



PUBLIC MEETING

April 22, 2021
MINUTES

The Lewis and Clark County Commissioners Public Meeting was held on Thursday, April 22, 2021, at 9:00 AM in Commission Chambers, Room 330.

Roll Call

Chair Andy Hunthausen called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

Commissioner Jim McCormick and Commissioner Tom Rolfe were present. Others attending all or a portion of the meeting included Roger Baltz, Peter Italiano, Dan Karlin, Charles Lane, Lindsay Morgan, Christal Ness, Audra Zacherl, Jeff Wadekamper, Pat Drynan, and Nadine McCarty, Recording Secretary.

Pledge of Allegiance

Everyone recited the pledge.

Consent Action Items

There were no consent action items.

Bid Opening. Collins Drive, Ferry Drive, and Snowdrift Road Resurfacing. (Audra Zacherl)

Audra Zacherl, Public Works Assistant Director, presented the bid opening for the Collins Drive, Ferry Drive, and Snowdrift Road resurfacing Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) project. The project consists of resurfacing Collins Drive from the Helena Valley Canal to the intersection of Snowdrift Road, resurfacing Snowdrift Road from the intersection of Collins Drive to the intersection of Ferry Drive, and resurfacing Ferry Drive from the Helena Valley Canal to the intersection of Snowdrift Road. The project also includes adding palliative to the new top surfacing and supplying/installing new drainage culverts. The project is scheduled to begin July 1, 2021 with approximately 45 days to complete.

Three bids were received. The first bid is from Bullock Contracting, LLC of Boulder, Montana. The Collins Drive bid amount is \$128,394.40, Snowdrift Road bid amount is \$73,364.32, and Ferry Drive bid amount is \$106,715.16 for a total base bid amount for all three of \$308,473.88. Additive alternates for in slope surfacing are Ferry Drive at \$19,728, Collins Drive at \$18,284, Snowdrift Road at \$13,140. The second bid is from Helena Sand & Gravel, Inc. of Helena, Montana. The Collins Drive bid amount is \$188,728, Snowdrift Road bid amount is \$99,477, and Ferry Drive bid amount is \$150,421 for a total base bid amount for all three of \$438,626. Additive alternates for in slope surfacing are Ferry Drive at \$29,592, Collins Drive at \$28,926, Snowdrift Road at \$19,710. The last bid is from Valley Sand & Gravel, Inc. of Helena, Montana. The Collins Drive bid amount is \$144,096.58, Snowdrift Road bid amount is \$75,188.82, and Ferry Drive bid amount is \$111,983.16 for a total base bid amount for all three of \$331,268.56. Additive

alternates for in slope surfacing are Ferry Drive at \$22,605, Collins Drive at \$22,096.25, Snowdrift Road at \$15,056.25.

A motion was made by Commissioner Rolfe for staff to take the bids under advisement and make a recommendation to the Commission on April 29, 2021. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McCormick. The motion Passed on a 3-0 vote.

Amended Memorandum of Understanding Between Lewis and Clark County and Big Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited. (Dan Karlin)

Dan Karlin, County Engineer, presented the amended memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Big Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited for the Poorman Creek Bridge project originally approved on February 5, 2021.

In 2017, the County began collaborating with the Big Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited (BBCTU) to design a new stream crossing at Poorman Creek on Stemple Pass Road. BBCTU funded the bridge design, with technical oversight of the design from Lewis and Clark County Public Works staff. BBCTU secured grant funding totaling \$315,712 from multiple sources that include the United States Forest Service at \$204,887, the US Fish & Wildlife Service at \$45,000, Trout Unlimited at \$34,825, and Future Fisheries at \$31,000. Costs for engineering, permitting, administration, and construction oversight are budgeted at \$49,800, leaving \$265,912 for project construction.

Construction of the bridge was first bid in March to a list of BBCTU pre-qualified contractors with a low bid of \$375,000. All bids were rejected; the project was rebid as a publically advertised bid the end of March. Bids were opened last week, with a low bid of \$324,700. BBCTU needs to find the difference in funding of \$58,788 to complete the project this construction season or jeopardize the already secured funding. This is an opportunity for the County to improve and increase the life of a bridge on its bridge system at less than 20% of the total cost. The amended MOU will include a County cash contribution to the project budget of up to \$60,000, funded from the FY22 Bridge Infrastructure Fund. Staff recommends approval of the memorandum of understanding with the Big Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

Discussion occurred on the public safety improvements of the project. Mr. Karlin explained currently there is a culvert with a stacked rock foundation inlet area and due to that, roadside safety is poor with ponding on the upstream side, a large pool on the downstream side. The fisheries want to correct the pool issues and realign the stream back to the appropriate alignment. In doing so, the culvert would be replaced with a bridge that has guardrail on it and the appropriate approach guardrail. An improved structure makes it possible for the risk reduction of a washout to occur in a flood situation. At some point, the County would be responsible for replacing the culvert solely on County funds and by combining with the other funding partners a significant amount is being saved for a much more efficient structure.

Commissioner Rolfe asked if anything was lost in the change of the two bid processes with the second coming in at a lower amount. Mr. Karlin explained the project was rebid as the pre-qualified list of bidders had full workloads already with most of them specializing in culvert replacement and fish passage stream reconstruction. The second is more focused on the bridge installation itself, bringing in bids from contractors more familiar with bridge work.

