

The Menominee County Board of Road Commissioners held a special meeting in their offices north of Stephenson on Friday, April 29, 2011. Chair Betzinger called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. with the following persons present or absent:

PRESENT: William Anderson, Roger Betzinger, Anthony Kakuk, Darrell Moilanen and Lisa Savord. Also present were Joque Piatt, Scott Havelka, Glen Havelka, John Groleau, David Granskog, Jack Martin, Dennis Rye, Ralph Brock, Tom Kuntze, Mark Marklein, Edith Vincent, Fred Reidell, Mark Jasper, Jim Revall, Milton Patz, Robert Getzloff, Dan Getzloff, Dave Johnson, Dennis Johnson, Tim Martin, Lee Spaude, Harry Meintz, Charlie Meintz, John Strohl and others.

ABSENT: None

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public comments – None.

Public Appearances – None.

Discuss spring road conditions and hauling restrictions - Moilanen presented photos of various roads in the county that have incurred damage during spring break up. He stated that it has been the worst spring in at least the past 18 years, due to excess moisture last fall. He also discussed the exemptions that are given to milk haulers and trash haulers by the road commission. It was also noted that persons involved in animal husbandry are exempt from the weight restrictions by state law.

Discussion ensued regarding the damage with the following point being brought up:

David Granskog stated that the pounds per square inch should be considered, not just the overall weight of the equipment, when determining legal loading for roads.

Lee Spaude stated that he lives on K-1 Road and that the amount of damage to the road was a safety concern, especially for motorcyclists.

Betzinger stated that he felt that repetitive hauling caused as many problems as the weight of the vehicle.

Kakuk stated that if a road was “bleeding” then a contractor should not haul on that route, and they should take the shortest route and haul smaller loads whenever possible.

John Strohl asked if there were any laws regarding malicious destruction of the roads. Moilanen stated that the only recourse would be a civil lawsuit.

Dave Johnson stated that the damage to K-1 Road was not due to operations from their farm and that common sense needs to be used when deciding hauling routes. He asked who decides the priority of which roads are repaired or paved – the road commission or the township. Moilanen explained that both entities were involved.

It was noted that Pleasant View Dairy Farm hasn't had manure hauled over secondary roads either and that they were concerned about the condition of the roads as well. They feel that the manure haulers should not be exempt from restrictions if they are damaging the roads. Moilanen stated that the farmers that hire the manure haulers can control when and where they haul.

David Granskog noted that fields are getting further away from the main farms and asked if the road commission would be willing to suggest the best hauling routes when there is more than one way to get to the fields.

Charlie Meintz stated that he agreed that farmers should be exempt from the weight restrictions, but not allowed to do damage. He noted that there is a farmer that cannot get feed to their cattle due to the condition of the road and asked what could be done in an emergency situation like that. Piatt stated that gravel could be hauled in with reduced loads.

Jim Revall asked if the road commission would fix K-1 Road. Moilanen stated that the damaged

portion may need to be turned back to gravel and then paved at a later date when funds were available.

Tim Martin stated that they were currently hauling under emergency situations only, where the farmers manure tanks were overflowing. Kakuk asked if they could haul to a closer field under those situations. David Granskog stated that the farmers were unable to get into some of their fields. Mr. Martin also stated that the state regulates manure saturation. Kakuk asked if the manure could be spread earlier in the year, before the weight restrictions were posted. Dave Johnson stated that it could not be spread on frozen ground.

Charlie Meintz stated that some of the support for the three-way funding program was being lost due to this situation as some of the county commissioners feel that if the farmers and contractors weren't going to haul responsibly, why should the county put money into the roads.

It was noted that some of the farms have installed larger manure pits in order to not have to haul during restrictions, and that the state has increased regulations on farmers regarding nutrients & fertilizers. It was suggested that the manure be spread in the fall of the year. Dan Getzloff noted that spreading in the fall could affect hunting.

Dave Johnson stated the he would like to meet with Moilanen and the weighmaster to plan hauling routes ahead of time.

Piatt suggested that farmers consider reducing their speed when operating equipment on county roads to help reduce damage.

Charlie Meintz stated that the outcome of this meeting should be cooperation between the farmers, haulers and the road commission, and that all parties should consider the economic impact of the road conditions.

Other Business – Kakuk asked that the repair of K-1 Road be put on the agenda for the May 10 regular meeting for discussion. He also stated that he was against heavy hauling of any kind during weight restrictions due to the potential for damage to the roads.

Betzinger asked if the road commission could issue a warning when the edge of the road is broken up due to repetitive entering from fields, etc. Kakuk stated that farmers should be advised to put stones at those entrances to help knock the mud off of the tractor/equipment tires before they enter the roadway.

Moilanen requested permission to issue a RFP for the design of County Line Road. Moved by Kakuk, seconded by Anderson to grant permission. Carried unanimously.

Public Comments – Glen Havelka stated that a claim against a contractor for willful destruction of property would possibly be covered under the contractor's liability insurance.

There being no further business, Betzinger declared the meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m.

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Road Commission Finance Director-Clerk

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Road Commission Chair