

Members Present

Mr. Dodge, Mr. Whitis, Mr. Byrne, Mr. Tripp, Mr. Hess, Mr. Liehr, Mr. Wheeler, Mr. McConnell, Ms. Polk, Mr. Skutt, and Mr. Snipes

Members Absent

Mr. LaGesse

In Attendance

- **Board Members**

Mr. Bossert, Mr. Arseneau, Mr. Reid, Mr. Mulcahy, Mr. Vickery, Mr. Miller, Mr. Hildebrand, Mr. Stauffenberg, and Mr. James

- **Department Heads**

Brian Gadbois, Sandi Cianci, and Jamie Boyd

Media

Dimitrios Kalantzis
The Herald

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Mr. Whitis, at 6:00 p.m.

Quorum present.

2. Public Comment

Leo Whitten commented on the courthouse.

3. Approval of Minutes –December 19, 2012 and January 3, 2013

Mr. McConnell made a motion to approve the minutes and Mr. Wheeler seconded it. Motion carried with a voice vote.

4. Building and Grounds – Brian Gadbois

- **Facility Dude Reports**

Mr. Gadbois stated that there is a lot of plumbing work being done at the Jerome Combs and the Kankakee County Detention Center. At the old jail several gate valves are being switched out to ball valves because they cannot be turned off. They are converting those as it is necessary. They did 129 work orders this month.

- **Finance Reports**

The committee reviewed the finance reports.

- **Building Updates**

Mr. Gadbois stated that at 189 East Court Street there was a fresh air intake out on the street which had to be moved from the sidewalk to the roof of the second floor. They also installed a 4" PVC pipe in the corner of this building on the west side by the generator for AT&T internet. FE Moran came and did the sprinkler inspection in this building and there is about \$4000 worth of repairs that need to be done on the sprinkler system. The flow valve on this building did not work so he had it repaired.

Mr. Gadbois stated that out at Jerome Combs there was a hot water storage tank that was taken out of service two years ago. He is not for sure why but it was inspected and put back in service.

Mr. Gadbois stated that the handicap access doors out at the Health Department were completed and are operational. That was done through a grant from the County Clerk's Office. That is now a permanent voting station and has handicap accessibility.

Mr. Gadbois stated that they had a new maintenance internet system installed by the IT Department in all of their buildings. It is an isolated internet system that does not allow anyone in but because of the access that they need for their temperature control systems, Facility Dude, and the Pitney Bowes mail machine they added another internet system in. He is getting ready to convert all of their heating and cooling systems, Pitney Bowes, and any other system that they deem necessary onto that system as they move forward.

Mr. Gadbois stated that the Johnson Controls system currently in the basement is on Windows 97. He met with Delta Controls today and he is getting pricing on converting that system over to Windows 7.

Mr. Gadbois stated that they found a set of oxygen and settling tanks over at the old jail and he assumed that they were ours but it turns out that they were being rented. He went ahead and returned those tanks to Air Gas and told them they were no longer needed. We have a set of our own.

Mr. Gadbois stated that last month at the old jail a shakedown was performed by the jail guards. What happens is that inmates quit calling in requests to fix anything in the cell block so everybody will stay out of their cell block. They did a shakedown on 3 West and they found about four pages of repairs that need to get done on the plumbing system.

Mr. Gadbois stated that his department just completed all the carpet cleaning at the Public Safety Building, the Admin Building out at Jerome Combs, and the Annex Building. They did it for about \$3400. There is some carpeting that needs to be replaced in this building. The Finance Department's carpet is in really bad shape, almost to the point of being a trip hazard so he looking into getting some pricing for that.

Mr. Gadbois stated that the elevators at all locations have to be updated by 2015 according to the mandated state rules. He is meeting with KONE to talk about pricing for those updates.

Mr. Gadbois stated that they are also taking a look at their Pitney Bowes mail delivery system. They are going through that system right now and are finding several places where they can cut cost in their mailing system. He will continue to look into this to see where they can save money.

- **Department Update/Personnel Training**

Mr. Gadbois stated that he has made some personnel changes with his mechanics. He has moved some mechanics around to other buildings. He transferred the old jail mechanic out to Jerome Combs for training. They are cross training all of their mechanics as they move forward.

- **Approval of Request for Proposal of the Snack Vending Machine Services**

Mr. Gadbois stated that he met with Mr. Bossert and a proposal for snack vending machine services was put together by the State's Attorney's Office and he would like to go out to bid on the snack vending services. He has three buildings that he takes care of for snack vending – 189 East Court,

the courthouse, and the annex building. The two jails are currently under contract through Mr. Downey and it is a separate company that takes care of those machines. He thinks that we own those machines. He never considered pulling those together with the rest of the county but Mr. Whitis did mention that to him tonight. He is looking for the committee's consensus on this.

