

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting

The Executive Committee of the McLean County Board met on Tuesday, June 8, 2010, at 4:30 p.m. in Room 400, Government Center, 115 E. Washington Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

Members Present: Chairman Sorensen, Members Owens, Bostic, Hoselton, Gordon, and Segobiano

Members Absent: Members Rackauskas, Butler and Nuckolls

Other Board Members Present: Member Caisley

Staff Present: Mr. Bill Wasson, Assistant County Administrator; Ms. Jude LaCasse, Assistant to the County Administrator

Department Heads/
Elected Officials Present: Mr. Craig Nelson, Director, Information Technologies

Others Present: Mr. Ryan Leuty, Assistant Director, Information Technologies; Mr. Marty Vanags, CEO, Economic Development Council; Mr. Ken Springer, Project Analyst, Economic Development Council; Ms. Dorothy Lockard, Director, Dietrich Lockard Group, Inc.

Chairman Sorensen called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Chairman Sorensen presented the minutes from the May 11, 2010 Executive Committee for approval. Hearing no additions or corrections to those minutes, Chairman Sorensen advised that the minutes would stand approved as presented.

Chairman Sorensen presented the reappointments.

Motion by Gordon/Bostic to Recommend Approval of the Reappointments as recommended by the Chairman.

Mr. Segobiano asked if a background or specific knowledge is required for the various County Board Appointments, such as the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Chairman Sorensen replied that, historically, where there are vacancies in appointments and there are people who are interested, there is an application/biography form that is completed and returned to the Administrator's Office.

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Chairman Sorensen noted that, in regard to the ZBA Appointment, Mr. Zimmerman has been on the ZBA since 2005 and indicated that he would be willing to serve another term.

Mr. Segobiano commented that the ZBA does a good job for the County.

Chairman Sorensen called for a vote on the Motion.

Motion carried.

Chairman Sorensen presented a request for approval of an Ordinance Amending "An Ordinance Describing and Designating an area located partially within the City of Bloomington, the Town of Normal and Unincorporated McLean County as an Enterprise Zone" – County Administrator's Office.

Motion by Owens/Bostic to Recommend Approval of an Ordinance Amending "An Ordinance Describing and Designation an area located partially within the City of Bloomington, the Town of Normal and Unincorporated McLean County as an Enterprise Zone" – County Administrator's Office.

Chairman Sorensen advised that Mr. Marty Vanags, CEO, Economic Development Council, and Mr. Ken Springer, Project Analyst, Economic Development Council is here to answer any questions that Members might have.

Mr. Hoselton asked if the County is still committed to the contiguous Enterprise Zone criteria. Chairman Sorensen responded that the contiguous nature of the Enterprise Zone map is a state requirement, which is being followed.

Mr. Segobiano noted that most of the fingers of the Enterprise Zone are on the east side of town. He recommended that the EDC make an effort to encourage growth on the west side of town. Chairman Sorensen responded that the Enterprise Zone does not push in any one direction, but responds to requests. Mr. Springer added that the last Enterprise Zone request was for an area on the west side of Main Street on White Oak Road. He indicated that the Enterprise Zone is applied where there is interest.

Chairman Sorensen asked Mr. Springer to provide a perspective on how other counties are using their Enterprise Zone and is McLean County's use unusual. Mr. Springer responded that McLean County's use of the Enterprise Zone is similar to the practices of other counties. He stated that most communities have a "blob" and the blob will be drawn to different areas as needed. Mr. Springer noted that counties are very strategic about how they use the Enterprise Zone.

Mr. Hoselton asked what is the area of the Enterprise Zone. Mr. Springer replied that the total area that can be used is 13 square miles. To date, about 6.3-6.4 miles have been used, which means there is still over half of the Zone to deploy. Mr. Springer noted that the McLean County Bloomington-Normal Enterprise Zone expires in 2015 and the EDC intends to use this tool while it is still available.

Mr. Springer distributed a graph that represents the amount of Enterprise Zone that is still available.

Mr. Springer advised that the Ordinance submitted by the Economic Development Council of the Bloomington-Norma Area seeks to extend the boundaries of the Bloomington/Normal/McLean County Enterprise Zone in order to cover approximately 111.34 acres located at and around 1010 Trinity Lane in East Bloomington. The land in question, "Empire Business Park," presents a sizable development opportunity for both the City of Bloomington and the larger McLean County community. Mr. Springer stated that it is the intention of the Economic Development Council to leverage the strengths of this business park to spur new investment in our community and to create jobs.

Mr. Springer stated that the EDC supports this extension of the Enterprise Zone boundary for a number of reasons. First and foremost, the planned projects in Empire Business Park will create new jobs in our community and will increase the property tax base through new investment. Secondly, by leveraging the Enterprise Zone's package of state-based incentives, Empire Business Park could be a hotspot for future development activity in our community.

