ROAD & BRIDGE COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 1, 2026

The McDonough County Road and Bridge Committee held their monthly meeting on Thursday, October 1, 2026 at 7:00 P.M. The Meeting was held at the Zahren Building in the Special Education Co-op Room. Committee Members present included Chair Craig Foster, Vice Chair Dave Cortelyou, Eric Chapman, Mike Cox, Travis Hiel, Jerry Raby, Jarad Royer, and Terry Thompson. Other persons in attendance: Dave Cadwalader, Rick Walker, County Chair Eric Blakeley, and Deputy Clerk Kyah Beck.

Chair Foster called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Review Minutes from September 3, 2026
Member Chapman moved with a second by Member Raby to approve the minutes as submitted. Motion carried on a voice vote.

Miscellaneous Project Updates
None.

Discuss Battery Storage Ordinance
Rick Walker said that if County Highway is signing off on the construction of battery storage facilities, he feels that an ordinance needs to be in place to provide guidelines to follow. A safety plan was also discussed in the event that a large lithium battery were to catch fire. Certain criteria should be required if a battery storage site is built. This matter will move forward, and discussion will be held with Joe Erlandson and Ken Durkin.

Discuss Upcoming Public Hearing for the Colchester Solar Project
The public hearing will be held on October 6th, at 7:00 p.m. at the Macomb Spoon River location. Eric Blakeley informed the committee that he expects several people to attend. This public hearing will not stop construction of the solar site because McDonough County is not zoned. The hearing will give people an opportunity to express their concerns, which can then be relayed to the developer.

Discuss the RWE Phase 1 & 2 Progress
Eric Blakeley informed the committee that construction of Phase 1 is almost complete. Wind turbine testing will take place within the next week and a half. Phase 2 will begin at another wind turbine location. Workers have been informing surrounding residents about the upcoming construction.

Work Report
Report given by Dave Cadwalader.

Claims Review and Approval
Member Cox moved with a second by Member Thompson to approve the claims submitted. Motion carried on a voice vote.

Other Items as Needed
Mike Cox strongly suggested that the committee begin looking for a replacement for Rick Walker when he retires. The committee discussed possibly having someone assist with the workload currently assigned to Rick. With the continued development of solar farms, wind farms, and possible battery storage facilities, having additional assistance would be beneficial.

Executive Session
None.

Public Comment
None.

County Chair Comments

Eric Blakeley informed the committee that a parental leave act will be coming up for discussion this month. This would give fathers or a caretaker the opportunity to take four paid weeks off for parental leave. Surrounding counties have adopted this already.

Adjourn

Member Raby moved with a second by Member Hiel to adjourn the meeting at 7:39 p.m. Motion carried on a voice vote.