

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT

July 11, 2016

A Transportation Committee meeting was held on Monday, July 11, 2016, at 6:00 p.m. in the Quorum Court Meeting Room, Benton County Administration Building, 215 East Central, Bentonville, Arkansas.

Committee Members Present: Adams, K. Harrison, Anglin, *Moore, Meyers
Absent: Slinkard

Others Present: JPs Sheridan, Sandlin, Leadabrand, Moehring, County Judge Bob Clinard, County Assessor Linda Hambrick, Comptroller Brenda Guenther, Administrator of Public Services Jay Frasier

Media: Tom Sissom – Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette

Transportation Committee chair JP Adams called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Public Comments

None.

War Eagle Bridge Project Update – Great River Engineering Design Work

JP Adams asked Administrator of Public Services Jay Frasier to give an update on the War Eagle Bridge project.

Jay Frasier stated that they have had a set-back on War Eagle. They found out today that Travis Rapp, the lead engineer, is no longer with the company. One of the principle owners, Spencer Jones, has taken over for him. They are still waiting for a reply from the State Historical Preservation Society. All the permits are in place including the short term activity authorization permit which is environmental from the State of Arkansas. They are still looking at a tentative construction date in August.

County Judge Bob Clinard reiterated that they do have a contract, however, they just found about Travis Rapp today. They do have a performance level in their contract and they do have a contract to finish on time and get this out for bid in August. He has no reason to believe that Great River Engineering will not honor that contract. He thinks that it will carry on like it should and has confidence in Great River Engineering. The plan is still to have it bid in August.

JP Anglin asked if the JPs were to decide on the three levels of bids and if that will happen before the bid process.

Judge Clinard said yes, as soon as they tell them when they can go out to bid. If nothing else, he will just send the JPs the bid documents and let them comment back to him. It is still a three-level bid process depending on weight, load, rating, and the how long the bridge is expected to last as far as a five-year bridge, ten-year bridge, etc.

JP Moehring asked if they have had any other success with other grants like the TAP grant.

Jay Frasier said not that he knows of.

JP Adams suggested that they send whatever they find out to everyone in case there are any questions, and they can possibly address this again at the next Quorum Court meeting.

Road Department Update on 2016-2017 Road Plan

Administrator of Public Services Jay Frasier reviewed his department's progress on the 2016 Road Plan. He stated that right now they have sixteen roads completed in the County including the roads around the new high school in Centerton. They are actively working on the State aid projects of Colonel Meyers and Robbins Road. They are looking at an August 10th letting date on Robbins Road, and then the State will come in and add the base and the asphalt on the road. He said that this is a joint project with Springdale, Elm Springs, and the County. He stated that Stagecoach and Corinth bridges are complete. They have taken possession of Stagecoach and Corinth is in the process of being turned back over to them. Also, on Wildcat Bridge, they have been working with the State. The State is trying to finish up their plans, and hopefully when that is done, the Road Department will be able to get that bridge under construction. He stated that they have been verbally accepted for the grant for Spanker Creek and they are actively working in the cities, doing cost-sharing. As far as the road plan goes, they are doing the best they can with the two months of rain we have had and that they are trying to get everything possible to get done this year that they can.

*JP Moore entered the meeting.

JP Adams what our share of Robbins Road is.

Jay Frasier stated that it is a State aid project and the expense is split proportionately with the other cities. He said the majority of the road belongs to the County.

Short discussion was held about how the cost-share works.

JP Moore asked about Fisher Ford.

Jay Frasier stated that it is on next year's plan. He then presented the list of roads that they will be moving to when they have finished Robbins Road and Colonel Meyers on the dashboard.

Lengthy discussion was held about the roads on the list, and how the easements are obtained on these roads.

Jay Frasier then presented the road plan for 2017 on the dashboard and emphasized that it is subject to change. For instance, Galyean Stables and Smith Ridge will be removed from the list.

He said that Smith Ridge is a fairly long road and they have to overlay it this year because the road is falling apart. He said that they fit Galyean Stables in this year. He stated that the majority of this will be a maintenance issue this year and most of these roads are overlays. He said that they have three or four roads on the plan that are new construction. He said that they are trying to take care of some of the problem spots in the County by doing an overlay maintenance plan this year.

Specific roads on the 2017 plan were briefly discussed.

JP Anglin asked if any of the roads in the 2017 plan are considered important as far as helping water quality, especially those around the lake.

Jay Frasier stated that most of these roads are paved roads that are in pretty bad shape. He said that they are hoping to get started on the watershed roads.

JP Adams asked if the County was awarded the \$75,000 grant for storm water mitigation.

