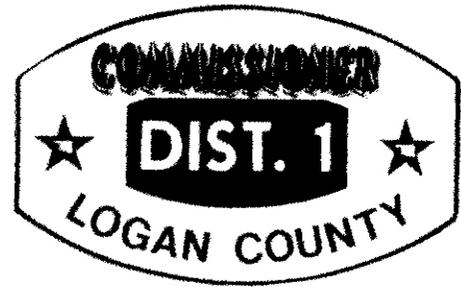


District 1 News

*A Public Service Communication
From the Office of...*



Logan County Commissioner Mark Sharpton

Volume 1, No. 4

December 2004

An Update From The Commissioner....

Mild temperatures and unexpected rains gave us a green August this year, but the torrential rainfall and 90 MPH wind created real problems for District 1.

Downed trees and washed out roadways slowed our usual maintenance efforts. Now we find ourselves facing additional delays, due to so much moisture. However, we want you to know that District 1 employees are grading roads and hauling gravel your way, just as soon as weather permits.

Although the August 10th storm did not produce enough damage to qualify us for FEMA funds, we considered the aftermath a District 1 emergency.

That's because several paving projects underway were delayed due to weather.

Weather delays meant our contractors faced a challenge in juggling their schedules to complete the work in a timely manner. We realize this created an inconvenience for some who lived in areas where road improvements were being made, but we appreciated your patience in the process.

Our purpose is to build roads that last. We feel this is a responsible way to use your tax money. We try to do more than simply throw a layer of chip and seal on an ill-prepared roadway. We put into practice the knowledge provided to our staff by instructors from the

OSU Roads Scholar Program. The training we received emphasized the value of soil stabilization and quality base preparation.

Forming a good road base involves not only clearing and creating good drainage, but adding a chemical such as fly ash, lime or kiln dust to the existing surface. This is ground together, and after compaction, creates a water resistant roadway.

Road improvements are much like remodeling. They require living with some measure of inconvenience while work is in progress. However, the long-range goal is to create a road surface that, once paved, will provide years of durability and service.

Cedar Valley Township Receives REAP Grant

District 1 recently received word that Cedar Valley Township was approved for a \$50,000 Rural Economic Action Plan (REAP) grant.

Plans are for the money to be used for a two inch overlay of asphalt on an existing chip-seal surface. Congratulations to the applicants.

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Road Improvements

In the last issue of this newsletter, we informed you of plans for road upgrades on Kelley, Simpson, Council and Macarthur. We're happy to say these projects are completed.

Upgrades were possible because each month we worked to save enough from our maintenance and operations account to finance major improvements.

Grants, Industrial Access Funds, and donations from homeowners' associations also helped make improvements possible. Our plans are to continually assess roads for future upgrades. Improvements this year include:

Council Road

1 1/2 miles stabilized and upgraded from gravel to 3" asphalt (Industrial Access Funds)

Macarthur

1 mile stabilized and upgraded from gravel to double-layer chip-seal

Kelley

1 mile stabilized and upgraded from gravel to double-layer chip-seal

Simpson

1 1/2 miles stabilized and upgraded from gravel to double-layer chip-seal

Country Home Estates

1.4 miles stabilized plus single-layer chip-seal (\$50,000 REAP Funds)

Dressen Rd.

New gravel road constructed west of railroad right-of-way, between Dressen and Seward Rd.

BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS

Complete deck replacement from wood to reinforced concrete

(Charter Oak between May and Penn)

Wooden bridge replaced with train car culvert

(Triplett between County Line and Council)

New guardrails and signage installed

(Industrial between Penn and Western)

Congratulations to...

...Kanaly's Big Sky Homeowners Association and its members for the single layer chip and seal improvement they recently made in their addition.

Like this newsletter? Let us know. 282-3581

Sooner Road Upgrade In Progress



On September 2, 2004, Commissioner Mark Sharpton and staff met with the county engineer and officials from ODOT to review plans for upgrading Sooner Road.

Plans are to overlay Sooner with asphalt from Waterloo to Seward Road. This will smooth the existing surface and improve travel for those who use the route.

Funding for the majority of the project will come from federal STP funds, (the Surface Transportation Program). Estimated cost for the improvement is \$450,000. Eighty percent will be federal money, with a twenty percent county match.

Approximately six million dollars are apportioned to the STP fund annually, and 77 counties compete for the money. Criteria for obtaining the funds depends on a ranking system, including traffic count, population, accidents and fatalities, as well as other considerations.

STP funds can only be used on major and minor collectors, some of which are Broadway, Seward Road and Western.

As soon as the county engineer submits final plans to ODOT, we should be ready for resurfacing Sooner in 2005.



Corporation Commission Approves Crossing Upgrades

Soon after taking office, Commissioner Sharpton had an opportunity to coordinate efforts between District 1, ODOT and BNSF to improve the safety of railroad crossings at Simpson Rd., Forrest Hills and Academy Rd.

