

**MONROE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING
MONROE COUNTY COURTHOUSE
JUDGE NAT U. HILL MEETING ROOM
BLOOMINGTON, IN**

The Monroe County Commissioners met in a regular meeting on April 11, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. With the following members present: Patrick Stoffers, President; Iris Kiesling, Vice President; Joyce Poling, Member. Also present William Steger, Monroe County Attorney; Faye Chambers; Commissioners Interim Office Manager; Bill Williams, County Highway Engineer and Sandy Newmann, Monroe County Auditor.

CALL TO ORDER

(Stoffers) I would like to call this meeting to order of the Monroe County Board of Commissioners for April 11, 2008

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Poling moved Kiesling seconded to amend the agenda and add item “E” which is the acceptance of the parcel numbers by the Auditor. And also instead of proclamation we will be celebrating Sue Berg.

Motion passed

APPROVAL OF PAYROLL (\$768,211.45) AND CLAIMS (\$1,343,531.42)

Poling moved Kiesling seconded approval of payroll and claims for April 11, 2008

Motion passed

REPORTS

(Kiesling) I don't remember how long Sue Berg has been with the Extension Service but I know it's been some time and I have had the pleasure of working with her on a number of projects. The program happening this weekend the, “Celebration of Families” is one of the things that started with Step Ahead, I think, and we started that sometime ago. She does a number of things that help our community. Helping people be self sufficient, helping people who are transitioning out of incarceration and various other things. I was very pleased at the Women's History Luncheon awarded her with a Life Time Achievement Award.

(Sue Berg, Extension Office) I'm always humbled by this because there are so many strong women in this community who take on quiet leadership in order to make this community the way it is. So I tried to argue my way out of the award because I thought there should be others who should get it before me. But I was very pleased to be honored to get it. And have always been an advocate for children, families and families with limited resources. Just because it's a lifetime achievement doesn't mean I'm going to stop.

(Kiesling) How long have you been involved with the Extension Service here in Monroe County?

(Berg) In 1986 at the beginning of the Monroe County Fair after I completed the Greene County Fair the night before. It was a busy summer.

(Kiesling) You've made a big difference in a lot of peoples lives and I want to thank you, but on behalf of the Monroe County citizens and the Board of Commissioners we all want to thank you to for making a difference in peoples lives.

(Poling) We have treasured having you through the years and seeing your work whether it's down at the Welfare Office teaching people how to cook and nutrition.

(Kiesling) Even cleaning out the refrigerators sometimes when they were pretty bad.

(Berg) With kitty cats jumping out of the bottom of the refrigerators, I think was the most surprising. A refrigerator was dirty enough that a kitty.... Five children in the family all under the age of five had spilled kool-aid and so on in the bottom of the refrigerator and so the kitty jumped in and the kids closed the refrigerator door unknown to me, so when I opened up the refrigerator door to check to see how clean it was that week out jump kitty cat.

(Kiesling) So she helps people when they're really in need of making some changes in their lives and helping children be in a better environment and that's been a big difference. Tell us what you are doing with people coming out of incarceration.

(Berg) We're spending quite a bit of time with both while they're on probation to try to get them to understand the economic and fiscal responsibility so that when they do get out on their own they will be better able to handle their finances as well as setting goals and priorities and realizing that not doing something is going to be a cost factor involved. And that wasn't always a reason for them being incarcerated was they did not make good choices. So we're working with them helping them learn how to make those choices and then be responsible for their choices.

(Kiesling) It's certainly an issue that we've talked about and it's talking about it all the time that we need to somehow figure out how we can get folks who are going to stay here get them back into society and make some transitions that are positive.

((Berg) And the nice thing about our program is that there's no time limit and there's not a lot of paperwork. It's a voluntary program so that we work with them while they are ready to learn and when they decide they've had enough they can say we can go away. But we sort of come back and visit every once in a while and they realize that we're not going to give up on them that they will continue to see us and they realize that what we're doing to help them is for their benefit and so it's a learning curve that takes a long time and we have to celebrate the little bits of light along that way.

