

Minutes
August 1, 2017

Commissioners Present: Mark Gazarek, Brian Robertson and Timothy Bechtol.

Also Present: Lucinda Land, Philip Johnson, Steve Wilson, Doug Jenkins, Jim Maurer, and Julie Benziger.

Commissioner Gazarek opened the meeting at 9:30 a.m. in the Commissioners' 1st floor conference room. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Minutes from the July 27, 2017 meeting were read with Brian Robertson making the motion to approve, Timothy Bechtol seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

The Clerk presented the following resolutions for consideration:

Resolution #396-17 – Authorizing payment of the listed and/or attached purchase orders. Brian Robertson made the motion to approve, Timothy Bechtol seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #397-17 – Additional appropriation within the Auditor's certification-Commissioners to appropriate to Water Pollution Control (Rodabaugh). Brian Robertson made the motion to approve, Timothy Bechtol seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #398-17 – Additional appropriation within the Auditor's certification-Commissioners to appropriate to Special Improvement Ditch (Western Meadows Detention Pond). Brian Robertson made the motion to approve, Timothy Bechtol seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #399-17 – Repayment of advance from Ditch Maintenance (Ottawa Creek Single County Ditch) to the General Fund. Brian Robertson made the motion to approve, Timothy Bechtol seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #400-17 – Advance of funds from the General Fund to Special Improvement Ditch (Wanda Way Paving Project). Brian Robertson made the motion to approve, Timothy Bechtol seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #401-17 – Transfer of funds within the appropriation-Sheriff. Brian Robertson made the motion to approve, Timothy Bechtol seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #402-17 – Repayment of advance from the Juvenile Court Specialized Docket Fund-\$40,000.00. Brian Robertson made the motion to approve, Timothy Bechtol seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #403-17 – Advance of funds from the General Fund to the Juvenile Court Specialize Docket Fund. Brian Robertson made the motion to approve, Timothy Bechtol seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #404-17 – Release of permissive tax-Village of Jenera to pay for resurfacing on Church Street from Main Street to High Street. Brian Robertson made the motion to approve, Timothy Bechtol seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

The clerk reported that Doug Cade sent a letter requesting a resolution be prepared accepting a grant agreement through the State for federally funded projects involving ODOT and FHWA and Steve Wilson requested a resolution to remove underground storage tanks at 136 N. Main St. The Commissioners asked that the prosecutor's office to prepare resolutions for both.

Lucinda Land withdrew the resolution that was scheduled to be presented today.

Philip Johnson requested an executive session to discuss potential real estate acquisition.

Steve Wilson gave an update on the MWCD and Stantec regarding hydraulic improvements and tasks completed since their May 5, 2017 meeting (list attached). The commissioners expressed their appreciation to Steve for a good summary update and also thanked him for his work on Dalzell Ditch.

A Hancock County resident asked if Steve's update is what was discussed at the private meeting that was held last week. Brian Robertson responded saying that it was not and he will have an update regarding that meeting in his report.

Reports

Timothy Bechtol attended a facility management consortium last Thursday and on Friday attended Board of Revision meetings all day.

Mark Gazarek attended the Raise the Bar Workforce Development meeting on Friday. Campbell's and McClain are trying to secure workforce.

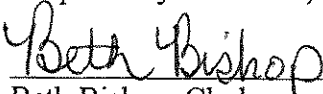
Brian Robertson held a work session on Thursday afternoon. In attendance were representatives from the Engineer's office, Soil & Water and Township Trustees. Brian distributed and reviewed a spreadsheet that he prepared from the meeting; copies were available to the public and media. He stated that he thought the work session went well and it was good to get everyone together for discussion. He appreciated the input and dialogue and said he doesn't know if they can accomplish all that was discussed but to accomplish some is better than doing nothing at all.

Yesterday Brian met with representatives on the business community side to get their perspective and dialogue.

At 10:00 a.m. Mark Gazarek made the motion to go into executive session to discuss potential real estate acquisition, Brian Robertson seconded. A roll call vote resulted as follows: Mark Gazarek, yes; Brian Robertson, yes; Timothy Bechtol, yes. At 10:40 a.m. Mark Gazarek made the motion to come out of executive session having discussed potential real estate acquisition with no action taken, Brian Robertson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

At 2:00 p.m. the Commissioners held a sales tax hearing at the Engineer's conference room (minutes attached).

