

Minutes  
August 8, 2017

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

Elected Officials Present: Judge Reginald Routson, Judge Jonathan Starn, Judge Kristen Johnson, Prosecutor Phillip Riegler, Sheriff Michael Heldman, Clerk of Courts Cathy Wilcox, Auditor Charity Rauschenberg, Treasurer J. Steve Welton, Recorder Tracy Coldren, and Engineer Chris Long.

Also Present: Heather Pendleton, Lucinda Land, Steve Wilson, Shawn Carpenter, Doug Jenkins, Jim Maurer, David Devore and Julie Benziger.

Commissioner Gazarek opened the meeting at 9:30 a.m. in the Commissioners' 1<sup>st</sup> floor conference room. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Phillip Riegler gave an overview of changes regarding sales tax that were enacted when the state budget bill was passed. Any tax levied July 1, 2018 will have to be levied in tenths instead of quarters. Even if the tax is voted upon prior to that date, if it takes effect after that date, it would need to be in tenths. If a tax is approved in November, 2017, it could take effect on April 1, 2018, therefore it could be collected in quarters. If the Commissioners would decide to push back the vote to May's election, it would have to be collected in tenths. The current sales tax expires December 31, 2018, however the Commissioners can reduce taxes at any time by resolution.

Mark Gazarek said there are many options that could be considered at this time. He did not feel the ¾% for 20 years would be feasible due to the opposition from the public to that option. There are three issues to be considered: ¼% for basic county operations, ¼% going into the general fund and being transferred into the Flood Mitigation Capital Projects Fund, and ¼% going into the general fund and being used for capital improvements.

J. Steve Welton stated the feedback he has gotten from the public is that they do not understand the need for the ¾% to be used for capital improvements. All of the public input he has received has been negative. He suggested the elected officials attend more meetings out in the county and provide clarity.

Judge Routson did not feel there has been a lack of clarity in the need for capital improvement money, but did feel that some important information has not been addressed. If the County would build a new building, the Courts have requested an arraignment room that would be connected to the Justice Center. If that were the case, the County would not be spending additional money for travel expenses.

Brian Robertson said the safety and security aspect of the sales tax has been drowned out by flood mitigation. There have been 22 fatalities in Hancock County related to criminal activity since 2007. There have been 0 fatalities due to flooding since 2007. He does not understand how flooding has become more important than the safety and security of Hancock County residents. He also said there is confusion in the community about the separation of City government/funds and County government/funds.

Judge Starn wanted to clarify the opposition he has heard is not against flood mitigation. They are against the retention ponds and dry basins. And the opposition to capital projects is not against building a new building, but they do not understand what it would be used for.

Brian Robertson stated it is likely the Alliance does not want anything to jeopardize the flood mitigation funds.

Phillip Riegle said he has not heard anyone oppose the ¼% for operations. That money is critical to sustain a basic level of service.

Mark Gazarek reiterated Phillip's statement. He proposed an option of splitting each quarter.

Sheriff Heldman gave an example of Brown County had to move all of their prisoners to other facilities due to locking mechanisms going out a few years ago. This would be devastating to Hancock County's budget. In order to maintain the current locks, the cost is \$850,000. That would not include prisoner housing and transport costs.

Brian Robertson stated the people need to decide what is important to them. By splitting the flood mitigation and capital improvement sales tax issues on the ballot, the people can share their opinion of what they think is best for the community.

Charity Rauschenberg said we have become reliant on the sales tax revenue. We have lost millions over the years due to state budget cuts. Hancock County is facing a loss of \$500,000 due to the loss of MCO sales tax.

Mark Gazarek said Hancock County is extremely efficient compared to other counties that are the same size within Ohio. Even with the increase in revenue they are requesting, Hancock County is still below the other comparable counties in revenue stream. He proposed the following option: ¼% for operations on a continual basis, ¼% to be placed in the flood mitigation fund for 10 years, and ¼% for capital improvements and continued operations within the county, specifically providing for the safety and security of the community, for 20 years.

Brian Robertson made the motion to approve Resolution #412-17 – Levying Additional Sales and Use Tax of one-quarter of one percent (1/4%) Pursuant to Section 5739.021 and 5741.021 of the Ohio Revised Code for a continuing period of time, Timothy Bechtol seconded. Lucinda Land clarified this is a non-emergency. This will be effective January 1, 2018 and withdraw the previous ¼% sales tax used for operations. Motion passed 3-0.