NEW BUSINESS

HFI COMMERCIAL EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT FOR JUSTICE BUILDING \$7,680

Poling moved Kiesling seconded

(Bill Steger, Legal Dept) This is a renewal of a contract that we've had for sometime with the local firm HFI for maintenance and inspection of the chillers and boilers at the Justice Building. This same firm did in fact install the two new chillers last fall. It provides for an annual first year cost of \$7,680 with three percent yearly increases for the second and third years, however, it may be cancelled upon thirty days notice by either party.

Motion passed

RATIFICATION OF CONSTRUCTION CHANGE DIRECTIVES #1 & #2 FOR COURTROOM

Poling moved Kiesling seconded

(Steger) Both of these construction change directives are related to closeout of the remodeling of the Justice Building we did two years ago for Courtroom 301. The first directive is for \$2288.50 for additional work done at our request on that project. The second one is giving a credit back to the county from the contingency allowance of \$12,711.50. And the additional work was paid out of the contingency fund, so this is not new money.

Motion passed

FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS GROUP

Poling moved Kiesling seconded

(Steger) This is the first piece of what we anticipate will be a major project involving various aspects of a strategic plan for development of the Justice Campus on South Rogers Street. This piece with Financial Solutions Group is for strategic financial plan which integrates expected capital, and operating costs and potential sources of revenue.

The contract work will be billed hourly and it's estimated to be in the area of \$5,000 to \$10,000 however it will not exceed the sum of \$10,000.

(Charles Newmann) Commissioner Stoffers mentioned this at the updates to the council last Tuesday night and then Mr. Steger has highlighted it here. But I would like to have more information brought forward about this. Mr. Steger I think I heard you right it's \$5,000 to \$10,000 for the projected cost?

(Steger) Yes.

(Newmann) And this is to identify the financing for the Justice Campus?

(Steger) Yes

(C. Newmann) And that's really the Thomson property?

(Steger) The Thomson property.

(C. Newmann) Okay, so we all know what we're talking about and that's the property that's down south.

(Steger) It's merely to identify the financing. But we pretty well know what that's going to be. But more particularly it will identify as best we can project now what the capital and operating expenses will be for the campus.

(C. Newmann) What the capital operating expenses would be? So the capital that would be for any construction of any buildings that might be down at the campus including the detention center of any courts or any jails that might go down there?

(Steger) That's correct.

(C. Newmann) Okay and is there a copy of this proposal that the public can be aware of because a lot of times when things like this are started...

(Steger) It's in the packet.

(C. Newmann) Is there anyway we can illuminate this for the public more so they know what is being spent down there, where it's being spent and what it's being spent for? Even though I'm involved in local government I'm still real fuzzy on this. I think this is the first time I've heard this.

(Poling) I think it's incredibly critical this year that the Council and the Commissioners do financial analysis on the changes and the property tax law. What are the implications and impact and this is the beginning and we have lots of work to do. None of it is going to be very fascinating to the public because counting beans is not fascinating work. There are a lot of other things that seem far more exciting.

(C. Newmann) That's true, and if you realize I am one of the council liaisons to the commissioners and I have heard about this only during the council update. I've not received anything from the commissioners. And if we're going to be communicating, if we're going to be agreeing on anything I think that communication has to work and that's the reason why I'm up here this morning trying to communicate. And I still don't know what this is being spent for and Commissioner Stoffers I think I asked you Tuesday if this comes out of the Commissioners budget?

(Stoffers) Yes, and as I recall at that public meeting of the council I reiterated that this was coming out of the Commissioner's budget. I've spoken on this subject probably every council meeting since December. It's no secret we need to do a financial analysis of the capital needs and the operational costs of a justice campus.

(C. Newmann) I keep on hearing the Justice Campus, and I heard Commissioner Poling say that we need to pay attention to the changes in property taxes happening at the state level and we know we need to be doing that. I know several council members are going to be going to Association of Counties meetings trying to understand that just like the commissioners are. But I also want to make the public aware that this is focused specifically at the Thompson's property, this financial package. This is not asking for solicitations for properties across the community like the postal system did. This financial plan at the consideration of the Thomson's property and the Thomson property only as far as I understand it, is that correct?

(Stoffers) Yes and I would refer you back to the County Council's resolution passed in December that specified that.

