

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF JOHNSON COUNTY ELECTED OFFICIALS  
OCTOBER 26, 2011**

**ELECTED OFFICIALS MEETING**

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Supervisor Pat Harney called the Johnson County Elected Officials Meeting to order in the Johnson County Health and Human Services Building at 1:33 p.m.

Elected officials present were: County Attorney Janet Lyness, County Auditor Tom Slockett, County Sheriff Lonny Pulkrabek, County Treasurer Tom Kriz, and County Supervisors: Pat Harney, Terrence Neuzil, Janelle Rettig, Sally Stutsman, and Rod Sullivan; absent was: County Recorder Kim Painter: Staff present were: Board of Supervisors Executive Assistant Andy Johnson, Board of Supervisors Budget Coordinator Rich Claiborne, and Auditor’s Office Deputy Auditor Nathan Reckman.

**UPDATE/REPORT/DISCUSSION OF THE FOLLOWING:  
Justice Center Pre-Schematic Design Process and Planning**

Neumann Monson Architects Principal Dwight Dobberstein said Venture Architects Design Director John Cain is taking part in the meeting via telephone. Dobberstein said both firms are eager to begin work.

Dobberstein said he provided the Board with a tentative schedule of meetings and in addition to the meetings he would like to conduct a few tours of the facilities. Dobberstein said his main concern right now is who should be on the planning committee. He said committee members should be people who are able to make decisions about the design of the facility. The committee will utilize a computer program to develop a 3D representation of the future justice center. The fastest way to accomplish this is to get all decision-makers together at one time. It is important to have a committee member from each of the major areas, such as the Sheriff’s Office, the Jail, the Courthouse Administration, the Physical Plant, the Clerk of Court, and the County Attorney’s Office. Once the committee has been selected, it is important that they know who they should report to. He asked the Board if they had any thoughts as to who the committee will be reporting to.

Sullivan said regularly involving three or more Supervisors poses a problem in terms of minutes and public notification of the meetings. It would be wise to form a smaller work group to make decisions and periodically report to the Board. Stutsman said each of the Supervisors is a member of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee (CJCC). She asked if those periodic reports could be presented during those CJCC meetings. Sullivan said he believes so.

Harney said he believes the CJCC needs to be involved, as well as the Sheriff and the County Attorney, and the other users of the facility. Harney's understanding is that much of the space needs has been documented and it would be up to the architects to develop the concept. Dobberstein said Harney is correct, however, the firms wish to confirm that information with others so they understand the history.

Rettig said the people Dobberstein identified as decision makers who he thought should be on the committee do not have the authority to make decisions but only to provide input and opinions. Board meetings need to be built into Dobberstein's meeting schedule because the Board has the ultimate authority to make decisions.

Stutsman asked Dobberstein if the committee would assist with decisions regarding what should be in this facility. Dobberstein said they are more concerned with how the programs and users interact with each other. Dobberstein said he wants to work with the users in designing the space layout. Once that is created the committee can report back to the CJCC or the Board as often as needed.

Sullivan said since all five Supervisors attend the CJCC meetings it makes sense for the firms to report during those monthly meetings. County Attorney Janet Lyness said the facility's users need to be a part of this process because it important to know what will be in the justice center and how those parts are going to function together. Sullivan suggested including the newly hired Facilities Manager Eldon Slaughter on the committee.

Harney suggested touring the justice center in Story County in addition to the Polk County Justice Center and the Le Claire County Jail already scheduled for tours. Dobberstein agreed.

Former University of Iowa Campus Planner Larry Wilson recommended the users act as a working committee with representatives from key departments or programs who make decisions about the initial plans regarding the departmental relationships, functions and the amount of space needed. The Board operates at a higher level of decision making which involves budget items and recommendations from the working committee. Wilson advised appointing a project manager as a representative of the Board.

Rettig said she is not sure spending money on a project manager is a good idea. Wilson said he is not referring to a construction manager but rather someone who meets with architects daily to make sure things are flowing smoothly and deadlines are met.

Rettig said she understands that, but during the pre-schematic phase before the voters vote, she does not want to hire another person on this project. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the new Facilities Manager will be assigned this duty. Wilson said he is not suggesting the Board hire anyone, but he thinks the County needs a representative in this project. Stutsman asked if Wilson has someone to recommend. Wilson said he would suggest the Facilities Manager handle it for a while until the workload increased. At that point, someone else may be hired to do the job. Regardless of this potential hire, Wilson thinks Slaughter needs to be involved from the beginning.

The CJCC members continued to discuss the purpose and composition of this design planning committee and agreed that a planning team would make day-to-day decisions and present updates at the monthly CJCC meetings. They agreed that a Supervisor does not need to participate on this design planning committee.

Lyness said she will prioritize this project. She thinks the committee should also include County Sheriff Lonny Pulkrabek, a representative from the Clerk of Courts Office, the County Facilities Manager, and representatives from Court Administration and she recommended a District Court judge and a District Associate Court judge because they will have different views on the facility's needs. Lyness said if the group gets much bigger it will be difficult to schedule meetings. CJCC members agreed with this committee membership and Dobberstein said Neumann Monson will coordinate the meetings. They agreed to schedule the kickoff meeting on November 4th at 9:00 a.m.

