

MARCH 14, 2005

The Wabash County Commissioners met in regular session in the former Circuit Court Room, Wabash County Courthouse. Chairman Les Templin called the meeting to order with all members present. Minutes for the March 7th meeting were approved as written, moved by Darle, seconded by Brian, approved by a 3 to 0 vote.

Highway Supervisor Larry Rice discussed the repair work needed to be done on the exterior of the highway garage building, he stated he had been in touch with contractors for estimates and he hopes that they will stay on top of the project before any more damage.

Wabash County Sheriff Leroy Striker reported a jail population of 88 today and also reported that the Community Corrections remodeling is still progressing well. Striker also discussed changes in his fleet to save costs and was told that EMA would be interested in a used sheriff's vehicle.

County Attorney Tom Mattern reported he had talked with Toby Steffan of Butler, Fairman and Seufert, Inc. about the condemnation hearing on the Old State Road 15 property and he had said they would have someone present from their firm for the April 21st hearing. Mattern also received a copy of the eminent domain suit.

Gerald Hopkins was present to ask that the commissioners consider the problem with the damage and stress being done on the courthouse tower by the vibration of the bell at the clock level and also at the top of the structure. The commissioners felt they should address the issue with Mary Ellen Rudisel, restoration architect and have someone take a look at it and possible solutions. The board again thanked Mr. Hopkins for his work and effort for the reproduction lights for the courthouse.

Bob Brown, EMA director, discussed the placement of antenna for the amateur radio side of the communication system to be placed in the attic of the courthouse by EMA funds. The board recognized Brown for the Wabash County EMA award mentioned in the recent Hoosier Safety magazine.

Officials from the County Health Department were present and introduced Joe Hill the District Coordinator for Bio-terrorism planning. He spoke of some of the plans his office is making and asked for the commissioners blessing to move forward with a "Titan Plan" to build a consensus with the Health Department and EMA. Jane Skeans expressed the desire to apply for federal funding to hire a Public Health Coordinator to be paid from a grant. She said the current staff will work with the new coordinator and will still be able to implement the plans, but that the amount of work for all the meetings, etc. is more than they can currently handle. Hill would also be working with the new person in training. The board approved a motion to apply for the grant. Motion made by Brian and seconded by Darle. Passed 3-0.

Shari Hinds of United Consultants, Inc introduced herself to the board and described her company and their representation of American Timberbridge.

Barrie Bunnell of Bunnell Land Surveying and Ralph Bolinger were present to discuss the proposed Cherry Springs Estates development and requested permission to use 10' of ingress/egress easement on the Donna Fowerbaugh property to provide the required 40' road right-of-way. They stated the county could still maintain the road and right-of-way as if they owned it. Following discussion, the board asked that Larry Rice meet with the developers at the site as they would want his recommendations. Rice stated he would like to see the road drawn in the plans as they have proposed and asked if the easement was going to allow the necessary work on the Fowerbaugh driveway and the water from the side ditch also needs to be addressed.

Bill Simpson of BJS Landscaping and Lawn Home Maintenance was present with a plan for free landscape trimming to be done around the courthouse. The commissioners also discussed with him the possibility of relocating the historic marker that has been refinished by the vocational school. The board thanked him for his offer of help.

Steve Jones of United Consulting discussed the Bridge 208 project and the historic bridge on Ferry Street (Bridge 505).

The commissioners reviewed the Benicomp self-funded case report, a request for Perf authorization for County Auditor Jane Ridgeway, and a request from Metropolitan Schools for gravel at a bus turnaround located at 2190 North and 600 East.

With no other business, the board recessed until 3:00 when they met with department heads, employee representatives and Strategic Health Plans representatives Jay Harvey and Carol Sipes to discuss possible options to avoid high increases in insurance coverage. All options discussed at the meeting will be taken under advisement and Strategic will work up the dollar amounts for the various options discussed for March 21st meeting.

No other business, the meeting recessed. The next meeting will be Monday, March 21st at 9:00 A.M.

Lester D. Templin, Chairman

Darle V. Dawes

Brian K. Hauptert

ATTEST: _____
Jane E. Ridgeway, Auditor