Mr. Whitis stated that he was just wondering if it would make sense to put them all together.

Mr. McConnell asked who services those machines that we own.

Mr. Gadbois stated that the gentleman's name is Griffin. His understanding is that we buy the product.

Mr. McConnell stated that he thinks that we would want to look at coordinating them all together.

Mr. Whitis stated that if we do own the machines then we probably need to keep them separate. It seems that they are different.

Mr. Hess asked about the Health Department.

Mr. Gadbois stated that the Health Department is its own separate entity. He does not have a whole lot to do with them.

Mr. Hess made a motion to put the three buildings on one contract and Mr. Liehr seconded it. Motion carried with a voice vote.

5. Buildings and Grounds – Mike Bossert

- **Recommendations & Course of Action for Courthouse**

Mr. Whitis stated that the Blue Ribbon Commission has given us a recommendation and we are here to discuss this issue and send a recommendation to the county board as to how we want to move forward.

Mr. Bossert stated that since the last meeting we have tried to discuss this in order to get some sense of direction to what we might do. He finds that as a group perhaps we are a little unsure of the exact direction that we would like to go in terms of asking the public for funding. He does not get a sense at all that anybody disagrees that there is a very big need in our building. The Blue Ribbon Commission did an excellent job in pointing out the deficiencies in that building and in giving us direction. What he is finding that they are having a little trouble getting their arms around is exactly how much money we need and what it would buy for us. With that said, this is open for more discussion. We may not be ready to go to the public here in April of this year. We might want to think about perhaps delaying this until the next opportunity to ask the public for funding. In that time period, we can firm up our thoughts.

Mr. Hess stated that he had asked Chairman Bossert before the meeting if anybody even took in consideration parking lots. We are looking at this whole thing of building on but we are going to have to improve the parking and we haven't even discussed this in any of the past meetings.

Mr. Whitis stated that the thing that impressed him the most is when the Blue Ribbon Commission charged us to not come back – to make sure that we come to the public once. That is the biggest challenge that we have. He thinks that we need to come together with a plan that addresses everything and show that to the community. He doesn't think that there is anybody that doesn't think that the courthouse needs to be addressed. It is just a matter of to what level and to what magnitude.

Mr. Dodge stated that he thinks that, with the meeting last week and discussion with board members since then, right now we are not at a consensus ourselves as to how far this needs to go. We all know it needs to go but how far, to what extent, and what are we asking the voters to approve. He thinks that until we have all those answers, now is not the time to try to make a rush with a half-hearted presentation to the voters on what we need.

Mr. Skutt stated that he concurs with Mr. Dodge. He thinks that there are other things that we have to figure out. Do we want to just address the current ADA citations versus addressing the long-term space issues that we obviously face at the courthouse, as well? There is more than one thing at the table and we are sort of trying to make it one thing when it is a lot of things. He thinks that there is still a lot that needs to be discussed. What is our primary concern here?

Mr. Liehr stated that he tends to be in an agreement with the other board members but at the same time he thinks that it is important that we present this to the public in a way that is clear that if we take action that does not lead to a referendum in April that it is for the purpose of insuring the public has adequate information to understand both the needs and why the proposal that we bring to them is the best in terms of how to finance those needs. We are really going to need to keep it in front of the public that this is something that is going to demand their attention and is going to demand their making a decision in terms of a way to meet needs that are very real.

Mr. Whitis stated that from the very beginning when we had the first meetings on this those were some things that they talked about – being able to make the community understand the importance of this and being able to answer their questions. The sense that we are getting is that we haven't answered a lot of those questions to the best of our ability. That is not saying that there has not been a lot of work done, there has been. There are a lot of options out there. He knows that the Blue Ribbon Commission has done a great job at that and has looked at everything. His inner conflict is – are we taking the time to get it passed?

Mr. Tripp stated that we will never build any cheaper than we can right now. How much time to we have?

Mr. Wheeler stated that he thinks that the Blue Ribbon Commission has done the heavy lifting here as far as searching all of the options. They have made the recommendations. Public meetings were held. They did the work and now the question is - Can we put a number on what that work means and is there enough time to communicate what was done and how it was done? We know what is coming next. The Attorney General is very clear on there. We know what the options are. While he does see a need to take some time to work with the public so they understand what everybody is facing, he does not know if there is enough time between now and April.