Brian Robertson made the motion to approve Resolution #413-17 – Levying Additional Sales and Use Tax of one-quarter of one percent (1/4%) Pursuant to Section 5739.021 and 5741.021 of the Ohio Revised Code for a period of ten (10) years; as a non-emergency and directing such measure be submitted to the Board of Elections to be placed upon the November 7, 2017 ballot, Timothy Bechtol seconded. This will become effective April 1, 2018 and withdraw the previous ¼% sales tax used for flood mitigation at that time if passed in November. The money generated from this ¼% will go into the general fund and be transferred to the Flood Mitigation Capital Projects fund on a monthly basis. Motion passed 3-0.

Brian Robertson made the motion to approve Resolution #414-17 – Levying Additional Sales and Use Tax of one-quarter of one percent (1/4%) Pursuant to Section 5739.026 and 5741.023 of

the Ohio Revised Code for a period of twenty (20) years; as a non-emergency and directing such measure be submitted to the Board of Elections to be placed upon the November 7, 2017 ballot, Timothy Bechtol seconded. This will become effective April 1, 2018 and will be used for capital improvements and general operations in order to provide better safety and security to the community. Judge Routson suggested the people most affected by this sales tax should help to better clarify what it would be used for. His suggestion was himself, Judge Starn, Judge Johnson, Sheriff Heldman, and Prosecutor Riegle. Motion passed 3-0.

Brian Robertson thanked all of the elected officials for their input.

At 10:37a.m. the Commissioners recessed until 1:00 p.m.

At 1:06 p.m., the Commissioners reconvened the Commissioners' meeting. Lucinda Land, Charity Rauschenberg, and J. Steve Welton were also present.

The minutes from August 3, 2017 were read with Brian Robertson making the motion to approve, Timothy Bechtol seconded. Motion passed 2-0, Mark Gazarek abstained.

The Assistant Clerk presented the following resolution for consideration:

Resolution #415-17 – Authorizing payment of the listed and/or attached purchase orders. Brian Robertson made the motion to approve, Timothy Bechtol seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

The Commissioners signed an acknowledgement of receipt of the FEMA Flood Insurance Claims Book. They approved a quote to repair the x-ray machine at the Courthouse in the amount of \$8,117.20. They approved travel requests from the Recorder and Sheriff's office. The Assistant Clerk read a notice from Steve Wilson stating former County Engineer Bob Morrison passed away and passing along prayers to his family.

Mark Gazarek stated there was an error in The Courier's report from the morning's meeting, and Heather Pendleton would be the point person on getting that corrected.

Lucinda Land presented the following resolution for consideration:

Resolution #416-17 – Authorizing Change Order No. 1 to contract with Quinn Concrete Construction Company for construction of the Villages of Arcadia and Rawson sidewalk project pursuant to the provisions and regulations associated with a CDBG project. The change order is and additional \$24,451.80, making the total contract \$60,000. Brian Robertson made the motion to approve, Timothy Bechtol seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

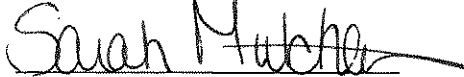
Lucinda requested an executive session to discuss potential real estate acquisition and potential litigation on behalf of Philip Johnson.

Charity Rauschenberg stated the budget projection is now open. She asked if she should coordinate with Heather Pendleton on the budget timeline. The Commissioners said yes. She also requested the Commissioners attend the general fund budget hearing on Tuesday, August 29, 2017 at 1:30 p.m. at the Courthouse. Brian Robertson asked if he could get a copy of the budget hearing schedule.

At 1:15 p.m. the Commissioners met with J. Steve Welton and Charity Rauschenberg for the Treasurer's Investment meeting.

At 1:32 p.m. Mark Gazarek made the motion to enter into executive session to discuss potential real estate acquisition and potential litigation, Timothy Bechtol seconded. A roll call vote resulted as follows: Mark Gazarek, yes; Timothy Bechtol, yes; Brian Robertson, yes. At 2:15 p.m. Mark Gazarek made the motion to come out of executive session with no action taken, Timothy Bechtol seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,



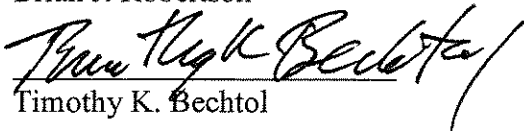
Sarah Mutchler, Assistant Clerk

Reviewed and approved by:



Mark D. Gazarek

Brian J. Robertson



Timothy K. Bechtol