

Starke County Highway Department

Monthly Report – January 7th , 2019

WINTER OPERATIONS

December was a good example of how weather affects a highway department's budget. The good weather has allowed us to haul in the majority of our summer paving material, perform asset inspections, and has saved us a great deal of wear on our trucks and equipment. The totals below does not include what we have saved in truck repairs, blade use, other costs associated with winter operations.

Starke County Highway Dept December Summary 2017-2018					
Diesel (Gal)					
Dec 2017	Dec 2018	Difference			SNOW EVENTS
12784.55	8434.89	4349.66		DEC. 17	14
\$1.97/Gal	\$2.18/Gal			DEC.18	4
\$25,185.56	\$18,388.06	\$6,797.50			
Gas (Gal)					
Dec 2017	Dec 2018	Difference			SNOWFALL
620.06	328.61	291.45		DEC. 17	14.8 in
\$1.98/Gal	\$1.77/Gal			DEC.18	0.99 in.
\$1,227.72	\$581.64	\$646.08			
Salt (Tons)					
Dec 2017	Dec 2018	Difference			PLOW HOURS
829	99.5	729.5		DEC. 17	1632
\$51.39/Ton	\$64.82/Ton			DEC.18	175
\$42,602.31	\$6,449.59	\$36,152.72			
Sand (Tons)					
Dec 2017	Dec 2018	Difference			
3286.00	398.00	2888.00			
\$6.00/Ton	\$6.00/Ton				
\$19,716.00	\$2,388.00	\$17,328.00			
Driver Overtime (Hrs)					
Dec 2017	Dec 2018	Difference			
584.5	26	558.5			
\$14,844.84	\$761.57	\$14,083.27			
Mechanic Overtime (Hrs)					
Dec 2017	Dec 2018	Difference			
135.5	1	134.5			
\$3,758.02	\$33.84	\$3,724.18			
Totals					
Dec 2017	Dec 2018	Difference			
\$107,334.45	\$28,602.70	\$78,731.75			

BUDGET

Our three operating funds are in all in good financial shape to begin the new year. This is despite the flooding costs, the transmission line repair costs, and a successfully completed road improvement schedule. We like to have at least \$300,000 in MVH, \$100,000 in LRS, and \$100,000 in Cumulative bridge funds to begin each new year. These amounts are important. They enable us to have operating funds before we get our first disbursements from the state for each fund. They also can be used as emergency funds throughout the year. This is especially true with cumulative bridge funds. If an emergency repair is required on one of our bridges, we have the ability to respond immediately. This has served us well on Bridge #27 on 700E over the Yellow River, numerous instances of guard rail damage, and bridge approach repairs.

	<u>1/1/2018</u>	<u>1/1/2019</u>
MVH (Motor Vehicle Highway)	\$384,467.60	\$428,335.13
LRS (Local, Road, and Street)	\$85,061.54	\$162,957.52
Cumulative Bridge	\$27,196.27	\$109,578.21

Because of smaller gas tax revenue estimates this year we had to cut our 2019 MVH budget by 9.8% this year. Our 2018 MVH budget was \$3,411,671.00. Our 2019 budget has been reduced to \$3,106,323.00, a reduction of \$305,348.00. We were able to handle the budget cut by readjusting some of our vehicle purchases and delaying some facility upgrades. There should be no reduction in the overall service our department provides to the citizens of Starke County. The good news is, despite the cut, we were able to actually increase our paving/road improvement budget this year by \$48,500.00. We are planning a road improvement schedule at least as robust as last years. If all goes well, we may be able to get about 5% more work done. One of the requirements of the gas tax increase of 2017 was that County's must show that 50% of MVH funds are being spent on road improvements and preservation, not routine maintenance. We were informed about two weeks ago that the MVH disbursement will be split into two funds, one for maintenance and one for preservation and improvements. This will probably require a significant increase in office work and documentation for all highway departments in the state. Thankfully, we anticipated this increase and it was one of the justifications for our new office position. This new person, along with our new auditor who has a great deal of experience in handling MVH funds should enable us to handle any reporting changes that may come our way.