Comptroller Brenda Guenther stated that they do not know yet.

JP Adams said that Jay Frasier will need to come and present this information to the entire Quorum Court sometime before the budget process starts. He suggested that he come and speak to the Committee of the Whole in September. He said that he does not intend to schedule another Transportation meeting until September and he will work this out with the County Judge.

County Judge Bob Clinard said that he can email every Quorum Court member the bid plan documents for the War Eagle Bridge and ask them to give any comments they may have. As far as he knows, it is still going to be the same plan. He added that everything is an estimate until this bids.

After a short discussion about the bid process, Judge Clinard stated that it should come before the Transportation Committee in September.

JP Adams said that it should then go to the Finance Committee, Committee of the Whole, and Quorum Court in September.

*K. Harrison left the meeting.

Judge Clinard stated that they have had a change of engineers and the State Historical Preservation Society has also not given a final answer yet. They still have two government entities involved and it is not all up to Great River Engineering. He said that there is no deadline but the goal is to start construction after November 1st to get the most time to work on the bridge prior to the War Eagle Craft Fair in the spring.

Discussion: Updating Benton County Code of Ordinances Chapter 58 – Roads and Bridges

- **Benton County Code of Ordinances §58-65 – Asphalt Paving, and Chip-and-Seal Road Surfaces**

JP Adams stated that the Municode that they go by here are not necessarily the ordinances that are passed verbatim. He said that Municode is a company that, as ordinances are passed in the County, the County ships these ordinances to this company, they make their own interpretations, and then they provide the Municode book. He said that it pretty confusing for the layman and that they have ordinances in the Municode that are outdated. He said that, to save time and confusion, they picked

out one section which is Section 58-65. He said that this section still speaks in a language from 1982. Back then, the county determined what mixes of asphalt that they were allowed to place on County roads. He does not even know if these mixes exist anymore. He said that what they would like to do over next several months is update these a few at a time to modern language and clarify them.

Jay Frasier presented a potential draft of an update of this section to the JPs from the dashboard. JP Moore suggested that, when they start revising them, they do a strike-through on the deleted language so that they can easily see what has changed.

Short discussion was held about the changes that need to be made.

JP Moehring asked if County Attorney George Spence is looking at all of this.

Judge Clinard said that he will because there has to be an ordinance drafted to be approved by the Quorum Court.

After further discussion, JP Adams stated that no action is required from the Transportation Committee on this agenda item at this time. He asked that the committee members read over the draft and the Code of Ordinances book, go back and look at the other ordinances, and that this item could be placed on the agenda for the next Transportation meeting. After that, it would go to the Committee of the Whole and Quorum Court because it has no financial impact and does not need to come before the Finance Committee.

- **Benton County Code of Ordinances §58-83 – Signage of Roads**

JP Adams stated that green sign roads are roads designated as county roads, blue signs roads are public access private roads, and white sign roads are private roads. He said that he does know if they can legally work on blue sign roads or not.

Judge Clinard said that they have this three-level sign system and that he is getting the opinion of Mark Whitmore at the Association of Arkansas Counties. From the best he can tell from the Arkansas State statute, it talks about three kinds of roads: county roads, public access roads, and private roads. He said that a public access road can be maintained by the county judge at whatever level he chooses. He said that it is not in the County's best interest to say that blue sign roads will be graded twice a year because a lot of them are paved. He said that it is a county road subject to the maintenance and construction and guidance of the county judge and that no other county has the green, blue, and white signage. He said that they probably need to change that ordinance, but the question then becomes what to do with the existing blue sign roads.

JP Moore clarified that they are advocating doing away with blue sign roads and either having the roads be county-maintained or not county-maintained. He said that public access means that it has to be county maintained.

JP Anglin asked, if the blue sign roads are only supposed to be graded twice a year, how they became paved.

Judge Clinard stated that the homeowners may have paid for the paving themselves. He said that he has also been told that previous administrations paved some of those roads with County equipment. He said, since he has been here, no road has been paved that was not a green sign road. He stated

that a lot of these blue sign roads are awful and they would almost have to rebuild them. He said that there is no easy answer.

*JP Moehring left the meeting.

Lengthy discussion was held about the blue sign roads and what needs to be done to change the ordinance.

JP Adams asked the committee members to look at Section 58-65. He stated that he will likely be scheduling a Transportation Committee meeting on Tuesday, September 6th and that hopefully Judge Clinard will have the AAC's opinion by then. At that point, any change to the ordinance could be moved to the September Committee of the Whole agenda, along with the War Eagle Bridge project.

Public Comments

None.

JP Adams declared the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.