

WHEREAS, in the opinion of the County Auditor, the public interests required that the Lake County Council, should be called to meet in Special Joint session at this time, for the purpose of considering additional appropriations, a written notice was sent to each member of the Council, and proper advertisement made, and all other acts performed in accordance with the laws governing such matters.

And now in obedience to such call, come Ted Bilski, President, David Hamm, Elsie Franklin, and Eldon Strong, County Councilpersons, together with Ray Szarmach, County Council Attorney. Councilwoman Christine Cid, Councilman Dan Dernulc, and Councilman Jerome Prince were absent.

Commissioner Gerry Scheub, Commissioner Roosevelt Allen, Jr., and Commissioner Michael Repay were present, together with Attorney John Dull.

#### In the Matter of DOJ Jail Project

##### Discussion

Commissioner Scheub said that this meeting was being held to have open dialogue, and gather ideas about preparing a 5-year master plan to solve many of the on-going problems in the facilities of Lake County Government, which includes the County Jail, Gary Courthouse, and the East Chicago Courthouse. He said we need to sit down with Elected Officials, and come up with a solid plan to resolve all problems in the beginning of 2015. He said that every time we turn around there is something else that we can't afford to finance.

Bilski said he is 100% on board with preparing a complete project with a projected cost timeline.

Commissioner Allen was concerned about a matter, and said he thought that this meeting was a good time to discuss it. He said he was sent correspondence about emergency issues in the Jail, on the second and third floor. He said he wanted to speak with Mark. He said they solicited 3 proposals, but only one was submitted. He said so they have a proposal, but it's sealed up, and he doesn't know what's in it, or what it says, or what the amount is. He said he doesn't know if the emergency still exists, and maybe the proposal should be opened. He said if the emergency doesn't still exist, then there is no point in opening it up.

It was stated that because of this emergency that was brought to our attention on August 23<sup>rd</sup>, that emergency is still in existence. The ceiling is still leaking because there is water coming out of it, and the question was where is the water coming from?

Bob Rehder, Superintendent, who is responsible for the buildings in Lake County, explained that he had an emergency meeting, on Friday of last week, with John Dull. He invited 3 different Contractors there, and they went to the site, they looked at the chases, and said, yes, we do have a problem with the chases. He said, at that time, it wasn't the chases that were leaking, it was a sprinkler head.

He said, they want to move forward, they have worked with the Sheriff, but he has to prioritize. Rehder also said he has 17 buildings that he looks over, and he has to keep up the other 5 Courthouses. He said right now, he doesn't believe that he has to do anything, with that third floor. He said, when he walked in there, those chases were dry. He said it happened again, the same inmate knocked the sprinkler head, flooded it again, and it was due to a sprinkler head. He said he is for doing the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floor, but right now, it wasn't due to that.

Bilski said with the Bid package, what did you put out? He said he wants to do it in a manner that is most cost efficient for us.

Rheder said, I don't think we have \$3 million dollars right now, to do it.

Bilski asked is that what it's going to come in as?

Rehder said, I am sure that's what it's going to come in at, maybe more. It's the same work that we've done on the 1<sup>st</sup>, and the 5<sup>th</sup> floor. The 3<sup>rd</sup> floor is the largest floor of all 3.

Commissioner Allen said the implication was that there was an emergency, and we sent out 3 emergency proposals, and that's why they were sent out to the 3 perspective vendors, because evidently the legal people felt that it was an emergency. If the Sheriff is saying that the water that's coming down on his floor, and his offices, on the desk is contaminated with sewage, then that is an emergency under any law, that's it's contaminated with sewage.

Commissioner Allen said I don't know what the proposal is here, it says on the outside, that it is a proposal for an emergency plumbing repair, I assume that's for whatever the emergency is, that's not a proposal for an overall repair of the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.

Bilski said he thinks that everybody should be in agreement here that we need to get the bid out there to complete the project, so we can get the money for 2015. We have to find the money, and if it is going to cost us \$2 million dollars, we have to decide how we are going to address that, and that means that where we are coming in with our PTRC, are we going to bond. He said we need to also get out Capital Plan so we have money for E911.

Strong asked the Sheriff if it is sewer water?

