

**WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF ROAD COMMISSIONERS
VIRTUAL WORKING SESSION MINUTES OF
September 15, 2020**

Present: Road Commissioners Douglas Fuller, Barbara Fuller, Gloria Llamas, Jo Ann McCollum

Commissioner Absent: Rod Green

Staff Present: S. Siddall, J. Harmon, D. Ackerman, M. MacDonell, C. Ryan, E. Kizer, C. Quinter, N. Peterson, B. Schlack, C. Brochue

Others Present: Ruth Ann Jamnick, County Commissioner, District 5; A. Philbrick, legal counsel – Conlin, McKinney & Philbrick

Roll Call Of Attendance:

Doug Fuller, Chair
Barb Fuller, Vice Chair
Gloria Llamas, Member
Jo Ann McCollum, Member
Sheryl Siddall, Managing Director
Matt MacDonell, Director of Engineering/Council Highway Engineer
Jim Harmon, Director of Operations
Dan Ackerman, Director of Finance & IT

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No public comment.

WCRC Job Shadowing Program

Sheryl Siddall, Managing Director, stated that the Job Shadowing Program came from our employees through the Employee Think Tank group. Nicole Peterson, Human Resources Manager, provided a review of the Job Shadowing Program. This program provides opportunities for staff to explore different positions within the Road Commission they may be interested in pursuing in the future. Nicole stated that the WCRC encourages job promotion from within the organization. An employee would have to request through the HR Department and management to participate in the Job Shadowing Program. Commissioner Doug Fuller asked if an employee could shadow more than one job position. Nicole stated it would have to be considered if there would be a limit on the number job positions an employee can shadow. Commissioner Barb Fuller asked about outside people participating in this Job Shadowing Program. Sheryl Siddall and Nicole Peterson stated that there would be specific safety concerns with outside people participating and this would require quite a bit more thought. Commissioner Gloria Llamas asked if an employee would ever be denied a Job Shadowing request.

Sheryl stated she did not see any specific reason an employee would be denied a Job Shadowing request. Commissioner Doug Fuller complimented staff on developing good, forward thinking ideas.

WCRC Bylaws

Sheryl Siddall, Managing Director, provided a review of the final changes to the WCRC Bylaws. The Board agreed with the proposed motion of the WCRC Bylaws to be approved at the September 15th Board Meeting this afternoon.

Environmental Stewardship: Part 2 – Trees

Sheryl Siddall, Managing Director, provided a review of the WCRC's rights to remove any tree within the right of way that is obstructing sight distance or interfering with the roadway. WCRC does not have a specific tree policy. WCRC does have a Community Engagement Policy. This policy focuses on scalable notification about upcoming projects. WCRC has several procedures including a tree removal procedure adopted by the Board in 2002. This applies to living trees 6" in diameter or greater. WCRC also has an internal procedure on who is reviewing and performing work to remove trees that need to come down due to sight distance complaints. Sheryl stated removing trees has been controversial for a long time and provided a review of various concerns from the public on tree removal. Sheryl explained the current practices of why the WCRC removes trees. The primary reason is for safety to the traveling public. Sheryl provided a review of vehicle crash statistics of vehicles hitting trees and utility poles. WCRC also removes trees for road improvements and works closely with townships and Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation for various projects. WCRC can also remove trees for maintenance to maintain a working drainage system, pavement preservation and during storm cleanup or removing dead or dying trees. There are third parties that will also obtain a permit to remove trees from the right of way.

Sheryl provided a review of suggested alternatives to tree removal such as installing guardrail, reducing speed limits, more enforcement and installing rumble strips and roadway lighting. Sheryl also explained why these are not good alternatives.

Sheryl provided a review of current tree replacement practices. This can include partnership with townships or other entities on projects such as the Jackson Road boulevard. Anyone can apply for a permit to plant a tree in the road right of way. Sheryl stated that no Michigan road commission has a tree replacement policy. Most policies outline tree removal.

Legal counsel will discuss in closed session at today's Working Session a proposed tree policy.

CLOSED SESSION

B. Fuller moved, J. McCollum seconded to enter Closed Session at approximately 10:17 a.m. for Attorney/Client Consultation regarding a tree policy and a property offer from 52 Minerals LLC.

Roll Call Vote:

YEAS: B. Fuller, D. Fuller, R. Green, G. Llamas, J. McCollum

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Motion Carried.

B. Fuller moved, G. Llamas seconded to exit Closed Session at approximately 11:50 a.m.

B. Fuller moved, J. McCollum seconded to adjourn the September 15, 2020 Working Session at 11:51 a.m.

Roll Call Vote:

YEAS: B. Fuller, D. Fuller, G. Llamas, J. McCollum

NAYS: None

ABSENT: R. Green

ABSTAIN: None

Motion Carried.

Douglas E. Fuller, Chair
Washtenaw County Board of Road Commissioners

Barb Fuller, Vice-Chair
Washtenaw County Board of Road Commissioners