Authority, Duties, & Responsibilities of County Highway Engineer-Managers

2016 County Engineers Workshop

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Engineer – Manager
Marquette County Road Commission
• Authority, duties, and responsibilities of County Highway Engineer-Managers

• Keeping the roles of the Board and Engineer-Manager separate.

• Effectively interacting with the public, the road commission board, county board and the internal operations of the Road Commission.
Engineer – Manager

Great Title!
So What in the Hell Is Your Job!
The Engineer - Manager’s Job Can Be Described As A Simple Mathematic Function
Many mathematical functions are combinations of several functions. Therefore, an Engineer-Manager (EM) can be described as follows:

At any time $t$, the Engineer-Manager’s day $EM(t)$ is the sum of the amount of time spent engineering $E(t)$ and the amount of time spent managing other areas of the Road Commission $M(t)$. In other words,

$$EM(t) = E(t) + M(t)$$

Where $t$ is in hours/day $8 \leq t \leq 24$.
A Pictorial Representation of the Equation

\[ E(t) + M(t) = EM(t) \]

Engineer + Manager = Superhuman
A Pictorial Representation of the Equation

\[ E(t) + M(t) = EM(t) \]

Engineer + Manager = Magician
Engineer – Manager’s

Authority

Duties

Responsibilities
We Can Find Answers In Michigan’s County Road Law
PUBLIC HIGHWAYS AND PRIVATE ROADS (EXCERPT)

MCL 224.9 (3) … The board shall appoint a competent superintendent, skilled in road building, who may be an engineer and who shall supervise road building operations in the county under the direction of the board. …
MCL 224.10 (2) The board of county road commissioners shall employ a competent county highway engineer who shall make surveys ordered by the board, prepare plans and specifications for roads, bridges, and culverts, and exercise general supervision over construction to insure that the plans and specifications are strictly followed. Two or more adjoining counties may employ the same engineer, if the work in 1 or more of the counties is not enough to employ the whole time of the engineer. The engineer employed by the board shall be known as the county highway engineer.
The construction, improvement, and maintenance of roads, bridges, and culverts, shall be in accordance with plans and specifications furnished or approved by the county highway engineer, who shall have supervision of the construction....
"RESOLVED, by the Board of County Road Commissioners of Marquette County, Michigan that the Engineer-Manager is designated as the Chief Administrative Officer.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Chief Administrative Officer is hereby authorized to transfer up to 5%, but not to exceed $15,000, on certain line items in the Program Budget without prior approval within the Board’s General Appropriation Act for normal 2016 Road Commission operations, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Chief Administrative Officer shall report the line item transfer to the said Board for approval at the next regular meeting of said Board following the transfer."
E(t) – Engineering Functions

• Professionally responsible for the planning and execution of construction and reconstruction programs.

• Responsible for countywide road and bridge maintenance programs involving road commission work force and private contractors

• Meets with federal, state & local agencies, businesses, constituents, utilities and consultants to discuss and solve road and bridge program problems and issues.

• Under the general direction of the Board
M(t) – Management Functions

• Chief-Executive Officer (CEO)
• Responsible for planning, developing & executing programs and policies to achieve organizational goals within budgetary, workforce & time allowances.
• Responsible for planning, developing & operating administrative and fiscal programs and policies.
• Meets with federal, state & local agencies, businesses, constituents, utilities and consultants to discuss and solve administrative and organizational problems and issues.
• Under the general direction of the Board
Knowledge

Professional Engineer (Road and Bridge Design & Construction)
Road and Bridge Maintenance
Building Maintenance
Equipment & Equipment Maintenance
Accounting/Financing
Budgeting
Local, State and Federal laws (Act 51, Opening Meetings Act, FOIA, Labor, Liability)
Public Relations
People Management
Human Resource
Marketing
Skills

Public Relation
Labor Relations
Public speaking
Negotiating
Listening
People Skills
Management
Risk Management
Supportive
Marketing
Leadership
Politician
Counselor
Coach
Referee
Disciplinarian
Engineer Manager’s Goal:
Strive to have positive interact with constituents, the business community, employees, local, state and federal government officials, and the media.
I could do my job if it wasn’t for all the interruptions.

