

August 10, 1998

Chairman, Lester Templin, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. with all members present. Minutes of the 8/3 meeting were approved as corrected, motioned by Darle, second by Brian, and passed. The correction notes Brian motioned to accept the Assessor's recommendation to hire Accurate Assessment, second by Darle (rather than Brian) and passed. Commissioners reviewed and signed the Payroll Claim and Allowance Docket, and the Payroll Check Register. Noted that Triax Cablevision has merged, and will now be known as Alliance Communications L.P. Will forward a TORT notice filed by Lola and Walter Wandersee to Attorney, Tom Mattern. Reviewed the NIPSCO Choice plan involved with de-regulation, which allows options for the purchase of gas. After comparing the costs, Commissioners will stay with NIPSCO for now.

Elliott Road bridge replacement: Herb Underwood told Commissioners if the location is altered, it would have to be approved by the Dept. of Natural Resources, which would take a minimum of 4 to 6 weeks. After discussion, Brian motioned to accept the estimate of \$89,664. from DEBCO Metal Culverts, second by Darle, and passed. DEBCO will remove the destroyed structure, and work should be completed by Nov. 1st.

Tillman Road right-of-way: Chad Dilling will send a letter requesting removal of a trailer that encroaches the right-of-way. There's been trouble here before.

David Murphey, Somerset Town Board president: Presented a petition requesting the county to accept Shopping Center Rd. into it's system, so the county would maintain it. The 30 ft. wide road adjacent to the shopping center in Somerset has never been dedicated to the county. Darle moved to accept Shopping Center Rd. into the county roads system, second by Brian, and passed. Petition papers will be forwarded to Tom Mattern.

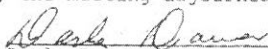
Innkeeper Tax increase hearing: Commissioners adjourned their regular meeting for the hearing. Trula Frank, director of the Convention and Tourism Bureau, shared her reasons for supporting the increase from 3% to 5% which is the maximum allowed. The increase would help us compete with surrounding counties that collect the maximum, allow her to work full time to promote Wabash, and increase funds for advertising. Leon Ridenour, Pat Lynn, Richard Pepple, Bruce Storm and Doug Lehman all spoke in support of the increase. Darle asked if she would work to promote overnight activities that would draw business to the innkeepers who collect the fee. Trula says activities in surrounding area's like the James Dean Festival in Fairmont and the Farm Show in Lebanon affect us now. Holiday Inn Express representatives, H.B. Patel and Bindu Patel would like to see more results from Trula's current efforts before there's an increase. They haven't noticed many overnight guests attracted here by current programs, except maybe the performers. Their summer week-ends have been near capacity, but they would like to see similar results in the other seasons. They also asked about taxing restaurants rather than increasing the Innkeepers Tax. Bindu also wonders if their corporate business will be affected by an increase, as Miami Co. doesn't collect the tax. Brian noted the completion of the Heartland Corridor will be a major part of our projected growth, and motioned to support the increase of the tax to 5% effective 1/1/99, second by Darle, and passed. The request must be approved by the Council, too.

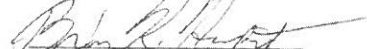
Pat Lynn Transportation grant 5311: The total request is for \$58,355 (operating \$31,835. and capital \$26,520.), and the proposal has been embellished since last year. Submission deadline is 8/13, and one of the three grants available is still uncommitted. Commissioner Chairman Les Templin signed, and will submit a letter of support.

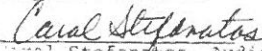
Manatron ditch reconstruction program: Manatron is pressuring the county to resume monthly software fees, as they contend the original complaints and a mid June problem with Spring Settlement have been resolved. They would like to reinstate the software support with an effective date of May 1, 1998. Treasurer, Ann Gillespie, is still worried about roll over after the November settlement, and says few County Treasurer's have faith in the program. Since she won't actually know if the program is successful until about Feb. of 1999, she suggests resuming monthly payments after the Nov. settlement, if the program proves successful. Commissioners agree as a group to withhold payment until after the November settlement figures are in. If everything is okay, Wabash County will pay Manatron retroactive to July 1, 1998. The county will continue to support the program in the future as long as it functions correctly. Commissioners are willing to meet with Manatron personnel if they so wish.

Paul Bergman, Emergency Management: Toured with State Emergency Management (SEMA) and Small Business Administration (SBA) representatives for 12 hours last Thursday assessing damages from the 7/3 and 7/21 storms. Preliminary estimates indicate about 15 major disaster sites in the county. We may be able to piggy back with Miami County for assistance, because their damage seems to be more extensive. Figures could change as more reports come in. At this time aid would be in the form of low interest loans to repair damage. Criteria states damage must equal at least 40% of the value of the home. With no further business, the meeting adjourned.


Lester Templin, Chairman


Darle Dawes


Brian Haupt

ATTEST: 
Carol Stefanatos, Auditor