On Sept. 21, 2004, a hearing regarding the matter was held at the Corporation Commission. Final approval for the upgrades depended on District 1 constructing a road along the west side of the railroad right-of-way, between Dressen and Seward Road. This was completed and opened to the public in August.

We're pleased to report that BNSF and ODOT are now in the process of making \$601,648 worth of safety improvements. These include full-depth concrete surfaces and pedestal flashing signals with gates.

Road Reclassification Opens Door for Future Funding



On May 23, 2003, Commissioner Sharpton submitted a request to ODOT to reclassify certain District 1 roads as major and urban collectors. Roads that are classified as such may qualify for improvement funding.

On November 18, 2004, we received notice that the Federal Highway Administration approved adding five miles of Western Avenue (from Waterloo to Seward Road) and two miles of Santa Fe Avenue (from Waterloo to Charter Oak Road) to the rural urban / major collector system.

This reclassification means we now have the opportunity to apply for future funding through the Surface Transportation Program—funding that, if approved, would allow us to improve the quality of Western Avenue.

Requests for STP funds must also pass through the Logan County Board of Commissioners, where a unanimous vote is required for approval.

REAP Rock Headed to Davis Glenn Addition

Each year, as monies are available, the legislature appropriates a certain amount of dollars into the Rural Economic Action Plan (REAP) fund.

Counties may apply for these funds, as well as homeowners' associations and small communities.

In 2004, District 1 applied for a REAP grant to improve the quality of roads in the Davis Glenn Addition, located at the corner of Charter Oak and Broadway.

As a result of the application, a grant in the amount of \$24,891.30 was approved. This means District 1 will soon begin widening roads, building up 2.5 miles of roadway, and applying gravel to form a 4" road base.

The area to be covered includes Shannon Dr., Deer Trail, North Chisholm Trail, West Chisholm Trail, North Short, Woodland Dr., Glenn Trail Dr. and Chisholm Circle.

Thanks to the grant, Davis Glenn residents can look forward to road improvements this winter.

A view of Simpson Road after 1 1/2 miles of base stabilization and a double layer of chip-seal was applied in late September, 2004.



District 1 stabilized and resurfaced a total of 6.4 miles of roadway this year. (See list of improvements—page 2).

Sources of funding for these projects came from homeowners' associations, REAP grants, Industrial Access Funds and the District 1 M&O account. Plans are to stabilize and chip-seal as many roads as possible, then later, overlay the chip-seal with asphalt, as money and time permits.



Education Corner

Question: *Can you offer information about the Open Meeting Act?*

Answer: The Open Meeting Act, sometimes referred to as the "Sunshine Law," took effect in Oklahoma in October 1977. It is found in Oklahoma Statute 25, Section 302, and states:

"It is the public policy of the State of Oklahoma to encourage and facilitate an informed citizenry's understanding of the governmental processes and governmental problems."

In essence, the purpose of the Open Meeting Act is to make public business known to the public.

Meetings of public bodies must meet certain requirements. They should:

- a. Be held at specified times
- b. Be held at places convenient to the public
- c. Be held at places that are open to the public
- d. Be preceded by advance notice of time and place

Question: *Does the Open Meeting Act mean I can participate in public meetings?*

Answer: You have the right to attend all public meetings of public bodies, and may even record the proceedings by videotape, audiotape, or any other method, provided this does not interfere with the meeting.

A public body is not required under the Open Meeting Act or the First Amendment, to provide an opportunity for citizens to speak, but may voluntarily do so.

The public body which chooses to do so, may limit comment to items on the agenda, or, may allow for open comment.

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The policy of the Logan County Board of Commissioners regarding public participation in meetings was established March 31, 1998. The board approved a resolution which stated: "...to maintain a good public policy, groups desiring to be heard will be limited to one spokesperson and limited to two minutes of the first meeting day of the month."

The resolution also states that items to be placed on the agenda must be submitted to the County Commissioners' office by 3:30 p.m., two days prior to the meeting.

It has been the policy of Commissioner Sharpton to encourage citizen involvement in county government. On March 31, 2004, he introduced a resolution to televise all Commissioner meetings. The measure died for lack of a second.

Sharpton also attempted to institute a monthly "roving meeting," to be held at 7 p.m. in each district on a rotating basis, so working people could attend. This also died for lack of a second. Hopefully, these resolutions will meet with approval in the future, and it will become easier for the public to access their government.

Logan County Board of Commissioners meet at 10 a.m., three times a month, at the Courthouse Annex, 312 E. Harrison, (across the street and north of Logan County Courthouse) in the Commissioners' Conference Room.

If you would like to attend these sessions, you may contact our office at 282-3581 to request a 2005 calendar of meeting dates.

District 1 News... is published by the office of Commissioner Mark Sharpton. Our office is located at 2315 S.W. 19th, Guthrie. An "open door" policy is in effect and visitors are welcome. You may reach us at 282-3581, or e-mail marksharpton@sbcglobal.net.

Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Mon.-Friday.

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