

NIOBRARA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
NIOBRARA COUNTY, WYOMING
November 15, 2016

The Niobrara County Commissioners' meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. on November 15, 2016. Those in attendance were Chairman Richard A. Ladwig, Commissioners Greg B. Starck and Patrick H. Wade and County Clerk Becky L. Freeman. Also in attendance was County Commissioner elect John Midkiff and Justen and Jason Miller.

Road and Bridge-Lance Creek Bridge Replacement Project (STP-BROS-CN14063) – Jim Barnes, Resident Engineer for WYDOT, met with the Commissioners and Foreman Fred Thomas and updated them on the status of the aforementioned project. He discussed the county's share of costs for the project. The current rate that the county is paying is 11% of the project cost, but Jim said that percentage would be reduced to 8.23%, making the total amount the county would owe for this project approximately \$150,000.00. Jim also said that there wouldn't be a temporary road in use, but a detour would be established and Fred said that there was a road that could be used. This will be discussed at the pre-construction meeting.

Jim said that the apparent low bidder for the bridge replacement project was Reiman Corp. There is a target date for completion of October 2017. Jim said that a letter of concurrence would be required from the County stating that the Commissioners concur with the costs and County's participation in the payment for this project.

Letter of Concurrence- Pat moved to approve the letter of concurrence for the Lance Creek Bridge Replacement Project. Greg seconded, motion carried.

Justen and Jason Miller met with the Commissioners to discuss county roads. They asked the Commissioners if they had every considered putting road blading projects out for bids. The Commissioners didn't believe they had and Fred added that the budget determines a lot of what they can do as far as contracting blade work for roads. Jim Jordan joined the meeting.

They also inquired about watering down the roads and asked if road and bridge had a water truck. Fred said they had one and Justen said that he knows of several businesses that would give water to help alleviate the dust when road projects are in progress.

Jason then asked about money for the gravel and how the Commissioners determine what roads receive gravel. Richard said that funding for gravel comes from the County Road Fund and he explained about the five year project that was started in 2005. He also said that perceived need, mail and school bus routes, as well as input from individuals, all help determine which roads should be a priority.

The Millers then asked how to change a county road to a private road. Richard explained the process of petitions, public hearings etc. Pat asked if they had an idea of what road was being considered and Jason said Coffey Road. Jason said that half of the road is in poor condition. Fred said that there are two new auto gates on both sides of Middle Creek but there is no maintenance after Coffey's.

The group went back to discussing funding and Greg said that it might not be a bad idea to get together with other blade operators and present some projects and costs for consideration. Justen inquired about the availability of grant money and the Commissioners explained that budget cuts at the state level have caused the Consensus Block Funds to go by the wayside but the current 6th penny tax collection is nearing completion and it might be an opportunity to put road projects on the ballot and pose the question to the voters.

Fred discussed equipment repairs and said that he had to send the blade to Casper. He thought that CAT might have to pull the transmission but he would know more later. The Millers inquired whether or not the County owned the blade or if it was leased and how many hours were on it.