Mr. Snipes stated that he applauds the efforts of the Blue Ribbon Commission and he thinks that they did a thorough research of the issues. However, if it came to putting that referendum on the ballot he

vote “no” for the simple reason that the public is not informed and they said “no” in the past. He thinks that we need to take the time that is necessary to educate the public because if we don’t we will suffer the backlash because these individuals only see a tax. He thinks that it would be defeated in April. He thinks that the efforts of the Blue Ribbon Commission would be washed away. He thinks that we have intelligent voters and when we do what we have to do to educate the voters then we can move. We don’t have a figure in mind that we are asking for so it would be premature at this time to even begin to think April. Let’s take our time and educate the public and then we will be in a better position to place it on the ballot and get a positive vote.

Mr. Reid asked if there is an estimate of what it is going to cost.

Mr. Whitis stated that that is one of the issues. They have numbers but it is all conceptual budgets.

Mr. Bossert stated that based on the concept work that was done their number is somewhere in the range of \$55 million to take care of an addition and upgrade the existing building, as well as, consolidating some offices.

Mr. Reid asked how long it would take to find out what is all included in that.

Mr. Bossert stated that it is certainly going to take longer than between now and April. One concern that he had is the cost of renovating the old courthouse into whatever space we use it for. We have been using the number of \$10 million to do that but is that a real good number or do we need to fine tune that one. To some extent, nobody knows until it is actually torn into. They may need to get some expert help to really nail that number down in order to be comfortable with it.

Mr. Reid stated that the people that he has talked to want to know what is going on with the courthouse. They are aware that something has to be done and they are expressing their mind right now. They are thinking about it right now. They are asking questions and they want to know what we are going to do. It is fresh in everybody’s mind right now if we could get it done now.

Mr. Dodge stated that he has not been involved in a referendum on the county level but he has seen a number of school referendums over his 35 years of teaching and he does not ever remember a referendum ever being able to be convinced just to a local school district in 60 days let alone a county-wide presentation in which we still have questions among ourselves. Just like the question that was brought up about parking, he doesn’t remember that being discussed thus far. What about traffic flow among that location? He thinks that there are enough questions amongst ourselves yet that 60 days does not give us a lot of time to get answers for ourselves and present them back to the public.

Mr. Stauffenberg stated that he was the chairman that helped pass the last referendum for the school in Manteno which was \$10 million. You really have to be organized. They met with every tavern, legion, nursing home, business, rotary chamber, and convinced numbers of people why it was necessary. You have to have all your facts and figures in order because they are going to ask questions which we need to have the answers for or they will think that we are all confused and he thinks right now we kind of are confused. He doesn’t think that it can be ready for April if we want to try to pass it. Putting it on the ballot is one thing but we want to pass it.

Mr. Whitis stated that he thinks that we have a good concept and a good master plan. He thinks it needs to go the next step because we are going to get those specific questions and not having an answer doesn't send the right impression.

Mr. McConnell stated that he agrees with his colleagues. The people that he has talked to, since the last meeting, really want to see hard numbers and they want to see pictures. They also want to know what happens if we don't do it. Somebody needs to tell them specifically what will happen. Will the courthouse really be shut down? They need to be told by the Attorney General or the State's Attorney that they can shut it down. They need to understand the consequences if we don't do something. He doesn't think that we would pass the referendum now according to the people that he has talked to.

Mr. Whitis stated that we need to make the people understand that we cannot continue to run status quo. We just can't.

Mr. McConnell stated that they understand that but they want to see hard numbers and pictures.

Mr. Byrne stated that he has heard the same thing from a number of people. They want to see a concrete number. Instead of doing it in April, can we put it on the ballot in 2014? That way we set a goal for ourselves. We know at this date we are going to put it on the ballot.

Mr. Whitis stated that the next time that we could put it on the ballot would be in March or November 2014. He feels like it is on the forefront of everybody's mind and it is a serious enough issue that a recommendation should be made; it should not just be tabled. He thinks that there does need to be a set timeframe. If we don't do it in April, we need to set benchmarks for ourselves because then we have an end game and we are sending the public the message that this is important and we are not just pushing it off.

Mr. Wheeler stated that that is the route that he was thinking – for this committee to fully endorse the Blue Ribbon Commission's recommendations and send that to the full board with a working number that is just a theoretical number at this point or a not-to-exceed number until we get harder numbers and then put it on the March 2014 ballot. That is what he would be in favor of doing.