ACCREDITATION AND DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES

One of the other duties of our new office employee is to be our APWA accreditation manager. Over the last few years we have been trying to codify all of our departments policies, practices and procedures but we were always limited in terms of available work hours. With the additional person we have now begun to "clean up" our existing policies and add others that were never officially

recorded. The APWA requires accredited organizations to have all written policies for all department activities. Each month we will be presenting the Board two or more of our policies and/or procedures. Although most of them are existing policies we would like to give the Commissioners the opportunity to review, comment, and amend.

This month we are presenting our roadside mowing policy for mowing the roadways adjacent to farm fields. This policy is a small section of our overall mowing procedures which we will present at a later date:

Straightaway Mowing – It is the policy of the Starke County Highway Department to mow 5 feet from the edge of the roadway. This allows ample room for motorists to safely pull to the side of the road if necessary and also creates better visibility to reduce collisions with deer and other animals. Additionally, maintaining a 5-foot right-of-way keeps plant roots from encroaching onto the road surface and causing damage.

Mowing at Corners and Intersections – It is the policy of the Starke County Highway Department to mow 15 feet in all directions at corners and intersections. At some corners and intersections additional visibility is required to ensure the safety of motorists. In those instances, additional mowing will be necessary.

Next are the PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) procedures for all Starke County Highway Department workers (see attached document). They outline the general requirements and responsibilities for the proper usage of PPE. These include but are not limited to head, hearing, eye/face, foot, and hand protection.

COMMUNITY CROSSINGS GRANT PROJECTS

As you may know we were awarded two projects during the 2018 Community Crossings grant awards. The first was an intersection improvement at 600S/CR210. There have been many accidents here and there are also sight distance and traffic flow problems. We will be changing the alignment from a three-way intersection to a t-intersection. This will solve the sight distance problem, discourage trucks from using this route so they will use the proper truck route (SR10), and improving the traffic flow on CR210. This project will be bid in February.

The second project is a hot mix overlay on 25N from CR600E to SR23. This project will also be bid in February. 25N was chosen because its high traffic count, fairly high accident rate, condition, and because it is a major county road connector for the East central part of the County. Many people use it to get to Knox going west and SR23 going east. It also connects to our recently replaced bridge on 25N.

Today INDOT opened the first round of the 2019 Community Crossings Grants. The applications are due by February 1st, 2019. Because we had already submitted multiple applications for the last call, we are ahead of the game and are moving the applications that were not chosen for that call into this one. We will complete our submittal this week. Here are the projects:

- 1) 400S from US421 to CR650W; HMA Overlay, Preventive Maintenance
- 2) CR50S from SR39 to the Knox city limits; HMA Overlay, Preventive Maintenance
- 3) CR250N from Range Road to US35; HMA Overlay, Preventive Maintenance
- 4) CR25N from US35 to County Bridge #38; HMA Overlay, Preventive Maintenance
- 5) CR1100E (Tecumseh Road) from US30 to Circle Ave; HMA Overlay, Preventive Maintenance
- 6) CR600E from US30 to the Laporte County Line; HMA Overlay, Preventive Maintenance

BRIDGES

REPLACEMENTS/REHABS

The replacement of Bridge 154 on 100E, north of 400N will begin next month.

BRIDGE MAINTENANCE

As a result of the last round of inspections conducted by United Consultants they provided us with a to-do list of bridge maintenance projects that we could complete before next summer. Thanks to the mild weather we have been able to complete most of the tasks already. Our cumulative bridge funds were used for these repairs. This task list is one of the reasons we chose United over the other bridge inspection consultants:

- 1) Drift accumulation that restricts or redirects flow causing scour at the substructures of bridges 58, 71, 125, 126, 137, and 146 **These obstructions have been removed**
- 2) Moderate undercutting present at bridges 38 and 86. Bridge 23 has voids present and a failed timber backwall. **Flowable backfill placed on all three bridges. The backwall on bridge 23 has also been temporarily fixed. More work will be conducted as weather allows.**
- 3) Bridges 25, 140, and 146 have damaged guardrails that should be replaced. **The guardrails at all three bridges have been repaired.**

CULVERTS

Another beneficiary of the December weather was our department's ability to complete some inventory and planning work normally not possible during December. Bob Lorenz, our Construction Inspection Supervisor, was able to inspect all 661 of our culverts and small structures less than 20 wide throughout the County. Now that this initial inspection is complete. The Superintendent and our two Foremen will re-inspect all the culverts rated "poor". The Superintendent will be able to use this information to plan our 2019 culvert replacement program. As of today, we will probably schedule 25 to 30 replacements.

