

MINUTES
ERIE COUNTY BRIDGE AND ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE ADVISORY BOARD (BRIM)
MEETING No. 1 - October 21, 2014 – 8:30am

PRESENT

Patrick B. Burke
Wayne A. Clark
Mary S. Cooke
Dennis M. Dains
Matthew D. English
Gary A. Eppolito
Michael C. Kasprzyk
Kenneth W. Kostowniak
Hal Morse
William E. Swanson
Joseph C. Lorigo
Kristen Walder-County Attorney Representative

ABSENT

Betty Jean Grant
County Executive/Representative

MEDIA

Channel 7
WBFO

I MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS

Members introduced themselves

II ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Recommended that it be done after establishment of goals and mission statement

III ESTABLISHMENT OF MISSION STATEMENT /GOALS/GENERAL DISCUSSION

Concerns and issues were stated by members including:

Legislator Burke: seeks to establish a functioning system, develop a routing system and turn some road over to towns.

Mr. Kasprzyk: stated the system is not functioning and seeks to find a way to work together to get a system we are proud of.

Legislator Lorigo: stated we should prioritize issues. Asked what the relationship is with Erie County DPW and all agree and the relations are good and supportive.

Mr. Swanson: Is concerned about the rating/ranking system of road conditions.

Mr. English: Questions why Towns aren't involved in ranking since the Town Superintendent of Highways know the roads very well.

Ms. Cooke: stated Grand Island meets with the County and Legislator to discuss road. People differ in agreeing on which roads should be done and have different priorities. The Towns, County, State and NYS Thruway should use the same rating system.

Mr. Lorigo: Town Superintendent of Highways could meet with the Highway Superintendent Association and refer comments to BRIM. All should work together and be treated equally to improve infrastructure.

Mr. Kasprzyk: concerned about timing of county work. Work seems to begin late in the season and it would be a better use of funds if projects are done right away.

Mr. Swanson: would like to have a copy of ratings shared.

Discussion:

Consensus is that roads and bridges need repairs, maintenance or replacement but between State, County, Towns, and villages there is no commonality in determining ratings for physical conditions or priority for capital improvements. There is a lack of communication between levels of government and the terminology/ranking/ratings of problems needs to be addressed.

The Board would like to get involved early in the County's capital improvement planning process, and have input for projects.

It is felt that many road projects commence late in the construction season and this may add to costs because contractors are already committed and cost of the work would be at a premium. John Mills indicated that the late start is not always a result of a funding issue as monies for the work were in place April of this year.

Discussion over the County's wish to turn roadways over to the towns rose considerations that included: condition at the time of turnover, how to pay for maintenance with a 2% property tax cap in place. A coordinated approach is needed.

Crisis management practices should be addressed and communications between local municipalities and the county improved.

Roadway conditions are keys to being a successful tourism destination and securing and maintaining employers in the region. They are basic drivers of an economy.

After discussions Mr. Lorigo suggested the following Mission Statement for BRIM and it was agreed on by all in attendance:

"To establish a better understanding of county road priorities in order to work together on improving infrastructure with a more comprehensive and proactive approach, including better communication, planning, prioritization, cooperation, and execution."

IV ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Chair: Hal Morse

Vice Chair: Kenneth W. Kostowniak

V ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHEDULE

Agreed that next meeting will be Tuesday, December 9 at 8:30am in the Legislative Caucus Room , Old County Hall – 4th Floor, 92 Franklin Street, Buffalo NY.

VI ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 9:25 AM.