Harney left at 1:56 p.m.

### **2012 Legislative Priorities**

Sullivan said the Board is still receiving input from department heads regarding legislative priorities. Executive Assistant Andy Johnson said the meeting with area legislators is scheduled for December 15th at 7:30 a.m. Sullivan said he hopes the elected officials can attend the meeting and he urged them to email Johnson as soon as possible if they want to add an item to the agenda.

### **Budget Process and Contingency Planning**

Johnson said he thinks this item was suggested because the budget process for FY13 is starting. The contingency plan was added to discuss items related to legislative priorities and what plans are put in place if some of the proposals brought forward are passed.

County Auditor Tom Slockett asked if Johnson is referring to particular proposals. Stutsman said the feeling is that something will be done with commercial property tax this year. Slockett said there have also been proposals for state replacement aspects to those proposals. He asked if the Board is expecting cuts will occur without state replacement.

Rettig said she does not think proposals other than the Bolkcom Plan have been fully backfilled. If anything else passes, the County will experience budget cuts. The Board knows the county will experience cuts between \$500,000 and \$600,000 due to the co-op housing issue. If Bolkcom's plan passed, it was completely backfilled by the State.

Stutsman said she think's Slockett is referring to a proposal that does backfill for three years, then smaller amounts in subsequent years. But now the State is talking about being short on funding and she wonders if there will be any money for backfill.

Neuzil said he thinks the worst thing the State can do is fiddle with the County's General Supplemental Fund.

Rettig said she thinks departments should have budget contingency plans ready in case of cuts.

Slockett asked if the County would be notified of cuts before the fiscal year starts. Rettig said the County would have lost about \$900,000 on July 1st with Governor Terry Branstad's plan. Slockett said that was proposed before the budget process. He asked if there is any real reason to think the State is going to cut the County's budget even after the budget process was completed. Rettig said all the plans had that in starting July 1st. Slockett said that was last year. Rettig said the legislative leaders and Governor Branstad have already guaranteed a commercial property tax rollback will pass. Slockett said he is not sure the State would do that after budgets have passed.

Stutsman said she is inclined to agree with Slockett, but it is all speculation at this point. Slockett said the County should be doubling its efforts to make sure the Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC) and all fellow cities, counties, and school officials are aware of this. He thinks the public needs to know about the possibility of budget cuts.

Sullivan said he thinks that is an important point. He does not think budget cuts will hurt the schools because schools are important to voters. Sullivan said of the 99 counties in Iowa, only 15 of them have larger retail practices. Those 15 counties are not necessarily getting full representation from ISAC because the majority of the counties are not affected by the same things those 15 counties face. Sullivan said that is why he feels Johnson County needs a lobbyist.

Rettig said she thinks a small, shrinking county is completely supportive of a commercial property tax rollback because it thinks it will increase its opportunity to bring commercial businesses into Iowa. She is not against a commercial property tax rollback, but she feels the State should backfill it.

Slockett said Governor Branstad has a long record of advocating and taking credit for tax cuts. The tax cuts are to local government not State government so Governor Branstad does not face the consequences of these cuts.

Stutsman said maybe the County should do what the City of Iowa City did. When the legislative proposals were put forth, they showed what the cuts would cause. This would educate the public and get them involved. Showing the effects of budget cuts might get people's attention.

Rettig said she agrees with Slockett's statement that over-preparation for budget cuts enables the State to cut. Slockett said Johnson County has been fortunate because its valuations have not plunged like some others and is one of the fastest growing counties in the state. Rettig said as legislation progresses, she wants the County to have the ability to respond to it and think through it rather than be shocked by it. Sullivan said he wants people to be aware and start thinking about this though they will not know anything for months.

### **Allocation of Parking Funds**

Neuzil said he wants the elected officials to know the Board came up with the concept that a portion of the parking fees would be reinvested back into parking or potential employee benefits. He thinks 75% of the parking funds would be put back into the budget.

Pulkrabek asked if this percentage is after the investment in the infrastructure such as the gates. Treasurer Tom Kriz said initially they considered a cost of \$75,000 to cover the cost to maintain the lots and stairwells. Sullivan said he think's former Facilities Manager David Kemp projected 75% of parking fees would be needed for maintenance and upkeep.

Kriz said they also discussed the possibility of a subsidy for bus use or investments in employee wellness. Neuzil said informing County employees that a portion of employee parking is reinvested in the employees is a positive thing.

Rettig invited the Wellness Committee to make recommendations for equipment in the employee workout room. Sullivan said 25% of the money the County will take in from parking fees is approximately \$18,000.

Neuzil said the County does not have to charge its employees for parking. He thinks there was some commitment to reinvest some of the money to employees when this was decided. He thinks it is a good time to decide what to do with these fees since it is before the budget cycle.

Kriz said employees have asked about securing the entrance to the parking ramp stairwell, especially during the colder months when the area might be used by some as shelter from the bad weather. Rettig said people do feel unsafe using the parking ramp stairwells at night. There had been a request to restrict that entrance. Kriz said employees don't want to have to walk over someone sleeping in a sleeping bag in the stairwell.

