

Administrative Services Committee Meeting Douglas County, Nebraska

Tuesday, September 1, 2015

The meeting convened at 10:30 a.m. in Room 903 of the Omaha-Douglas Civic Center, 1819 Farnam Street, Omaha, NE 68183. A copy of the Open Meetings Act was present in the room. A notice of the meeting was published in the August 24, 2015 issue of The Daily Record. County Commissioners present at the beginning of the meeting were Jim Cavanaugh, Clare Duda, Marc Kraft, and PJ Morgan. Others present at the beginning of the meeting were Patrick Bloomingdale, Diane Carlson, Joe Lorenz, Dianne Wallace, and Kaieva Williams of Administration; Diane Battiato and Larry Miller of the Assessor/Register of Deeds' office; County Attorney Don Kleine; Wayne Hudson of the Sheriff's office; Jerry Leahy and Jeff McGill of Public Property; John Hubbard of Corrections; Christopher Carithers of the Election Commission; Kathleen Hall and Dan Esch of the Clerk/Comptroller's office; and Bob Nord of DOT.Comm. Commissioner Cavanaugh conducted the meeting.

1) Request for space on the 4th floor.

County Commissioners Mary Ann Borgeson and Mike Boyle entered the meeting during this item, as well as Marcos San Martin and Catherine Hall of Administration. Ms. Williams left the meeting during this item. Speaking during this item were Mr. Leahy, Mr. Bloomingdale, Assessor/Register of Deeds Battiato, Commissioner Cavanaugh, Commissioner Kraft, Commissioner Duda, Commissioner Boyle, Commissioner Rodgers, and Commissioner Borgeson. Highlights from the discussion included the following:

- Mr. Leahy provided a floor plan of the 4th floor (see Attachment #1).
- Mr. Bloomingdale said Administration has four employees housed in the southwest area of the 4th floor of the Civic Center.
- Mr. Bloomingdale said there is a wall that separates the Administration and Assessor spaces.
 - Mr. Leahy said this wall is 35 linear feet.
- Mr. Bloomingdale spoke about a request from Assessor/Register of Deeds Battiato to cut the height of the wall in half so it could serve as a counter, as well.
 - Assessor/Register of Deeds Battiato said this would allow for work stations on each side of the wall.
 - Mr. Leahy said to create the half-wall/counter would be a minimal cost.
- Mr. Bloomingdale said Assessor/Register of Deeds Battiato would also like temporary use of the Administration side of this wall to house some listers.
 - Mr. Bloomingdale spoke about being okay with this move as long as it's temporary.
 - Mr. Bloomingdale said there could be six to seven Administration employees on the 4th floor next budget year.
 - Mr. Bloomingdale said he plans to make a request to the County Board for another grant employee next budget year to work with the County's grant coordinator.
 - ❖ Mr. Bloomingdale said he'd like to move the grant coordinator from the 9th floor to the 4th floor.

- Mr. Bloomingdale said he'll work with Mr. Leahy and Assessor/Register of Deeds Battiato to come up with something that clearly delineates the space needed for the Assessor/Register of Deeds.
- Mr. Bloomingdale spoke about how Administration could enter into an MOU with the Assessor/Register of Deeds whereby the use of the space is temporary, and Administration would get the space back if Administration needed it.
- GIS and the Assessor/Register of Deeds' GIS department were discussed.
 - Assessor/Register of Deeds Battiato said the GIS discussion has not gone anywhere.
 - Assessor/Register of Deeds Battiato said GIS is designed for a different reason than the Assessor/Register of Deeds' GIS department.
- Long-term space needs for the Assessor/Register of Deeds were discussed.
 - Assessor/Register of Deeds Battiato said her goal is to have the combined office be a cohesive unit.
 - Commissioner Boyle said he thinks the solution is getting the Assessor/Register of Deeds out of the Civic Center.
 - Commissioner Boyle said an adequate space outside of the Civic Center is a better alternative than trying to squeeze both spaces onto the 4th floor.
 - Assessor/Register of Deeds Battiato said it doesn't matter to her if the Assessor/Register of Deeds' office is in the Civic Center or in some other centralized facility.
 - Assessor/Register of Deeds Battiato said at least 16,000 square feet would be ideal for the Assessor/Register of Deeds' office space.
 - Commissioner Boyle said he has heard the City is interested in the Register of Deeds' space.
 - Assessor/Register of Deeds Battiato said if someone else needing the Register of Deeds space helps to get the Assessor and Register of Deeds moved together, she's more than happy to work with someone on that.
 - Commissioner Kraft said working on two different floors is not insurmountable.
 - Commissioner Cavanaugh said space needs going forward is a part of the County's strategic plan, and the Assessor/Register of Deeds is at the front of that line.

