

**Greenvale Township  
Special Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, June 6, 2023**

**Present:** Supervisors Tony Rowan, Dave Roehl, and Chairman Charles Anderson; and Clerk Jane Dilley

**Others Present:** Bernard Budin, Erv Ulrich, Jack Gust, Kraig Niebuhr, Sarah & Quincy Moore, Chuck Tennessen, Jerry Gehler, Rachel Eckelman, Richard & Joyce Moore, Donita Anderson, Victor Volkert, Terry Mulligan, Boyd Lundquist, Sara Berry, Bruce Paulson, Jerry Janda, Gregory Langer, Scott Norkunas, Mike McNamara, John Kuyper, Christina Nelsen, Tom & Lori Robey, Ben Street, Carolyn Fott

**Opening of the Meeting:**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited at 7:00pm. Anderson reminded the audience to silence their electronic devices. This is a public meeting, not a public hearing.

The purpose of the meeting is to hear updates from Dakota County staff on the construction of County Roads 96 (320<sup>th</sup> St W), 86 (280<sup>th</sup> St W), 23 (Foliage Ave) and for staff to get input and answer questions from the public.

No township business will be conducted tonight.

**Approve Agenda:** Roehl moved to approve the agenda. Anderson seconded.  
Motion carried 3 – 0.

Mike Slavik, Dakota County Commissioner introduced the staff from Dakota County:

Erin Larabee, Dakota County Transportation Director and County Engineer;

Todd Howard, Dakota County Assistant Engineer; and

Georg Fischer Jr., Dakota County Physical Development Administration.

Todd Howard talked about County Road 86 where significant work has been completed, but work stopped two weeks ago. County Road 23 (Cedar Ave to longtime residents) has a short stretch going east and west between Foliage Ave and Galaxie Ave. The gas company had a spotter standing by during excavation. When discolored soil was discovered around the gas line, the gas office in Omaha said shut down the road while the gas company does its work. The gas line was not hit, but there had apparently been leakage. Road crews were able to continue working but the road was completely closed off for a period of time. Xcel has been moving poles.

For the longer term with County Road 86 there are still issues with the railroad company. Until those are worked out, nothing can be done in the area of the trestle in Castle Rock. There are some bad soils in the roadbed that will have to be removed and replaced, but that can take place while the bypass bridge is built. During this phase, County Road 86 will be completely closed from Hwy 3 to the railroad bridge.

Lorence Berry Farm expressed concern about how customers would get to their location with strawberry season upon us. Customers are able to navigate the east/west stretch of County Road 23 or can approach from the south. County Road 86 is not open between Galaxie Ave and Garrett Ave at this time.

Chairman Anderson said we have two roads that are really getting beat up by traffic coming from the west on 86. The road is closed at Garrett Ave and commuters, trucks etc are taking Garrett Ave to 290<sup>th</sup> St W (leading to County Road 23). Traffic seems undeterred by the road closed signs and cars are going too fast. One farmer using Garrett got passed in the ditch.

In some situations the solution is to pound the road closed signs into the ground, but that does not work with farming equipment which may take up most of the road. Todd Howard said the best solution is for the County to work as quickly as possible and get the road opened back up.

Anderson asked if we could get some help from the County for Garrett Ave and 290<sup>th</sup> St W. Todd Howard said he would be down in the morning to take a look at those two roads. He thought the County had applied chloride but Anderson said no chloride has been applied.



Chris Henry lives on Garrett Ave and commented that when 86 was closed east of Garrett, they got traffic that sounded like a NASCAR dirt track. Residents coming out of their driveways narrowly avoid collisions. Drivers are running the stop sign at Garrett and 290<sup>th</sup>. The residents appreciate the efforts of the Township, the County and the Sheriff's Deputies. She has talked to the patrol deputy and has seen tickets being issued. She is wondering if speed limit signs can be added and if someone from the County can check daily that the road closed signs are still intact.

Howard responded speed limit is 55mph so speed limit signage isn't the solution. He will commit to having the road closed signs checked morning and later in the day. It is possible that when Cedar Ave opened up the road closed signs on Garrett Ave may be removed by the County.

Henry further remarked residents can't even sit outside their homes because of the dust kicked up on Garrett Ave. Howard said that would be addressed in the morning. Even though the speed limit may be 55mph, drivers should take into account road conditions. Howard said chloride will cut down the dust, but when the road surface hardens, speeds will likely increase.

Quincy Moore says he mows the ditch and Garrett Ave is being pounded out, it's moved out 8 – 12 inches. Wants some help from the County to bring it back. Howard said he'd look at the road tomorrow. Until the 86 is reopened, they're just doing triage.

An inquiry was made about the weight limit on Garrett Ave. Howard says as it is under the township's jurisdiction. Anderson said it's a 9 ton road. The only time there are weight restrictions is in the spring when it drops to 5 tons because of the thaw.

