



ONEIDA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Bill Lewis, Chairman – Ken Eliason – Brian Jeppsen

10 Court Street, Malad, Idaho 83252

Special Commission Meeting

22 NOVEMBER 2023 11:00AM – 12:30PM *RECORDING 21130*

IN ATTENDANCE

County Commissioners Bill Lewis, Brian Jeppsen, and Ken Eliason; Hess Pumice Mike Hess, Mike Hess Jr, Jared Brown, and Ryon Owens; Oneida County Road Department Lisa Baker and Diana Dredge, Road Engineer Steve Freiburger, Oneida County Clerk Lon Colton, and community members.

Meeting opened and Pledge of Allegiance led by Commissioner Bill Lewis

AGENDA ITEM 1

Diana Dredge requested a camera/weather station that would save Road & Bridge a lot of time driving out to the Stone area to check on things. She reached out to TJ Burbank (IT specialist) but has not heard back from him yet. The annual subscription is \$3,000.

Motion to accept a 1-year subscription for the camera from Frost Solutions from Commissioner Eliason is seconded by Commissioner Jeppsen. Unanimous vote and the motion carried.

AGENDA ITEM 2

To discuss a road agreement for the Wrights Creek Road with Hess Pumice, Oneida County Road Department, and Road Engineer Steve Freiburger.

Road Engineer Steve Freiburger began the discussion by recapping the proposed road agreement from this past summer and explained that instead of pumice on the road, the appropriate material is type 3A for gravel roads, as they need a binder to hold things together on the gravel roads and pumice does not work.

Mr.'s Mike Hess and Mike Hess Jr. each stated they had not received any information about the agreement proposal, and Mr. Freiburger outlined additional items in the proposal such as grading, abatement, signs, cattleguards, snow removal, etc. They said they had reached out to their legal counsel, who provided them with the LTAC manual and the FHWA gravel

road information. Lisa Baker, with Road and Bridge, stated she had emailed the analysis to Mr. Hess but they stated it was a "sieve analysis" instead.

The senior Mr. Hess stated "we just need to know the standard". Mr. Freiburger said the county has a standard, but it does "have some holes in it". He explained where the R&B funds come from and how funds from the state are divided out between 30,000 miles of roads within Idaho, of which 565.59 miles are in Oneida County. Mr. Freiburger also explained the Functional Classification of Roads and asked Mr. Hess about the road to the mine and how much traffic on the road is Hess Pumice traffic.

Mr. Hess Sr. shared that they average 11 round-trip loads per day, or 65 movements per week with semi-truck trailers/25-ton loads. This equates to 68% of the traffic on that road. The other 32% is from contractors, trucks hauling trailers, etc.

Mr. Freiburger said that we need traffic counts but this is the wrong time of the year. When questioned by Mr. Hess Sr. about how to get an accurate count based on the usage changes throughout the year, it was clarified that they look at the changes over a year's time. He said that the goal of a gravel road is to design it so that it only needs to be graded (or bladed) one time per year. Other counties Mr. Freiburger has worked with have made agreements with businesses that have high traffic on those roads, where the county grades the road 1 time and the business is responsible for gravel loss and mag and any additional grading throughout the year. Mr. Hess Sr. said they would be happy to maintain the road once it is up to standard.

There was discussion around how much mag/gravel is lost on a gravel road (250 tons of gravel with 100 cars per day – lots of dust) and the thresholds considered for the cost of mag vs pavement (number of cars daily, needing to grade the road more than twice a year). Mr. Hess Sr. stated that for years they have done the best they can to maintain the road without assistance from the county because it is their livelihood and the livelihood of their employees. The mining road is now a single-lane road and there are places that are trouble spots. They have used pumice to fill in some of the pot holes because it "floats". The county does not want pumice on the road and Mr. Hess Sr. stated if the county would bring aggregate, Hess will put it down. The road would require a Type 3 Aggregate.

Mr. Freiburger suggested Hess not do work on the road unless they have a permit because it is a county road and the county is liable. Mr. Hess Sr. is willing to work with the county. This may entail a public works contracting license, bond, and a timeline of how/when the road would be fixed/maintained. Mr. Hess Sr. added that DEQ would be involved because of the stream next to the road. Jared Brown with Hess Pumice stated that Allen's corner on Wrights Creek, past Dave Isaacson's place, is shady and does not dry out. It does get solid when frozen.

Mr. Freiburger also stressed that the county wants to avoid spot fixing. His recommendation would be to work from one end of the 2.5-mile stretch to the other, or from a central point and work outwards. Mr. Brown said that if the county maintained the road each time it storms (regular maintenance), it would make the road easy to take care of. It is only 2.5

miles from the pumice mine to the cattleguard. Lisa Baker said that she heard a berm had to be left when plowing and Mr. Hess clarified that it needed to be bladed differently so that the moisture/snow collected different and that this was being monitored by DEQ, the water board, etc.

Lisa Baker with R&B is concerned that there is no winter maintenance on other roads in the county that have homes on them and the budget is stretched already without adding the 2.5 miles to the mine.

Mr. Hess Sr. stated that he wants to work with the county and asked the county to take into consideration the tremendous benefit Hess Pumice brings to the community in revenue, jobs, income, taxes, etc. He is willing to help maintain the road to protect his business and his employee's jobs.

A tentative agreement, suggested by Mr. Freiburger, might include:

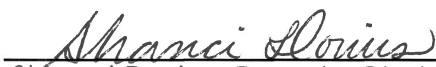
- Hess giving Mr. Freiburger information about the trouble spots
- Learning the type of material on the road now (bedrock, sand, soil, clay)
- Hess is willing to help with some of the earthwork, etc. to get the road where it needs to be once the road is brought to standard
- Bill Lewis suggested this be a gradual thing due to funding
- Mr. Freiburger and Diana Dredge with R&B will come up with a schedule for road improvement over time and county will "kick in" as each section gets done.
- Go through the site with Hess to see if any specific areas need something different done.

Commissioner Bill Lewis proposed plowing or maintaining the road from one mine to the other for a period to see how it goes. Mr. Freiburger is going to get more details, view the road and the areas of main concern, and determine what is needed. Commissioners agree to discuss further after Steve Freiburger gathers more information.

*** Meeting adjourned just before 12:30pm***



Bill Lewis, Chairman

 11-27-2023

Shanci Dorius, Deputy Clerk