

Buildings & Grounds  
Committee Meeting  
December 18, 2013  
9:00 a.m.

**Members Present**

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

**Members Absent**

Mr. Skutt

**In Attendance**

- **Board Members**

Mr. Bossert

- **Department Heads**

- **Media**

None

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Mr. Whitis, at 9:00 a.m. Quorum present.

**2. Public Comment**

**3. Approval of Minutes – November 20, 2013**

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

**4. Presentation**

**5. Buildings and Grounds – Brian Gadbois**

- **Monthly Financial Reports**

Mr. Gadbois stated that they had a good month; their expenditures were down.

- **Facility Dude Reports**

Mr. Gadbois stated that everything is working well.

- **Building Updates**

Mr. Gadbois stated that they are trying to update their snow removal plan. They had a meeting with their staff yesterday to go over everybody's duties.

- **Update on Restroom Renovation at Courthouse**

Mr. Gadbois stated that they had a meeting last Friday with Doug Bright and work is going to begin on December 23. He sent off a list today for background checks on each person that will be working in the courthouse. Once that is completed, those workers will get temporary badges and will be allowed in the courthouse from 6:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. There will be a guard at the building while the work is being completed. They will start in the men's restroom which will be gutted. He has met with R&R Construction several times on this and they are getting ready to start on it. On the week of December 23 they will be mobilizing and starting the demo on the men's restroom.

Mr. Gadbois stated that he had a problem with a deteriorating sewer line on the west side of the courthouse women's restroom. It deteriorated out all the way out the roof. He had Precision Piping come Monday and Tuesday and they ripped out that entire vent and ran it right back out the roof.

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Mr. Boyd asked if it was the same sewer pipe that they had trouble with before.

Mr. Gadbois stated that it was.

Mr. Boyd asked if the public should be informed that they just had to spend money on this piping issue and that we do not anticipate that this will be the last time that this kind of time and effort will have to be spent. If the pipes in the building are that bad, shouldn't the public be made aware.

Mr. Gadbois stated that that is probably a good idea. That vent pipe that ran out the roof crumbled apart in your hand. That is how bad it was.

Mr. McConnell asked if it was copper or cast.

Mr. Gadbois stated that it was cast so it crumbled apart which in turn ran down the sewer line and plugged the drain in the basement so tight that they could not get a router through it. He had to have Glade Plumbing come over to cut off the pipe at the floor of the basement and vacuum the drain out in order to get the sewer lines to run. There is no way to tell what deterioration there is throughout the courthouse. They only found this because of the sewer gas smell and the plugged drain.

Mr. Boyd stated that he is not calling into question anything that Mr. Gadbois did because he did everything the way that he should have. He just thinks that perhaps it is incumbent upon this committee to begin to bring these things to light to the public so that they begin to understand that when we say the courthouse is in a condition that is no longer usable for its purposes we are able to point to more than the fact that the Supreme Court would like us to have higher ceilings and that we need to be compliant with ADA.

Mr. Wheeler asked how difficult it would be to go back three or four years and total up the repairs and expenses that they have had to do at the courthouse.

Mr. Gadbois stated that he has everything documented so he can get that number.

Mr. Whitis stated that he thinks that is good for PR but these are things that we have to do because we are not going to get rid of the courthouse. He agrees that it would be good to let the public know how much they had to spend on deteriorating infrastructure. Have they done an inspection on the sewer lines that are in the restrooms to be renovated?

Mr. Gadbois stated that they would have to bust open walls and ceilings to do that. They took out about a 2' by 4' section of the floor up on the third floor to do what they did.

Mr. Whitis stated that his concern is that if we spend all this money inside the building on pipes then what about the pipes leading outside of the building.

Mr. McConnell stated that when they take the stools out they could put a camera up the pipes to see if they getting real thin.

Mr. Gadbois stated that they can do that.

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Mr. Tripp stated that timing on this is more important than anything. Gather the information on it but timing is everything.

Mr. Bossert asked if there was a possibility that they would have to evacuate because of the sewer gas smell.

Mr. Gadbois stated that there is. The sewer gas was coming from the ceiling and getting sucked out with the cold air return and into the rotunda.

Mr. Bossert asked whose call is it if they would have to evacuate.

Mr. Gadbois stated that he does not know.

Mr. Snipes asked if they fix things would they still be able to accommodate the general traffic that they have. The building was not made for 400,000 some people. They could build a new structure and alleviate some of the congestion that is being put on the building.

Mr. Whitis stated that his opinion is that in going forward, with whatever process they choose, their goal is to alleviate some of that congestion so they do not have to do a full-scale renovation. The bathroom renovation that they are going to do is meeting ADA needs, not meeting the problem of congestion. It is not giving the courthouse any more fixtures. They need to look at ways that they can eliminate stress on that building.

Mr. Gadbois stated that he moves forward as if there is not going to be an approved referendum. Any repairs that he is making are for today, not three years down the road because he has to make sure that things stay operational.

Mr. Snipes stated that if a human body is under stress it would eventually have a heart attack. If we continue to do what we are doing to the courthouse and do nothing to alleviate the stress, something is going to happen which will cost more. The public needs to understand this.

Mr. Whitis stated that we need to be able to say these specific things to the public. The public needs to be made aware of more than the ADA issues. If it is not fixed right away, it will continue to deteriorate and lead to other things. As they begin to open up ceilings and floors they are going to find things that they did not know about.

