

## HIGHWAY COMMITTEE MINUTES

**DATE:** January 9, 2024  
**LOCATION:** Kendall County Highway Department  
**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Zach Bachmann, Dan Koukol, Brian DeBolt, Scott Gengler, and Ruben Rodriguez  
**STAFF PRESENT:** Michele Riley, John Burscheid, and Francis Klaas  
**ALSO PRESENT:**

The committee meeting convened at 3:30 P.M. with roll call of committee members. All present. Quorum established.

Motion DeBolt; second Gengler to approve the agenda as presented. Motion approved unanimously.

Motion Rodriguez; second Koukol to approve the Highway Committee minutes from December 14, 2023. Motion approved unanimously.

Motion DeBolt; second Gengler to recommend approval of a Resolution Providing for Spring Road Posting of Certain County Highways. Chairman Bachmann reported that the resolution would provide for seasonal posting of just 3 county highways; those being Plattville Road, Van Emmon Road, and Whitewillow Road. Klaas stated that these are the same 3 roads that have been posted for the past 5 years. DeBolt wondered about winters that linger later into spring. Klaas stated that the signs probably won't get posted until February, and could then be left in place until May – a maximum of 90 days – but as soon as the spring thaw is over, the signs would be removed. He also indicated that the Department works with farmers if they have to move grain. Gengler thought it was crazy that only 3 roads get posted, and wondered how the Department determined which roads would get posted. Klaas stated that the decision to post was linked to how thick the road base was on these specific roads, and whether they could stand up to truck traffic in the spring. Burscheid added that the County has built up most county highways over the years, and so they didn't need to be posted anymore. Upon further consideration, motion approved unanimously.

Motion Koukol; second Rodriguez to recommend approval of an Intergovernmental Agreement between Kendall County, the Village of Oswego, and Oswegoland Park District relating to the installation of traffic signals at Plainfield Road and Woolley Road, Section 23-00172-00-TL. Koukol expressed his concerns about vehicular and pedestrian traffic at this intersection, as well as traffic crashes. Bachmann reported that construction of this project should get started this summer and be completed by Thanksgiving of 2024. Klaas discussed some of the difficulties in getting traffic signal equipment in today's world, and the extremely long lead times needed. Rodriguez wondered about the strength of signal mast arms and various methods of inspection. Klaas stated that all of the county's signals are visually inspected twice per year to make sure there are no problems. DeBolt discussed some issues that Village of Oswego experienced with light poles due to fatigue caused by the wind. Klaas reported that all the lights along Orchard Road have harmonic dampeners; and traffic signal mast arms also have dampeners to resist

fatigue on the poles, arms, and welds caused by the wind. Burscheid stated that the equipment on the mast arms is very light, because it is constructed of plastic, and doesn't weigh very much.

Rodriguez also asked about sensors for the traffic signals, including detection, cameras, and pre-emption. Klaas described the improvements on this specific intersection, which will have radar detection, and will use push-button pedestrian detection. The committee then discussed all the various detection types and cameras at various county intersections. DeBolt asked if these signals had pre-emption for emergency vehicles. Klaas reported that some do and some don't. The Department is actively looking at installing this Opticom equipment county-wide so that there would be consistency across all intersections. Committee members felt this was a good idea. Gengler asked if the Plainfield-Woolley signal will have flashing yellow arrows on both Plainfield Road and Woolley Road. Klaas said he was pretty sure that there would be flashing yellow arrows in all quadrants because there is a dedicated left turn in each leg. Gengler stated that he really liked the flashing yellow arrows.

Rodriguez asked if fire departments make requests to have pre-emption installed on traffic signals. Klaas responded that they almost never do. He then went on to describe some of the ongoing issues with installation and maintenance of the pre-emption equipment, and how it has been very inconsistent over the years. Bristol-Kendall Fire Department has recently asked about pre-emption on some of the Eldamain Road intersections. After investigating, the Department has found that some intersections have pre-emption, and some don't. Klaas thought it was important to install on every intersection and was considering a separate contract to have pre-emption installed at all intersections under County control. The committee was generally supportive of this initiative. Burscheid discussed further the different types of vehicle detection used at different traffic signals and some of the problems experienced with maintaining these systems.

Motion to send the IGA to the County Board for consideration was approved unanimously.

