

**COMMISSIONERS' AND COUNTY COUNCIL SPECIAL JOINT MEETING- MONDAY,
APRIL 25, 2022**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Commissioner Brian Baird at 4:32 P.M. Commissioner Kevin Walls, Council Member Pete Ketchum, Council Member Jonathan T. Myers, Council Member James Ison, Council Member Rob Henderson, Council Member John Myers, and Council Member Ron Deer, were present. Commissioner Ron West and Council Member Melinda Griesemer were both absent.

**DISCUSSION OF DRAKE ROAD PROPERTY and DISCUSSION OF HIGHWAY
DEPARTMENT PROPERTY**

Mr. Walls stated everyone has been given an information handout regarding the Drake Road Project; stating for now this is something each of you can think about. He noted as we get further in the discussions today he believes this information will change. He said the Drake Road Project is a 15,000 square foot facility and would house the Health Department and the Coroner's Office. Mr. Walls stated the Drake Road Project has currently been stopped. The only thing that has been completed to date is soil borings. If we should retain this property for County use, or sell it, the soil borings would be used as part of the sale of the property.

Mr. Henderson stated the big picture is where we want to see this project go. Do we want the development of a Community Campus, relocation of services, build departments for more of a campus setting at a larger site? A larger site would be easier to develop, and we could potentially upgrade or move the Highway Department to have it more centrally located. This would increase land size to account for growth. He said this could potentially be done using some of the ARPA Funds, noting there are limitations on both discretionary and regulatory Funds. Mr. Henderson said now is the time to develop the vision of a campus and contemplate the future.

Mr. Jonathan T. Myers, stated he likes the idea of relocating the highway department and developing the ground into a central campus as suggested by Mr. Henderson.

Luke Mastin, Highway Director, approached the podium to answer questions regarding the Highway Department as it currently stands. Mr. Mastin stated the gas tanks are fiberglass and have a long lifespan; there was a project several years ago and some of the fittings were repaired above the tanks. He said his immediate concerns were for everything that is located above ground; the fuel island and the pumps themselves have many issues and are in a state of needed repair or replacement, the canopy is aging and there are drainage problems with the islands.

Mr. Deer suggested possibly relocating Adult Probation to the new complex and selling the Key Bank Building.

Mr. Baird said relocating Adult Probation would be something that would need further discussion by the Commissioners.

Mr. Walls stated \$49,000,000 was the amount needed for the suggested Central Campus Project.

Mr. Ison said he is in agreement to relocate the Highway Department and build a Central Campus.

Mr. Henderson stated he is in agreement to relocate the Highway Department and build a Central Campus in order to meet the needs of our growing community.

Mr. Baird stated he agreed with Mr. Henderson.

Mr. Deer stated he was in favor of building a new complex and relocate the Highway Department.

Mr. Ketchum stated he also supports this idea but still has a few questions he would like to address as the project moves forward.

Mr. Jonathan T. Myers stated he supports this idea and has from the start.

Mr. Ison stated this project is long overdue and he supports it.

Mr. Walls recommended a conceptual plan be done as the next step for this project.

Mr. Ison suggested along with the conceptual plan, there also be a project timeline and the source of potential funding be provided.

Discussion was held and all questions were addressed.

DISCUSSION OF SMITH VALLEY ROAD

Mr. Deer asked Mr. Baird for a summary of the discussion regarding the Smith Valley Road Project during the Commissioners' Meeting that morning.

Mr. Baird stated the Commissioners made a motion to table the Smith Valley Road Project until a special meeting could be held between the Council and the Commissioners.

Mr. Walls stated there was a decision made to approve Consultant Contracts for Smith Valley Road Preliminary Engineering.

Luke Mastin, County Highway Director, appeared before the Commissioners/Council for discussion of the INDOT State Road Relinquishment Agreement. He provided a copy of the agreement in its current draft format for review noting this is the same report that was given to the Commissioners during their morning meeting. Mr. Mastin said the summary takes into account the dollars that would be received from the Relinquishment Agreement and additional annual revenue in Highway Funds; this is coupled with maintenance costs and additional resource costs. The net annualized benefit of accepting the Relinquishment Agreement becomes outweighed by the net annualized Road Maintenance cost to the County in one hundred and twelve (112) years. The County would be potentially spending more money than received benefits by accepting the Relinquishment Agreement.

Mr. Ison asked if Highway 252 and Highway 144 would also need to be widened.