Mr. McConnell stated that he agrees with Mr. Gadbois. When you start fixing these things, you really have to fix what is there with the sizing that has been approved by how many toilets and fixtures. There are restrictions and codes on how big or how little you can have it. You fix what is there to accommodate now.

Mr. Whitis stated that what they are doing now they are doing for the future because they do not have the ability or the space to put bathrooms in the courthouse for the capacity that they have now.

Mr. McConnell stated that when it comes to opening up walls, sometimes you are better off just leaving it alone.

Mr. Gadbois stated that he was hoping to be able to hold off on repairing this until the remodel took place but it deteriorated to the point where he could not wait any longer so they did what they had to do. He was hoping that they could stretch this out into the construction portion of this and not call someone in on the side but it just did not happen that way. Thanks to Precision Piping for coming and getting it fixed and backup running.

Mr. Gadbois stated that the courthouse clock motor went down. In the past, it was sent to California for repair but he found a great company in Indiana that fixed it. The Christmas lights are up at the courthouse; his staff did a great job on those.

Mr. Gadbois stated that the west doors at 189 E Court are now ADA compliant. That was paid for by a grant through the County Clerk's office. They are continuing to make improvements in the heating system. They transferred the heating system in this building over to the internet last week.

Mr. Gadbois stated that they had some heating issues over at the old jail. There were adjustments made over the last 10 years with no documentation so he stopped the adjusting and is bringing Precision Controls over there to fix that system. It has to be done. There are dampers open all the way dumping freezing cold air into the building which is shutting the units down because the freeze stats are going off. They are going to get it fixed once and for all.

Mr. Gadbois stated that they started painting over at the old jail and had some issues with painting going on in off- hours by inmates. They had to pay a couple custodians because painting was being done on Saturday without custodians here. It is in their contract. They now have inmates painting Monday through Friday over at the old jail and they are really doing a good job. His department is buying the paint. He has also approved the elevator updates over at the old jail and annex building for the 2015 updates.

Mr. Gadbois stated that the third-floor remodel at the courthouse is being done with staff. He has had the old internet and phone wires pulled out and will start fresh with all new wires. They will be doing a facelift to that area. The entire vault in the basement of the courthouse has been cleaned out and they reused shelving that they were able to save from a demo area. They are making use of things that they have on-hand, therefore, saving the county a lot of money.

Mr. Gadbois stated that after the holidays his staff will start to do some painting in the Annex. The annual inspections on all the fire alarm systems and sprinklers have all been completed.

Mr. Gadbois stated that at 189 E Court St. there are gate valves that are old and rot off so they are going to be changing out some of those valves.

Mr. Gadbois stated that he is working with KJWW and Doug Bright on the next phase of the remodel in the courthouse basement. He is now bringing in air balancers so they can check the air system to make sure that it is all correct.

Mr. Hess complimented Mr. Gadbois and his staff on the decorations at the courthouse. They really look nice. He also thinks that it might be a good idea to give an update on the courthouse at the full

county board meeting so all the board members can be made aware of what is going on there and what some of the problems are.

Mr. Gadbois stated that he can do that.

Mr. Wheeler asked how many of our facilities still have old phone wire in them.

Mr. Gadbois stated that the phone system in this building now goes through the network. The courthouse has those upgrades, as well.

Mr. Boyd stated that when he took office and saw the antiquated phone system that was in the State's Attorney's Office he asked the facilities manager at that time for a new system and he was told no, mostly because nobody in the building at that time had been updated either. Over the course of his years in that building, they updated everybody but his office because they knew what it was going to take to rip out lines and pull in new ones and he decided not to do it while he was there which is why they are having do that now on the third floor.

Mr. Gadbois stated that they took out all the ceiling tiles and light fixtures which made it easier to get all the phone and internet lines in there.

#### **5. Buildings & Grounds – Mike Bossert**

Mr. Bossert did not have anything to report to the committee.

#### **6. Old Business**

Mr. Boyd stated that he has recently been contacted by the Attorney General's Office for an update on our progress on ADA. He will be in contact with them before the end of the week to give them a more detailed update, now that he has Mr. Gadbois' schedule on the bathroom renovation. They are still being appropriately patient understanding our situation. They have a favorable opinion of this county board and the people who are making the decisions because we have not turned a blind eye but have continued to go forward as best we can on the limited financial situation that we face with regard to this facility and hopefully it will continue that way but if he gets the idea or response from them that they are in some fashion dissatisfied he will let this committee know and we will begin to act in some other way.

Mr. Snipes stated that we need to let individuals know that the courthouse is part of the public safety of this community. If there is not a courthouse to process things efficiently you are either going to have a backup which sends the people back out into the street or you are going to have a greater problem with the greater number that we are having and the influx of individuals coming out of the Chicago area that are migrating here. He foresees us moving ahead but he thinks that the public needs to know there is also the issue of public safety of this community.

Mr. Liehr stated that he thinks it would be useful for members of the county board to try to put together the specific information that we have here with the report on the courthouse that was given to the full county board because clearly that is something that gave us some idea where the process is at. We all need to see how we can use that info with the info that we received from this committee.

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Mr. Whitis stated that this dovetails along with what was talked about at the last county board meeting and sometimes we forget that.

## **7. New Business**

## **8. Adjournment**

**A motion was made by Mr. LaGesse and seconded by Mr. Snipes to adjourn the meeting at 9:28 a.m. Motion carried with a voice vote.**

Matt Whitis, Chairman  
Joanne Langlois, Executive Coordinator