LAKE COUNTY COMMISSION MINUTES
July 14, 2020

The Board of Lake County Commissioners met in special session on July 14, 2020 at 9 a.m. in the commission meeting room at the Lake County courthouse to discuss a proposed county road levy. Chair Kelli Wollmann called the meeting to order. Auditor Janke called roll call: Commissioner Roger Hageman, Commissioner Aaron Johnson, Commissioner Deb Reinicke, Commissioner Dennis Slaughter, and Commissioner Kelli Wollmann all present. There were 7 concerned citizens present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

AGENDA APPROVED:

Motion by Reinicke, second by Hageman, to approve the agenda of July 14, 2020. Motion carried.

COUNTY ROAD LEVY DISCUSSION:

Chair Wollmann showed those present an example of a one-dollar bill and what portion of that bill goes to the different entities in the county for tax purposes. She used her property as an example to show how to figure the proposed new county tax. She discussed the following: laws to follow, all counties are different, Lake County circumvented by 3 major highways, AG and Industrial community, flooding, BIG grant applications made, turning roads back to gravel, the booklet from DLA showing what the county is statutorily required to make allotments to, commodity flow study done, railroads not being used as they have in the past, and the county cannot get sales tax.

Nels Nelson, Hwy Supt., told those present he plans 5 miles of overlay for 2021. He told the board an engineer (construction manager) is needed to monitor the overlay projects and this expense would be approximately $10,000. Commissioner Hageman questioned Nelson on the life of a road. Nelson said 15-20 years but many things can affect the life of the road. Hageman would like to revisit adding the chemical on gravel roads. Commissioner Reinicke asked Nelson about the costs to mill the three miles of CR35. Nelson told her the total cost of that project was $84,874 which included the injection cost at $23 per gallon. She also discussed lowering tonnages. She reviewed the wheel tax ordinance and the fuel tax received by the county. Commissioner Slaughter reviewed the wheel tax collections for the first five months in 2020 comparing to the 2019. The amount for 2020 is less. The mail forwarding business that closed August 2018 accounts for a majority of the decrease in 2019 and 2020. Auditor Janke told the board a cash operating transfer to the RD-BR fund of $1,000,000 is made annually. With the proposed budget for 2021, the operating transfer would need to be $1,700,000. Janke gave examples of what the new levy would generate for the RD-BR budget. The cities in Lake County would receive a portion of the new levy based on a formula. The new levy could begin in 2021. Chair Wollmann read the guidelines for public comments. Rollyn Hess understands the county needs more money for roads. He said he called into the hwy dept for several years about a needed road repair but only would get bump signs put up. He believes filling holes with gravel on paved roads is just creating more business for the glass repair businesses. Roger Clark told the board agriculture is in financial straits. He rents his land and has had to lower the rent. He told the board he thought 90 cents was a considerable amount. Jarret Lee told the board he has seen changes to the county gravel roads near him since Nelson became Hwy Supt. He brought a safety issue on CR47 to a county hwy employee and a load of gravel was delivered to that spot. He encouraged people to call and report road problems. David Pitts told the commission that taxes are currently about $25 a tillable acre. He told the board the economy is affected by COVID-19. Commissioner Slaughter said it's never a good time to raise taxes. He knows the need for better roads but questions if now is the time to do it. He asked Nelson about using red rock vs pea rock. Nelson told the board the red rock interlocks tighter. With 3/8-inch pea rock the costs are less and a cheaper oil can be used but he would want to use a heavier fog seal. Commissioner Johnson questioned Nelson if all the roads currently asphalted need to be asphalt. Nelson said if any roads dead end to gravel they should be gravel. He believes we should start eliminating some paved roads. He presented a fact sheet showing the surrounding counties and counts for paved and gravel roads.

He also provided information on asphalt and culverts used to date in 2020. Commissioner Johnson asked Nelson if he uses traffic counts. He currently is not doing any traffic counts. Johnson asked Nelson if the numbers in the 2021 budget were firm. Nelson said some trimming could be done. Chair Wollmann asked the board what levy they would support. Commissioner Johnson asked what will happen with the public safety building if this levy passes. Chair Wollmann asked board members if they would support a road levy. Commissioners Slaughter, Reinicke, and Johnson said no. Commissioner Hageman agreed with them.

Chair Wollmann asked about a Citizens Committee for roads & bridges be formed in Lake County. This will be a discussion item on the August 4th agenda.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Reinicke, second by Johnson, at 11 a.m. to adjourn. Motion carried. The next meeting will be held on July 21st at 9 a.m. in the commission room.

/s/Roberta Janke	/s/Kelli Wollmann
ROBERTA JANKE	KELLI WOLLMANN
Lake County Auditor	Chair, Lake County Commission

Published at the total approximate cost of $