

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF MONROE COUNTY, ILLINOIS MARCH 12, 2015
SPECIAL MEETING

The meeting of the County Commissioners of Monroe County, Illinois was called to order at 8:00 a.m. Chairman Terry Liefer, Commissioner Delbert Wittenauer and Commissioner Robert Elmore were present.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

With Chairman Liefer presiding it was declared there was a quorum present and the meeting was ready for business.

This meeting was held to discuss a Nursing Home addition with two Architects. Chairman Liefer said this project had been addressed earlier, but at the time it wasn't economically feasible. He said it appears that the time may be better for proceeding with this addition to the Nursing Home.

The first presentation was made by Joseph C. Wiener of the Farnsworth Group. He said the company is over 100 years old, and has more than 450 employees throughout the United States, including offices in St. Louis, Peoria and Champaign. He said the company has worked on a lot of Nursing Homes, especially County Nursing Homes. He said that one of the things they do to help save money for the client, is to transfer all documents, plans and shop drawings electronically – that way they arrive faster, and the customer isn't charged a lot of fees for mailing, etc. Mr. Wiener said this way contractors won't be able to say that something was mailed and they never got it.

Mr. Wiener said his company is expert at working with IDPH and the NFPA Life Safety Code, which will help the County achieve faster approvals from IDPH. Commissioner Wittenauer said if you have the ability to do this, will you provide a guarantee in your contract that the County will have no problems with IDPH. Mr. Wiener said they cannot provide that type of guarantee. He said the contract will include a design and construction contingency to cover any kind of problems or delays in the contract. Commissioner Wittenauer asked if there would be extra charges for any parts of the project that have to be redrawn after the construction work begins. Mr. Wiener said no, they do not charge for redrawing any of the plans if necessary.

There was extensive discussion regarding the fire pump and sprinkler system requirements for the home. Commissioner Wittenauer said the one thing that was learned is that this problem caused a lot of finger pointing, and that will not be allowed on a project like the one being discussed.

Commissioner Wittenauer asked about the allowable percentage of increase at the Nursing Home without having to file a Certificate of Need. Mr. Wiener said it is not more than 10% of the amount of your existing rooms every two years.

Mr. Wiener discussed several other projects they have worked on. There was discussion about the cost of some of the other building additions. Mr. Wiener said that the average cost is about \$160 per square foot. There was extensive discussion on the best way to set up bathrooms/showers in this type of room arrangement. Heating /cooling units in the rooms and bathrooms were discussed.

Mr. Wiener said when you're doing a Rehab facility like this, you don't want to mix the populations from this facility and those who are in the other parts of the Nursing Home.

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Chairman Liefer asked what was viewed as the biggest challenge for this building addition. Mr. Wiener said the site is the major challenge, and what is going on with the Planned Unit Development agreement with the City of Waterloo. Even though there is enough physical room on the site, it may be a problem because of the City's PUD agreement. He said it all depends on how close you are to the planned coverage amount and whether you have to go before a Zoning Board for a variance. Mr. Wiener said it also may be necessary to add fill to the east end of the site and install a retaining wall. Dan Borisuk said it will also be necessary to provide some parking, because the existing parking area is always full.

Chairman Liefer asked about the estimated timeline to complete a project like this. Mr. Wiener said he estimated that the Nursing Home addition would take about a year. He said once you decide on an Architect, it will take about 2-3 months to complete the plans, and then about 10 months to complete the construction. Chairman Liefer said there is no big push or no time limit on when this has to be completed.

Mr. Wiener said you could also include several sizes of private rooms to meet the various needs of the people. A larger room would allow a parent to stay overnight with a child if necessary. Mr. Borisuk asked if the Architect would be meeting with the Therapy people to determine what they want and need in this new space. Chairman Liefer said he also felt it was important to develop the plans with the future in mind, trying to determine what the needs of the county will be in future years.

Mr. Wiener said two things will drive this project – your schedule and your budget. He said management needs to sit down and say – what are you going to do in each of these rooms, and then the Architect will sit down with the experts to determine what the needs of each of these spaces will be.

