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**BARTHOLOMEW COUNTY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
April 22, 2014**

The Bartholomew County Council met for a Special Meeting on April 22, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. in the County Council Chambers of the Governmental Office Building, 440 Third Street, Columbus, Indiana. Members present were: Chris Ogle, Rob Kittle, Pro-Tem Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence, President Ryan Lauer, Bill Lentz, Jorge Morales and Jim Reed. Also in attendance was Auditor Barbara J Hackman.

Rob Kittle gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The only item on the agenda was the consideration of Funding for the County Annex Project.

President Lauer gave a synopsis of how we had gotten to this point tonight. Every Council member has had input; they have talked with the employees at the current building and they have talked with constituents. A sub-committee was established with Ryan Lauer, Jim Reed and Rob Kittle.

President Lauer presented the sub-committee's recommendation as to the funding for the Annex Project. The sub-committee recommends two million dollars (\$2,000,000) from the Rainy Day Fund, seven-hundred-fifty-thousand dollars (\$750,000) from the Telecommunication Fund, three-hundred-twenty-five-thousand dollars (\$325,000) from the CEDIT Fund and one-hundred-seventy-five-thousand dollars (\$175,000) from the Levy Excess. This would give the Commissioners a total of three-million two-hundred-fifty-thousand dollars (\$3,250,000) for a new annex building.

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(Council Attorney Chris Monroe joined the meeting)

Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence recommended two million dollars (\$2,000,000) from the Telecommunication Fund and one million dollars (\$1,000,000) from the CEDIT Fund. She is recommending only expending two million dollars (\$2,800,000). She noted that there had been excess money in the Cumulative Bridge Fund in the past years. She would suggest putting the allowed ten percent (10%) into the Rainy Day Fund from the 2012 and 2013 years if the Commissioners will do the Ordinance.

Jorge Morales clarified that her concern was more of where the funds would come from than the amount.

Bill Lentz complimented Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence as he had contacted several asphalt companies all of which she had talked to prior to his call.

Jorge Morales would like to hear from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Lienhoop would like to hear from the other Council members before he makes any comment.

Jorge Morales has talked to several commercial builders and they are telling him a 140 to 160 dollars per square feet would be a good average for a new building. That would equate to 2.7 million dollars.

President Lauer stated that the plan the sub-committee had submitted was based on a \$160 square foot for a 20,000 square foot building.

Jorge Morales stated he is not so concerned about the difference of two-point-eight to three-point-two million dollars (\$2,800,000 to \$3,200,000). He thinks we should

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build a structure that can be expanded upward if needed in the future. He also asked if the amount the Commissioners were asking for would include the cost of the demolition.

Commissioner Kleinhenz stated the amount will include the demolition as well as a lot of other “soft” costs. It is doubtful that County employees would be allowed to do the demolition. They will also have to determine if there is any asbestos in the building.

Bill Lentz stated that he had faith in the Commissioners and knows that the sub-committee’s goal was not to deplete any particular fund.

President Lauer stated that they do not want to affect the strong financial stability that the County currently has.

Bill Lentz stated that this would be done without a tax increase; would still allow for employee raises and would not require a bond.

President Lauer opened the meeting for public comment.

Mike Lovelace (*in the audience*) stated that the Council is wrong. He believes this project should be bonded. The employees should be able to walk out of the building and appreciate it. They spent all kinds of money on the jail and it is for prisoners. He does not believe we will build a nice building for three-point-two-five million dollars (\$3,250,000). He does not like to pay taxes but feels there is a need for a nice building.

John Finke, member of the Extension Board, (*in the audience*) asked who would be placed in the building. Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence stated she believed it was the Extension, Health Departmentb and possibly Soil & Water. The plan would include a meeting room that is bigger than the existing meeting room.

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Jorge Morales explained that the Council's portion is to fund the project. Once they have determined the funding, it is then the Commissioners that will determine as to the architect, offices that will be housed and all other decisions regarding the building.

President Lauer stated that currently the Extension Office has a large meeting area and the Commissioners have included a large meeting area in the new building.

Bill Lentz stated that they did take to heart the letter from the Extension Office. He knows that they wanted something smaller, but it was determined it was in the best interest to go a little larger.

Don Strietelmeier (*in the audience*) stated that he has followed this issue just from what has been in the newspaper. He did comment regarding Mr. Lovelace's comments. If they can build it without raising taxes, then they need to do that. It needs to look good, be efficient and serve the purpose it is being built for. He is not certain that using the Cummins Foundation for the architect is required. He stated that most of the school buildings are very nice, but he does not know if the children are any better educated inside of those buildings. He commented that he knows that building it to be expandable is a good idea if it is cost effective. He believes they are doing the right thing by building something new.

