

GLA Road Committee 6-1-2015

GLFPC Summary and Interpretation of GLA's Road Committee meeting held Monday, June 1, 2015. GLFPC welcomes your questions and responses to this summary.

In what appeared to be record attendance (at least in recent memory) an estimated twenty-one GLA landowners attended the June 1, 2015 GLA Road Committee meeting held in the kitchen of Liberty Hall.

Road Management Committee Chairman Robert Wallace opened the meeting by reviewing his announcement first given at the May GLA Board meeting that Park County will fill the cracks on Dry Creek this year and will also seal coat their road either this year or next. The question of whether GLA should again put its own assessment monies into the maintenance of this county road or motivate the county to take care of Dry Creek has evoked thoughtful and at times heated debate and discussion from landowners at recent meetings. News that the county will take maintenance responsibility for Dry Creek appeared to be well received among the attendees.

How to assess the condition and prioritize the maintenance of the four and half miles of paved roads in NG revealed differing views of what is the most cost-effective and practical way to proceed. Findings from a group of landowners who recently took the initiative to walk NG paved road (a mile plus of Capricorn so far) and visually inspect, count, and measure failing filled asphalt cracks and new open cracks and to measure the alligatoring areas show significant road deterioration even though over \$30,000 has been spent on this road in about 24 months to stabilize it. Samples of unattached tar ribbons and broken sections of asphalt (about two inches thick) were presented as evidence of these findings at the May board meeting.

Wallace reported that he and the contractor who filled the cracks on Capricorn last fall had recently walked the road and found about 800 feet of new cracks and about double that amount of failing cracks. Later when questioned about details of the walk, Wallace clarified that he and the contractor had actually driven the road very slowly and had gotten out of their vehicles from time to time to look at certain sections of the paved surface. In addition to the new and failing cracks and alligatoring areas, Wallace explained that some parts of the road were sinking and others were rising.

A proposal from last year's crack filling contractor to repair the failed cracks (estimated 1600 linear feet) at a cost of 50 cents/foot and to repair new cracks (estimated 800 linear feet) at a cost of a \$1.00/foot was not acted on given an overall reluctance to work again with a contractor whose work has not held up. Though Wallace said he would research other options and get other bids, others insisted that last fall's contractor needs to be held accountable for his work. Though Wallace explained that crack filling work is not warrantied work, given the many variables, others reasoned that if the contractor wants to keep his reputation and stay in business, he should stand behind his work.

A landowner proposal that would have the road committee do virtually no maintenance for two years so that roads funds could grow into a bigger “pot of money” that would let the committee do things right was not acted on. Others said GLA could not afford the liability of letting the roads deteriorate for two years.

A proposal by Wallace to use Mag-chloride to reduce dust, stabilize gravel road surfaces and address wash boards was not well received by most of those in attendance. Noting that Mag-chloride is basically sea salt, some said the corrosion to vehicles was not worth the uncertain results of mag chloride applications. Three counties in Montana have reportedly banned the use of Mag-chloride citing vehicle corrosion as a serious side-effect. NG Road Captain Paul Rantallo said that clay is needed in our road gravel mix to address the on-going wash board problems. In answer to the questions of where to import the clay, Rantallo said it was available in Idaho and Wyoming.

When it was clear that Mag-chloride was not a popular answer for road maintenance, Wallace asked those who opposed it to find something better. At least one landowner agreed to do the research.

Others questioned the grading technique used to grade our gravel roads each spring and fall. They cited recent grading done by Park County (with a new looking grader) in the SG area where wash boards have not reappeared. It was surmised that GLA’s grading contractor may not be grading deep enough to allow the road surface to be redistributed and re-rolled and instead is only filling the wash-boards. It is a concern that most wash board conditions return within weeks of the seasonal grading work.

Next on the agenda was a discussion about how to handle Matching Funds for GLA road work. The issue is being addressed at this time because landowners in HS have offered \$2000 for more road work in their area. By consensus, the committee decided to “chew” on the criteria needed to accept Matching Funds (such a policy is being discussed) and to advertise the fact that all landowners can offer Matching Funds for road maintenance.

In another discussion there was a repeated call for road impact fees to be assessed on local business owners. Noting that employee traffic is greater than any landowner traffic and that heavy equipment has a greater impact on our roads than personal vehicles, it was felt that those who benefit more than landowners from their non-homeowner road uses should pay more than landowners to maintain the roads. To date, GLA dues are assessed on land parcels and dwelling units.

Additional background information received by GLFPC since this road meeting follows.

To augment and set the record straight after Road Committee Chairman Robert Wallace stated at the meeting there had been no work done on the HS roads for ten years, Charlene Murphy sent GLFPC excerpts from GLA road maintenance records from 2006 through 2014 that show about \$5000 was spent each year during those years. She also reported that road records show that in 2001 when GLA paved Dry Creek in SG and four

and half miles of roads in NG that the same engineering, road base preparations and paving specifications were used in both areas.

However landowner Tim Brockett, who has walked and visually inspected paved roads in both NG and SG, claims that the lack of drainage rocks under the sub-surface gravel and hard top surface in NG allows water and moisture to sit under the paving. According to Road Chairman Robert Wallace, it is the freezing and thawing of the water under the paved surface that creates new cracks and makes it hard to keep the filled cracks sealed.

Brockett also reports that visual inspections shows that the roads in NG were paved with a 2 inch thick layer of asphalt whereas SG got 3 to 4 inches of asphalt. He writes "Dry Creek has been neglected for 10 years, yet it will last longer than NG paved roads which have seen almost \$100,000 worth of maintenance in the same period.