Another inquiry was made if we could get Google Maps to note closed roads. Howard's experience is it takes them too long to be of much help, particularly when there are closings of various segments of the same road, but he will have someone work on that.

County Road 96 should have been completed last year. Things were going well until the culverts didn't arrive. The culvert shortage is still going on with other projects. The final lift couldn't be put on last year. It has been done now, and the road closed signs should be coming down soon. County Road 96 seems like it might become a speed track. Anderson has talked to the Sheriff about increasing patrols on 96.

Slavik said he had lunch with Sheriff Leko last week who said they've issued more tickets in Greenvale Township than any other township in the last two months. The Sheriff's Office thought they were seeing an increase in DWIs but it mostly turned out to be people who were all confused and trying to figure out how they were going to get to their destination.

Slavik said Erin Larabee would be addressing County Road 90 but she has a short presentation first. Larabee shared with the audience what the next five years of construction might look like. In the 2023 – 2027 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), there were plans to address County Road 86 from County Road 23 west to the frontage road next year. Due to a lot of staffing changes, the County has put that on hold. This was the only project in Greenvale Township in the 2023 - 2027 CIP. There are some County roads in Waterford Township that are scheduled to be turned back to the township in the next couple of years.

Larabee shared a slide that listed the age of each of the County Roads. This is a map another snippet of the 2040 transportation plan where they look out 20 years plus at the road system. They look at development, traffic growth, look at the overall roadway network, where improvements needed to be made, where additional capacity is needed. That helps the County form their five year plan and for working with cities and townships.

County Road 90 has a low priority from the County's standpoint for a turnback to the Township. The road carries about 200 cars a day, and although it is an east/west route, more traffic occurs on County Roads 96 and 86 because they're a straight shot. The County is looking at 10 – 20 years out before it is a priority for turnback.

The County is open to discussions about an earlier turnback if the Township wants. Larabee said there are a few options. The first is the County would reconstruct the



road by paving it, adding turn lanes. It would be a county project at county cost, then when that construction is completed, the County would turn it over to the township, who would own and maintain it.

The second option is that it would remain gravel as it is today and the County would offer a lump sum payment to the township so Greenvale can maintain it well into the future with that payment.

There's a third option, some type of hybrid option, not 100% sure what that might look like here. The County is hearing there are issues, the County could do spot improvements, maybe around the curves and do some ditch improvements.

Slavik added that when the County did the 2040 Transportation Plan back in 2019, at that point, County Road 90 was actually an early turn back candidate, and the feedback from the Town Board at the time was, we don't want to have a turn it 90back at all. That's why the turnback got pushed to far off into the future.

Anderson said there have been some bad accidents on the first curve at Holyoke Ave and the sloping of the curve is a problem. There have been improvements but drivers on the outer lane are still straddling a crown so they tend to drive down the middle. Anderson would actually like to see the curve removed so that when you approach Holyoke, it's a stop sign from both the north and the south. Howard mentioned there is a down side to grading a high slope on the outside as that encourages drivers to treat the road as a raceway. Howard said when the County redid 78 east of Hwy 3 in Castle Rock Township they addressed side roads that connected to County Road at an angle (not 90 degrees). The County altered all those approaches so they are 90 degrees. It's difficult to provide a consistent grade when there's a curve followed by a flat area and traffic is also entering at the same time. To remove the curves on County Road 90 it appears from GIS there would be some right of way acquisitions needed which add more expense to the project.

Rowan suggested speed limit signs for the curves. Howard said they had advisory signs that could be put up. He also said there are reflective chevrons along the edge of the road to help with visibility at night. Howard said the County does keep track of crashes and collisions. There's been one serious crash reported there.

Jerry Gehler said there is vegetation that has grown up around the Holyoke curves which impedes visibility, hoping the County can do something to address that. Anderson said the brush is in the triangle – he will point it out tomorrow.

Terry Mulligan lives on Hwy 19 and wondered if there was anything in the works adding an interchange at County Road 86 and I-35. Larabee said she is not aware of any projects involving new interchanges with I-35.

Jack Gust lives on County Road 90 and commented on the quality of the road as it is graded infrequently. We are in a rich County so he's surprised at the potholes and washboards on a County Road. He's one of the people who started the petition. He's noted some improvements but asked about paving. Larabee said they assess paving needs based on the amount of traffic which is about 200 cars a day. Projections into 2040 indicate around 400 cars per day.

Some audience comments could not be deciphered – apologies from the author – but appeared to question the issue of speed limits. Slavik answered the State of Minnesota dictates speed limits on all roads. We can't arbitrarily decide on a speed limit. Even if there have been fatalities on that road. The State of Minnesota would have to do a speed study. One was requested on a stretch of road in hopes of a lower speed limit and the state ended up increasing it. The density of the population on Garrett Ave doesn't meet the standard of a residential road (where speed limits are 35 mph). Howard said this is generally found in "urbanized areas."

