

1/15/2019 10:30am Items VIIA2 #3, #
From Doug Kagan (NTF) VII C1

NTF SPEECH TO DOUGLAS COUNTY BOARD ON THE JUSTICE CENTER: Jan. 15, 2019.

Good morning. My name is Doug Kagan, representing NE Taxpayers for Freedom. Our taxpayer group urges commissioners to vote NO on issuing revenue bonds for the justice center or juvenile center, as this board not yet has revealed the cost of renovating the MUD building or decided definitely on the site for a new juvenile center.

Again, we ask the board to backtrack. We urge a process like that used in the 2016 bond issue that includes 100% public, competitive bidding. Commissioners and/or the building commission would retain professional services of an expert consultant to assist in the development of a Request for Qualifications for interested bidder teams and assist the county in award of the contract. This process also should allow for consideration of alternatives by offsetting any reduction in construction costs by a predetermined amount of internal cost borne by the county due to having separate facilities. The method to determine the internal cost to the county must be established prior to the involved teams developing their respective bids as a matter of transparency and fairness.

The county would issue a Request for Qualifications to select a short list of qualified developer/designer/contractor bidder teams. Each team in its bidding would have the discretion to propose each facility on the preferred site or propose an alternative site. A short list of qualified teams would develop a design and construction cost based on a program and site development requirements developed by the county with its architect/expert consultant. The contract would be awarded using a commonly used Technically Acceptable-Least Cost selection analysis that would include construction cost plus any differential, internal cost to the county. At this time, we simply do not know if there exist less costly alternatives. Therefore, we strongly urge you to delay this vote.



The NTF Alternate Proposal

The NTF Alternative Proposal provides a process that includes 100% public, competitive bidding. Douglas County and/or the Public Building Commission would retain professional services of a consultant like the Space Study architect and expert to 1) assist in the development of a Request for Qualifications for interested bidders and 2) assist Douglas County in the award of the contract. Each bidder must have the expertise provided by the current plan's four prime consultants/contractor. The process should also allow for the consideration of alternative sites by offsetting any reduction in construction cost by a predetermined amount of internal cost borne by Douglas County due to having separate facilities; the method to determine the internal cost to the county must be established prior to the teams developing their respective bids as a matter of transparency and fairness. The private, non-profit JCDC would not be necessary in this alternative process; as with NU construction projects, the construction activity would be considered independent of the philanthropic activities and could be promoted with a group of motivated, civic-minded individuals.

1. Douglas County would issue a Request for Qualifications to ***select a short list of qualified developer/designer/contractor bidder teams***. Each team would have the discretion to propose the facility on the preferred site or propose an alternate site that would give the team a competitive advantage but must be acceptable to Douglas County.

2. A short list of qualified teams would develop a design and construction cost based on a program and site development requirements developed by Douglas County with their architect/expert consultant. The ***contract would be awarded using a Technically Acceptable – Least Cost selection analysis*** that would include construction cost plus any differential, internal cost to Douglas County.

3. ***Public projects of this magnitude should be approved by the public*** via the ballot box.

This is a surprising issue given the previous occasions over several years where the Douglas County Commissioners have been open to hearing our input and have accommodated the taxpayers; the 2016 Public Safety Bond Issue is one example where Commissioners Borgeson and Morgan gained our support (a similar measure on the 2014 ballot failed) of a \$45M bond that would be financed such that the county budget for debt service would not increase. As well intentioned as the Juvenile Justice Center proposal may be, citizens must guard against any tool that can be misused or abused by future, less scrupulous elected officials. The mandate by the State of Nebraska for a sixth Juvenile Court Judge, the long overdue need to address our deteriorating existing courthouse, and the well-intentioned desire to improve the outcomes for those impacted by the Juvenile Justice system appear to be blinding our county board to this risk.