Commissioner Kleinhenz wanted to clarify one item. He knows that Jorge Morales stated a single story building. The Commissioners have not made a determination as to the number of stories. He believes that a single story building was

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the recommendation by DLZ when they completed their study. He thanked the Council for their work. They did not want to raise taxes to build this building.

The public portion of the meeting was closed.

Rob Kittle thanked everyone for all the comments. He reminded them that the Council has the job of funding the project and the Commissioners have the rest of the functions.

Chris Ogle wanted to comment regarding Mike Lovelace's comments. If they needed more money, he would still have gone to the Rainy Day fund before he would raise taxes. He appreciates that he is willing to pay more taxes, but he does not want to raise taxes.

Jim Reed commented that he also would not bond because they would incur additional costs. Mr. Lovelace stated that he felt seven million dollars (\$7,000,000) was correct for the building.

Auditor Hackman stated that the DLZ study amount provided did not include the soft costs. The Commissioners letter requesting five million dollars (\$5,000,000) did include both hard and soft costs. DLZ projected twenty-five to thirty-five percent (25% to 35%) for soft costs.

Charlie Day (*in the audience and with DLZ*) stated that they could probably stay on the low end of the twenty-five to thirty-five percent (25% to 35%).

Auditor Hackman had also talked with Dan Eggermann, Financial Consultant, regarding as to where the funds were coming from. Attorney Monroe was in the office

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with her during the phone call. Mr. Eggermann stated that it would be much easier if it all came out of the Rainy Day Fund as long as it stayed under four million dollars (\$4,000,000). This was based on the Commissioners agreement to pay back the money from the CEDIT Fund. It would be considered a loan between the two funds. The proposed expenditures would deplete the Telecommunications Fund. This fund receives only about eighty-five-thousand dollars (\$85,000) a year. It was stated that this money would not be spent immediately, but over time and would possibly be replenished as it was spent.

Bill Lentz thinks we should have a little bit of flexibility.

Auditor Hackman stated that they could deplete the Levy Excess Fund as it will revert to the General Fund if not used.

Rob Kittle stated that they did not want to deplete any fund due to unforeseen expenses.

Jorge Morales stated they have discussed this for a year. He is flexible as to where the money comes from; he does not want to deplete any fund. It is time to get off the pot.

Jim Reed asked Charlie Day if architectural fees were included in the soft costs. Mr. Day stated it was. With the Cummins Foundation Grant picking up the architectural fees, those would be savings or money to use elsewhere.

Rob Kittle stated that there was a recommendation to the Council and it needed to be acted upon.

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Commissioner Chairman Carl Lienhoop stated that he appreciated Mr. Strietelmeier's comments. He does not want the County Highway to have to demolish the building or to pave the parking lot. He believes the Council sub-committee has a good recommendation and after hearing Auditor Hackman, they are willing to work with the various funds to assure they do not deplete the Telecommunication Fund.

Jim Reed stated that the Council had to come up with a figure. The architect may come back and say they can only build a twelve-thousand five-hundred (12,500) square foot building and then we will need to look at it again.

Commissioner Kleinhenz stated that if they can come up with a number tonight, he would like to work with the Auditor and Council as to where the funds would come from.

Jorge Morales made a motion to approve the recommendation from the Sub-committee for three-million two-hundred-fifty-thousand dollars (\$3,250,000). Rob Kittle stated that Commissioner Kleinhenz's comment is correct. Jorge Morales restated his motion to approve the recommendation from the Sub-committee for three-million two-hundred-fifty-thousand dollars (\$3,250,000) utilizing the Rainy Day Fund, the Telecommunication Fund, the CEDIT Fund and the Levy Excess. Jim Reed seconded the motion. Attorney Monroe asked if that was to include hard and soft costs. The consensus of the Council was yes. Attorney Monroe asked if this was contingent on a pay back by the Commissioners as noted in their letter. The consensus of the Council was no, it was not. Rob Kittle asked if that is what the Commissioners were wanting.

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Commissioner Kleinhenz stated that yes; it was though he wished it was a higher amount. Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence asked if that included the two-hundred-fifty-thousand dollar (\$250,000) payback from the CEDIT every year. It was stated the Council had just determined it was not. President Lauer asked for any public comments. Julie Aton (*in the audience*) asked if there were a limited number of architects with the Cummins Foundation Grant. It was stated that it is five architects. She then asked the time line. Commissioner Kleinhenz stated they hoped to be in by the end of 2015. President Lauer called for the vote. It passed 7-0.

Chris Ogle made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jim Reed seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

BARTHOLOMEW COUNTY COUNCIL

By: _____
Ryan Lauer, President

By: _____
Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence, Pro-Tem

By: _____
Chris Ogle, Member

By: _____
Rob Kittle, Member

By: _____
Jorge Morales, Member

By: _____
Bill Lentz, Member

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By: _____
Jim Reed, Member

ATTEST: _____
Barbara J. Hackman, Auditor
Bartholomew County