My job is the interruptions!
Engineering Standards Verse Political Consideration
The role and responsibility of the Engineer and the Board are very different.
Engineer’s Responsibility: Making Recommendations to the Board Which Take Into Consideration the Following:

1. **MCRC Mission Statement** - To provide a safe and efficient system of county roads and bridges with responsive and dependable customer service by continually improving both the system and the service.
2. Application of Professional Engineering Standards

- Using the most current, economical, and safety conscious options available.

- Provide design services which protect the health, convenience, and welfare (safety) of the public, without discriminating or applying different standards based on the users or potential users of a roadway.

- Recommendations contrary to these ideals compromises professional engineering standards.
3. **Duty to Explain Why The Criteria That Was Used Is Important.**
The Board should expect and require their Engineer to present his “professional” recommendation, even if it contradicts the popular opinion.
Board’s Political Responsibility

- Review /Consideration of Professional Engineer’s Recommendation
- Apply The Mission Statement
- Take Public Comment and Weigh It Against the Professional Engineer’s Recommendation
- The Board’s Privileges Include the Ability to Direct the Engineer to Consider Alternative Design Options, or Set Design Parameters that the Engineer Must Meet. (i.e. cost, right of way width, clearing, design speed, etc.)
MARQUETTE COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION
Proposed Triple A Road / County Road 510
Marquette County, Michigan

476 +00 TO CR 550
- USE EXISTING CR 510 ALIGNMENT
- CLEAR 10' ON EACH SIDE OF EXISTING ROAD
Triple A
West Of Salmon Trout Bridge
Approximately Station 174+00 (blind 53 Road) to CR 210
- Use existing centerline alignment. (Public request)
- Stay within existing right of way. (Public request)
- Minimize tree clearing to 50 feet on each side of the existing road. (Trying to meet public request, while addressing maintenance and safety.)
- Use a narrower road section. (Trying to meet public request.)
  - 12 feet lane, 5 feet paved shoulder, and 1ft curb where needed

PUBLIC ROAD
NEW "T" INTERSECTION

MARQUETTE COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION
Proposed Triple A Road - Nov. 14th, 2013 Alignment
Marquette County, Michigan
Separation of Duties
Board and Manager

As The Manager
Manage – Lead - Make Decisions
Follow Policy
Less is More (Stay out if the Weeds)
Use Phrases like:
  I recommend
  Staff has discussed
  Policy States
Accountability = Credibility (You and the Board need to agree on what the standard is)

No Surprises

If you let your Board Manage - They Will
Separation of Duties
Board and Manager

As The Board
Set policy – Set Course
Set the political agenda

Board Meetings
Information Items and Action Items
Interactions with the Public

• Honest – Straight forward – Upfront
• Respectful
• Don’t pass the buck!
• If you don’t know you don’t know. Find the answer and get back to them. Don’t Make Shit Up.
• Follow Policy – Don’t Like it go to Board
• Don’t throw your people under the bus.
• Finally, Have a how can we do this attitude – Don’t be the no because I said so Guy
County Board

- Don’t ignore them
- If it is political let your Board make the call
- Follow policy
- Have a how can we do this attitude
- Be positive
- Don’t throw your Board or staff under the bus.

Politicians have big egos – They will summon you to chew your ass to make political hay. Take your ass chewing – Turn it into a positive.
Internal Communications
Management Makeup and Style

Manager – Contact Employee to the Board

3 Department Heads – Non-Union
  Finance and Office Manager
  Engineering
  Operations and Maintenance

Senior Management

Management Team

Operational Management

Additional Key Management Areas
  KI Foremen
  Ishpeming Foremen
  Shop Foreman
Marquette County Road Commission
Organizational Chart
December 1, 2015

Board of Road Commissioners
Dave Hall, Chairman
Joe Valente, Vice-Chairman
Russell Williams, Member
Ray Roberts, Member
Rodger Crimmins, Member

Engineer – Manager
Jim Iwanicki, P.E.

