

Decatur County Commissioners
Monday, November 4, 2013
8:00 a.m. Room 106

Present: Rick Nobbe, Jerome Buening, John Richards

The minutes were approved as presented. Claims were approved as presented.

Decatur County Highway Superintendent Mark Mohr discussed the possibility of Bridge 168 (near Westport Covered Bridge) being considered as a federal aid project. Mr. Mohr spoke with United and the numbers are being put together. Mr. Mohr will forward that information to the Commissioners as soon as he receives the information. The project is being proposed as rehabilitation, not a replacement. Mr. Mohr presented the Mylar title sheet for Bridge 2 and it was signed by the commissioners. The bridge was designed by R.W. Armstrong but the engineer who did it has left the company. There has been some minor confusion but overall the project is still on track.

Mr. Mohr asked the Commissioners if they had received and read through a letter of support he has sent on behalf of EMA regarding purchase of a snowplow. He also discussed furnace problems at the highway department building and that they had been advised that the problem is not repairable. The system is more than thirty years old and they have been advised by professionals that it needs replaced. It was agreed that he would obtain quotes and forward them to President Nobbe.

Mr. Mohr presented a request from Frontier that asked the county permission to bore under 400 South for a utility drop. Mr. Mohr stated he had reviewed the request and could foresee no problems with signing the permit. The Commissioners agreed and signed the permit.

Rob Duckworth discussed the variety of grants that have been applied for and received through the efforts of EMA and pointed out that the county has already recouped more money than their original outlay for the co-directors of EMA. He stated that an additional \$10,000 was received in grant money to be used for equipping the mobile response unit. An EMA Incentive Grant has also been received that will be used to buy an emergency lighting unit. Decatur County REMC and the Community Foundation both gave money towards helping establishing the CERT program (Community Emergency Response Team). The money is being used to purchase equipment needed for emergency staging in the northern part of the county. Mr. Duckworth also mentioned that both school corporations in the county had received the full \$50,000 allotment (per corporation) for implementing a school resource officer position in the schools. Mr. Duckworth commented that 12 – 16 hours had been spent by EMA personnel helping write the grant. Since they already have an officer, Greensburg School Corporation will utilize their grant money for security surveillance equipment.

Mr. Duckworth also discussed winter preparedness activities. He talked about the three levels, Advisory, Watch and Warning and also asked the Commissioners if they had given any thought to the purchase of a snow blade attachment. The cost is around \$2100. After some discussion, Mr. Richards moved to allow the purchase of the snowblade. Mr. Buening seconded the motion. President Nobbe concurred and informed Ms. Wenning that payment will come from Plans and Implementations.

Mr. Duckworth also reported that the request for \$330,000 for district grants to purchase trailer-mounted generators for each county in the district was reduced to \$50,000 to purchase 2 per district. The question is where to house this equipment and Mr. Duckworth pointed out that in order to accept equipment, you need to be able to store it safely. He asked for the Commissioners to consider endorsing the idea of utilizing EDIT money to put up a storage facility. He will be talking to the council about the idea and wanted to ask the Commissioners for their support.

Mr. Buening suggested a survey of what type of “plug” each of the smaller towns have to see if some sort of adaptor would be necessary or if there is some consistency.

Ms. Sarah Robinson, Director of Mainstreet Greensburg was on hand to request permission to decorate the downtown and the north atrium for Christmas and to use the space for Santa visits. After some discussion of the decorating timeframe and the hours of operation of the Santa house, Mr. Buening moved to allow the planned activities. Mr. Richards seconded the motion. Mr. Nobbe concurred.

Mr. Nobbe discussed the savings the county had enjoyed utilizing the “pooled pricing” available to county entities through Proliance. He reported that the four meters enrolled in the program had a savings of \$2573 to the county. The contract will automatically renew unless the Commissioners choose to rescind the agreement. No one moved to do so.

Mr. Richards agreed to check on getting the tower tree trimmed.

