

## **Hancock County Board of Commissioner's Minutes**

**September 01, 2015**

Commissioners met in regular session. Those present were Commissioner Brad Armstrong, President, Commissioner Tom Stevens, Vice President and Commissioner Marc Huber.

Auditor Robin D. Lowder and Deputy Auditor Emily R. Moore were also present.

Hancock County Board of Commissioner's meeting began at 8:00 a.m.

Attorney Ray Richardson arrived at 8:00 a.m.

### **Highway Department**

County Engineer Gary Pool appeared before the Hancock County Board of Commissioners to discuss:

**InterLocal for McCordsville-** County Engineer Gary Pool appeared before the Commissioners to update them on the progress on the InterLocal for McCordsville. County Engineer stated that the Interlocal is a work in progress. The topics being discussed are geographic vs cost/benefit, scope of agreement, timing, and termination clauses. County Engineer will keep the Commissioners updated regularly.

**Pennsy Trail-** County Engineer Gary Pool appeared before the Commissioners to update them on the progress of the Pennsy Trail Project. County Engineer stated that he has asked for senior students at Rose-Hulman to lay out a plan for Pennsy Trail. (possibly Purdue) After this takes place, Grants would be able to be applied for.

**Uniforms-** County Engineer Gary Pool stated that there will be a uniform switch to Plymate on about October 15, 2015.

**Letters for Political Support for 600 W Mt. Comfort Corridor Project-** County Engineer Gary Pool appeared before Commissioners to update them on the political support for the 600 W Mt. Comfort corridor project and to request representation from the Commissioners at the upcoming meetings with other political entities. County Engineer stated that he met with Fishers last week and has already obtained a letter of support from their Mayor. A Town Hall Meeting in New Palestine is set for September 16, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. and a meeting with Hamilton County for 2:00 p.m. on September 14, 2015 has been set. Also, County Engineer Gary Pool is working with State and National Representatives to obtain their support for this project. An early meeting on September 16, 2015 at the State House has tentatively been scheduled. When details for this meeting are finalized the County Engineer will let the Commissioners know. County Engineer stated that a show of political support at any of these meetings would be appreciated.

**Highway Department Staffing-** County Engineer Gary Pool stated that the Highway Department is now fully staffed.

**Chip Sealing-** County Engineer Gary Pool stated that as of today the Chip Sealing is done. They will be moving on to the paving projects.

**Overlay in BOMAR-** County Engineer Gary Pool stated that he had requested three quotes be submitted for this project. He has received one quote in the amount of \$83,665.50. County Engineer requested permission to accept this quote unless a lesser quote is received. Commissioner Stevens moved to allow County Engineer to accept lowest quote for BOMAR Neighborhood overlay or for an amount not to exceed \$83,665.50. Commissioner Huber seconded. Motion carried 3/0.

**Trail Grant-** County Engineer Gary Pool stated that the Heritage Grant will be available in October 2015 and due in November 2015. It would pay 80% and the County would be responsible for 20%. The Friends of Pennsy Trail are hopeful that they'll still be able to raise the \$60,000 for match.

#### **Surveyor**

**Subdivision Control Ordinance-** Hancock County Surveyor Susan Bodkin, Gary Pool, and Mike Dale appeared before the Commissioners to present the changes that are being made to the Subdivision Control Ordinance. This was for informational purposes only at this time.

#### **Minor Sub / Signatures**

**Cheryl Jacques Minor Sub-** Phillip Going appeared before the Commissioners to request Signatures on a plat for Cheryl Jacques Minor Sub with a 35' dedicated right of way. (located at County Road 500 E, two lots) Commissioner Stevens moved acceptance of a 35' dedicated right of way. Commissioner Huber seconded. Motion carried 3/0.

**Stewart Real Estate Minor Sub-** Phillip Going appeared before the Commissioners to request Signatures on a plat for Stewart Real Estate Minor Sub with ½ of the 70' dedicated ½ right of way. (located at State Road 234, a one AC lot) Commissioner Stevens moved acceptance of ½ of the 70' dedicated ½ right of way. Commissioner Huber seconded. Motion carried 3/0.