An audience member asked if the County has a traffic count for the west end of County Road 86. The concern is there is barely any shoulder on 86 on the west end, the traffic volume is up and bicyclists are using the road – which is very hilly in spots. Larabee said this is the project that the County has pushed back a few years. Larabee offered to check on the traffic volume. There is also a concern about field driveways.

The resident asked how they would know when a project is ready to be started. Slavik responded when construction projects are coming up there are typically public engagement open houses and mailings to property owners in the area and County staff typically reaches out to the affected townships. Larabee said the County's upcoming projects are on the website.



Discussion took place about paving County Road 90. Anderson said as the County did with County Road 96, all the material in the roadbed is removed and replaced. The County does not pave over the top of a gravel road, as a different base is required. To pave 90 would be very expensive.

Georg Fischer added to the conversation that the County does its plans in five year rolling increments. These plans often change due to growth, development and traffic patterns. Because something is currently listed as happening 10 years from now doesn't mean it cannot change.

An audience member asked if one of the criteria is population density per mile. Will a stretch of road with 90 residents get higher priority than a similar stretch of road with 20 residents. Larabee responded that per capita itself is not a part of the criteria, although population will drive traffic patterns which are part of the factors considered when prioritizing projects.

A resident asked if the Power Point presentation Larabee is using could be made available to residents. Larabee will get a copy to the Clerk.

Rowan asked if there was a per mile cost the County would quote that would cover one mile of gravel road, reclaimed and redone as a paved road. If paving is to be done, the County would do it, but Howard cautioned townships about maintaining paved roads – the cost of maintenance is at least double what it is for gravel roads. After 20 – 30 years of wear and tear, the costs to redo a paved road are outside the reach of most townships.

An audience member asked about the criteria used in determining if a road should be a county road or a township road. Larabee said county roads are intended to be straight thoroughfares reaching across a significant part of the county – east/west or north/south. In this area of the county, County Roads 78, 86 and 96 meet this criteria. County Road 90 covers a much smaller territory and is not a major thoroughfare with low traffic volumes. That's why County Road 90 is a candidate to be turned back to the township.

Next steps on County Road 90? Slavik said continue discussions – do we want to change the timeline? What kind of improvements? Actually price out the options. The township would need to talk with the County about escalating the options. The County isn't vested in one option or the other. A resident said she felt the west end

of 86 should be a much higher priority than 90 with increased traffic, farm equipment and bicyclists. Slavik said the two projects aren't mutually exclusive. Part of the reason for delaying the west side of 86, besides staffing issues, is the feedback they are getting from the area about the nonstop yearly road closures and could we get a break for a year or two. The five year CIP establishes the funding for projects. A road project generally takes three years – the first year is design, the second year is right of way acquisitions and the third year is construction. Slavik cleared up the idea that County Road 86 is going to be turned back. It is going to stay a County Road.

Larabee moved onto the Northwest Northfield Highway Corridor Study Report done in 2009. Involved parties are Dakota County, Rice County and the City of Northfield. The report portrays a couple of options that extend County Road 23 south of County Road 96 (320<sup>th</sup> St W) to connect with Hwy 19. The timing and outcome will be determined by studies and decisions made by the City of Northfield and Rice County and will be paying a large chunk of the costs either from the city or the developer. The project is not in Dakota County's 5 year plan. As development becomes more imminent then Dakota County will get more involved. Development is the driving factor.

Rowan asked why (south) Garrett Ave going off of County Road 96 wouldn't be considered as a route to connect County Road 23 to Hwy 19. Larabee said it wouldn't be consistent with keeping the route primarily north/south. Slavik said the extension of County Road 23 to Hwy 19 doesn't happen until there is a plan in place to address what happens south of 19. There are a lot of things that happen before any construction would begin.

Wrapping up, Slavik said pay attention to the Cedar Ave project but nothing is changing soon. The City of Northfield shared with us at the Northfield Advisory Group that they're intending by late fall, early winter, that they will have the Environmental Assessment with Xcel Energy done, and that will be the catalyst for them to determine how they would market for developers on that.



Slavik thanked Greenvale Township for hosting this meeting and a thank you to all the audience members being here and being engaged, because Greenvale Township is definitely one of the townships where people show up. Slavik says he gets a lot of emails and phone calls but also appreciates the support and the feedback given to him over the years.


He also thanked the staff with the county who are came to the meeting who gave up an evening away from their families for this as well.

Chairman Anderson made a motion to adjourn meeting. Roehl seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Submitted:

  
Jane Dilley  
Town Clerk

Approved:

  
Charles Anderson, Chairman  
Board of Supervisors