

WILL COUNTY BOARD
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES

February 1, 2011
302 North Chicago Street
County Board Committee Room
Joliet IL 60432

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Maher called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present were Members: Dralle, Brooks, B. Smith, L. Smith, Winfrey and Maher.

Absent were Members: Traynere.

Also Present: County Board Chairman Jim Moustis, County Board Chief of Staff Bruce Friefeld, Finance Director Paul Rafac, County Executive Chief of Staff Nick Palmer, Deputy Chief Marty Nowak and Jason Dwyer of Wight & Company.

Present from State's Attorney's Office: ASA M. Tatroe and ASA M. Manning.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Brooks led the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Ms. Winfrey, second by Mr. Smith, to approve the minutes of January 4, 2011. All in favor. MOTION CARRIES.

OLD BUSINESS

Update from Wight & Company

Mr. Dwyer explained the overall concept is to have the county's core functions housed mainly in the Will County Office Building and the Courthouse. New multi-function, service-oriented buildings would be created in the northern and eastern parts of the county, and a few operational buildings such as the Highway Department and the Health Department would remain in other locations in Joliet. As the study is finalized, the next steps in the process might be presenting the planning concept strategy to the entire board at a Committee of the Whole meeting; determining the size of the new buildings; developing a budget; and prioritizing the projects.

Mr. Maher suggested creating a list of immediate, short-term and long-term goals for the county's space needs.

Mr. Weigel asked if Wight & Company had a recommendation for the 9-1-1 facility. The 9-1-1 Board has an opportunity to buy land on Caton Farm Road, and the 9-1-1 Board Members want to know if Wight & Company thought the purchase would be a good idea.

Mr. Moustis indicated there had been some preliminary discussions about grouping some related county functions in one facility.

Mr. Dwyer stated the Sheriff's facilities on Laraway Road and in the Eagle Building are not in good condition and are somewhat disjointed because of operating in different locations. One important factor in the planning process for the Sheriff's Department is consolidating different departments -- investigations, patrol, records and the other law enforcement functions -- in one facility. Finding the right site for a consolidated facility has been an issue. The Sheriff's facility on Laraway Road doesn't have sewer and water, for example, so it wouldn't be a good place for expansion without those utilities.

Mr. Nowak stated the Sheriff came to the same conclusion as early as 2005 but did not have a good site for a consolidated facility. The Joliet Training Area was under utilized by the Army Reserve and aided by former Congressman Jerry Weller, the Sheriff began the process of securing a parcel there for the department. Negotiations later began with the Army to lease as much as 25 acres, but the process stalled while officials waited for the new Reserve Center to be built. The Sheriff now is trying again to secure a Congressional conveyance of the land, and there have been some discussions with Senator Kirk's and Congressman Adam Kinzinger's offices. Lobbyists from Smith Dawson suggest the county's leadership should work with County Executive Larry Walsh to develop a strategy.

Mr. Maher noted the location of the property would make it easier for the deputies to move around the county, especially if the Illiana Expressway is built. Considering the possibility of other law enforcement agencies training at the site and the proximity of the CenterPoint Intermodal Center, there might be Homeland Security dollars or other federal funding available.

Mrs. Dralle asked if the public would be doing much business at the facility.

Mr. Nowak answered Will County residents might go there to make a complaint or pick up a police report; it's meant to be an administrative center.

Mr. Maher stated the location might be more convenient for many Will County residents because it is close to Interstate 55.

Mr. Nowak stated Elwood has sewer and water nearby and is willing to work with the county.

Mrs. Dralle indicated she was concerned because the majority of Will County's population lives in areas north of the site.

Mr. Weigel asked if police dispatchers would work in the proposed facility.

Mr. Maher answered nothing had been ruled out.

Ms. Winfrey asked if other law enforcement agencies might pay a fee to train there -- a move that might offset the cost of development.

Mr. Nowak replied other agencies currently use the Sheriff's facilities but often donate useful items such as lumber, targets and ammunition. When other law enforcement agencies use the Sheriff's facilities it builds rapport.

Mr. Moustis stated the proposed Congressional conveyance would become part of Will County's legislative agenda.

Mr. Nowak commented the Sheriff had a drug seizure fund; some of the money could be used to plan a facility on the arsenal property.

Mr. Palmer indicated once a plan was in place, there might be some federal grant money available to pay for items such as technology or energy efficient infrastructure.

Mr. Friefeld suggested County Executive Larry Walsh should contact Senator Dick Durbin and get him on board as soon as possible.

Mr. Nowak suggested a call also should be made to Congressman Kinzinger's office, to continue to keep him informed.

Mr. Moustis stated the group should develop a coordinated effort to keep everyone informed.

Next Steps on LED Technology and Lighting

Mr. Maher stated he would like to request samples of LED lighting from the three companies that responded to the RFI.

Mr. Rafac indicated he recently learned of other companies in the same business, so he would request samples of tube lights from a broader group.

Other Old Business

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Maher stated he would like to schedule a Committee of the Whole meeting to present an update from Wight & Company. Workshops on the planning process could be held during the Capital Improvements Committee meetings.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Smith, second by Ms. Winfrey, to adjourn the meeting at 11:37 a.m. All in favor.

MOTION CARRIES.