No public comment was received.

A motion to Approve was made by Commissioner McCormick and seconded by Commissioner Rolfe. The motion Passed on a 3-0 vote.

Proposed Abandonment of an Unnamed Right-Of-Way. (Christal Ness)

Christal Ness, Development Services Supervisor, presented the proposed abandonment and discontinuance of an unnamed right-of-way in the Bellevue Addition, noting this has been advertised as a public hearing. Staff requests that this item be tabled until further notice.

The right-of-way is located on the northern end of Hauser Boulevard and runs from Hauser Boulevard east to Granite Street, south of Kessler School.

PUBLIC COMMENT -

Forrest Zimmerman, 2615 Knight Street, stated he is representing several neighbors in the area and they have significant opposition to closing the right-of-way off. It is a path for school children and the sole access to three backyards. As mentioned, it has been in existence since 1889; however, they all based their property purchasing decisions on having the nice open spaces, figuring they had been open that long for public use forever, as stated on the handwritten Bellevue Addition plat. They would like to keep it open. More open space is needed in the neighborhoods, not less.

There being no further comment, Commissioner Hunthausen stated the public hearing is now closed.

Commissioner McCormick stated he read that NorthWestern Energy has utility lines through that area and would like to hear about their comments.

A motion was made by Commissioner McCormick to table the item to a future unnamed date and seconded by Commissioner Rolfe. The motion Passed on a 3-0 vote.

Public Hearing Re: Helena Sand and Gravel Variance Request to Operating Hours. (Applicant: Helena Sand and Gravel) (Planner: Lindsay A. Morgan)

Lindsay Morgan, Planner III, presented the variance request from Helena Sand and Gravel to temporarily amend the operating hours approved under their Montana Department of Environmental Quality Opencut Program permit. The request is being made to allow for the partial reconstruction of the main runway at Helena Regional Airport. The Helena Sand and Gravel operation is located south of Canyon Ferry Road, west of and adjacent to Lake Helena Drive, east of and adjacent to Valley Drive, and north of the East Helena City limits. The property is also in Special District No. 43, which does not allow gravel mining operations. However, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) permitted the operation prior to the adoption of the zoning. Under their DEQ permit, modified hours of operation may be allowed following a public hearing and consultation with Lewis and Clark County Board of County Commissioners.

PUBLIC COMMENT -

Jeff Wadekamper, Helena Regional Airport Director, 6090 Greenfield Loop, stated he is attending in support of Helena Sand & Gravel. The project is fairly large with a significant amount of material. Most times when runways are redone, the process can be drawn out. The phased plan will shut the primary runway down for eight days. This time of year, there are concerns with weather. It would be helpful if Helena Sand & Gravel could do some of the work at night.

Mr. Wadekamper noted the Helena Forest Service Tanker Base is the only one in Montana that can accommodate the very large firefighting tankers with the next closest being Moses Lake, Washington. A secondary runway will be open during the eight days for air ambulances, air cargo, small private aircraft, and single engine air tankers. Discussion occurred on the importance of not having interruptions during the paving process to prevent the occurrence of cold joints. The elimination of cold joints prolongs the life of the runway. He added if the extended hours were not allowed the project could take weeks and even a couple of months.

Ms. Morgan stated this type of request has been done at least four other times for a project. The variance to the operating hours would temporarily allow for the operation of the asphalt plant during nighttime hours Monday through Friday, 8:00 pm to 5:00 am for approximately fifteen days from June 20 through July 21, 2021. In addition, it will allow for temporary extension of weekend hours for gravel hauling and operations of the asphalt plant on Saturdays and Sundays from 5:00 am to 8:00 pm beginning May 15 with the last weekend ending June 13.

Pat Drynan, Helena Sand & Gravel General Manager, 899 Lodestar Road, stated they are hoping they only have to run three to four of the weekends with extra time allotted for weather. The first phase of the project, to construct the eastern most 2,700 feet of the main runway must be completed prior to shutting the runway down for the eight days. The nighttime operations are after the main runway is completed and are for reconstruction work on the taxi lanes leading to the main runway. He explained when the work will be done and why.

There being no further comment, Commissioner Hunthausen stated the public hearing is now closed.

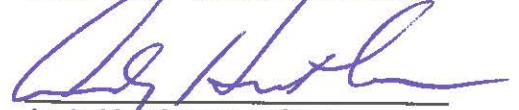
A motion to Approve was made by Commissioner McCormick and seconded by Commissioner Rolfe. The motion Passed on a 3-0 vote.

Public comment on any public matter within the jurisdiction of the Commission that is not on the agenda above.

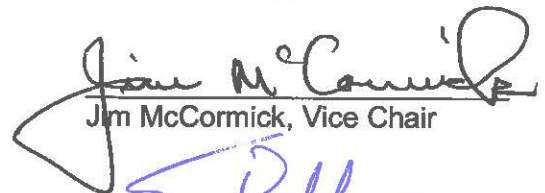
Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:47 am.

LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Andy Hunthausen, Chair



Jim McCormick, Vice Chair



Tom Rolfe, Member

ATTEST:


Amy Reeves, Clerk of the Board