

WILL COUNTY BOARD
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES

March 1, 2011

302 North Chicago Street
County Board Committee Room
Joliet IL 60432

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Maher called the meeting to order at 10:29 a.m.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent were Members: None.

Also Present: County Board Chairman Jim Moustis, County Board Chief of Staff Bruce Friefeld, County Board Deputy Chief of Staff Melissa Johannsen, Finance Director Paul Rafac, County Executive Chief of Staff Nick Palmer, Health Department Executive Director John Cicero, Joliet City Councilman Joe Shetina, Joliet City Manager Tom Thanas, Will County Chief Judge Gerald Kinney, First Midwest Bank President Jim Roof and Jason Dwyer, Steve Collins and Kevin Havens of Wight & Company.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Smith 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 February 1, 2011. All in favor. MOTION CARRIES.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Smith and Ms. Dralle arrived at this juncture.

Discussion Re: New Lamps for the County Board Room

Mr. Maher stated Borealis had contacted him about the remainder of the lamps to be installed in the County Board Room. The fixtures are available.

Mr. Rafac indicated he hadn't talked with Mike Miglorini and didn't know the status of the project.

Mr. Maher stated there already had been a discussion about completing the project.

Mr. Rafac stated additional lights would be needed.

Mr. Maher commented the new lamps were an updated version with higher lumens and asked Mr. Rafac to have Mr. Miglorini check on the project. Had the other vendors who work with LED lights been contacted?

Mr. Rafac replied yes.

Mr. Maher asked about samples of the lighting products from those vendors.

Mr. Rafac indicated the vendors had been contacted but the samples had not arrived.

Mr. Maher asked Mr. Rafac to have everything ready for the April committee meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Initial Discussions Re: Prioritization of County's Immediate, Short-Term and Long-Term Needs & Development of Conceptual Strategy

Mr. Maher stated the committee members should decide if the county should create centralized campuses for its facilities or should different services simply be spread across the county in various buildings.

Mr. Dwyer distributed a work sheet for each of the committee members to complete. It included space to prioritize capital projects by the time frames of near-term and long-term and by the priorities of low, medium and high.

Mr. Maher indicated the work sheets would be collected at the end of the meeting and the results would be compiled. At the next meeting, the committee members would discuss the information.

Mr. Dwyer reviewed a PowerPoint presentation prepared by Wight & Company on the proposed master plan for Will County facilities. The committee members asked questions and made comments during the course of the review.

Ms. Smith commented the options didn't include a compound or facility at a current location. The discussion was focused on satellite campuses. There wasn't a chance to discuss if a larger complex was more cost-effective than satellite facilities. There are short-term needs with the court system, but that doesn't exclude the possibility of a multi-purpose building and an expansion later.

Mr. Maher stated the court system did have a near-term need. If the county buys or acquires property for a court building, the land might be five to 10 acres. If the committee decides there should be a central campus, the members might determine it is better to buy 20 acres while the land is less expensive, construct a court building and reserve the remainder of the property for future growth.

Ms. Smith noted Wight & Company hadn't recommended satellite facilities over a main government campus or vice-versa.

Mr. Maher stated the committee wasn't addressing that issue at this time. The current decision-making process was more conceptual.

Ms. Smith asked how she would be able to make that type of choice.

Mr. Maher advised the committee members should decide if they would rather have services centralized or spread throughout an entire area.

Mr. Moustis stated the core functions would not change – they would stay in Joliet. There already are satellite facilities in other locations throughout the county. The question is, should the

services stand individually, or should some of the services be grouped together in campuses at other locations?

Mrs. Dralle stated multi-function facilities seem to be the best approach.

Mrs. Traynere indicated she agreed with the concept of multi-function satellite offices but still had a concern: technology improves practically on a daily basis. Some of the things done today in an office might be done on-line tomorrow.

Mr. Maher stated there might be public computer terminals for different departments inside a county building. An employee could assist people as they completed county-related tasks on the terminals.

Mrs. Traynere stated she backed the multi-purpose satellite facilities.

Mr. Moustis noted the technological infrastructure could be built on a site.

Ms. Winfrey indicated she also favored the multi-purpose satellite sites.