Mr. Whitis stated that his only hesitation to that is that he doesn't think that we want to limit anything. If we put a not-to-exceed number down, after going through everything we may find that we need to do more. A not-to-exceed number is good but are we sure that is our ceiling. He hopes that is our ceiling but if we are going to take our time and look at every available option he doesn't know if he would put any restriction on it other than timing.

Mr. Vickery stated that he is not a member of the committee but listening to what the committee has said here and what he hears out on the streets it seems to him that this is a two-phased approach. We want to establish need and then develop a plan and put it into some concrete numbers and some prints and pictures that we can look at. The next job of the committee would be develop a plan and go forward with it. If the need is there, the committee could adopt the commission's recommendation and then move it to a point where some dollars would be put into the plan and architects would become involved. We did do that at one time about five years ago and we did have something in prints and that could be resurrected. That would just be a suggestion to the committee.

Mr. Whitis stated that one thing that everyone needs to be aware of is that we are dealing with the Kimme Report which was back in 2006. That plan is six years old; it needs to be gone over again.

Mr. McConnell asked if we can state that we concur with the Blue Ribbon Commission as our vision but that we want to do it for the ballot in March 2014 to make sure that the concept which the Blue Commission set forth does not get lost. He thinks that would be what we want. We don't want to lose that in the translation. They have done a good job and we don't want to overlook that.

Mr. Boyd stated that he has been in regular contact with representatives from the Attorney General's Office and he has given them a heads up based on some of the communications that he received late last week that the county board may not be prepared at this point to seek a referendum at the April ballot. He is waiting for a full scale reaction from that although he knows what part of that will be. Part of it will be that they will want to give us a very short timetable for a transition plan to transition the courthouse from a defiant ADA facility to a compliant ADA facility. Included in that transition plan will be a need to bring the other properties that the county operates within in compliance with ADA, as well. As we start down the road of taking no formal action to place something on the referendum, we need to be mindful that our timetable will be somewhat shrunk; although, he would agree that between now and March it is very unlikely that the courthouse will be shut down prior to then but we better have a plan as part of this, if it should occur. The next step that he would advise the committee to do is that before they leave here tonight they should set a reasonable date, perhaps within 45 days of tonight's meeting, to be prepared to either issue RFP's to competing operations for a design/build facility that would be responsive to the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission or at a minimum be prepared in 45 days to tell the public why we are not issuing RFP's. It might be possible that we are not going to be able to hit that benchmark but that is a benchmark that he didn't pull out of his hat but rather through his conversations with Springfield he has discovered that perhaps that is a reasonable time table for us to work within. We run the risk of upsetting the apple cart in Springfield which leads to communication between Springfield and Washington regarding our disabilities violations and then we run the risk of having the Department of Justice become involved instead of the Illinois Attorney General's Office. He believes that as long as we continue to be cooperative and responsive with a plan to move forward and stay on that plan we will be fine. He has set a meeting date with the representatives from another county that has gone through this because they were not cooperative so that he can get a real feel for what we are going to go through if in fact we are perceived to be not cooperative in acting in the best interest of those who have disabilities. We have to be prepared for all things. It is not a question of what are we really doing. It is a question of how well our actions are perceived by those who have the authority and the ability to direct our actions and when they don't like our responses to make it hurt fiscally for the county. It sounds like to him that there is a consensus not to go forward but there remains a consensus of agreement with the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission. As the county's attorney, he believes the next step is to say that if we are not going to go forward with putting something on the ballot in April then let's set our timetable. Maybe the committee wants to pass that off to the county board for Wednesday's meeting or next month's meeting; although, he would recommend that it not be delayed any further than that. If the committee wants to make a recommendation to the county board on the initial steps of a plan that is fine and they can attempt to refine that between now and Wednesday's evening county board meeting at the courthouse.

Mr. Whitis stated that he thinks that it is a serious enough issue that a recommendation needs to come out of this meeting. He doesn't think that we want to push it off.

Mr. Arseneau asked how much the fine is per item for violating the ADA Act.

Mr. Boyd stated that at a minimum it is going to be about \$250 per violation. There were 159 violations cited to us. That is about \$15 million a year. If they wanted to hurt us, they could hurt us.

Mr. Skutt asked if any of those 159 violations have been addressed.

Mr. Boyd stated that they did reconfigure parking in the driveway. They have sat down and gone through some numbers but he does not have them with him today. There are several violations that they cannot address such as the elevators. Regardless of what they do, because of the design of the building the elevators can never be 100% compliant. It can be substantially compliant and they will tell us that substantial compliance is what they are looking for in a 100-year old building but we cannot get away with doing nothing. We have not started addressing the violations because there were some concerns as to how long we were going to be in the building and whether it would be fiscally responsible to begin addressing them before we had a full plan.

