

**STAFF MEETING MINUTES
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING
ROOM 113
THURSDAY, AUGUST 9, 2007
8:30 A.M.**

Commissioners Present: Bernie Heier, Vice Chair
Ray Stevens
Deb Schorr

Commissioners Absent: Bob Workman, Chair
Larry Hudkins

Others Present: Gwen Thorpe, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Dan Nolte, County Clerk
Ann Taylor, County Clerk's Office

The Vice Chair opened the meeting at 8:31 a.m.

Schorr arrived at 8:32 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM

1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE STAFF MEETING MINUTES OF THURSDAY, AUGUST 2, 2007

MOTION: Stevens moved and Schorr seconded approval of the Staff Meeting minutes dated August 2, 2007. Stevens, Schorr and Heier voted aye. Motion carried.

2 ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

- A. Letter to Villages Regarding Floodplain Mapping (Exhibit A)
- B. Update on Proposal for Two (2) New Probation Officers to do Pre-Sentence Investigations
- C. Public Defender/Juvenile Court Cases

MOTION: Stevens moved and Schorr seconded approval of the additions to the agenda. Stevens, Heier and Schorr voted aye. Motion carried.

3 A) PARTIAL RELEASE OF EASEMENT, OUTLOT A, FINIGAN VIEW, 1ST ADDITION - Doug Pillard, County Engineering Design Division Head

Doug Pillard, County Engineering Design Division Head, said the City Attorney's Office requested release of the utility easement at the request of a local attorney. He said his department has no objection to the release.

B) POTENTIAL LITIGATION - Jim Shotkoski, County Engineering Right-of-Way Division Head

MOTION: Schorr moved and Stevens seconded to enter Executive Session at 8:34 a.m. for discussion of potential litigation. Schorr, Heier and Stevens voted aye. Motion carried.

MOTION: Stevens moved and Schorr seconded to exit Executive Session at 9:03 a.m. Schorr, Workman and Stevens voted aye. Motion carried

4 JAIL DESIGN REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) COMMITTEE - Vince Mejer, Purchasing Agent; Mike Thurber, Corrections Director

Further discussion took place regarding formation of a Jail Design Request for Proposals (RFP) Review Committee (see July 26th and August 2nd Staff Meeting minutes).

Mike Thurber, Corrections Director, offered a tentative list of committee members (Exhibit B). He said Deb Brehm, Douglas Theatre, has expressed some reservation about serving, as she lacks expertise in jail design, and said Timothy Loewenstein, Buffalo County Commissioner, is willing to serve but has a tight schedule to work around.

MOTION: Schorr moved and Stevens seconded to: 1) Remove Debbie Brehm, Douglas Theatre, per her request; 2) Remove Timothy Loewenstein, Buffalo County Commissioner, due to scheduling issues; and 3) Make Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer, an ex-officio member.

Brief discussion followed.

AMENDMENT: The maker of the motion and the seconder amended their motion to include Bob Walla, Assistant Purchasing Agent, as an ex-officio member.

Stevens suggested that Gary Hill, CEGA Services of Nebraska, be named to the committee.

ROLL CALL ON THE MOTION AS AMENDED: Schorr and Stevens voted aye. Heier voted no. Motion carried.

Heier said Commissioners Hudkins and Workman want Loewenstein on the committee and he suggested that Loewenstein be made an ex-officio member.

MOTION: Stevens moved and Schorr seconded to: 1) Offer Timothy Loewenstein, Buffalo County Commissioner, the opportunity to serve as an ex-officio member of the committee; and 2) Add Gary Hill, CEGA Services of Nebraska, to the committee.

Mejer recommended having an odd number of members to eliminate the possibility of a tie vote.

AMENDMENT: Stevens moved and Heier second to make Vince Mejer, Purchasing Agent, the facilitator and an ex-officio member, giving him voting rights only in the event of a tie vote.

ROLL CALL ON THE MOTION AS AMENDED: Schorr, Stevens and Heier voted aye. Motion carried.

Mejer said he anticipates the RFP going out on August 29th, with the proposals due back on October 30th. The first committee meeting will be held November 15th. Interviews are tentatively scheduled for December 6th.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

A. Letter to Villages Regarding Floodplain Mapping (Exhibit A).

Ben Higgins, Public Works and Utilities, appeared and said the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is considering a floodplain remapping of Lancaster County (contingent upon receipt of additional federal funding). FEMA sent a letter to the villages inviting them to a meeting on August 1st to discuss floodplain mapping needs. He said the meeting was not well attended.

Doug Pillard, County Engineering, appeared and said his department would like to see all of the County's streams mapped.

The Board directed Gwen Thorpe, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, to send an email to the village clerks notifying them of a follow-up meeting on August 14th and outlining the purpose.

B. Update on Proposal for Two (2) New Probation Officers to do Pre-Sentence Investigations

Thorpe said State Probation has indicated that it supports the proposal and is looking for funds to assist with the cost.

C. Public Defender/Juvenile Court Cases

Dennis Keefe, Public Defender, appeared and recommended that the County amend its contract with the Pierson Fitchett Law Firm so the firm can accept additional juvenile cases to cover an immediate staffing shortage in the Public Defender's Office until a new deputy public defender is hired. He further recommended that the contract be amended to allow the contractor accept 25 new law violation cases, beginning August 15th. Keefe said there is \$15,000 budgeted in the contract line item for overages that could be used for this purpose. He added that he will try to persuade the juvenile court judges to be more judicious in appointing over the contracts.

