

APRIL 25, 2005

The Wabash County Commissioners met in regular session following the Wabash County Council Meeting in the former Circuit Court Room, Wabash County Courthouse. Chairman Les Templin called the meeting to order with Brian Hauptert present, Darle Dawes was absent due to illness. Minutes for the April 18th meeting were approved as written, moved by Brian, seconded by Les, approved by a 2 to 0 vote.

A group of Wabash County residents presented a petition with nearly 50 signatures to the Commissioners requesting to alter traffic devices at Co.Rds 200E and 250S, following a fatal accident at that location recently. Suggestions were: a four-way stop at the intersection, warning signs and/or rumble strips approaching the intersection and possibly leveling out the hill prior to the intersection. Beverly A. Friend, who lives across from the Asbury Church, spokesperson for the group asked the Commissioners to consider all of the suggestions for public safety adding that she feels that these may have possibly prevented the death of Franklin Pennington recently. Doris Bever stated she could not go to her mailbox, turn around and go back across the road without waiting to listen for traffic because of the dip in the road and that "something" needs to be done. Fred Brewer stated he has relatives that live in the area and is a member of the Asbury Church and he has always worried about the safety of the church members pulling in and out of the parking lot and favors a four-way stop and removing the east hill. Carol Copeland lives on 300E and said that "people use the Dora Road like a raceway" which is extremely dangerous with tractors and equipment on the road. Roger Waltz lives at the corner and sanctioned the comments of the others mentioning that the road is narrow and dangerous to cross or pull in or out of his driveway. Maurice Frazier stated his personal opinion that speed is the biggest problem and that previously the county had tried to get the hill shaved down, moving the poles back but never got the hill shaved. John Friend reiterated about the speed problems on the road especially in the summer with motorcycles, larger trucks and towing of boats. James Urschel would like to see the stop signs and possibly rumble strips would be helpful to warn of the stop ahead. Tony Hoover recalled other accidents within the past 10 years. Sheriff Striker addressed the situation as that speed is not always a factor but seems to be seasonal and depends on the time of the day and that a vehicle going 55-60 mph appears a lot faster due to the visibility factor along that stretch of road. He stated they may be able to reduce speeds with traffic tickets. When asked by Les about the time frame for the worst problems with speed, Friend replied "early in the morning and around or after 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Brewer stated that Friday evenings after work and with increased reservoir weekend traffic were busy and dangerous times also. Highway supervisor Larry Rice stated that from his departments' standpoint a) these were all points well taken, b) the public must be prepared for accidents even with a four-way stop, c) he would be happy with if the hills were out of the road as the line-of-site distance east of the intersection is 60-70' less, d) all of us are going to have to live with the decisions made when we try to correct the situation: "we cannot correct humans, if they don't stop or obey traffic signs you are still going to have trouble". Following more public discussion, Commissioner Hauptert stated, "you can sign to pieces and that doesn't mean people are going to pay attention -especially with the church there I hope people don't become over-confident that traffic will stop and they will be safer." Commissioner Templin said "If we can save lives it makes it well worth it." Brian then moved to amend the sign ordinance to include a four-way stop at Co. Rds. 200E and 250 S., seconded by Les and approved by a 2-0 vote. The Commissioners attorney, Tom Mattern was directed to start the process.

Morris and David Milliner were present after receiving a letter indicating the board would like to talk about the side ditch on the west side of 100E south of 900S which is a gravel road. Highway Supervisor Rice reported that there was no beam left at the side of the road and rain will fill the side ditch and wash the stone into ditch. At this time it is not on the agenda to chip and seal the road. The Milliners have put a side ditch in attempting to straight the bottom of the ditch. Commissioner Hauptert stated that even if they thought this was an improvement, "without talking to us before hand, you can't go ahead, you should have come to us first and said you wanted to do this work instead of going ahead and doing the work yourself". Commissioner Templin added that "we appreciate the farmers' mowing and taking care of the roads but the bottom line is communication." Following discussion it was decided the Milliners should get together with Rice and decide what needs to be done. David said it probably needs a little dirt and grass seed to give it a bank. Rice gave them a copy of the road specifications and confirmed the county ordinance states a 40' right-of-way. Rice agreed that if there is a registered or certified drain there that does need to have something done it should be brought before the Drainage Board. Both commissioners agreed that everything was getting worked out now and suggested that the Milliners might need to see the Surveyor about the drain.

Rice also presented a request for a cut to the road for a 6" tile by Doug Stephen west of 7213 E 700 N for the county to install at a cost of \$380.00. Brian moved for approval as requested, seconded by Les and approved by a 2-0 vote.

Rice also filed a copy of the Wabash County Highway Department Emergency Escape Plan with the Auditor and the Commissioners.

Commissioner Attorney Tom Mattern thanked Les and BFS for their help with the hearing for the condemnation on the Old State Road 15 project last week. They expect a settlement to be made soon.

Sheriff Leroy Striker reported 89 inmates in jail today.

Clerk of the Circuit Court Lori Draper was present to ask the commissioners to pass an ordinance pursuant to IC Code 35-50-5-4 for inmate reimbursement to the county. Earlier in the Wabash County Council Meeting, the council had set a maximum of \$30.00 per diem, (the Judge will set the number of days). The Sheriff will collect this fee to be paid to the County General Fund. Following discussion, Brian moved to proceed with such an ordinance, seconded by Les and approved by a 2-0 vote. Attorney Mattern asked for a sample ordinance and the judge's input to prepare the ordinance.

James Rose was present to inquire about a property going up for Sheriff's sale. It had been in the Tax Sale in 2002 with no bids received. The city of Lagro raised the building for \$6000. He requested any help the county could give with the delinquent taxes. The commissioners responded that there was nothing they could do in this situation.

Amy Carpenter of Apex Benefits Group of Indianapolis, an independent employee benefits group was present to introduce her company and that they would like to be involved in future health care benefits bidding for the county. She requested permission to compare some of our current coverages offered. The Commissioners stated that would be fine as long as the Auditor had time to work with her.

Jay Harvey and Carol Sipes of Strategic Health Plans were present to offer the options available for life insurance coverage for employees and recommend an increase in the Cobra rates as presented. Life insurance coverage of \$15,000 for employees and \$7500 for spouses is available at the same premium now being charged for only \$5000. Brian moved to accept Option One and to accept the new Cobra rates based on the expected claims costs as recommended and to rewrite the upgrade policy, seconded by Les and passed on a 2-0 vote. Open enrollment will be offered and Cobra rates will be effective June 1st.

The Commissioners asked the Auditor to send a memo to all department heads reminding them that all capital outlay purchases are to be approved by the Commissioners before being submitted to the Council requesting an Additional Appropriation.

Brian Hauptert submitted a letter of resignation from the WEDCOR Board of Directors as the Commissioners' appointee.

No other business, the meeting recessed. The next meeting will be May 2, 2005 at 9:00 A.M.

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Lester D. Templin, Chairman

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Darle V. Dawes

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Brian K. Haupert

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jane E. Ridgeway, Auditor