Mr. Gordon asked if the Enterprise Zone, with a finger here and a finger there, is within the set boundaries and are we following set procedures. Mr. Springer replied that the Enterprise Zone remains within state guidelines.

Mr. Segobiano reiterated his concern that the expansion is not moving to the west side of town. Chairman Sorensen stated that the Enterprise Zone started at Mitsubishi, which is on the west side of town. He added that there is a significant amount of the Zone still available for expansion into any section of town.

Ms. Bostic asked if the White Oak Wind Farm in White Oak Township will request a section of the Zone. Mr. Springer replied that the White Oak Wind Farm has already received part of the Enterprise Zone in 2008.

Chairman Sorensen asked if there were any further questions. Hearing none, he called for a vote on the motion.

Motion carried.

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Chairman Sorensen presented a request for approval of an Antenna Site Lease Agreement between McLean County and Hudson Grain Company through the Information Technologies Department.

Mr. Craig Nelson, Director, Information Technologies, stated that the space, located alongside and atop the grain bins by the Hudson Grain Company, will serve to relay data between COMLARA County Park and the McLean County Law and Justice Center via the wireless microwave system approved last month.

Mr. Nelson noted that the terms of the agreement provide payment of \$300 per month to Hudson Grain Company for the use of their space and electricity for a period of two years. He added that this was found to be the fair market price for this type of access for non-profit organizations in the area.

Motion by Owens/Segobiano to Recommend
Approval of an Antenna Site Lease Agreement
between McLean County and Hudson Grain Elevator
– Information Technologies.
Motion carried.

Chairman Sorensen advised that the next item for consideration will be discussed at this meeting, but action on the item will be considered at a Stand-up meeting prior to the County Board Meeting. He indicated that the request is for approval of a Services Contract with Dietrich-Lockard for Telephone Consulting Services in the Information Technologies Department. In conjunction with that request, will be an Emergency Appropriation Ordinance Amending the McLean County Fiscal Year 2010 Combined Annual Appropriation and Budget Ordinance, County General Fund 0001, Information Technologies Department 0043. Chairman Sorensen noted that Mr. Nelson will provide background information on this issue, and Ms. Dorothy Lockard is also available to answer any questions.

Mr. Nelson explained that, over the past several years, Information Technologies has continued to investigate alternatives to our current telephone service. The introduction of Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) to the market brought with it the ability to reduce costs while providing enhanced capabilities and features.

Mr. Nelson stated that in 2006, the County contracted Ms. Dorothy Lockard of the Dietrich-Lockard group to explore the feasibility of introducing VOIP to the County. He noted that Information Technologies conducted focus groups, interviews and surveys of County employees. Mr. Nelson indicated that It was clear that the current telephone system and service provider were inadequate and costly.

Mr. Nelson stated that past approaches to upgrading the telephone system required an additional Full Time Employee to the Information Technologies staff so that the services could be managed in-house. He added that there was a nearly obsolete "core switch" at the Law and Justice Center that needed to be replaced and the cabling in the Law and Justice Center needed to be upgraded to support VOIP.

Mr. Nelson advised that cabling was upgraded during the recent remodeling of the Law and Justice Center, and a new core switch was installed in 2009.

Mr. Nelson noted that, recently, several companies were reviewed who offer fully managed and maintained VOIP telephone service that would eliminate the need for additional staff in order to implement VOIP.

Mr. Nelson stated that conversations with providers across the industry verified that McLean County is currently utilizing one of the most costly voice systems available (Centranet). Each provider indicated that they would be able to provide more service for less money than we are paying today while improving customer satisfaction. Mr. Nelson advised that a minimum of \$5,000 a month can be saved with a new system.

Mr. Nelson indicated that an additional reason to consider a change now is that our current provider, Verizon, is being acquired by Frontier. He added that he has had persistent service concerns with Verizon as a provider, and unreasonable amounts of time have been spent attempting to clarify service and billing issues.

Mr. Nelson advised that Information Services proposes to replace our current switches with one that are POE (Power Over Ethernet) capable. This will enable the County to maintain phone service in the case of a power outage.

Mr. Nelson stated that Ms. Lockard has provided valuable service to the County in the past. Her current proposal for services brings the knowledge and capability the County needs to address this issue quickly and thoroughly, with the likelihood that the County will be able to realize a savings in cost prior to the end of FY'2011.

Mr. Nelson indicated that the Emergency Appropriation Ordinance in the amount of \$73,000 will cover the services for Ms. Lockard as well as replace the needed infrastructure in the computer closets to handle a new phone system.

Mr. Segobiano expressed concern with the costs associated with changing from Verizon to Frontier, including the cost to change e-mail addresses, stationery, business cards, etc. He asked if Mr. Nelson anticipates additional costs with changing to the new system. Mr. Nelson responded that the types of costs and changes that Mr. Segobiano is concerned with would not have a direct impact to the County. He noted that because the County manages its own e-mail system, letterhead and business cards would not be affected.

