

November 05, 2012

The special meeting of the Highway Committee was called to order by Chair Paul Schwandt at 6:00 PM on Monday, November 05, 2012. The requirements of the Open Meeting Law were certified as being met.

Present: Paul Schwandt
Donald Peters
Eugene Henke

Absent: Margaret Whirry

Others Present: Amy Brooks, Highway Commissioner
Becky Pence, Administrative Assistant
Duane Prachel, County Superintendent
Ben Moderow, Alternate
Tony Daley, Berlin Journal
Jack Meyers, County Board Chair
Bob Jahn, Highway Local 514 President

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Agenda

Motion/second (Peters/Henke) to approve the Agenda. Motion Carried.

Correspondence

Short survey/comparison regarding other county mechanics, shop foremen and motorized fleet size compared to Green Lake County.

Public Comments

Bob Jahn, Highway Local 514 President spoke against combining the shop foreman position with a mechanic position. With winter upon us, having 1 person short is not a good idea and feels there are other ways to save on costs and be fiscally sound. Schwandt asked Prachel if he would like to speak at this time.

Prachel is concerned about losing a person. By dropping the shop foreman position the work won't get done, also indicating we have 13 plow routes, each route takes approximately 4-5 hours each, and 15 people are needed in order to run the routes as employees are off due to sickness and vacation, etc.

Appearances None

Restructuring Vacant Position

Discussion was held on the Feasibility Letter for restructuring, the Mechanic/Parts Foreman Job Description, and Budget savings that was included in the committee packet.

Meyers thought the committee may want to hold off after hearing the public comments until the Brooks becomes more familiar with operations.

Peters feels this is the perfect opportunity to move forward as this type of transition has been talked about in the past, and is cost effective.

Henke indicated the lane miles on the survey doesn't mean anything because other counties don't have a prairie like we do and today more people are working where the roads need to be cleared earlier than in the past. Pence explained the survey was not for winter plowing that it was a simple comparison regarding how many mechanics, shop foreman compared to size of motorized fleet and that other counties are not filling positions, but are combining positions to become more cost effective.

Peters spoke saying that it appears the only concern here is the winter maintenance after listening to Henke, Prachel and Jahn, and indicated that if the winter is the issue that we need to look at maybe hiring a part time laborer and if it is determined necessary, to bring back to the committee a general laborer for full-time. To have a full time person in the shop sitting at a desk is not cost effective.

Pence explained the difference between direct labor and indirect labor regarding the highway operation rates that we have to account for. Anytime you put more direct labor into the operations, it benefits us. By increasing indirect labor, you are increasing not only payroll, but overhead and fringe benefit rates.

Prachel agreed with Pence and indicated it would be good if we could hire a general laborer if necessary.

Resolution No. 27-2012 Relating to Restructuring the Highway Department

Motion/second (Peters/Schwandt) to pursue Resolution No. 12-2012 with recommendation to Personnel Committee relating to restructuring the vacant Shop Foreman Position. Roll-Call Vote, (2) Ayes, (1) Nay (Henke). Motion Carried.

Committee Discussion None

Adjournment

Motion/second (Peters/Henke) to adjourn at 7:00 PM. Motion carried.

Submitted by,

Becky Pence
Secretary