Commissioner Wittenauer said it may make sense to build this now, and then convert these rooms to Nursing Home later if the demand grows for that type of room.

Dan Borisuk said we did not receive any “as built” drawings on the current Nursing Home. Mr. Wiener said you will get hard copies and PDF copies of those when the project is complete.

Kim Keckritz said after meeting with Mr. Wiener yesterday, she thought a better idea might be to move the day room to the center of the building rather than putting it at the end of the hallway area and addition. He also suggested that the area where the day room had been planned should possibly be devoted to private room space. Ms. Keckritz said these additional rooms would be private rooms for Oak Hill. She said financially it would also make more sense since this type of room commands a higher fee and will produce more income for the Nursing Home. Mr. Wiener said he also cautioned the County against including too many double rooms, and lean more toward single rooms.

Ron Polka said if you're selected, what is the timeline for preliminary planning. Mr. Wiener said he could start immediately, and would work “time and materials” to produce the preliminary plan that would give the County a better idea of the cost of this project. He said a team of 2 or 3 people would assist him with this for an estimated cost of \$6,000. Mr. Polka said he also liked

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the idea of everything being in house with this firm – the mechanical, plumbing, etc. Mr. Wiener said yes, they could do everything including any civil engineering work. Mr. Polka said he would suggest that the County stay with TWM for any civil engineering and survey work since they did the previous work on the site. Ms. Keckritz asked if some educated estimates can be obtained from contractors once this preliminary plan is complete, and Mr. Wiener said yes, that is the case. Mr. Wiener said he will also provide computer-enhanced photos of what the building interior will look like.

Mike Kovarik came to the meeting to listen to the discussion.

Ron Polka asked when would we negotiate a contract in this process. Mr. Wiener said he would complete the preliminary work first and then move into the full contract. He said he anticipated the first phase would take about a month to complete. Ms. Keckritz asked if someone from the Architecture firm would be on site at all times. Mr. Wiener said they could do that, but it would be cost prohibitive to the County to do that – normally someone from his company would only attend the regularly scheduled contractor meetings.

There was discussion of the bid process. Mr. Wiener said he is the one who would take care of qualifying all bidders, and reviewing and tabulating all of the submitted bids to determine the lowest responsible bidder. He suggested not requiring the contractors to provide bonds to keep the bid costs down. Mr. Polka said he thinks the County is required to include contractor bonds on projects.

Chairman Liefer asked Mr. Wiener to provide some closing comments. Mr. Wiener said you are not just contracting with an individual, you are signing on with an entire team that is qualified to handle every detail of a project like this. He said he felt they were a local firm, and he would really like to work on this project. Ms. Keckritz asked if he could provide some reference contacts, and maybe also look at the possibility of touring some of the firm's previous projects.

Mr. Wiener left the presentation.

Some additional discussion followed. Mr. Keckritz said she really likes the idea of looking toward more private rooms. Mr. Wiener told Ms. Keckritz that changing that part of the design would not increase the total construction cost of the project. Chairman Liefer asked if there is anybody else around here that is positioned to include rehab in their services. Ms. Keckritz said none of the other facilities have made any plans to do that.

Ms. Keckritz said another one of the things that needs to be addressed in the future is the bariatric population (larger people). She said they already have problems with some people not fitting in chairs or being able to get through some of the doors. Mr. Keckritz said she has also been talking with the neighboring Surgical Center about sending patients to Oak Hill for rehab once this new addition is completed. Commissioner Wittenauer said he felt we need to partner with the other assisted living facilities since they don't provide the rehab services. Ms. Keckritz said if they do out-patient therapy, they would need to provide an outside entrance along with a waiting area, and a separate license would be required.

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Ron Polka said the main thing to remember from the last construction project is to learn from your mistakes.

Bruce Ferry and Greg Perkins came to the meeting to make the presentation for Ferry & Associates. Mr. Ferry said his firm was involved in the construction of the current County home and the person that represented the firm was Lindsay Hahn, who has since gone to work for IDPH in Springfield. He said the firm has been in existence since the mid-1950's. The firm is small enough that the partners get involved in all of the projects. Mr. Ferry said they do work all over the State, and specialize in working on projects under the jurisdiction of IDPH. He said their office is strictly architects, and they hire other engineers in various fields to help with projects that require specialized experience.