Chairman Sorensen advised that, while there is an initial expense of \$73,000 to convert the telephone system, this is an expense management effort. He indicated that it will take approximately a year to recoup the cost of the project, but over the years, the County will continue to save money. Chairman Sorensen commented that the project is a good technology move and a good business move.

Chairman Sorensen asked if there were any additional questions or comments. Hearing none, he reminded the Committee that the Contract and Emergency Appropriation Ordinance will be considered at a Stand-up meeting next Tuesday. He thanked Mr. Nelson.

Mr. Ben Owens, Chairman, Chairman, Finance Committee, presented a request for approval of an Ordinance for Prevailing Rate of Public Works Wages for McLean County – County Administrator's Office.

Motion by Owens/Bostic to Recommend Approval of
an Ordinance for Prevailing Rate of Public Works
Wages for McLean County – County Administrator's
Office.
Motion carried.

Chairman Sorensen asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing none, he thanked Mr. Owens.

Ms. Bette Rackauskas, Chairman, Justice Committee, was unable to attend the meeting. Chairman Sorensen presented the request for approval to apply for Grant Funding from the United States Department of Justice for the Court Services Department.

Motion by Owens/Gordon to Recommend Approval to
Apply for Grant Funding from the United States
Department of Justice – Court Services.
Motion carried.

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Chairman Sorensen asked if there were any questions or comments. There were none.

Mr. George Gordon, Chairman, Land Use and Development Committee, advised that the Land Use and Development Committee brings no items for action to the Executive Committee. He advised that the request for approval of the Application to approve a Text Amendment in Case S-10-06 will be pulled from the Board Agenda because the Public Hearing held on June 3rd in connection with this application was not concluded on that date and it was continued to July 1st for further discussion and consideration.

Chairman Sorensen reminded the members of the Executive Committee that the County has a pressing zoning case that will be a topic of debate and discussion at the County Board meeting next week. Chairman Sorensen advised that there are times like this when how we conduct our business is more important than the business being conducted.

Mr. Segobiano stated that he hopes that the remarks and discussion will be held to what was presented to the Zoning Board of Appeals and not personal feelings and person hearsays.

Chairman Sorensen warned that if the Board cannot conduct this discussion without breaking the rules, it may be necessary to hold over to a hearing of the Board which could be very difficult.

Chairman Sorensen asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing none, he thanked Mr. Gordon.

Ms. Diane Bostic, Chairman, Property Committee, advised that the Property Committee brings no items for action to the Executive Committee. However, a request for approval of a Lease Agreement between McLean County and Fusion Brew, LLC will be presented for recommendation at a Stand-up meeting prior to the Board Meeting.

Chairman Sorensen asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing none, he thanked Ms. Bostic.

Mr. Stan Hoselton, Chairman, Transportation Committee, advised that the Transportation Committee brings no items for action to the Executive Committee.

Mr. Hoselton stated that several items will be forwarded to the County Board for approval, including the Preliminary Engineering Services Agreement with Clark Dietz for the East Side Highway, as well as the Stringtown Lakes, LLC Gravel Pit

Road Use Agreement. He noted that these items will likely initiate significant discussion at the Board meeting.

Chairman Sorensen commented on the "Request for approval of Stringtown lakes, LLC Gravel Pit – Road Use Agreement." He reminded the Committee, and noted that he will remind the County Board members next week, that regardless of how members intend to vote on the Zoning Case itself, having this Road Agreement is quite important to McLean County. Chairman Sorensen advised that, knowing this is a contentious Zoning Case, the Board members need to understand that no matter how the County Board votes, we may or may not have complete control of the outcome of this case ourselves. He stated that the Courts may make that decision. Having this Road Agreement in place no matter how the Zoning Case turns out is quite important.

Chairman Sorensen reiterated that it is good business for the County to get this Road Agreement approved. He noted that the County Board agenda will list the Transportation Committee before the Land Use and Development Committee, so that this issue will be dealt with first.

Chairman Sorensen asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing none, he thanked Mr. Hoselton.

Chairman Sorensen announced that in July he will be formally appointing an ad-hoc committee of the Executive Committee named the "Search Committee." He noted that he has asked Mr. Segobiano to Chair the Search Committee. Chairman Sorensen advised that the Search Committee will be charged with the responsibility of advising him and the County Board on the County Administrator search, the process and potential candidates. The active work on that Committee will begin in July. Chairman Sorensen indicated that the intention of the Search Committee is to conduct a comprehensive process that is fair and open.

Chairman Sorensen presented the May 31, 2010 bills as recommended and transmitted by the County Auditor for payment as well as a transfer of \$8,947 in the Information Technologies Department. The Fund Total is \$303,904.85 and the Prepaid Total is the same.

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Motion by Hoselton/Owens to recommend approval of the Executive Committee bills for May 31, 2010 as presented to the Committee by the County Auditor.
Motion carried.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the Executive Committee meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith A. LaCasse
Recording Secretary