Motion DeBolt; second Gengler to recommend approval of Bonnell Industries, Inc. Complete Snow Fighter Package "Standard Level" Tandem Axle Class in the amount of \$135,433.67 for 2024 truck and \$141,545.72 for 2025 truck. Klaas discussed the normal method for acquiring new dump trucks, wherein the Department competitively bids out the cab and chassis, and then uses Sourcewell account to acquire the dump body, hydraulics, augers, spinners, plows and related equipment to finish all the truck components. Sourcewell is used by the Department and most public agencies for this purpose because the dump body equipment is so complicated and specialized that it is very difficult to competitively bid it independently. He also discussed the extremely long lead times to acquire dump trucks post COVID. It now takes over 2 years to acquire a new dump truck, and he emphasized the importance of getting the truck orders in the queue. Rodriguez reported that the Sheriff's Department has similar problems acquiring new equipment. DeBolt asked what trucks used to cost when Klaas had first started with the County. Klaas stated that they were well under \$100,000, compared to the \$250,000 to \$275,000 that they cost now. DeBolt also asked what happens to the old trucks, when the Department is finished with them. Klaas reported that they are sold to other public agencies, traded in, or even put out to competitive bidding.

Rodriguez asked if Klaas already knew which old trucks the new trucks would replace. Klaas indicated that he did. He emphasized how it was important to have spare trucks because frequently trucks go down for repairs during snowstorms. The best old trucks are kept for

spares, while trucks that continue to have problems are sold. A couple of the committee members were interested in ride alongs in the plow trucks. Upon further consideration, the motion was approved unanimously.

Under the Chairman's Report, Bachmann reported that the Eldamain Road project has received another award, that being the Public Works Project of the Year in the category Transportation - \$25 million, but less than \$75 million.

In other business, DeBolt asked for an update of intersections on the west end of the County. Klaas reported that Burscheid had put together a report of the nearly 300 intersections on county highways. He further indicated that the Department was trying to put together a comprehensive report of possible safety improvements at county intersections. DeBolt discussed some of the various types of flashing lights, including AC-powered lights and solar-powered lights. Klaas reported that the AC-powered LED lights only cost about \$100, while the solar-powered blinker signs cost about \$1,700 each. The problem with installing AC-powered lights was getting ComEd to install the necessary equipment to power them. DeBolt then asked whether the Department was going to install any type of flashing lights at all the other intersections on Millington Road. Bachmann indicated that he had some conversations with Gengler in regard to a strategy going forward for safety improvements. It might involve some type of comprehensive data-driven strategy that would be more consistent in applying safety improvements. Klaas reported that the Department was continuing to gather data related to this concept. Bachmann wanted to be able to justify the actions that the Department takes in response to accidents or other safety concerns.

Koukol reported that he had received notice from a constituent that Orchard Road in Kendall County was in really great shape during the recent snowstorm, compared to other highways in Kendall and Kane Counties.

Gengler asked how the budgeting of the new dump trucks was going to work, if the delivery and expenditures were uncertain. Klaas wasn't sure either; but indicated that he had budgeted for a truck in 2024, and would continue to budget for one every year, even if delivery was uncertain. He stated that the Capital Expenditures line item had just been moved out of Highway Fund and over to Sales Tax Fund. Now that it has been moved, the Department has way more flexibility in the budget. Highway Fund simply did not have the money to continue to sustain Capital Expenditures for the Department.

Related to the earlier discussion about traffic studies, Bachmann suggested that Jeff Norris' father might be willing to assist with analyzing safety improvements at county intersections. Jeff is a member of the Connect Kendall County Commission. His father has worked in the highway business for many years, possibly with Washington State.

Motion DeBolt; second Rodriguez to forward Highway Department bills for the month of January in the amount of \$125,078.63 to the Finance Committee for approval. Gengler asked about the \$104,000 bill for the Galena-Kennedy intersection improvements. He wondered if that project was complete. Klaas indicated that everything had been completed except the final landscaping, which will not be finished until spring. So there would be some small final bills still to come on that project. Otherwise it was complete; and the County has already officially taken over maintenance of the new traffic signal. Burscheid added that the landscaping was not finished because the old utility poles had still not been removed. Motion approved unanimously.

Motion DeBolt; second Koukol to adjourn the meeting at 4:07 PM. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Francis C. Klaas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Francis C. Klaas, P.E.  
Kendall County Engineer

**Action Items**

1. Resolution Providing for Spring Road Posting of Certain County Highways
2. Intergovernmental Agreement between Kendall County, the Village of Oswego, and Oswegoland Park District relating to the installation of traffic signals at Plainfield Road and Woolley Road, Section 23-00172-00-TL
3. Approve Bonnell Industries, Inc. Complete Snow Fighter Package "Standard Level" Tandem Axle Class in the amount of \$135,433.67 for 2024 truck and \$141,545.72 for 2025 truck