

**To: Birchwood Council**  
**From: Roads and Streets Committee**  
**Subject: Committee Report**

The Roads and Streets Committee consists of five (5) members:

Mark Anderson, secretary/treasurer  
John Anderson  
Tom Patsy  
David Reynolds  
Gene Ruehle, chairperson

On January 24, 2013, we held our first meeting and elected officers. We also established the fourth Thursday of the month as our regular meeting date. The majority of our time that evening was spent reviewing the purpose of the Committee as stated in our bylaws. This is how the purpose is stated.

The purpose of the Roads and Streets Committee is to advise the City Council on the status of all roads within the city limits of Birchwood, including maintenance, upgrading and repair of such roads and streets and the funding of such work.

The past two (2) months, we have conducted our own 'crash course' in paving and repair techniques, getting acquainted with our task. We have had five (5) scheduled meetings.

The village has provided us excellent records that have shown us the history of past work (years), street statistics (length and width) and condition (PCI Rating Plus). We also found previous (2010) bids from asphalt companies on work that was being considered at that time.

The name of a key person that we found in the files is Thomas Wood. He is a research analyst at MN DOT.

We have approximately five (5) miles of street in Birchwood. Tom suggested that after we get the streets maintained up to the standard we want, that we budget for one (1) mile of street maintenance per year, (25-30K per year) based on his formula of normal maintenance. This would be in addition to the usual spring maintenance throughout the village. Tom Wood has been a great resource for us because of his expertise in the field of asphalt roads. His willingness to come and discuss the conditions of our streets and the corrective and preventative maintenance approach we should follow has been extremely valuable. Tom also spoke highly as to the quality of asphalt companies that are in the business. In reverse, the asphalt company representatives we spoke to also say he is also their 'go-to' person.

As of this writing, we are in process of interviewing asphalt companies regarding work to be done in the village. We have found it interesting that no one has recommended reconstruction of any of our streets and all recommend that with a bit of work they can last a few more years.

This is the worst time of the year for asphalt streets. The streets are wet from the melting of the snow. The wet surface freezes at night which loosens a miniscule plus amount of surface asphalt. The loose asphalt is washed away the next day and the process starts all over again. Also each day the cracks are filled with water. When the temperature falls below freezing, the water expands as ice, causing pieces of asphalt to break loose and a pot hole is born. The pot holes, as you know, come in many sizes and only get larger as time goes on.

The general procedure for maintaining our streets is to patch the broken areas, seal the cracks and over chip seal the completed roadway.

The patch work is best done this time of year by filling the potholes with hot asphalt (\$75/ton + \$45 hour labor, clean hole, tack, fill and then pack. The asphalt batch plants are just starting to open for the season (April 1) so this is all possible. The work is just a stop-gap solution.

When the full scale patch work is done there are several approaches and each company prefers their own way. From repairing a small area with a clean and fill method, or to heat the asphalt area and then fill. Large areas would be routed out and use a larger patch that seals better.

Crack seal can also be done in several ways. We have to admit, Fahrner Asphalt Company's method of filling cracks in 2010 has worked well. It was not the cheapest way to go, but other visiting asphalt companies have also mentioned that it has really held up well.

Chip seal is the next procedure when doing a complete project. Chip seal consists of applying an asphalt binder, which is immediately covered with an aggregate and then compacted. Chip seal prevents the rapid deterioration of asphalt due to oxidation and traffic wear. It is comparable to other resurfacing methods in durability and effectiveness, but costs less. Another option that Fahrner offers is a micro surfacing, a better product but more expensive.

We are probably two (2) weeks away from having all the bids in for these needed repairs, maybe a bit longer if the cool weather hangs in here and the snow drifts melt a bit slower.

#### **County Report:**

We held a special meeting with Ted Bearth, our County Commissioner, Wayne Sandberg, County Engineer, and their clerk. To make a long story short, they do not want Old Count Road 29 back. They had a litany of reasons why. As for our side, if they did take it back, they would hold us to their old road plan, which involved widening, curbs, gutters as well as a loss of some of our tree canopy.

The historical road preservation concept would not fit according to Wayne Sandberg. We also inquired as to obtaining some funds from the County 'Wheelage' tax, but were told that none of this money could ever be available to us, as it was always assigned to larger road projects.

#### **Resident Information:**

Some companies would provide opportunities for home owners to get driveway work done at a reduced rate while they are working in the area. The information regarding this could go out in the newsletter and homeowners could call the company for an estimate. This is something to consider that would be of additional benefit to our residents at no cost to the city.

**Items to Be Resolved:**

- Street right-of-way (width of street) and residential driveway connection... What do we do if the connection is not made?
- Owl Street was to be treated a little different than the other streets because it appears to have been missed the last go around.

For OWL street, The asphalt companies we interviewed suggested that we go with the procedure of clean, tack, and 1-1/2" to 2" over-lay. This is the same recommendation that Tom Wood had suggested.

The Roads and Streets Committee spent considerable time discussing traffic control on Cedar/Hall Streets with much thought toward slowing and/or reducing traffic. We think that the right signage, the addition of cross walks as well as narrower traffic lanes would be issues to consider that would reap larger benefits at low cost.