Respectfully submitted,


Beth Bishop, Clerk

Reviewed and approved by:

Mark D. Gazarek


Brian J. Robertson


Timothy K. Bechtol

Minutes

August 1, 2017 – Sales Tax Hearing

The Commissioners held a Sales Tax Hearing on August 1, 2017 at 2:00 p.m. at the Agricultural Service Center Conference Room.

Commissioner Gazarek opened the meeting at 2:00 p.m. He thanked everyone for coming to the hearing and asked that everyone show respect for those speaking. He said the needs of the county are a unified effort by all 14 elected officials. We would like to express to the public the resources needed to adequately provide for the safety, general health and welfare of the citizens of Hancock County. He stated this is not a wish list, it's a needs list. He then turned the meeting over to Commissioner Robertson.

Commissioner Robertson gave a presentation of needs that the County will be facing in the near future. He explained that many county offices were displaced due to the 2007 flood that we are currently leasing outside space. In order to consolidate and reduce costs, a portion of the sales tax proposed would be used for a new building to house Juvenile/Probate Court and those offices displaced in 2007. The jail has exceeded their capacity and is using outside housing for inmates. Flood Mitigation money will continue to be used to clean the river, improve transportation corridors and purchase flood properties with the first phase of the project ready to bid in the spring of 2018.

An additional ¼% being introduced to the public is for new infrastructure, maintenance, security, the exterior of the Courthouse, jail maintenance issues and jail expansion.

Doug Staas commented that millions has been spent on flood and it's still going to flood. He said clean the river, make it wider and make it deeper. He said the people who get arrested for using dope is not everybody's problem and their family should take care of them.

Commissioner Gazarek responded that the heroin epidemic is a National issue, not just Hancock County. We are running out of places to put them due to the jail being full.

Doug Staas also stated you can't just keep giving tax money away to all the people that's building big structures. The Port Authority can't just keep giving away millions and millions of dollars to private sectors.

Commissioner Bechtol responded to Mr. Staas' comment about flooding stating that the topography of the Maumee River and The Blanchard River are totally different. We are on the right track now. He said he can't take responsibility for what has been done 10-15 years ago but said we are moving forward now. Commissioner Bechtol also stated that the money spent on the Army Corps of Engineers was not wasted and that Stantec is using the data collected by the Corps.

Prosecutor Riegle said the number of felons has doubled. As of July 26, 2017, there were 86 felons in jail and we have a 96 bed facility. He stated there has been a significant change in felons and a substantial increase in crime and the people we are prosecuting. Judge Starn commented that a facility assessment done by the City of Findlay in 2012 showed the need for 120-140 beds for misdemeanors. Prosecutor Riegle said we have to do something because we will start having consequences.

Doug Staas asked if there is ever any money left over at the end of the year? Commissioner Robertson said yes and that \$300,000 was returned by all offices in the general fund and it went into Capital Projects.

Commissioner Gazarek stated some of the needs that we are currently facing are new sheriff's vehicles, security for Juvenile/ Probate Court, and the outside of the Courthouse. He reported that we usually buy 3 to 4 Sheriff vehicles a year and last year we didn't buy any, Juvenile/Probate Court needs updated security and the outside of the Courthouse needs attention.

A resident asked why 20 years instead of 10 years. Commissioner Robertson stated to cover the debt that would be incurred for jail expansion and Capital Projects.

John Haywood, President of the Alliance, read a letter signed by the business community. They will support the ½% sales tax as it is now for another 10 years but they will not support the tax for 20 years due to the lack of information to justify the increase.

Richard Kirk, Kirk Brothers Construction and Alvada Construction, thanked all the elected officials for dealing with this issue. He said communities that prosper are those that invest in the future. The flood problem has to be solved and the cost is not out of reach and it is obtainable. If people think it's too expensive, he said it's too expensive not to. He appreciated the power point presentation and the information given but suggested the Commissioners continue with the ½% sales tax and then continue to work throughout the community for support to put the additional ¼% tax on the ballot next year.

Mark Gazarek said in the last 6 weeks they found out the State is cutting our budget by about \$1.3 million. This includes Managed Care, F4 and F5 felons are coming back to our jail and probation cuts. We just found out the State was going to do this so we could not plan for these cuts.