(C. Newmann) I'll refer you back to my vote on that also.

(Stoffers) Okay.

(C. Newmann) And as the Commissioners liaison and if we want to improve communication I would appreciate being communicated with by the Commissioners to one of your council liaisons.

(Stoffers) Of course I'm sure you recognize we have staff time in the Commissioners office every Monday from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and you and anybody are welcome to join us and always have been.

(C. Newmann) I will be looking at your budget going into the budget sessions this year and you will be preparing that and if I can not understand that budget then I can not advocate for that budget. So I would hope that you would extend yourself out and your communication.

Motion passed

RATIFICATION OF 3D PROFESSIONAL CONTRACTING CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT \$648,500

Poling moved Kiesling seconded

(Steger) This is a written contract which formalized the award you made two weeks ago to 3D Professional Contracting for phase two of the renovation of the Correctional Center. The contract amount is for \$648,500 and that will all be payable from the 2007 General Obligation Bond. The work involves installation of additional showers of the fourth floor and construction of a woman's detox and dorm on the first floor.

Motion passed

ACCEPTANCE OF PARCEL NUMBERS

Poling moved Kiesling seconded

(Cathy Smith, Auditor's office) We are certifying to you today the official certificate of the Monroe County Auditor's office regarding the township parcel numeration required by the State. The ratification of house bill 1001 had certain requirements in order to do it's business. One of those items was an official certification of parcel count for every township in the county for delineation of which townships will retain county township assessing offices. And beyond the ballot in the fall and which ones would be turning over their township assessing duty to the County Assessor. So what I'm certifying you is the number as of January 1, 2008, which was kind of a precarious date and it makes me further feel like the State doesn't really understand how we do business in the county. Our official date of assessment is March 1st. That's the date the Assessor's office works with the Auditor's office and says these are our parcels for the upcoming tax year. The fact that they pick January 1st took us a long time to go back and get the exact count. As of January 2008 there were just under 60,000 parcels at 59,794 and the ceiling for retention of a township office past July 1st was 15,000. We only have one township that meets that number and that is Perry Township and those are DLGF tax codes 008 and 009 at 19,615. So if you accept this we will forward this to the state. The other thing that I would like to mention is you did receive and Iris helped me out on this and I appreciate it. It's a memorandum from the DLGF's office and it's dated April 1, 2008. Of course we didn't receive it. A few days after that but when we got our copy it was single sided and I'm understanding that councils copy was also single sided even though it's a double sided document, so I wanted to thank Iris for providing that information to us. We do have a copy in our office if anybody in the public would like to read it. The other thing I wanted to let you know we are moving forward with the assessed valuations of the county in order to do our county abstract for taxation. That does affect every taxing unit in our county. And this year as you know will be the last year for the department of Child Services to actually be in our budget. And so that's quite a large change. I've been meeting with their financial director on our plan for a transition. And what we want to do regarding reimbursements because one of the reasons why our cash balance has been healthy is we've been working very close with them and getting all of the

reimbursements that we can and we don't want the financial transactions to end on December 31st and they start with the State on January 1st while there's still money out there that can be reimburse to the county. To move forward with these AV's Financial Solutions Group has worked with us on TIF neutralization. We are one of the largest TIF counties in the State. This information has went to the State and when we get this back and we get the percentages that they want to apply to the bases we will put that in our computer system and we will begin to work on the official net AV's of the county.

Motion passed

(Poling) I know tax collection will be late, we don't know how late. And yesterday at the Association of Commissioners we were wondering about the costs of the late tax bills. In other words, how many of our units the fire districts, the schools will have to borrow money?