#### **Weed Department**

**Weed Specialist-** Dean Falkening had let Hancock County Auditor Robin Lowder know that there is a need for him to work until October 9, 2015. In order for this to happen transfers in the amount of \$4,080 would need to take place for his salary. (transfers of \$1,158 from Weed Specialist Supplies, \$1,000 from Chemicals, \$400 from Liens & Releases and \$1,122 from Mental Health Gallahue to Weed Specialist Personal Services) Also, this would need to be presented to Council at the next Council Meeting for approval. Commissioner Huber moved to present a request to Council for Weed Specialist transfers in an amount not to exceed \$4,080 transferred from \$1,158 from Supplies, \$1,000 from Chemicals, \$400 from Liens & Releases, and \$1,522 from Mental Health Gallahue to Weed Specialist Personal Services. Commissioner Stevens seconded. Motion carried 3/0.

## **Hancock County Exposition Complex Corporation/Fair Grounds Lease**

**Alternate Plan Presentation (30 minute presentation)**- John Priore appeared before the Commissioners to present an Alternate Plan, "A pay as you go Initiative." Mr. Priore started his presentation with his opinions on the HCECC Strategic Plan that has been presented. His recapping of his thoughts on the HCECC plan as presented is: "The HCECC basically has no money. No pledges. No letters of credit. No letters of commitment from users, sponsors or lenders. No credit rating. No references. No record of successfully completing anything. So, how can the Commissioners in good faith and conscience seriously think about signing a lease with the HCECC and placing the county and its taxpayers to such obvious risk?" Then, Mr. Priore went on to lay out his view on "A pay as you go Initiative." Bullet points from Mr. Priore's plan are as follows:

\*Establishment of County Farm Development Board (purpose of the board)

\*Actual Membership of Board

\*Openness and Transparency

\*Organization and Committees

\*Proposed Funding Sources (Tourism Tax-2% set aside(\$168,686.52), Food & Beverage-1%(\$1,047,319.92), CEDIT-.05%)

\*Design and Construction Schedule

\*The need for certain upfront discussions and decisions

\*What is meant by Partnering?

\*Goal and desired results

\*What if no community groups are willing to partner?

\*Closing and Summary: Mr. Priore's comments were as follows. "As a matter of fact with the HCECC no longer at the helm, I am confident consensus resolution will be more quickly reached." "In closing, I have one caution. Don't approach the development of the county farm with the idea of building the Taj Mahal. Be reasonable and realistic. Remember, we are talking about a county fairground. We are not talking about replicating and competing with the state fairgrounds or the Indianapolis Convention Center or existing small businesses. We are also not looking at permanently increasing tax rates or burdening ourselves and future generations with unnecessary debt and we sure are not intending to waste millions and millions of taxpayer dollars on unnecessary borrowing and debt service. If we all keep that in mind and work together, we might just accomplish something this time around."

### **Alternate/Con Plan Speakers**

**At 9:30 a.m. Alternate/Con Plan Speakers were permitted to speak their opinion on the proposed HCECC strategic Plan that has been presented. They were scheduled alphabetically and were each given three minutes.**

**Ann Breslin-** Ms. Breslin stated that there were too many unanswered questions with the proposed plan, the plan doesn't have complete specs or financial plan, and that the County shouldn't enter in a contract with a private company.

**Jan Brown-** Ms. Brown stated that she feels that there should be full disclosure, a survey should be done, and that there shouldn't be public/private partners.

**Carolyn Flynn-** Ms. Flynn stated that the fairgrounds shouldn't be ran by a private corporation, that there hasn't been a market analysis done, and the plan presented has more questions than answers.

**Randy Harrison-** Mr. Harrison stated that the fairgrounds shouldn't be competing with other local businesses, and that he feels that two elected officials have a conflict of interest when it comes to this project.

**Ron Kerrigan-** Mr. Kerrigan stated that the plan presented doesn't have enough details, that the lease should be the last step, and that he feels there is a conflict of interest with certain members of the boards.

**George Langston-** Mr. Langston stated that the,"HCECC plan is not about the County Fairgrounds it's about the one sided Ground Lease and the grossly inadequate Strategic Business plan." He feels that there should be a contract not a lease, that the HCECC didn't provide a full business plan, and that the project is grossly overbuilt.

**Russell Locker/Gail Locker-** Ms. Locker stated that she and her husband want to know why the fairgrounds are being put on US 40 instead of 500 E? They both feel this is a very unsafe situation.