Mr. Brooks stated the decision would affect other people. Input from the county's employees and the city of Joliet would be important during the decision-making process.

Mr. Maher stated the question was to either centralize services or to offer them piecemeal.

Mr. Brooks stated he preferred centralizing services.

Ms. Smith stated she favored a campus.

Mr. Moustis stated he preferred a campus setting.

Mr. Maher stated he also wanted centralized services.

Mr. Dwyer commented the plan did not include having each county office present at each site. There would not be complete duplication and massive infrastructure.

Mrs. Dralle indicated she was concerned about the costs.

Ms. Winfrey stated she agreed with Mr. Brooks. County employees could help the committee decide what services would work well at the satellite offices.

Mr. Moustis commented some of the departments housed currently in the County Office Building might function just as well in another location; others truly belong in the County Office Building, such as the County Clerk.

Mr. Dwyer noted the County Clerk offered many services for Will County residents. The Clerk should stay in the County Office Building along with other customer service-oriented departments.

Mr. Moustis stated the functions housed inside the justice complex were listed separately on the Master Plan Project Prioritization work sheet. The committee members then could rate each one as a low, medium or a high priority for the building. It would have been helpful to have the departments housed in the County Office Building listed on the sheet in the same fashion so a priority could be assigned to each one. For example, the offices of the County Board would be a low priority. The County Clerk's office would be given a high priority. The priority for the Treasurer's office might be medium.

Mr. Dwyer advised some departments might be combined into one building or campus to increase the efficiency of operations and also to make it easier for the public to access services.

Mr. Moustis asked when the county would be required to create a public works department.

Ms. Tatroe answered when the population reached 700,000.

Mr. Moustis commented the population probably would be that large in 10 years. The function of the County Engineer would change somewhat at that point. It might be preferable to have the County Engineer's office near the Land Use Department so the two easily can work together.

Mr. Maher stated the committee should plan for that eventuality. Although the county's population currently is under 700,000, when the time comes to build more space for the courts, the planning will be for the future when the county's population is more than 1 million. The court building could be constructed in a shell fashion, meaning part of the space will be finished and other sections – perhaps even floors -- won't be. The unfinished space could be completed when it is needed.

Mr. Moustis asked for a clarification: the planning for the courts did not include the vacation of Washington Street?

Mr. Dwyer replied it did not.

Mr. Moustis noted there had been discussions with the city of Joliet and a portion of Washington Street might be vacated. For the purposes of long-range planning, the existing courthouse and the EMCO Building might someday be used to house support services for the courts. The Public Defender's office and Probation might one day be located in the EMCO Building. There also have been discussions about one day bringing all the court-related functions together on one site.

Mr. Dwyer stated there were two ways to think about the courts. The changes could be made in stages, and some of the existing buildings would continue to be used for a certain period of time. Ideally, all the court-related functions would be grouped together. There would be some operational benefits. For example, there could be a single spot for visitors to form a line before going through a security check point. Currently each building has its own security check point. One task that has yet to be done is the consideration of how the existing courthouse might be reused. That is where Washington Street becomes a factor. That would allow all the court-related functions to be grouped together.

Mr. Maher stated it would become a judicial campus.

Mrs. Dralle asked if the existing courthouse might be eliminated.

Mr. Moustis answered it might be razed at some point. Eventually the current courthouse site could be redeveloped. There might be some sort of public-private partnership. Or the site could be redeveloped for the county's use. Nevertheless, that building will be replaced eventually. The committee should think in terms of the building being temporary.

Mrs. Dralle asked if the courthouse should be renovated if one day it will be demolished. Additionally, how exactly could it be renovated?

Mr. Maher answered it would be difficult to make that kind of decision until the complex prioritization process was completed.

Mrs. Dralle stated government tends to bandage problems. If a bandage solution is chosen, what would the cost be? If a different solution is chosen, what would that cost be?

Mr. Maher indicated those discussions would happen later.

Mr. Moustis stated the committee should assume all the court functions will go to one site. The other factor to consider is the redevelopment of the city of Joliet. City officials probably would like to see the old courthouse site redeveloped or used as part of the intermodal transportation system, despite the fact that it might have a higher value as a commercial use.

