

**Valley County Road Advisory Board  
Valley County Commissioners Chambers  
Meeting Minutes  
October 6, 2021**

**Members present - Steve Hull, Kirby Robertson, Paul Hefner, Gary Swain, Lorraine Munn, Jerry Robinson**

**Nonmembers included – Jeff McFadden, Commissioner Sherry Maupin, Mary Rosen**

Meeting was called to order by board chair Paul Hefner at 2:05 pm.

**Approval of meeting minutes:** Kirby Robertson made a motion to approve August 6, 2021, meeting minutes, Lorraine Munn 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion carried by unanimous approval.

**Current Projects/Maintenance Update:** Jeff McFadden gave following updates-

- West Lake Fork paving
- Filled potholes on 2 areas of Farm to Market Road
- Bear Valley blading
- East Lake Fork from Highway to the bridge is completed

Jeff reported that West Mountain Road is in bad shape and work is scheduled to begin on Monday. East Lake Fork grant will be available in 2 years. Jerry Robinson asked if in kind work was included. Jeff stated that the Lake Fork pit was not good material for road base. They are starting on construction design and cost estimates. There are also right of way issues. Paul asked if revenue was generated from back country road maintenance. Costs needed to be tracked to do an analysis of the costs. Lick Creek Road is in very bad condition. Jerry stated that the road was never properly crowned which is necessary for proper drainage. Suggested looking into wetland banking. Jeff gave an update on Abstein Road Bridge. Gary suggested a conversation around contracting. Kirby discussed the need for full analysis of the costs for operating. Makes more sense to contract out the work. Jeff explained the storage areas of different pieces of equipment and the board had questions about the efficiency of certain storage areas. Lorraine stated that road counters in the Yellow Pine area may be needed but from her personal experience there is a high amount of traffic for only one time maintenance. Commissioner Maupin suggested doing 3 passes and follow with a cost analysis. Jerry stated that all roads may not need 3 passes.

**Management of Road Department:** Gary Swain led discussion. Coastline assisted in obtaining idle time on 2 pieces of equipment. Results showed 17+% which equates to 1.5 hours out of 10-hour shift. Gary has concerns about productivity and read an anonymous letter from homeowner on Farm to Market Road. Believes that priorities need to be set and move forward. Feels that a levee is not justified at this time. Not enough of the citizens would be behind it. Must do projects which are needed. Get the roads safe and passable on the valley floor. Commissioner Maupin stated that funding will be there to do special projects. Need to set priorities for next 2 years and we need better data to make better decisions. Jeff stated that ITD shows an increase in traffic on highway 55 of 35% along with this increase comes an increase in accidents and deaths. Jeff did traffic counts in front of the fire station in Donnelly and showed 23,000 cars in 1 week. Kirby emphasized the need for better efficiency. Asked about the idling of equipment. Jeff stated that with the new tracking devices put on snow plows this information will be more readily available. Kirby stated that they need to create a plan going back to obtaining the data to do a cost analysis. Need to improve the efficiency of employees also. Commissioner Maupin and Jeff emphasized the additional tools are in place such as the Verizon trackers and new employees are coming

on board to assist in inventory and costs. Kirby stated that the messaging needs to be amped up with projects such as Farm to Market Road. Be proactive in getting the informational updates to homeowners such as Farm to Market since it is being used as a bypass route during the construction on highway 55. If maintenance is needed on a badly deteriorated road could messages or letters be sent to those homeowners on that road to make them aware of what the schedule is. Commissioner Maupin stated that long term planning is occurring. Jeff stated that they were awarded a grant for safety signs, but it does not include striping. Chip sealing is in the budget and will take place on Farm to Market next spring.

Break: 3:30 PM – Back 3:40 PM

**Facilities/ Equipment Efficiencies:** Paul opened the discussion on possible increases in efficiency within Road Department. Board discussed different sites used for storage and the costs, sites owned by Valley County and the utilization of the different sites which may make more sense. An internet speed test is needed at Lake Fork. Need to investigate the internet capacity and the Board can make a recommendation after investigation of broadband. Need to include backcountry employment costs and equipment expenses in analysis also. Paul stated that funding from the selling of the surplus equipment could be used for smaller equipment. Defense Logistics is a company which local governments could possibly use for these purchases. Steve volunteered to investigate this company and will report findings next meeting.

**Open/Review of Recommendations to BOC:** Paul has determined that there were possibly two recommendations which the Board made to go in front of Commissioners. He knows of the one about accepting new subdivisions. Commissioner Maupin stated that Jeff provides comments on developers plans. Kirby recalls at least four recommendations to bring to Commissioners to act upon. The recommendations need to be found in the notes and formalized to present to Commissioners. Gary would like to see a list of priorities. Steve stated that Cabarton Road, Ponderosa Loop and much of the South end of the County has roads in bad disrepair.

Gary made a motion to close the meeting, Kirby seconded. Meeting closed by unanimous decision at 4:32 PM.