(Smith) Basically what happens is you have a couple different kind of taxpayers, you have corporate taxpayers, for instance mortgage companies that pays large amounts of money. A lot of times some of this money comes in ahead of time based on estimates. Other times people wait for the exact bill to come out and pay for it. So some of the money is actually already in there cause you have businesses, you have not just residential properties and so once we start collecting taxes, even though it's not the due date then these tax units can petition to the County Treasurer and with agreement with everybody involved they can cut a check to help them run their office, an advancement until they actually get their settlement. We have, I should say, "worked out the bugs" of our new property taxation software that got installed last year. And we went through one whole year of settlement now and it was difficult getting it all set up correctly, but we have done that and this year we've had to add our eighteen tax unit, which is the new Ellettsville/Bean Blossom tax unit. But things seem to be working really well at this point and I believe that settlement will be more swift as we go forward, now that all the parcel numbers are fixed, the new system is installed, everyone is trained. So I hope that once we... once the Treasurer can certify us the collections at that time it should shrink too because they're training now, it was new for them last year also that the time from the date of collection to the date they received their money should be well clasped this year verses last year.

(Poling) Their interest is they've asked three counties and we're one of them to tell us if there is a costs to this late tax billing, if the units are paying interest. And what you're telling me is that they can get advancements from us and so they don't have to pay interest?

(Smith) Well they don't pay interest to us and what I could do...

(Poling) You don't think the schools have to borrow?

(Smith) If they go on and borrow, but what we could do is we could actually write a letter, we can send a letter out to each unit and ask if they done that last year or if they anticipate doing that and we can gather that information and present it to you.

(Poling) We're interested in knowing this because the DLGF we were trying to get some estimate of what these lag times in tax collections, what are they costing counties.

(Smith) And that's a very good question. And one that's a real question.

(Poling) Because the longer this goes the less the Treasurer has for advancements.

(Smith) Absolutely. The other thing that's curious to me is, we sort of know where we're going to fall in developing our budget with our local DLGF rep. He's doing two counties in front of us for the next two weeks and then we're the third county. Once we get that done we have no guarantee that it won't sit on someone's desk up there waiting around for the rest of them to be sent out. So according to him it could be another two or three weeks after that. But I would like to see us get all the information in the next six weeks so we can get tax bills out.

(Poling) It's my understanding that they've started approving budgets.

(Smith) When I spoke with him a couple of days ago he said our area they haven't even started looking at them yet, our district. Anyway I'll be glad to help you anyway that I can.

(Judy Sharp, Assessor) Cathy brought these values down to my office yesterday. They jive with my numbers close enough for government work. We would never, ever say that everything is real precise, but it's pretty close. The January 1st verification date was the DLGF's suggestion. And I think it might have had something to do with counties maybe increasing or decreasing parcel counts. When they were on the cusp and by going back to January 1st it probably stopped some of that because we actually had counties out there that were just a few, one subdivision away from hitting the 15,000 mark. And they would have that done by March 1st and at the DLGF no one wanted that to start happening. So that's why they went back to the January 1st. It gave a better count of parcels. In Monroe County it is only Perry Township. A lot of people have been asking what happens down the road if a township would go up to 15,000. Once this is done as of January 1, 2009 its over with forever, there's no going back. If one of these townships would start quickly developing it's over with, they're gone. It will go under referendum in the General Election. They already have the wording of the referendum. It will be something to the point of, should Monroe County or should all assessing duties. It will not pinpoint a name it will just be very generic yes or no. As you all know right now we're in the middle of this transition for the other ten townships that we are assuming as of July 1 that July 1st is a drop dead date where everything has to be done. So July 1st County Assessor's office should be set up moving forward. There are some questions of this whole transition at the Attorney General. We're waiting for answers from him right now on salaries. We've been talking to the County Council about this. There's going to be a lot of legal issues

coming up. I do a summery of House Bill 1001 specifically for this assessing transition. Next week the AIC is having a huge meeting for council, commissioners and auditors at the fair grounds at Hamilton County. On the general election the referendum says, "yes" then Perry Township will turn over their office to me by December 31st. One of the things that I had to do immediately and it's done, is I had to give anyone that wanted, from those assessors offices an opportunity to apply to work for me. I've already done that; I've already hired so that's over and done.

(C. Newmann) The council is well aware of the AIC meeting. It's going to be held April 29, 2008 down in Jasper IN. I know I'm going down to the Jasper meeting. I don't know who else might be going. Marty Hawk did mention at the last council meeting about Hamilton County.

(Poling) They're also having one in Indianapolis on May 13th. I think after that every county is going to really have to do a lot of financial analysis. You're going to have to be very careful as you do budgeting this summer because we just really don't know the forecast or the implication.