2) Discussion regarding County Attorney space issues.

Speaking during this item were Commissioner Cavanaugh, County Attorney Kleine, Commissioner Duda, Mr. Leahy, Commissioner Boyle, Mr. Lorenz, and Assessor/Register of Deeds Battiato. Highlights from the discussion included the following:

- Immediate space needs for the County Attorney's office were discussed.
 - County Attorney Kleine said there have been three times in recent history where a flood has occurred in the County Attorney's basement area.
 - County Attorney Kleine said the Building Commission has done everything they can to help, but it seems to be a problem that's not fixable.
 - There's about 2,200 square feet in the County Attorney's basement area.
 - County Attorney Kleine said investigators, law clerks, and an IT trial specialist work in this area.

- Mr. Leahy spoke about how Records Imaging, located on C Level, is also experiencing problems with flooding.
- Mr. Leahy said there is 3,250 square feet available in the Treasurer's office on Harney Level, and the County Attorney's staff and Records Imaging could be moved there.
 - Mr. Leahy said Treasurer Ewing is aware of the possibility of staff from another office moving into this space.
 - County Attorney Kleine said this would be fine.
 - Commissioner Cavanaugh said this will be pursued with the Treasurer and the Building Commission.
- Strategic planning and possible long-term space needs for the County Attorney were discussed.
 - County Attorney Kleine said the County Attorney's office space is extremely divided, and that's difficult from a management perspective.
 - County Attorney Kleine said there are County Attorney employees in the Exchange Building, 9th floor of the Civic Center, 6th floor of the Hall of Justice (HOJ), and two different spots on the first floor of HOJ.
 - County Attorney Kleine talked about how he would like the County Board to keep this in mind when it comes to the County Attorney's office set up.
 - Mr. Leahy spoke about how a sixth Juvenile Court judge could impact the County Attorney's space on the sixth floor of the HOJ.
 - The possibility of Worker's Compensation Court and Probation being moved out of the HOJ was discussed.
 - Worker's Compensation Court and Probation are located on the first floor of the HOJ.
- Mr. Leahy and Mr. McGill provided a document that contained square footage figures (see Attachment #2).
- County Attorney Kleine left the meeting after this discussion.

3) Discuss strategic planning regarding County space needs.

Speaking to this item were Commissioner Cavanaugh, Mr. Leahy, Mr. McGill, Assessor/Register of Deeds Battiato, Commissioner Borgeson, Capt. Hudson, Commissioner Kraft, Mr. Lorenz, Mr. Bloomingdale, Mr. Hubbard, Commissioner Duda, and Commissioner Rodgers. Highlights from the discussion included the following:

- Commissioner Cavanaugh said a big part of what the County will be doing in the next 12 months is revisiting the Fitzgerald Home and the bond issue.
- Commissioner Cavanaugh said the Fitzgerald Home is in an area that's underserved by the County in terms of available services.
 - Commissioner Cavanaugh said it would give the County a chance to offer a variety of services to people living in Western Douglas County.
- For the bond issue in November 2014, there were plans to move 911/Communications, Environmental Services, and a Treasurer's branch into the Fitzgerald Home.
 - Mr. McGill said these three departments will take up 59,000 square feet in the Fitzgerald Home.