### **2011 Charitable Campaign**

Neuzil said the 2011 Charitable Campaign is underway. Lyness said only three items have been donated for the silent auction. Neuzil said departments could pool money and come up with a basket to donate.

Neuzil asked about the K.I.S.S. the Pig contest. Rettig said she thinks there are supposed to be weekly updates. Rettig said Assistant Planning and Zoning Planner Josh Busard requested that elected officials send emails regarding the campaign because he feels those emails are more likely to be read. Sullivan said since he and Neuzil are on the Communications Committee, one of them could send out the email.

Rettig said Iowa City will be issuing the Linda Severson Charitable Challenge. If they accept the challenge, the County would raise items to donate to a preferred charity. The governmental entity raising the most number of items per full-time equivalent employee will be the winner of the contest. The challenge dates are November 25 through January 1, 2012.

### **Employee Recognition**

Sullivan said the Employee Recognition luncheon is scheduled for December 15th. Those employees being honored will eat for free and others will pay. Neuzil said Secondary Roads District Patrol Person Nick Ollinger will also be recognized with a hero award. Sullivan encouraged long-time employees and respective department heads to attend the recognition.

### **Reports from Elected Officials**

Slockett said satellite voting has begun for the City General Election. There was low turnout for the Primary Election. Election employees work late hours with poll workers and building administrators, as well as deal with complaints. He appreciates their hard work and overtime hours.

Lyness said the Attorney's Office is very busy. There are more murder cases pending in Johnson County than ever before, and other investigations are underway. She thanks the Board for giving the Attorney's Office another attorney to help with this workload. There were 87 to 88 new charges coming in during one week, when usually the Attorney's Office has between 60 and 70 charges.

Lyness said there are a lot more officers patrolling downtown since the 21 Ordinance was put into effect. Three new employees have started during this past year.

Lyness said there are many doctors testifying in the current trial and this costs the County a lot of money. Since the charges in this case occurred six years ago, some witnesses do not live in this area and it is expensive to transport them. Some cross examinations can occur through Skype, which saves money from bringing witnesses

here. Lyness said she has no doubt the current trial will go over the money budgeted for expert witnesses.

County Treasurer Tom Kriz said Second Deputy Treasurer Koleen Hoffman will retire October 31, 2011. She does not want anything done for her farewell, but Kriz invited elected officials to stop in and wish her well.

Kriz said the Department of Transportation (DOT) is going ahead with license plate replacement in May 2012, which is a multimillion dollar project. The DOT is looking into setting up areas for people to deposit old plates for recycling. The problem is that scrap metal is at an all-time high, so the drop off areas will have to be locked down, since the metal from the plates would be worth some money. Rettig said the City Federation of Labor could build the County a locked shed that could act as a drop off point for old plates. Then the money from recycling the plates could be used for charitable giving. Kriz said the license plate replacement will occur over a ten year period beginning May 2012.

Rettig said the DOT is changing the colors of Iowa license plates because law enforcement wants the change. Kriz said this change is going to cost consumers a lot of money because they will have to pay for the postage for their plates. Kriz said 127,000 plates will be replaced over ten years.

County Sheriff Lonny Pulkrabek said the Sheriff's Office received a resignation from a deputy sheriff who worked for the County for over eight years. The Sheriff's Office civil service list is still current, and there are good applicants to choose from. The new booking area and holding cells have been used, but the official opening of the area has not occurred yet.

Neuzil said he is taking a class at Kirkwood Community College to update his computer skills. In November, he is celebrating his 500th Listening Post.

Rettig said she and Neuzil are the liaisons to Facilities Management. New Facilities Manager Eldon Slaughter starts October 31, 2011. Part of his schedule in the first week is to meet with elected officials. Masonry work will take place at the Courthouse.

Slockett said the storage facility for Elections equipment has been put on hold. He asked if there is space available on the third floor of the Health and Human Services Building that could be used for this purpose. He knows there is some discussion on tearing down the Ambulance Building. Sullivan said the Board had discussed that any construction there will not begin for at least a couple years. Rettig said former Facilities Manager David Kempf took her on a tour of what he envisioned could act as a storage area for Elections equipment. She thinks this idea needs to be revisited. She wants to know how the County will handle transporting the heavy Autocarts in public elevators during business hours.

Pulkrabek asked if there are any specific plans regarding the demolition of the three unoccupied houses on South Capitol Street. Sullivan said the Board did not budget for demolition because they are generating revenue for now. Rettig said they hoped to get a bond for that. Pulkrabek said he spoke to Kempf about the possibility of using the houses for storage of inmate property but Kempf implied the demolition would occur in the near future.

**Set Date and Time for Next Meeting**

Johnson said the next elected officials meeting is scheduled for January 25, 2012.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR JANUARY 19, 2011**

Motion by Neuzil, second by Stutsman to approve the minutes of the January 19, 2011 meeting. Minutes were unanimously approved.

Adjourned at 3:08 p.m.

Attest: Tom Slockett, Auditor  
Recorded By Nathan Reckman