Brian Robertson said that 14 elected officials came to an agreement regarding the sales tax. The Alliance wanted two things and that was support for flood mitigation and the three commissioners to start working together. He said we heard that message and that's what we're doing but how do you choose between flood mitigation and security.

Richard Kirk said don't choose. The flood mitigation has to happen. He said you might need the additional money. Solve the flood first. Brian Robertson said as Commissioners they took an oath to provide safety and security. The state would mandate that over flood.

A resident said don't bring new businesses because that brings more crime and she said those businesses can't even find employees.

Gary Bright from Century Health is in favor of the additional ¼% tax. It is needed for jail and Adult Probation to try to divert people from going back and to enhance treatment services.

Brian Stout has a grass fed beef operation near Mt. Blanchard. He does not like the term "flood mitigation". He is having a hard time paying a tax that will drown his cows and flood his pastures. When he floods he could lose 3 months to a year of income. Flood mitigation should

be flood reduction. If you want the rural community to be supportive you can't come up with ideas that have a negative impact.

Paul Schmelzer agreed with Brian Stout. He pointed out the flood mitigation is not an elimination, it's a mitigation. The last Stantec study showed a significant amount of acres impacted now but will be better off after the flood mitigation.

Brian Stout said you hired a company that builds dams. When they build that dam it is going to flood his property that he has worked a lifetime to build. And the Arlington and Mt. Blanchard property values will drop. No one will want to buy in those communities.

Dave Whitehart, Marathon Petroleum, asked Commissioner Robertson if a comparison had been done on leasing vs. buying to get a proper return on that investment. Commissioner Robertson replied it's about \$4.4 million over a 20 year period, so it doesn't pay for the building but since the economy is coming back, increased lease space is being garnered by the public sector with increased costs. It is a very conservative number. Dave said it would allow for a calculation to be made that said here's the amount of leased cost that would be spent and whatever building you would be looking at including the jail relative to capital investment, and ongoing operating expenses. Also a cost benefit analysis would be useful and he offered to help stating they have the expertise to do a financial calculation and would volunteer to do that. Also, the logic to increase the sales tax rate is linked to the revenues received. Is there any study data from our county or other counties that an increase might chase away people to other counties to shop. Would the increase of ¼% drive away sales? Brian referred to his slide that a number of people shop in Toledo and Columbus. Heather Pendleton reported that on the Auditor's website is the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and the Commissioners appropriations are also there. On the Auditor of State's website you can find the audit back to the 1990's, PERS review and Sheriff's performance audit.

Dave Blatnik, Marathon Petroleum, stated that 22 deaths due to drugs vs. 0 deaths due to flood is not a fair comparison. If we had more beds in the jail would we still have had 22 deaths? The drug problem is a statewide and national issue, so it's not a fair comparison. Brian Robertson said another comparison is if we had a 4' water table improvement in the flood plain, would all those basements still flood with the flash flood? Dave Blatnik said until we see the dynamics, we can't answer that. Brian Robertson commented that until we get the felons off the street, we don't know if that would reduce the number of deaths due to overdose.

Richard Kirk asked what the next step is. Lucinda Land said by state statute, the deadline to file with the Board of Elections is Wednesday, August 9th by 4 p.m.

Dave Whitehart, Marathon Petroleum suggested the Commissioners approve the ½% for 10 years for now and work with them to get an analysis done toward the additional capital funds. Brian Robertson asked if anyone has looked at the data from past studies for example the 1995 study, 1999 envisioning or the 2012 Municipal study relative to the jail expansion?

A resident commented that she understands the importance of the increase but asked how that number came about. Sheriff Heldman said the study done in 2012 by the municipality said we would need 254 beds by 2040. He said they are housing 25-30 inmates outside of Hancock County on a daily basis. At the rate we are going, we will need the additional beds by the early 2020's. She asked what determines which inmates go to outside housing. The Sheriff responded

saying medical and their sentence. Phillip Riegle also said protective orders. Sheriff Heldman said they try to keep felons local so they can meet with their attorney if possible. She said after talking to her neighbors, she encouraged the Commissioners to put the tax back on as it is right now.

Mark Gazarek thanked everyone for coming and sharing their thoughts and opinions.