TOWNSHIP	# OF CULVERTS	VERY GOOD or NEW	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	RATED POOR AND TO BE REPLACED
CALIFORNIA	134	15	52	40	27	14
CENTER	61	4	35	15	7	0
DAVIS	59	12	23	17	7	0
JACKSON	22	1	16	3	2	0
NORTH BEND	94	22	31	30	11	3
OREGON	63	9	32	13	9	0
RAILROAD	103	8	49	29	17	3
WASHINGTON	51	2	22	23	4	0
WAYNE	74	9	34	16	15	2
TOTALS	661	82	294	186	99	22
% OF TOTAL		12.41%	44.48%	28.14%	14.98%	3.33%

SIGNS

Now that he has completed the initial culvert inspections, Bob Lorenz will now transfer his efforts to signs. He will inspect all 6428 of our county road signs and from the data he collects we will create a 2019 worklist for our sign technician. We will also get a more accurate measure on the percentage of signs that now meet the high reflectivity requirements. One of the tasks of our new office worker is to maintain the sign inventory based on the work sheets the sign technicians completes each day.

ROADS

After the sign inventory and inspections are complete the Superintendent and Bob Lorenz will work on completing Starke County's 2019 PASER ratings. These ratings will help the Superintendent create the road improvement list for this year. Last year the department completed 57.93 miles of road improvements and preservation. This year we hope to complete from 15 to 25 miles of cold mix paving, 20 to 35 miles of chip sealing, 5 to 10 miles of crack sealing, and 5 to 15 miles of hot mix paving. This totals from 45 to 85 miles of road improvements.

VEHICLES

As we presented at last Commissioners meeting, the Starke and Marshall County Highway Departments have negotiated the purchase of Marshall County's used stone chipper and a used distributor truck by the Starke County Highway Department for \$60,000. While we normally prefer to purchase new equipment in this case, we recommend the purchase for three reasons.

First, we need a chip box and a distributor to successfully complete our chip seal program. Our current chip box is on its last legs and we do not have a sufficient distributor. Last year we borrowed the distributor and chip box they are now selling us.

Second, the 9.8% reduction in our budget made it necessary to cut back on the amount we could use for equipment purchases.

Third, we know this equipment. We have used them for a few years and we know they will serve us well for the next five to ten years.

Because this is an intergovernmental agreement, as long as the Commissioners from both counties agree to the purchase, the SBOA purchasing guidelines are satisfied.

TRAINING

We do not generally schedule training events for January, with the two exceptions being our weekly meeting tool talks and on the job training for our newer employees.

SAFETY

We did not have a reportable accident this month. We have not had a workman's comp claim since early last summer

ADA Grant

There is an ADA grant program available for local agencies. While most of the opportunities focus on municipalities and buildings, We believe this particular grant may help us enhance our retroreflect ivy sign program. One of the categories of disability that is covered by the ADA is limited vision. We believe there are some intersection and roadway enhancements that might qualify for this grant.

US 30 COALITION

The Superintendent attended the US30 Coalition meeting in Warsaw, IN on December 14, 2018. It was voted by the committee that because he has moved out of state and has not attended the last three committee meetings that Charlie Weaver be replaced by his proxy, Rik Ritzler, as Starke County's representative to the committee. Starke County now has to appoint a proxy to replace Mr. Ritzler.

Starke County will no longer handling the financial matters for the Committee. LaPorte and Porter Counties are still delinquent in paying their association dues. The committee president will be meeting with representatives from both counties to discuss the matter.

INDOT has made some funds available for development of several planned corridors in Indiana. The committee approved a resolution to ask the state for funds to begin the EIS (Environmental Impact Study) for the development of the US30 corridor.

The next Committee meeting will be in Indianapolis on February 13th, 2019 at 10:00AM EST. This will be followed by a legislative lunch meeting member of the State House and Senate. The committee members were encouraged to invite local economic development corporations, Chamber representatives, industry representatives, and other stakeholders to the luncheon.