The Board scheduled the contract amendment on the August 14th County Board of Commissioners Meeting agenda.

5 BUDGETS FOR LANCASTER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY, RURAL FIRE DISTRICTS, RAILROAD TRANSPORTATION SAFETY DISTRICT (RTSD) AND RURAL LIBRARY - Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer

Lancaster County Agricultural Society Budget

Ron Snover, Lancaster Event Center Managing Director, appeared and presented the following (Exhibit C):

- * Lancaster County Agricultural Society, General Fund Budget for the Fiscal Year Ended November 30, 2007 & 2008
- * Lancaster County Agricultural Society, Capital Projects for the Fiscal Year Ended November 30, 2006 & 2007
- * Lancaster County Agricultural Society, General Fund Budget - Event Center (Only) for the Fiscal Year Ended November 30, 2006 & 2007

Snover said the budget is the same as last year's.

Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer, projected a slight decrease in the Ag Society's overall levy, based on a projected 2.25% increase in valuation.

Schorr suggested that Snover extend an invitation to the editor of the Lincoln Journal Star Newspaper to tour the facility and give an overview of the Ag Society's plans for expansion.

Rural Fire Districts Budgets

Meyer said the Malcolm Rural Fire District's levy request is 10.3 cents (an increase of approximately \$9,000 over last year). The maximum fire district levy would have to stay at around 10 cents in order to stay within the 15 cent levy authorized for certain political subdivisions.

MOTION: Schorr moved and Heier seconded to reduce the Malcolm Rural Fire District tax rate to \$0.10.

Stevens said other less critical areas could be reduced to get to the 15 cents, such as citing the Ag Society's capital request as an example. He said he favors "shaving" the Malcolm Rural Fire District and RTSD's requests with the understanding that they might be restored if valuations come in higher than projections.

The maker of the motion and the seconder withdrew their motion.

Board consensus was to delay action until the final valuation numbers are in.

Railroad Transportation Safety District (RTSD) Budget

Meyer said the RTSD has requested 2.6 cents (the RTSD received 2.4 cents last year).

Rural Library Budget

Meyer said there is a reduction in the request, due to cuts on the City side (2.2 cents is requested, down from 2.4 cents last year).

6 ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT

A. Noise Standards for Motor Sports

Heier said he is not sure what 70 decibels sound like at a distance of ½ mile and suggested having noise testing done at that distance from a motor sports event. He suggested Eagle Raceway and State Fair Park as possible locations.

Stevens suggested that the Board ask Scott Holmes, Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department Environmental Health Division Chief, to perform tests under the conditions that were recently adopted.

Thorpe will check with Holmes regarding costs and necessary equipment.

B. TRIM Seminar Invitation (August 28, 2007 from 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.)

Thorpe said there will be a mini-seminar for the Board at 12:30 p.m.

C. Appointments to the Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Commission

Board consensus was to meet with the appointees on a one-on-one basis or in pairs.

D. Lincoln Independent Business Association (LIBA) Retirement Plan Survey

Board consensus was to not respond to the survey, as LIBA will obtain the information in another manner.

E. Formal Request from Lancaster County Agricultural Society for \$500,000 from Visitor Improvement Fund

Board consensus was to forward the request to Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer.

F. Street Naming Committee

Thorpe said the committee corresponds through email and said the Commissioners could ask to be included in those communications.

G. Open House at Election Office

Board consensus was to allow the Election Commissioner to hold an open house at the Election Office, contingent upon consultation with Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer, and the County Attorney's Office.

H. Employee of the Month

The Board reviewed letters from constituents commending Veronica Schippert, County Engineering (Exhibit D).

MOTION: Schorr moved and Stevens seconded to begin the process to nominate Veronica Schippert, on behalf of constituents, as employee of the month. Schorr, Heier and Stevens voted aye. Motion carried.

7 DISCUSSION OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS

A. Budget Monitoring Committee - Hudkins, Schorr

Schorr said Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer, gave an overview of the budget. She said discussion focused primarily on the new jail and said a majority of committee supported the proposal for an additional 1 cent levy to establish a Jail Savings Fund.

B. Nebraska Innovation Zone Commission (NIZC) - Heier

Heier said only one response was received to the Request for Proposals (RFP) for a study of zoning in the Interstate-80 corridor.

C. Lincoln-Lancaster County Ecological Advisory Committee (EAC) - Heier

Heier said the Planning Department presented the Comprehensive Plan Annual Indicators Report and the EAC discussed whether to add environmental indicators to the report or update the 1997 Environmental Indicators Report.

D. Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development (LPED) Investors - Schorr

Schorr said Harvey Perlman, University of Nebraska at Lincoln (UNL) Chancellor, gave a presentation on UNL's plans for a research corridor.

E. Public Building Commission - Hudkins, Workman

No report.

8 ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Schorr moved and Stevens seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:35 a.m. Schorr, Stevens and Heier voted aye. Motion carried.

Dan Nolte
Lancaster County Clerk