was presented to the Board for approval at the last meeting is complete. Everything went well within the timeline desired. Gerkin is working on completing the paving portion this week. We hope the road will be open sooner rather than later.

**Camden Regis (Director of Human Resources) -**

Ms. Regis reported training will be held for management, supervisors and crew leaders tomorrow. It is a supervisory and train the trainer type training. Some employees are newer to their positions and this training should help. Ms. Regis reported we won first place in the Monroe County Fair parade. This was a large group and team effort. We will be attending a touch-a-truck event this coming Thursday in Milan. Additionally, the MCOP requested us to participate in the end of summer bash next week Thursday. So, we will be taking a truck to that site with the painted plow from the Arthur Leslow group. Commissioner Thayer gave appreciation to the group for representing the MCRC at the parade and other community events.

**Philip Costello (Legal Counsel) - Nothing to Report**

**11 PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Marge Cousino**

Ms. Cousino reported she was delivering meals on wheels on Stevenson Road which is in very bad shape due to potholes. Ms. Cousino requested the MCRC repair the potholes and she was very surprised that these repairs were made the same day within hours of the request. Ms. Cousino expressed her appreciation to the Road Commission.

**12 COMMISSIONERS COMMENT**

**Commissioner Jacobs (Member) -**

Commissioner Jacobs gave appreciation for the information contained in the Managing Directors communication as it cleared up many questions. In regards to the fair, Commissioner Jacobs reported it was nice to see truck out there which got a positive response from the public. Commissioner Jacobs reported at last years CRA Commissioners Seminar, they discussed the ability to sell off Federal Aid dollars. Lenawee County is the primary purchaser because they have a process in which they can purchase additional dollars from local municipalities which don't have the opportunity to get matching funding from the Townships. Since they have the ability to pull the funds together, they can leverage the dollars much easier to gather the matching response. Commissioner Stewart asked if Mr. Leach had communications with Lenawee and could reach out regarding this process. Mr. Leach confirmed.

**Commissioner Kipf (Member) -**

Commissioner Kipf echoed Commissioner Jacobs appreciation for the lengthy and informative report Managing Directors Communication. Commissioner Kipf reported he enjoyed time at the fair and reported seeing many kids who like to play with the traffic circles. Commissioner Kipf reported he does have a bit of concern after reading that road funding could drop off tremendously in 2025. Commissioner Kipf stated he knows they are looking for alternative ways of funding and asked if we have a contingency plan if the funding drops? Commissioner Kipf stated he did not expect an answer, but knows this needs to be on our minds moving forward.

**Commissioner Thayer (Member) -**

Commissioner Thayer thanked Ms. Cousino for her public comments as this helps our people know things are appreciated. Commissioner Thayer commented that several topics seem very interesting at the upcoming CRA Commissioners Seminar in which he is interested in attending.

**Commissioner Minton (Vice Chairman) - Excused**

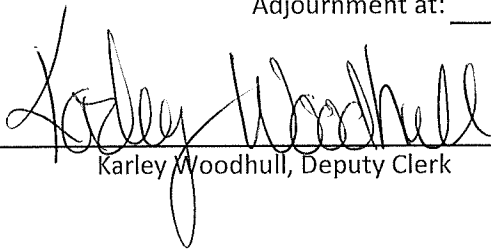
**Commissioner Stewart (Chairman) -**

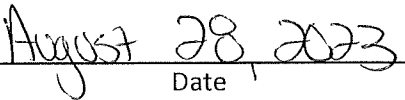
Commissioner Stewart gave a round of "Thank you's" adding that he is very glad to see financial reports. Commissioner Stewart stated he supports plans and training and hopes by now the idea of a five year plan is just as normal as anything else.

**13 ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Stewart adjourned the meeting with no further objection.

Adjournment at: 2:39 PM

  
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Karley Woodhull, Deputy Clerk

  
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Date