Mr. Skutt asked if it would be reported on monthly as far as what has been looked at and what the plan is.

Mr. Whitis stated that once we get to that point Mr. Gadbois will keep us informed of that.

Mr. Gadbois stated that they have applied for a grant and have put some things in that grant that will be permanent fixes but they have stayed away from minor repairs that will be torn out if major changes are made so they have been kind of in limbo on some things. They don't want to expend funds that are going to be flushed away but every issue has been looked at.

Mr. Boyd stated that in addition to the ADA violations we are still short a courtroom for a judge and eventually, even as understanding as Chief Justice Kilbride is, his patience will run thin eventually. Do we put money into this repair if six months, eight months, or eighteen months from now we are going to pull everything out and make a courtroom because that may be where we end up?

Mr. Wheeler stated that if it is construed that we are not taking the action necessary to move forward with the courthouse other buildings will be looked at also. Is that correct?

Mr. Boyd stated that other buildings will eventually be looked at no matter what but yes as soon as we are perceived to not be going forward he thinks that a much closer look at all of our facilities will occur. They know that we are not prepared to address whatever those issues are. We want to address the courthouse first because once we get through the courthouse we will have a schematic of "how to" on addressing everything else and we can start applying that to the deficiencies we see in our other facilities. They are looking for us to get it right once and then take that mold and use it on all of our facilities.

Mr. McConnell asked if our architect would think that 45 days for a conceptual plan would be a reasonable number.

Mr. Boyd stated that it is 45 days for us to request to send out request for proposals, not to have a conceptual plan.

Mr. Snipes stated that he would suggest that if we are going to target March 2014 as a target date there is a lot of work that needs to be done in a little amount of time so before he votes he would like to know what will be our strategy between now and then. The public needs to have a visual in front of their face way before March 2014. If we are going to do this, we need to have a plan of action that takes us from now to 2014.

Mr. Whitis stated that is the only way that it is going to be successful.

Mr. Boyd stated that during a conversation with people in Springfield the question was asked of him – Didn't you just reorganize your board? He answered that yes they had and the response back to him was that every single person on that board managed to convince the majority of the people in their district that they were the person for the job and they all need to understand that whatever the board moves forward with their job is to convince the majority of the people in their district to support the future of the county.

Mr. Wheeler made a motion to send this to the board with the recommendation to follow the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission and place the referendum on the April 2014 ballot along with having the County move forward with an RFP within about a 45-day period and Mr. Byrne seconded it.

Discussion

Mr. James asked what exactly are the recommendations that are going to be voted on. Can they be altered? Should we only accept the recommendations that apply? If there is something in there that doesn't apply, he doesn't think that we should be locked into it. We may want to make changes. We have to sell 95% of the voters on this. We better have everything lined up.

Mr. Boyd stated that this will not lock in anything. The county board can change its mind when the RFP's come back. This is basically a recommendation to not put something on the ballot in April but instead create a cycle that gives the county 15 months to get something done. It is not locking in stone anything. If they do an RFP, and it comes back from one of the geniuses that knows how to build buildings that there is a way to do it a lot cheaper or a better way to do it then that will all have to be looked at. You don't know what you are going to get back from an RFP.

Original motion carried with a roll call vote of 12 ayes and 0 nays. Voting aye were Mr. Bossert, Mr. Dodge, Mr. Whitis, Mr. Byrne, Mr. Tripp, Mr. Hess, Mr. Liehr, Mr. Wheeler, Mr. McConnell, Ms. Polk, Mr. Skutt, and Mr. Snipes.

Mr. Bossert reminded the committee that we will meet as a county board Wednesday night at 7:00 p.m. at the courthouse and they will take up this recommendation and will probably take some time to review the presentation on the concepts that were discussed and the various issues with the building. There will be an Open House prior to the meeting, from 4:30 to 7:00. They will do their best to invite the public.

Mr. Tripp asked if it would be wise to have Mr. Kimme at that meeting.

Mr. Bossert stated that he is not sure that they are at the point where they want to get into the Kimme Report in much detail.

Mr. Gadbois stated that if any county board members would like to come over to the courthouse prior to 4:30 please call his office and he will be glad to take them through the courthouse prior to anyone being there.

6. Old Business

7. New Business

8. Adjournment

A motion was made by Mr. Hess and seconded by Mr. Dodge to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Motion carried with a voice vote.

Matt Whitis, Chairman
Joanne Langlois, Executive Coordinator