Rehder said that one of the contractors that he walked with, what he said to him is "why are we here"? That's what he said to me. "We fixed the problem last Friday, and then it happened again", but that tells me, he told me it was a sprinkler head, it wasn't due to sewage. I didn't see any evidence of sewage in those chases.

Repay asked can we have an opinion on an emergency, non-emergency. Can we have a perceived emergency, and then realize later that the emergency is a non-emergency?

John Dull said he probably was one who misinterpreted what was occurring, he thought it was sewage, he went to the Commissioners, and had 2 of them declare an emergency, based on sewer and plumbing. He said if you were to open that bid, you are going to find out what it's going to cost you, and if you then decide because of that number that you are going to put it out for a spec, are you putting...(inaudible)?

Repay said if the bid in this envelope is documentation and bid prices on complete renovation on the third floor, then essentially it's open to the public, and it puts that Contractor at a disadvantage because, if the total is \$3 million dollars, we can't declare an emergency on a \$3 million dollar job, right?

Dull said, you don't have the appropriation.

Commissioner Allen said, the question is whether the water is contaminated. It was never tested. You just can't look at water and say it's contaminated, or it's not contaminated.

Attorney Szarmach said there should be an opinion, whether or not that water is contaminated.

Bilski commented that until we find out that it's contaminated, we treat it as contaminated, not the other way around, we treat it as, worse case scenario.

Franklin said they should have the water tested, utilize the Health Department.

Strong said that from what he has heard from Bob, it's not leaking.

Bob said, I've been told by the Contractor that it's been corrected.

Bilski said, I don't know what's in that envelope, but we need a scope of work, we've got to get the Contractor, get the money to do this, we are moving ahead, so we know where it will take us till the end of the year, then in December, we can have this money approved, and start the project within about 60 days, and get this done. I don't have \$2 million dollars right now, I appreciate the Commissioners wanting to address this problem, but we can't approve a Contractor \$3 million dollars.

Scheub said that's not what this meeting was for, we can't approve a \$3 million dollars bond. We needed to look at the long term, a 5-year plan, how we are going to fix some things. Let's get a master plan, and the cost with it, but this emergency came up.

Bilski said I'm prepared right now, since we have the full scope, the Sheriff to get us a detailed Plan to get that 3<sup>rd</sup> floor exactly where it needs to be, and get that information out for bid, and have that as part of our Capital Plan for 2015.

Repay said in the interest of discussing a big master plan, some of the things that most of us who sit up here can either readily recognize, or we hear from our constituents, whether it be roads, bridges, drainage. Those are things we hear regularly. The one thing that we probably need to get documentation on is what are those, besides the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, and the buckets on the second floor, what are those things that are necessary for the DOJ to be satisfied.

Someone answered, prioritize. (the rest of the discussion is inaudible)

There was also a discussion about the phone system, and there being no lines. Repay said they have a solution for the phone system. He said, Mr. Raggs has spoken with Mr. Purevich and they have a solution.

Commissioner Allen said, on the original project for the Jail, it was estimated that it was going to cost \$4 to \$5 million dollars. He said we've spent \$1.6 million dollars already, so it's a fact that \$1.6 million, from the \$5 million, and you have a general idea of what it's going to cost you to finish it.

It was explained that there are other areas, there are ceilings to be replaced, that's all incorporated, it's not just plumbing. There are a lot of corrective measures.

Commissioner Allen said but that was all incorporated into the initial project, that part has already been done. He said, what Commissioner Scheub is talking about, we did that part of it, the overall cost of the Jail. He is talking about the other costs, like the drainage, the cost, going into the future for Highway, and other costs that the County is going to incur, and building and maintenance, and all of that. We already know what the Jail estimates are.

It was said just to be clear, that's for that plumbing project, that's not DOJ compliance, and mental health, that's another couple hundred thousand, or what?

The answer is (inaudible) I believe it's the Sheriff speaking.

Commissioner Allen asked, you are saying that the overall costs, are going to exceed \$5 million?

Hamm asked, what exactly do we need to get this done?

Bilski said, we need to find a permanent fund source. The Commissioners, and the Sheriff need to sit down and come back and say, here is our 5-point Plan, and it will cost xxx amount of dollars, then the 7 of us will sit down with Dante to figure out how to find a permanent funding source.

