

C COMMISH INDY'S COMMENTS

Just an update. New county officers have been in office 6 months now. A lot has changed. Mostly good, some not as good, but never as fast as we would like!

I am trying to be a good steward of the taxpayer's money. Not just in my district, but in the entire county. I believe the county officers are also committed to trying to do the most with the funds available. Certain expenses are unavoidable and can't be reduced at this time, but other expenses can be changed and are being monitored.

Several people have made donations to help with certain projects and to them I say "THANK YOU! Other citizens benefit from your help also." We all live in this county together and there aren't many of us! I will try to help the towns as much as I can. There are just certain things that can and can't be done. If it's possible for the county to help, I will try my best.

Road maintenance is generally the main topic discussed. I have started a program of spraying and mowing roadsides. We have mowed the greatest part of the ditches at least once in my district. We have missed some (due to rains), but plan to get to them all eventually. We will continue to run the mowers all summer and into fall after the freeze for safety (wildlife, intersections, etc.) as well as for help with the possibility of drifting snow. Mowing also helps with maintenance and finding where the ditch should be for reconstruction. These problems didn't happen overnight and it will take some time, but I feel we are making progress.

Some people spray and mow their own roadsides. There are costs associated with this and I know it's not possible for everyone to do this. I am well aware of the costs. To those who do, THANK YOU from your neighbors and me! It makes the roads safer for all of us and we do notice.

Right-of-ways are a topic of debate also. Right-of-ways and easements that have been in existence for a great number of years will have to be honored. Prior to 1890 Congress passed the United States Code Title 43 Chapter 27 Subchapter I 1095 which states, "There shall be reserved public highways four rods wide between each section of land in said former Territory of Oklahoma, the section lines being the center of said highways..." Remember that one rod is 16 ½ feet wide so 4 rods is 66 feet total, with 33 feet on each side. Furthermore, "public highways" prior to 1890 simply meant "public roadways" as there was not any state highways systems in Oklahoma at this time.

The 66 feet refers to the right-of-ways established prior to 1890, which are still in effect; however, some right-of-ways are greater than the original 66 feet. For example Oklahoma State Highways are greater as are several of the county farm-to-market roads.

The additionally right-of-way footage is legally recorded at the County Clerks Office and can be researched individually by the legal description of each individual property.

As an officer of Grant County I am legally obligated to uphold and enforce these right-of-ways, not just for the present but for the future too. Fences are expensive and should be located correctly in reference to the right-of-way. If they are not, they will have to be moved and this is not good for anyone. Some people farm to the edge of the road, "Keep the weeds down!" This is well-intended, but don't get mad when the ditch is graded to get the water off the road to maintain or make it usable again. Electric fences at the road edge are extremely dangerous to your livestock and anyone that uses the road. When I request that you move a fence it's not that I'm picking on you (believe me I don't like to have to request it), generally someone has brought it to my attention. Then I must give it all my attention and see that it is corrected. Please, let's avoid problems and do it right the first time and/or correct prior misplacements of fences and field-borders.

District 2 employees work a 10-hour 4-day work week, which is Monday-Thursday 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Each of them is working to make improvements for Grant County and particularly for each of you in this district. I am generally here at the shop office around 6:30 a.m., please feel free to stop in or call me with any questions, concerns, comments, or just to visit. The shop office number is 580-395-2859, my cell number is 580-541-8950, and the Road and Bridge Foreman is Bryan Brown and his cell number is 580-541-8951.

Bryan is recovering from knee surgery. He still comes to the office and is overseeing the roads and bridges but is a little slow getting around. He is wearing a full length leg brace, making it difficult for him to get in and out of a vehicle and is limited on how much walking and climbing he is suppose to be doing. However, do feel free to contact him when you need to.

Again, I thank everyone for their willingness to donate money, materials, and time to help improve the county and especially District 2. Great things happen when we all work together!

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy R. Bobbitt
Grant County Commissioner
District 2