

BOARD OF COUNTY ROAD COMMISSIONERS
GOGEBIC COUNTY ~ BESSEMER MICHIGAN

JOINT MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2016

The joint meeting of the Board of County Road Commissioners was held with the Gogebic County Board of Commissioners in the Circuit Courtroom, City of Bessemer, on the above date.

Present: Don Bennetts, Vice-Chairman Rob Drier, Commissioner
 Marti Wegner, Commissioner Dan Siirila, Commissioner
 Darren Pionk, Engineer/Manager Patricia Hagstrom, Secretary

Also Present: Numerous Public Attendees

The Gogebic County Board called its meeting to order at 5:03 pm. The pledge of allegiance was recited. They rolled called the members and approved the agenda. There was no public comment. Minutes of meeting are attached.

- I. Vice-Chairman Bennetts called the meeting to order at 5:23 pm.
- II. Roll Call ~ All members of the Gogebic County Road Commission were in attendance.
- III. Response to Questions ~ Darren Pionk, Engineer/Manager of the GCRC responded to questions asked from the county board members.
 - Site Selection ~ MDOT was contacted and an intersection study done for the previous owner was considered in the determination that the main entrance/exit to the property would be off of Marshalek Road. Access to utilities was a factor in considering the site. The layout of a new facility would need 8-10 acres. The discussion on a new facility has been being discussed for about 5 years. Steps have been taken to research a location and new facility. There is new road funding expected to be distributed in 2017 that would help with the construction of a new facility.
 - Equipment ~ Leasing of heavy equipment is being utilized, new mowers have been purchased in the last few years and 4 new plow trucks will be purchased this year.
 - Snow Plowing ~ The GCRC is not setup to be a 24/7 plow operation. GCRC has received many compliments this year about the snow plowing. However the operation will fail in certain circumstances.
 - Unfunded Liability ~ The GCRC analyzed the liability for retiree healthcare and found that the amount is close to the actuary that was done through the retirement office. The GCRC has worked to minimize this liability by eliminating health insurance for any new hires upon retirement. The GCRC made an additional payment to retirement for the GCRC employees' pension account in

2015. This payment was made due to additional money from a General Fund Distribution from MDOT. Gravel was also place on some roads in the fall of 2015 due to the additional funding.

- Commissioner Wegner handed out a personal letter to the members and read it.

Mr. Oliver asked what amount has been spent on the site to date and questioned spending money before approval for construction. Approximately \$140,000 has been spent. This figure includes the testing (boring, wetland delineation, Phase I ESA, facility design, purchase of land and preliminary designs from a professional architectural firm). Mr. Pionk suggested that a committee of members of the county board and road commission should be formed to discuss this item.

Mr. Peterson asked about the status of the contract with the Union. This issue is currently in fact finding.

Mr. Siirila stated that he would like to clear up what was in the *Ironwood Daily Globe*. He said that the other board members do not hate him. He suggested to the Gogebic County Board that when they interview for the appointment of road commission members that they should ask if the applicants are familiar with *Roberts Rules of Order* and the *Open Meeting Act*.

Mr. Bonovetz stated that the Gogebic County Board appoints the members of the road commission board and that they entrust that the members would police themselves. He questioned the status on the development of the site. Mr. Pionk stated that action taken by the board at the last regular Meeting of Monday, March 28, 2016, moved to put the project on hold.

IV. Public Comment ~ Pete Matonich responded to Ms. Marti Wagner's letter stating that he did have concerns about the waterline along Marshalek Road. He was told there was nothing he could do regarding a new facility at the site. He did research the steps and procedures taken in purchasing the land and zoning and has found that the site in not zoned commercial. Activity was done on the site without proper permits, etc. He has been living in this area for 20 years and feels he should not be faulted for being concerned about the safety issues at this location. Butch Saari stated that he was under the assumption that you could enter the highway by using the turn lane; however it is illegal to do so. Julie Mathiesen asked about the preliminary work/testing done at the site and asked if the same work/testing would have to be done on any property that would be considered for purchase for a new facility. Larry Grimsby stated that the townships have participated in funding road improvements and that he supports a new facility. Don Grbavcich questioned the funding of a new facility and the unfunded liability. He stated he believes the workers are funding these items. He also informed the members that there is a

spreadsheet that was requested by Art Lyons that shows the money spent on the site. Brad Noren asked what would happen to the current buildings that house the road commission at its current location. He asked about soil contamination. He stated that he thinks a past title search identifies the Gogebic County Board as the owners of the land that the buildings are on. Darren Pionk stated that the buildings have been discussed and that they may possibly be used by the school or sheriff's department. Asbestos testing would need to be performed. Mr. Kangas stated that there are funds available from the Brownfield Development. Mr. Pionk stated that the fuel tanks have been removed from the location. Mr. Bonovetz stated that Mr. Matonich has not asked for any favors from the Gogebic County Board of Commissioners regarding the site. Randy Kasich stated that the MDOT traffic studies are theoretical and do not deal with real time statistics like adverse weather conditions that may affect visibility at this location. Brad B. stated that the letter read threw the residents of the location under the bus and that the land is junk. He stated he would purchase the land for \$20,000 right now. He says he travels 519 north and that the road commission should be fixing the dips in the road caused by culverts.

- V. Adjournment ~ A motion was made by Siirila, 2nd by Wegner, with all in favor to adjourn at 6:22 pm.

BOARD OF COUNTY ROAD COMMISSIONERS

Secretary

Vice-Chairman