

Engineer warns of bad bump on Route 2

BY MARIAN MCMAHON
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LAKE COUNTY - Commissioner Judy Moran asked County Engineer Jim Gills about the bump on Route 2 at the March 12 commissioners meeting.

Gills said the bump, which was in the center lane and partway in the lane by the safety wall just east of Route 44 in the westbound lanes, was a good size. There are also bumps in the eastbound lanes, but not as bad. "We, and ODOT, are working to figure out what it's all about," Gills said. "We do need some of this warm weather to make sure that it's not just frost to see how far it drops. But, it's pretty serious."

A circle of paint was drawn around it and signs

have been put up. An electric sign will also be added.

He said it could be especially dangerous for a motorcyclist.

While motorists in general are aware of it and driving around it, they decided to close the lanes there for St. Patrick's Day.

Gills called the bump unusual, stating he had never seen anything like it. He does not believe it is just caused by the weather, but soil testing needs to be done. Most likely ODOT would need to make the repairs because of the amount of work it will take to fix it. Since it is serious, it will need to be repaired as soon as possible, Gills said.

RESOLUTIONS PASSED: ENGINEERS

DEPARTMENT

• Awarding a bid contract to Signal Service Company in the amount of \$134,041.61 for the Chapel and Hubbard Signal Upgrades Project in Madison Township.

The whole system for the intersection will be redone and updated.

UTILITIES DEPARTMENT

• Approving plans, specifications and estimates of cost in the amount of \$402,000 for Eaglewood Waterline Replacement Project No. 361-W and advertising for bids for same with a bid opening date of April 1.

JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

• Appointing Ronald Jakic and Sally Delong to the Lake County Workforce Investment Board Youth Council to complete unexpired terms.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

• Increasing appropriations for various general and non-general fund accounts.

• Transferring cash and appropriations within various general and non-general fund accounts.

REPORTS DEPARTMENTAL UTILITIES

typically have about 15.5 million gallons to process daily. However, with the snow melting because of the warmer weather, that figure jumped to 32 million gallons. "So normally we'd have about 15.5 million gallons going through there, which should be all wastewater," said Lake County Board of Commissioners President Dan Troy. "And because of the thaw, just snow melting, we're getting an infiltration of about 17 million gallons from snow melt into our sanitary system."

That was confirmed. Troy said the inflow and infiltration (I&I) of storm water into the system would be addressed by a study being done.

NEW BUSINESS

• Troy presented a report on the County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO) Tax and Finance Committee meeting March 10.

One of the items the committee will recommend to the whole is a fund specifically to benefit local airports. "Presently, the fuel that is sold at regional airports like the one we have in Willoughby is not subject to the voter fuel tax," Troy said. "And it's estimated that the sales tax proceeds to the state from the sale of

that aviation fuel generates about \$16 million a year, of which—through ODOT—about \$1 million gets appropriated for local airport assistance.

"So this proposal is to take away the sales tax to create a—not put them in the fuel tax which would be 28 cents a gallon in Ohio—but to an 18-cent excise tax per gallon, but then that money would go into a dedicated fund to be available for access by local airports."

The fund could be used, for example, to help small airports come up with the local match of 10 percent needed for FAA grants.

Another proposal the committee is supporting is a change in the Ohio Public Works Commission Law of the State Capital Improvements Program (SCP) funds must go into a loan fund which the committee believes has excessive balances. For that reason the committee believes it should be lowered to just 10 percent of the SCP funds. The additional funds would be used directly for projects.

"One of the big concerns from CCAO over the years has been the funding of independent defense," Troy said. "We are required to pay for independent defense through our Public Defenders Office."

The state had, at one time paid 50 percent and the county's paid 50 percent. Some people feel since it is a state mandate the state should pay the full cost.

Troy said at one point the state only paid 20-some percent and currently it was 30-some percent. CCAO is asking for an additional \$12 million per year to the budget to bring the state to 50 percent.

He said it is believed the tax proposals from the governor will be quite different when the budget is approved.

"It seems everything is built around driving down state income tax rates, which will basically give back \$4 billion with those cuts to state income tax," Troy said. "The problem is it's collecting most of it from other areas."

Concerns are for an increase in the CAT tax and the state taking the reimbursement funds for personal property tax and utility tax for its general fund. The Board of Developmental Disabilities/Deepwood could lose up to \$500,000 for its programs.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The commissioners adjourned to executive session to discuss personnel dismissal and compensation and legal pending litigation.

MEETINGS

• The Lake County Board of Commissioners meets at 10 a.m. most Thursdays, with some meetings at 2 p.m. on Tuesdays, in the Commissioners' Chambers of the Lake County Administration Building, 105 Main St., Painesville. All meetings are open to the public. Requests to address the government board may be made at any board meeting or presented to the Commissioners' Office by calling Amy Elszasz at (440) 350-2753.

There was a meeting