Repay said, the biggest point is, that's how I started this conversation you know what roads are in disrepair, you know what drains need to be improved.

There was much discussion, but everyone was speaking at the same time, (inaudible)

Sheriff Buncich said I will, find out the cost, and what, specifically is going to be needed to satisfy the DOJ. He said we are 65% done.

Sheriff Buncich is speaking, (inaudible).

Rehder said he put information together, saying what he needed. He said the DOJ came forward and said they had to do Mental Health. He said they took \$750,000, so we had to find those dollars for that. That's where this money has been taken for that. He said in the midst of this, they took a million dollars from your funding, right there. He said we need to put a plan together because as Superintendent of the Building, and I can't explain why the Gary Courthouse is down... He said we are down because need a boiler. We have to prioritize. I need to do repairs in the Hammond Courthouse because nobody has looked at this for 20 years. He said, now I'm putting a Plan together, with the help of everybody here. He said other things have come up, and that's what has happened.

Councilwoman Franklin said she has always been a supporter of the Jail, but the Gary Courthouse, as well as the other buildings, can not be ignored because of the ongoing problems in the Jail.

Dull said that every spec, with cost estimates of 100K, must be done with Plans by an architect, and those Plans must be submitted to a State Agency for approval so if you are going to go with this Plan, you know that you can't do much for \$100K, so you... Bilski interjected(inaudible).

Repay asked how many cell blocks are on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor?

He said the reason he is asking that question is if they could do it block by block.

Attorney Dull said, you would still have to go out to bid. He suggested that you get your Plan. He said you can't break up a major job up into small amounts to avoid a bid war.

He said you need to gather the Project, but then you need the architect to prioritize them. When you go out to bid, follow what Councilman Bilski said, which was that he wanted to see a spec, which is what we didn't have, even with the original one, we told them to go look at it, now you tell us what you need, that's how we ended up.

Bilski said if you decide to bond, and if you don't expect it to go for a referendum, you would keep it under \$12 million, and the time factor, if there were no remonstrators, is 119 days, which would put you into December.

Attorney Dull said that gives you some time to do what you want, the real guts of this, is do I need to bond for the construction projects that's out there, or can I do it some other way?

He said your answer will be, yes, we need to bond for it. You need to get that process started quickly.

Then, during this period of time you come in with your projects, somebody has to prioritize them. He said, the Elected Officials are the ones who prioritizes them.

Once you've done that, hire your architect.

Attorney Dull said the Commissioners need to set a special meeting to adopt findings to proceed.

Commissioner Scheub said that was the purpose of this meeting, to set up a master plan to bring Gary, Hammond, and East Chicago buildings up to code.

Attorney Dull asked to whom are those lists going to be submitted to?

Commissioner Scheub answered to Bob Rehder.

Attorney Dull said everybody that has some stuff needs to submit it to Rehder, the Commissioners are going to call a special meeting to go forward with the Bond Issue, then you need to get somebody to prioritize, then you hire your architect.  
He said Councilman Bilski wants the specs. He said the spec right now is so elusive.

Discussions continue, but it's inaudible. Everybody talking at the same time.

Bilski said we've discussed those issues, we need to have open discussions about permanent funding sources for projects, we need to also look at the bridges, and there is a possibility to bond for that existing department. It might not be included in our (inaudible).

Dante said on your agenda for the 2015 budget is... (inaudible) others are speaking at the same time.

Commissioner Allen said there was some discussion about eventually creating a conservancy district for drainage in the southern part of the county, like they have in the northern part of the county, since the population is increasing, in a number of the sub-divisions. As the costs continue to increase for renovations, and repairs.

Attorney Dull said, if Crown Point doesn't annex Hermits Lake, you need to set up a sanitary district for Hermits Lake..(inaudible).

Franklin asked the Commissioners to re-visit their decision to have Cigna, because there are numerous complaints from employees.

Repay responded to Franklin on that issue.

Commissioner Allen said since we haven't determined whether there is actually an emergency, he made a motion that they return the proposal, unopened. Scheub seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

The Council took NO ACTION in this meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Council, it was moved and seconded that the Council does now adjourn, to meet again, as required by law.

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President, Lake County Council

ATTEST:

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Peggy Holinga Katona,  
Lake County Auditor