Operations & Maintenance
Mike Harrington

Finance & Office Manager
Mary Herman, Clerk

Engineering
Kurt Taavola

Ishpeming District
Bob O’Neill, Foreman
Jim Chaperon, Lead Person
+13 Road Crew

Sawyer District
Ross Olsen, Foreman
Gary Revord, Lead Person
+9 Road Crew
3 Mechanics

Big Bay District
Tom Durand, Lead Person
+1 Road Crew

Republic District
Mark Kaminen, Lead Person
+2 Road Crew

Equipment Maintenance
Berle (Mike) Lapin, Foreman
4 Mechanics Ishpeming
Dave King, Shop Clerk

Office and Administration
Joan Terzaghi, Administrative & Accounting Assistant
Lisa Hammill, Board Secretary, Administrative Assistant

50 Total Full Time Employees
1 Contract Employee (Manager)
13 Non-Union Employees
36 Bargaining Unit Employees

23 Winter Temps
7 Summer Temps

Eligible Retirements
2016 - 2 Union 2 Non Union
2017 - 2 Union
2018 - 3 Union 1 Non Union
2019 - 5 Union 1 Non Union
2020 - 1 Union
2021 - 1 Union 1 Non Union
2022 - 2 Union 2 Non Union
2023 - 2 Union 1 Non Union
2024 - 5 Union

Group  Ave Age  Ave Years of Service
Union     47       14
Non Union 49       17
Combined  48       15

Eligible Retirements
2016 - 2 Union 2 Non Union
2017 - 2 Union
2018 - 3 Union 1 Non Union
2019 - 5 Union 1 Non Union
2020 - 1 Union
2021 - 1 Union 1 Non Union
2022 - 2 Union 2 Non Union
2023 - 2 Union 1 Non Union
2024 - 5 Union

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2016 - 2 Union 2 Non Union
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2020 - 1 Union
2021 - 1 Union 1 Non Union
2022 - 2 Union 2 Non Union
2023 - 2 Union 1 Non Union
2024 - 5 Union
Team Management Style
(Information Exchange)
3 Key Meetings

Senior Management Team
• Meets at least once a week to discuss organizational planning, goals, issues and accomplishments (Tuesday Mornings)

Management Team
• Meets weekly to discuss Planning, Goals, Employee Issues, and Objectives. (Wednesday Morning @ 9)
• (Wire our Head with our Tail)

Individual Team Meetings (Thursday Mornings)
• Ishpeming District
• Ishpeming Shop
• KI District
• Republic District
• Big Bay District
• Office
• Engineering
Employees

Bargaining Unit (Mechanics and Drivers) Maintenance
• Labor Management – Meets as Needed
• (Weekly Team meetings is very effective in letting them know what is going on)

Non-Bargaining Unit (Office, Engineering, and Supervisors) Maintenance
• (Weekly Team meetings is very effective in letting them know what is going on)
Employee Expectations

Since the introduction of Team Management concept to the Road Commission one of the key concepts to creating a great place to work is **EXPECTATIONS**.

Expectations are discussed all the time.
- Performance
- How to act
- How we treat each other
- Behavior

This is our Accountability to each other and to the Organization.
HIGH Employee Morale

Why is it High? – It’s a Team

• Expectations are talked about and are clear.
• Employees know why we are doing what we are doing. (Team Meetings – they understand the organization)
• Employees are accountable to each other. (Worker to Supervisor, Supervisor to Worker, Worker to Worker, Supervisor to Supervisor)
• Employees are encouraged to make decisions.
Questions?