Mr. Dwyer commented if the goal is to bring everything to one site, a complete renovation would not be advisable.

Mrs. Traynere asked if the possibility of the combination of public and private space – perhaps leased spots for restaurants – had been considered for the first floor.

Mr. Maher asked the committee members to determine if some of the projects on the prioritization sheet shouldn't be done at all. Some committee members might not want to renovate the existing courthouse, for example.

Mr. Dwyer stated the Sheriff's facility on Laraway Road is a poor quality building. The site doesn't have public water and sewer, so it would be difficult to expand there. The Highway Department's portion of the Laraway Road site isn't in bad condition. The building housing the administrative arm of the Highway Department is a little too small so perhaps it would be better to move those functions in with county government.

Mr. Maher asked how much land could be recouped if there was city sewer and water service at Laraway Road.

Mr. Dwyer stated it was piecemeal. Some things could be moved to the site even without public sewer and water but the preference would be to try to get the service. Perhaps the Sheriff might leave Laraway Road for a consolidated site in another location. Then Animal Control perhaps could be moved there. It also might be a good spot to consolidate the office of the Coroner and the Morgue. The two related departments are now in different locations. A household hazardous waste site also could be located on Laraway Road.

Mrs. Dralle asked if the current Morgue would then be closed.

Mr. Dwyer answered there had been quite a bit of discussion about that possibility. The Highway Department has land in Wilmington, and the highest priority is to start building another location there. On the public works side of the operation, equipment needs to be housed in that section of the county. Perhaps a salt dome could be constructed there first and then a maintenance

and garage space to store equipment. There has been discussion about a possible partnership with the county and the Emergency Telephone System Board, also known as the 9-1-1 Board. The ETSB has been considering the possibility of a facility off Caton Farm Road. The county might have some functions or components within the proposed building. The county's Emergency Management Agency is now located in the basement of the County Office Building. If the department were to move out of that location and in with ETSB, that would free some space at 302 N. Chicago St. for the short term. EMA has synergy with ETSB.

Mr. Moustis stated the county's 9-1-1 system and its public safety function are separate entities. The county's 9-1-1 is not a dispatching agency. It provides support for all of the dispatch centers. When 9-1-1 was formed, the plan was to cut the telephone line charges from 75 cents to 35 cents once everyone was up to speed. That never has happened, and now there is \$9 million accumulated at 9-1-1. That doesn't mean the money should be used for a building or diverted to some unintended use. Although the county must plan for its future public safety needs, that does not include 9-1-1.

Mr. Maher noted if a new facility is built for the Sheriff, the county might want to invite other agencies to be partners. Once the county decides what to do, the partnerships could be pursued.

Mrs. Dralle asked if anyone considered the possibility of the Coroner having a facility including a morgue at the new Silver Cross Hospital in New Lenox.

Mr. Maher replied it had not been discussed.

Mr. Dwyer stated the future of 9-1-1 does seem to be a policy issue. If there is some opportunity to partner with the agency, the County Board will have to consider it and make a decision.

Mr. Moustis noted it was a 9-1-1 decision.

Mr. Maher stated from the scope of this exercise, it is up to the committee to determine where it is on the priority list.

Mr. Moustis stated the dispatch centers run by the various communities have to decide if they are going to consolidate. The County Board said a number of years ago there should be no more than three dispatch centers. In the beginning there were 16 dispatch centers. Now there are eight or nine. No one can make them consolidate. The dispatch centers have to make the decision.

Mr. Palmer asked when it would be the appropriate time for the County Executive's office to comment.

Mr. Maher answered everyone would have a chance to comment.

Mr. Moustis stated he would like to hear from the elected office holders themselves.

Mr. Palmer indicated Mr. Walsh was in Springfield working on the airport issues.

Mr. Dwyer stated there might be four court rooms at the northern satellite site. A permanent traffic courtroom might be a good idea. It would be difficult to move the criminal courts away from downtown Joliet and the jail because there would be transportation issues. Courtrooms for civil cases

and probate might work well, however. There also might be office space for the State's Attorney and the Circuit Clerk. There also could be a county government service center for residents and a satellite office for the Health Department, perhaps in a separate building on the site. There also could be flexible space for meetings with residents, Workforce training and GED testing, for example. The eastern satellite campus might be a little smaller and have just a single traffic courtroom.