Mr. Nobbe indicated he had received a letter from Catch A Ride asking for continued support. It was acknowledged that the program is funded in the 2014 budget.

Persons interested in the Cottonwood Lakes Subdivision request for the creation of an Economic Improvement District were on hand to continue the discussion started at the initial public hearing held at the last Commissioner meeting. It was determined that the petition has the appropriate amount of signatures required and that the guidelines also required a calculation of net assessed value be factored in. Mr. Nobbe asked County Attorney Peg Polanski to concur that the petition met all state requirements. She did so.

The statute does state that the proposal should include a way to divide the cost among the owners. There was discussion that lots vary in value from empty unimproved lots to lots with nice homes. The original petition proposed that each pay 1/23rd of the cost. Mr. Nobbe pointed out that the persons that form the board will be charged with working through the highway or a contractor regarding the costs and scope of the project and will be responsible for sharing that information with the other owners. The Commissioner’s role is to simply allow the formation of the EID. Mr. Buening asked if the 3 member board is responsible for deciding how the repayment is apportioned. Ms. Polanski stated that the answer is yes; the board takes over and reports to county council. The board would also be responsible for preparing an annual budget and doing the required reporting to the DLGF. Once again, it was mentioned that there is nothing binding in the current proposal. The Commissioners are being requested to establish the district. The Commissioners would establish the district boundaries for the area. The ordinance would set up the district boundaries and how many are to serve on the board.

Ms. Polanski reiterated that they (Cottonwood) are required in the petition to tell the Commissioners what they (Cottonwood) would want to do and the Commissioners are empowered to create the district and set the board.

There were several comments concerning obtaining funding from sources other than the county. Cottonwood owners were asked for their comments. Mr. Nobbe stated he would like to see a proposal put together of exactly what the project is going to be, whether it is just roads in Cottonwood or if CR 500 S is included. Mr. Mohr asked if it would be safe to assume that certain portions of the plan could be contingent upon financing.

Owner Marla Van Shaik stated that, realistically, if the subdivision has to fund the project up front, it is likely that the district would only pave in Cottonwood. The group would be willing to work with the county if the county would front the money and then the residents would be willing to pay to help pave 500 or another project. Mr. Joseph Allen Stewart clarified that he felt the group would seek outside financing to just do the subdivision, if they can’t get financing, then the district could negotiate with the county to see what could be done if the county could finance. The owners would probably be happy to pay to pave 500 also. If the county would partner with the district, then the district would also pay for the paving of 500.

Mr. John Richards, County Commissioner, voiced his concern that he has a problem with public money being used to pave private roads.

Mr. Nobbe stated that we are not at a point where that decision needs to be made and that conversation could take place at a later date if the conversation is necessary. Ms. Van Shaik feels that banks would be more willing to loan if the District was formed because that would show that the county backs the idea. It would signify that the county is willing to be the collection method for the repayment of the loan through the tax bill process. It was suggested that Ms. Wenning forward minutes from the prior meeting and the current meeting to Ms. Van Shaik as proof for her to provide to financial

institutions that the conversation is taking place with the county and that the county is willing to form and EID if the bank is willing to fund it.

After more discussion, it was mentioned that the next Commissioner meeting is on November 18th and the December meetings are on the 2nd and 16th. If the Cottonwood group has more information, they may come to those meetings.

Mr. Stewart mentioned again that if the commissioners would okay the district, no one would be out anything. No action was taken.

Mr. Buening asked Ms. Wenning to locate a security audit done on the courthouse from several years back. He was unsure of the source of the audit or of the year. Mr. Richards and Ms. Polanski both thought they may have a copy to provide Ms. Wenning. She, in turn, is to bring everyone a copy to the next meeting.

It was mentioned that the next County Council meeting is on November 19th at 6:00 p.m.

It was also mentioned that Ms. Wenning and Mr. Mohr will both be absent from the meeting on the 18th.

Mr. Richards moved to recess and Mr. Buening seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Rick Nobbe, President

Attest _____

Date _____