Mr. Mastin said capital projects like a road widening/reconstruction, intersection improvement and curb realignment are outside the scope of maintenance. He said if the County wanted to pursue

those type capital projects he would strongly encourage utilization of local federal aid programs at that time. This would minimize the impact on local dollars needed to finish the project. Capital projects have not been included in the maintenance estimate; however, they have been considered in case we pursue a project of that size, we will need to apply for Federal Funding. Mr. Mastin said the Relinquishment offer that has been discussed is \$35,000,000. He said we are estimating \$5,200,000 in projects that INDOT currently has in development. These projects would not be finished after the Relinquishment date. There is a calculated adjusted revenue to the Relinquishment Agreement of \$29,700,000. This is a net benefit and the \$5,200,000 would need to be considered. He said additional annual revenue would be received in the Motor Vehicle Highway Fund, as well as the Local Road and Street Fund. Additional revenue would be received from County Wheel and Excise Sur Tax. Mr. Mastin stated based on his calculations there could be a net annual deficit of \$265,000. He noted, we do not start with a balance of \$0; we start at the adjusted Relinquishment Agreement balance of \$29,700,000 while taking into account the County must finish the projects that are currently under development by INDOT. Mr. Mastin stated the Commissioners were given two agreements at the morning meeting, one was the actual Relinquishment Agreement and the other was a Federal Funding Agreement for Engineering Design of the Smith Valley Road Project. Those two agreements totaled approximately \$24,000,000; the offered amount is \$35,000,000. He said the additional \$11,000,000 would be 2028 funding and it has not been programed by INDOT at this point. The assumption is the \$11,000,000 would be put in the contract once the 2028 funding is programed.

Mr. Ison stated since this is not in the contract there would be nothing to stop the state from pulling out once we accept the Relinquishment Agreement.

Mr. Walls stated he is confident the people he is dealing with at INDOT today would make this happen; however, there are no guarantees and he also has concerns.

Mr. Ison stated he would not be in favor of supporting the Road Relinquishment Agreement with INDOT.

Mr. John Myers stated he would not be in favor of supporting the Road Relinquishment Agreement with INDOT.

Mr. Henderson stated he would not be in favor of supporting the Road Relinquishment Agreement with INDOT.

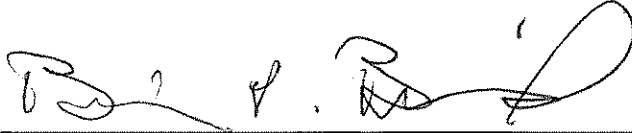
Mr. Baird stated he would not be in favor of supporting the Road Relinquishment Agreement with INDOT.

Discussion was held and all questions were addressed.


ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Walls moved to adjourn. Mr. Baird seconded the motion, which unanimously carried.

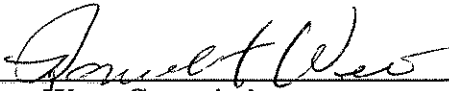
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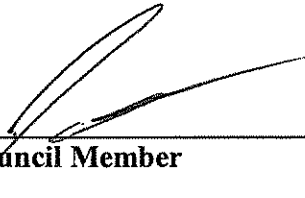
Brian P. Baird, Commissioner



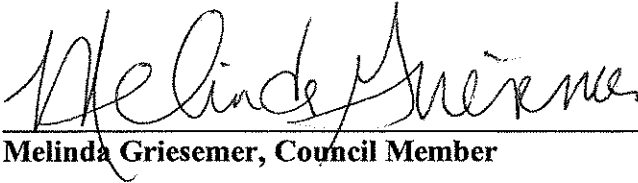
Kevin M. Walls, Commissioner



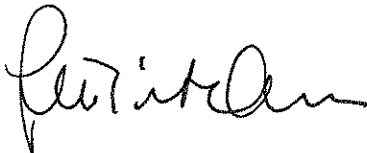
Ron West, Commissioner



James Ison, Council Member

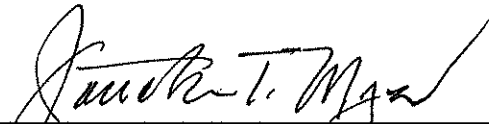


Melinda Griesemer, Council Member



Pete Ketchum, Council Member

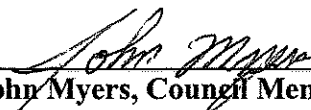
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Jonathan T. Myers, Council Member

absent

Rob Henderson, Council Member



John Myers, Council Member



Ron Deer, Council Member

Attest:

Pamela J. Burton
Auditor



Pamela J. Burton