**Robert Mench-** Mr. Mench stated that the Commissioners shouldn't sign the lease before they're ready. He also stated that the Commissioners are a "good group of guys, don't get in a mess."

**Shelton Oakes-** Mr. Oakes stated that he feels they should redo the current fairgrounds instead of the exposition center, would like to know what exactly the County would be getting and the cost, and that everything pertaining to this project should be open and transparent.

**Donna Steele-** Ms. Steele stated that she feels this Exposition Center will be competing with the surrounding businesses and wonders what negative effects it will have on the City of Greenfield and the County.

**Martha Vail-** Ms. Vail stated that when the HCECC approached the Tourism Board it made this project public, that the project shouldn't be competing with local businesses, and that there is a conflict of interests going on.

### **PRO HCECC Strategic Plan Speakers**

**The PRO HCECC Strategic Plan Speakers were permitted to speak their opinion on the proposed HCECC Strategic Plan that has been presented. They were scheduled alphabetically and were each given three minutes.**

**Jim Cherry-** Mr. Cherry stated that there are certain things he is concerned with: good sheriff department, roads, schools, and fire departments. That's what matters. He is concerned about the safety of the fair where it is located now and feels the time is now to act.

**Wyneta Duncan-** Ms. Duncan stated that she has been a leader for fifty years. She feels the county is in need of an indoor arena and that she is concerned with the safety of the fair where it is located now.

**Kent Fisk-** Mr. Fisk stated that he supports the 4H, that the HCECC is not a private board, the fairgrounds are for everyone, and that they have tried to have this project ran by the Commissioners before and that the State Board said no.

**Joe Fortner-** Mr. Fortner stated that if everyone would come together and focus on what's important we could make this project work. He also feels that the county has outgrown the current grounds and that the new fairgrounds will benefit the children.

**Mike Fruth-** Mr. Fruth stated that this is a great project, that the cities utilities would be made available, the city would like the existing property to expand Riley Park, and that this project will benefit the youth.

**Annie Grinstead-** No show

**Michelle Hasty-** Ms. Hasty stated that she feels the current fairgrounds have been outgrown and that a covered arena is needed. She also said that we should "make our best better."

**Cathie Hickerson-** Ms. Hickerson stated that she and her family has been part of the 4H program for years. She feels that the county is in a financially stable situation and that this is the right time to move forward.

**Heather Hill-** No show

**Mark Lozier-** Mr. Lozier stated that we all need to work together to make this project happen. He also feels that the public and private money needs to be together and he also spoke on different uses for the new fairgrounds. (sports)

**Jean Potts-** No show

**Kay Roberts-** Ms. Roberts stated that she is from Madison County but wanted to show her support for a new 4H fairground facility in Hancock County. She talked about other opportunities that would be available with the new fairgrounds and the support that would come from other counties.

**Kathie Robinson-** No show

**Tom Roney-** Mr. Roney stated that all groups want to see something happen with this project. He feels the fairground project won't be perfect and you won't agree with everything, but try to at least get behind it.

**Lou Savka-** Mr. Savka stated that some of the things in the fairground project will be costly but add long term value. He also feels that the children are who will make this County great and that the fairground project didn't work before so we need to make it work this time.

**Dave Scott-** Mr. Scott stated that he feels that the Commissioners need to do more than protect the County, they should lead and have a vision even in the face of opposition.

**Jim Shoufler-** Mr. Shoufler stated that he has actively been a part of the 4H program for forty-two years. He also feels that that with 1,200 children being part of the 4H fair this year, the present grounds are too small.

**Bill Bolander-** Mr. Bolander stated that he feels the Commissioners and Council are the right people to be signing this lease now. He feels we need to be visionary not reactionary.

**Jim Shelby-** Mr. Shelby stated he feels this issue isn't a hard decision but an important one. He also feels that if the Commissioners don't sign the lease now it will kill the project because it did last time.

**Jon Sparks-** No show

**Sharon Sunden-** Ms. Sunden stated that she is new to the County. She feels that the fairgrounds now don't serve the purposes they should, they're not conducive to livestock, and the fairgrounds are too crowded.