Mr. Smith stated there were two areas that need immediate attention: the Sheriff's department and the Health Department. Everything else seemed more long-term. The short term seemed to be about five years, and the long term seemed to be 20 years.

Mr. Maher stated the time frame had yet to be defined. Even if the planning began immediately, it would take five years to accomplish any of the projects.

Mr. Smith stated it would be better to finance a piece of property now rather than in five years.

Mr. Brooks stated he did not have any comments at this time.

Ms. Winfrey indicated the Health Department, the Sheriff's Department and the EMCO Building all needed work.

Ms. Traynere stated she needed to learn more about the 9-1-1 facility although it was not her top priority. Short term seemed to be about five years and long term about 10 years.

Mr. Moustis stated long term probably was completion by 2030.

Mr. Dwyer stated some projects have a long term horizon, such as the new courthouse. The process could be broken into smaller projects such as acquiring property and financial planning.

Mr. Maher indicated a satellite court could relieve some of the pressure on the existing courthouse.

Mr. Moustis commented short term means committing to the project. As an example, the committee could commit to building a new courthouse today. But a completion date or occupancy could be seven or eight years in the future.

Mr. Maher stated land must be purchased for a new courthouse or a satellite facility.

Mrs. Dralle stated she had a number of questions for the next meeting. The Sheriff, the Health Department and the courts are among the top priorities. Could there be some type of schematic and a timeline for completion dates?

Mr. Maher stated perhaps the committee could create a flow chart of the priorities for each project and then envision a timeline.

Ms. Smith noted the County Board had been talking about eight years about acquiring the First Midwest Bank building. That should have been done a long time ago. The courthouse and the EMCO Building should not be renovated. The county has already spent plenty of money on the EMCO Building by removing asbestos and installing new windows.

Ms. Dralle asked for Wight & Company's priority list.

Mr. Dwyer stated Wight's primary goal was to facilitate the discussion.

Judge Kinney stated there was one branch of government that was not minimized by the expansion and growth of municipalities: the court system. It is a core function of county government and continues to expand dramatically. The county's population has grown by 175,000 people during the past 10 years, and that increased the demand on the services provided by the court system. If disputes aren't resolved in a timely fashion, people stay in jail too long, and the cost of the whole process increases.

Mr. Roof stated the most difficult part of the process will be consider the county's present-day needs while also looking to the future and prioritizing.

Mr. Palmer indicated the County Executive will be at future meetings. Mr. Walsh believes the Master Plan is a good study because it is comprehensive but also wants to have a conversation about how it can be implemented. There is an incredible amount of need and limited funding.

Mr. Maher indicated he agreed with Mr. Palmer and the County Executive. This is the third phase of a multi-phase project. After setting the vision and the policies, the finances can be allocated. This is a 100-year event. When the next courthouse is built, that process won't happen again for another 100 years.

Mr. Rafac stated the plan would increase costs of operations and staff, and the county must plan for those expenses. The committee must consider when new judges must be added because of the Census and when the state would be willing to fund them. If the state doesn't fund them, the new space won't be needed until that happens. The committee must decide how much of the RTA tax will be used for road construction and how much will be used for public safety. That has large ramifications on the potential funding streams. A lot of the funding can be used in certain ways in the short term. The county should start doing things now in terms of buying the land, designing the projects and determining when to start construction to meet the long-term needs.

Mr. Moustis commented the county never really has done a true capital plan or budget. Some revenue streams have been identified that will not be used for operations such as the RTA tax. To have a successful capital plan, difficult decisions must be made such as dedicating 20 percent of the sales tax for capital projects, for example. That generally means the cost of other operations must be closely watched. If operations were to be as much as 85 percent of the budget – that figure is a hypothetical example -- there wouldn't be anything left for a capital plan.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mrs. Dralle, second by Ms. Traynere, to adjourn the meeting at 1:10 p.m. All in favor.

MOTION CARRIES.