- Mr. Leahy said this 59,000 square feet does include some shared space, such as conference rooms and break rooms.
 - Beyond the 59,000 square feet, Mr. Leahy said there might be an additional 14,000 square feet available at the Fitzgerald Home.
 - Mr. McGill said it is complex because of the attic spaces.
- Commissioner Cavanaugh said the bond issue in 2016 doesn't have to be exactly the same as the bond issue in 2014, and the County needs to have the bond issue discussion in conjunction with its space needs.
 - Commissioner Kraft said the County needs to re-analyze to see whether or not there are greater needs now.
- Commissioner Borgeson spoke about the need for the Commissioners to do more in the way of providing the public with information regarding the bond issue.
- Mr. Lorenz spoke about how the Omaha Public Schools bond issue that passed in 2014 had many donations given to its campaign.
- Commissioner Boyle said the bond issue in 2016 should be framed as a public safety issue.
 - Commissioner Rodgers said he feels the involvement of the County Sheriff, City Police Chief, and City Fire Chief would help tremendously.
 - Commissioner Rodgers spoke about getting the First Responders Group involved.
- Commissioner Boyle spoke about trying to get City offices into the Fitzgerald Home.
- Ms. Kathleen Hall left the meeting during this discussion.
- Assessor/Register of Deeds Battiatto, Mr. Hubbard, Capt. Hudson, Mr. Leahy, and Mr. McGill left the meeting after this item.

4) Presentation/update 531 area code.

Speaking to this item were Ms. Wallace, Commissioner Cavanaugh, Commissioner Duda, Mr. Nord, Commissioner Boyle, Commissioner Kraft, Mr. Bloomingdale, and Mr. Lorenz. Highlights from the discussion included the following:

- Ms. Wallace reviewed a slideshow presentation regarding the 531 area code and the actions taken thus far, and actions that could be taken in the future (see Attachment #3).
- Ms. Wallace said the cost is \$1,000/month to reserve the 531-444 number block, even though it's not being used.
 - Ms. Wallace said the number block is leased, not owned.
 - Mr. Nord said this cost is paid to the telephone company, who then pays the Public Service Commission (PSC).
- Outside of the \$1,000/month to reserve the 531-444 number block, Ms. Wallace said there isn't a good feel for what the actual cost will be for number re-assignment.
 - Commissioner Cavanaugh said to bring all of the phone numbers one umbrella makes sense, but it only makes sense to a certain threshold.
- Ms. Wallace talked about forming a group with the City to dig in deeper to what the cost will be.

- Ms. Wallace spoke about how part of the cost would be whether or not there is a hard cutover when someone calls an old number (i.e. “this number is no longer in service”), or if it’s set up to where both numbers stay in effect for a length of time (i.e. a call to the old number would be transferred to the new number).
 - Mr. Nord said the total phone count for the City, County, and DOT.Comm is over 4,000.
- The five Commissioners present during this item were supportive of forming a committee with the City.
- Commissioner Boyle said he’d like to serve on this committee.
- Commissioner Boyle said he thinks it’s a mistake to not change from the 444 prefix because 531-444 numbers could cause confusion with 402-444 numbers.
 - Commissioner Rodgers said if the County is going to change its area code, it might as well as change the whole number.
 - Mr. Nord said it is changeable; a new number could be requested.
- Other points made during this item included:
 - Commissioner Boyle said he doesn’t think County Commissioners should have land line telephones.
 - Commissioner Boyle said he thinks there needs to be a serious discussion about cell phones and phones in the buildings.
 - Commissioner Boyle spoke about the idea of not giving desk phones to employees who have County cell phones.
- Mr. Miller and Commissioner Borgeson left the meeting during this item.

5) Other business

Speaking during this item were Mr. Carithers, Commissioner Cavanaugh, and Commissioner Boyle. Highlights from the discussion included the following:

- Strategic planning for the space needs of the Election Commission was discussed.
 - Mr. Carithers said the Election Commission has tried to get a different facility since 2007.
 - Mr. Carithers said in addition to space issues, there have also been issues with the roof and plumbing at the current Election Commission facility.
 - Commissioner Cavanaugh said he doesn’t think any of the County Commissioners are happy with the current Election Commission location, and asked Mr. Carithers to share relocation space ideas with the County Commissioners.

The meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.