**Walt Waitt-** Mr. Waitt stated that he has been working on this project for twelve years and he feels it's time to sign the lease so the project can progress.

**Candace Trout-** Ms. Trout stated that safety is a major concern with the fairgrounds as they are. She is very much in favor of the new fairgrounds.

**Cathie Hickerson-** Ms. Hickerson returned to read two letters from 4H children. (Caitlyn Cox, EHHS Freshman & Jadon Yeager, 8<sup>th</sup> grader GCJHS)

### **Commissioners**

**Commissioner Tom Stevens-** Commissioner Stevens said he appreciates all ideas from all the speakers. He then spoke about when the fairground project started twelve years ago and how the turf battle accompanied with down turn of economy made the project fail. Commissioner Stevens stated that the Resolution from April 15, 2015 dedicated grounds for fairgrounds. Commissioner Stevens feels that children are our future and that the 4H program helps the children learn to make the right choices. He is concerned about having to have all the funding sources identified before going to next step. (signing lease) He stated that he's not making a motion at this time because he thinks some changes to the lease should be made first before signing but thinks the Commissioners do need to sign the lease. Commissioner Stevens thinks the down side or the only risk to signing the lease is losing the rent on the farm ground. (rent-\$29,267/10 year-\$292,000)

**Commissioner Marc Huber-** Commissioner Huber said that he feels that everyone that spoke is for the 4H but maybe location and funds are the problem. He is very concerned about a solid business plan but does want to see it happen. He feels they shouldn't sign the lease until some issues are addressed. Commissioner Huber does feel that now is the time for change. Commissioner Huber feels the HCECC should concentrate on getting the fair out to the new site first and then concentrate on Economic Development. He thinks the Commissioners and the HCEEC board should work together.

**Commissioner Armstrong-** Commissioner Armstrong stated that he had been in touch with County Attorney Ray Richardson and had discussed the lease and some changes that need to be done. (termination clause, insurance changes, and the need of a legal description) He also thinks that breaking this project up into segments to be completed might be the better way to go. (Would \$11,000,000 plus the land get the fair out to the new grounds?) He feels that there would need to be more of a financial plan made or maybe cut the scale of the project back. Commissioner Armstrong would like some hard numbers. He doesn't think a motion should be made on the lease the way it sits. Commissioner Armstrong will consult with the County Insurance carrier about the insurance on the property and the Director's Insurance. He would like the Lease to be put on the Commissioners' Action Items for the next meeting.

**Councilman Shelby-** Councilman Shelby spoke about the finances for the new fairgrounds. He stated that it's the Council's business to finance not the Commissioners.

**County Attorney Ray Richardson-** County Attorney Ray Richardson stated that the liability insurance needs to be in place before lease signing and that the proper amounts need to be there. He also would like the HCECC Board to look in to Director and Officer Insurance before the signing of the lease. County Attorney also said a clear legal description needs to be in place, and the right to terminate clause needs to be worded stronger.

There was a general discussion on funding for this project. Commissioners request that Lou Savka, the architect, come to the next meeting with a couple of different options on funding for the fair ground. (taxes needed, private funding, how much money to get the fair to new grounds) Also, there must be a legal description on Lease per County Attorney and County Auditor.

#### **Action Items**

**Claims-** Commissioner Huber moved approval of the claims as presented. Commissioner Stevens seconded. Motion carried 3/0.

**Payroll-** Commissioner Huber moved approval of the payroll as presented. Commissioner Stevens seconded. Motion carried 3/0.

**Minutes-** Commissioner Stevens moved approval of the September 01, 2015 Commissioners' Minutes as presented. Commissioner Huber seconded. Motion carried 3/0.

**RQAW/Roof Specifications/Bids-** Roger Stevens, from RQAW 10401 N. Meridian St. Indianapolis, IN 4620, appeared before the Commissioners to present and request approval of drawings and specs for jail roof. Commissioner Stevens moved approval of plans for Hancock County jail roof replacement including the specifications with the insurance modifications as requested by Doug Walker. Commissioner Huber seconded. Motion carried 3/0.

The Hancock County Board of Commissioners meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

Hancock County Commissioners

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Commissioner Brad Armstrong, President

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Commissioner Tom Stevens, Vice President

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Commissioner Marc Huber

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Robin D. Lowder  
Hancock County Auditor