APPOINTMENTS

(Kiesling) We need to clarify some appointments that we have made in the past and need to continue to make in the future. This has to do with Planning in the City as well as in the County. Because the City of Bloomington exercises planning jurisdiction outside of its corporate limits in areas in the County known as AIFA; Areas Intended for Annexation. State law requires that the County Commissioners appoint two members to the City Plan Commission. The members must one; live in the AIFA and two; be affiliated with different political parties. As of this date our appointments are to the City Plan Commission Milan Pece and Travis Vencil. We're just reaffirming this so that it's clear who those appointments are.

(Stoffers) Before we vote... consistent with my disclosure of conflict of interest as an employee of the City of Bloomington and this being a City Board, plus the Director of Planning for the City as an ex-officio member of the Utility Service Board I'll abstain from this vote.

Poling moved Kiesling seconded to affirm Milan Pece and Travis Vencil as members to the City Plan Commission

Motion passed, Stoffers abstained.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

April 12, 2008 the "Celebration of Families" annual event at Third Street Park from noon to 4:00 p.m.

This is Little 500 Weekend. The women's race is today. Iris is one of the judges.

Palette to Palate the fundraiser for the Community Kitchen of Monroe County will be held Saturday evening April 12th at the Clubhouse at the Fields from 7:00 – 10:00

The Monroe County library celebrates National Library Week with Food for Fines April 13 – April 19th.

Smithville Area Drainage Study – the Commissioners will be seeking assistance from a qualified firm to perform a drainage study of the Smithville area in order to determine methods to alleviate flash flooding problems in this area.

(Williams) We were awarded last week by Congressman Hill’s office a grant in the amount of \$712,000 to compliment the \$100,000 grant that we received previously for the renovation of the Cedar Ridge Bridge out on Maple Grove Road.

This week has been County Government Week and I just want to say that we really have been valuing our employees. We recognized our long term employees earlier this year in February.

The 2008 National Association of Counties theme is “Protecting our Children”.

PUBLIC COMMENT

(Jim Tolen) I have two items that I would like to refer to and I will be brief with these. The Volunteers in Medicine Clinic, 333 East Miller Drive, VIM is about to celebrate its first anniversary. What I’m about to say is in no way to diminish the many marvelous social services that a great number of organizations in Monroe County provide to people in need. To me VIM is the very best thing for providing necessary services to people in serious need. It’s the very best thing that I have witnessed in this county in nearly the 44 years that I have lived here, if you’re a citizen and you’re not involved or involving your time with VIM then you need to be doing so. And if you do that you will find that it is one of the most rewarding and uplifting experiences of your life. I sometimes regret having never sought an elected office, but I’ve been around the block a few times and I’m an observer of government. And I recognize excellence in government. And this morning I’m looking at it. And I commend this board for working together for the betterment of this community. And so I say, “Thank you” to Iris, Joyce and to Patrick. Sometimes partisan politics gets involved in the election process. But when you’re no longer a candidate, you’re an office holder the citizens require that you govern all of the citizens. You commissioners aren’t always in step with each other on every issue, nor should you be. But on the larger issues that you face you’ve demonstrated excellence in leadership in office. Not to favor a person or not to favor a particular group, but what is best for the community at large. I believe that thousands of people in this community would be in agreement with what I have stated. I commend you each of you for first putting the community number one in your activities, thank you

(Kiesling) Jim, thanks for talking about the Volunteers in Medicine Clinic. We were there the other day for part of the celebration. And it is amazing how many people have come together to collaborate to make this happen. It is beyond comment practically and warms my heart beyond what I can say. People should go down there and volunteer it's wonderful. I want to thank Dr. Haddawi and all of those people who had the vision to try to make it happen and have a successor to what we had, which was the Community Health Clinic. Which was a good thing and it helped people at the time that we needed it. We needed to go to the next step and this was it. Thank you to the community because the community was willing to come together and make this happen.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

MONROE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Patrick Stoffers, President

Iris Kiesling

Joyce Poling

Attest: Sandy Newmann, Auditor

April 11, 2008 minutes were approved on May 9, 2008