

## Administrative Services Committee Meeting Douglas County, Nebraska

Tuesday, February 16, 2016

The meeting convened at 8:02 a.m. in Room 903 of the Omaha-Douglas Civic Center, 1819 Farnam Street, Omaha, NE 68183. A copy of the Open Meetings Act is located near the entrance of the room. A notice of the meeting was published in the February 8, 2016 issue of *The Daily Record*. County Commissioners present at the beginning of the meeting were Jim Cavanaugh and Clare Duda. Others present at the beginning of the meeting were Patrick Bloomingdale, Diane Carlson, Joe Lorenz, Marcos San Martin, and Toni Dunn of Administration; Diane Battiato and Larry Miller of the Assessor/Register of Deeds' office; Mark Conrey of 911/Communications (911); Kent Holm of Environmental Services; Jerry Leahy and Jeff McGill of Public Property; and Dan Esch and Kathleen Hall of the Clerk/Comptroller's office. Commissioner Cavanaugh conducted the meeting.

### 1) County space needs.

County Commissioners Mike Boyle, PJ Morgan, and Chris Rodgers entered the meeting during this item, as well as Mark Foxall and Amber Michalski of Corrections; and Jenny Hansen of 911. Ms. Dunn left the meeting during this item. Those speaking during this item were Mr. Leahy, Assessor/Register of Deeds Battiato, Mr. McGill, Commissioner Cavanaugh, Commissioner Duda, Mr. Conrey, Mr. Lorenz, Mr. Bloomingdale, Commissioner Morgan, Commissioner Boyle, and Ms. Carlson. Highlights from the discussion included the following:

- Space needs for the Assessor/Register of Deeds' office were discussed.
  - Assessor/Register of Deeds Battiato said if the Assessor/Register of Deeds' office were to stay in the Civic Center, 16,000 square feet would work. However, if the Assessor/Register of Deeds' office were to move out of the Civic Center, there will need to be another 3,500 square feet to accommodate the Assessor/Register of Deeds' vaults on C Level.
    - Assessor/Register of Deeds Battiato said the records in these vaults are accessed daily.
  - When discussing the upcoming budget for 2016/2017, Mr. Lorenz said he estimates the County will receive an incremental \$3 million in revenue (due to an increase in property values and the likelihood of the passage of LB827), but he also estimates an increase of \$5 million in expenses, putting the County at a \$2 million deficit.
    - Mr. Lorenz said it would be hard to come up with a \$1 million to cover space needs for the Assessor/Register of Deeds if it's not covered in a bond offering.
  - Mr. Bloomingdale discussed the possibility of moving Vital Statistics off of Harney Level, which may give the Assessor/Register of Deeds enough room on Harney Level if the Treasurer was moved from Harney Level, as well.
  - Commissioner Boyle said he thinks the solution for the Assessor/Register of Deeds' office is to mimic what is done with the County Treasurer.
  - Commissioner Morgan spoke about looking into the Richman Gordman building on 121st and Center as a possible location for the Assessor/Register of Deeds.

- Of the four options discussed during this item, Assessor/Register of Deeds Battiato said at the moment her location preferences would be as follows:
  1. A building like Richmond Gordman that has enough office space and parking
  2. 4th Floor of the Civic Center
  3. Harney Level
  4. Thomas Fitzgerald Home (TFH)
    - Commissioner Cavanaugh said if time is of the essence, then the 4th Floor and Harney Level are probably the best options at this point.
- Commissioner Duda said the status quo is also an option for the Assessor/Register of Deeds' office.
- Commissioner Boyle talked about trying to find a building that could house a Treasurer's branch, the Election Commissioner, and the Assessor/Register of Deeds, and he does not believe there are any good options in the Civic Center or Hall of Justice.
- Mr. Leahy said the Public Defender's office needs to expand, as well.
- Commissioner Boyle said he thinks the scope of the Building Commission needs to be changed so the County can do things like Lancaster does.
- Commissioner Boyle said he has a meeting with Ben Gray to talk about joint City-County facilities.

## **2) Bond issue.**

Speaking during this item were Commissioner Cavanaugh, Commissioner Duda, Mr. Leahy, Ms. Hansen, Mr. Bloomingdale, Mr. McGill, Commissioner Rodgers, Mr. Conrey, Mr. Lorenz, Commissioner Boyle, Commissioner Kraft, and Clerk/Comptroller Esch. Highlights from the discussion included the following:

- Mr. Leahy said in addition to what was on the 2014 bond proposal, radios for Corrections and Sheriff have been added because their radio equipment will soon be obsolete.
  - Mr. Bloomingdale said the County has to purchase this radio equipment, regardless if the bond is used to help pay for it.
  - It was discussed that the cost of the radio equipment will be at least \$2 million.
- Commissioner Cavanaugh talked about the possibility of including the Assessor/Register of Deeds' space needs in the bond issue.
- Commissioner Boyle spoke about the bond issue only including public safety items.
- Commissioner Rodgers spoke about the difficulty of getting voters in Western Douglas County to approve a bond, and discussed the difficulty school districts have had with passing bonds in Western Douglas County.
- Clerk/Comptroller Esch said the bond issue is to improve TFH, located in Western Douglas County, and some voters in Western Douglas County more find the bond issue more appealing when they learn that.
- Ms. Hansen said the recent events are promoters of updating expiring services for public safety.

### **3) Strategic planning.**

Speaking during this item were Commissioner Cavanaugh, Commissioner Morgan, Mr. Lorenz, and Mr. Bloomingdale. Highlights from the discussion included the following:

- Commissioner Cavanaugh said he thinks the County has a great opportunity to make the bond issue do all of the things the County needs it to do, and not do a property tax increase.
- Mr. Lorenz talked said a Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for later in the day.
  - An employee with Baird Holm is scheduled to attend the meeting to discuss the strategy Omaha Public Schools (OPS) used for their bond issue in 2014.

### **4) Other business.**

There was no other business.

The meeting adjourned at 8:59 a.m.