Mr. Ferry said on the previous Monroe County project, Bric was chosen as the mechanical/electrical/plumbing engineering firm since they were a local firm. He said that they weren't the best for that project at that time. Mr. Ferry said he would suggest for this project that the County use Johnson Engineering in Springfield to handle the mechanical/electrical/plumbing details of the Nursing Home addition. He said they also work with a structural engineer in Springfield, but he would also be willing to work with a local structural engineer if the County has a preference.

Mr. Ferry said IDPH will do one courtesy review, but they don't do multiple site inspections like they used to. When the project is complete, they will come back to do their walk-through. He said it is important that you document all of the construction along the way, so if there is something inside a wall that is in question by IDPH, you have photos and plans to show IDPH what took place inside that wall. Mr. Ferry said he has already seen IDPH make the owner take down drywall to see what was behind a wall if there was no other documentation for them to look at.

Mr. Ferry said he had looked at the site, and there may be some civil work to be done on the site before construction can begin. Commissioner Wittenauer asked if it would be a challenge. Mr. Ferry said it could be a challenge, but that is still to be seen. He said another challenge would be to keep the existing access road, while placing the addition in that area of the site. Chairman Liefer asked if there was sufficient room. Mr. Ferry said there is plenty of room on the site.

Mr. Ferry talked about and showed pictures of various other projects they have been involved with. He said that having a separate identity for this addition is very important to the success of the unit. Mr. Ferry showed a possible layout for the addition of the 13 rooms onto the existing building. The plan he showed did not have many parking spaces, so he said that is something that would have to be studied. The plan also included a central enclosed courtyard area. Mr. Ferry said to keep the cost down, you need to make sure that you keep the shape of the building simple, and don't include a lot of outside corners, because that drives up the cost.

Chairman Liefer asked if there was anything that could be done to make the facility work better in future years. Mr. Ferry said one thing to consider is to design the building for bariatric applications. Even if no equipment is installed at this time, consider using heavier roof truss, etc. to accommodate this equipment at a later date. He said another thing to think about is that people who are using facilities like this are looking for more of a hotel or hospitality setting, so it makes

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sense to design your facility with that in mind. Mr. Ferry said the design should also blend with the existing building so it is a part of the whole, but at the same time the addition should have its own identity.

Commissioner Wittenauer asked if there could be different size rooms for different needs. Mr. Ferry said that would not be a problem.

Ms. Keckritz asked Mr. Ferry if he had time to make this project a priority. Mr. Ferry said yes, he did. Chairman Liefer asked what the next steps would be if the County decides to proceed. Mr. Ferry said the best way to proceed would be for him to come down and meet with Kim and the Nursing Home staff to discuss details for the project. Then he would suggest working in phases, with the first phase being the production of a preliminary design. He said he needs to know more details to know where the design is headed. He said following that, final drawings could be completed to go out to competitive bid to qualified bidders.

Commissioner Elmore asked how long this would take. Mr. Ferry said the first phase, or the collection of information and creating the preliminary design would take about two months so that should be done by early Summer. Then once the final plans and budget are in place, it would take about six months to create the detailed plans. Following that the plans would be sent to IDPH for review and approval, and sixty days should be allowed for that, even though IDPH usually will complete the review in less time than that. Mr. Ferry said then it will take about 12-16 months to complete the construction phase of the project, so the overall project should be turn-key in about two years.

Ms. Keckritz said if we have to accept the lowest bids, what do you do to assure we are getting quality work? Mr. Ferry said if you can, you need to pre-qualify your contractors.

Chairman Liefer asked if doing a rehab unit like this is the right thing to do. Mr. Ferry said a lot of Nursing Homes are doing this right now, and in the coming years this will be a very smart move. He said the key is to make sure you consult with the therapy people so provide the right layout and sufficient space.

Commissioner Wittenauer said when he came onto the Board, he found nothing but problems with the construction of the existing Nursing Home – what went wrong there, and what is going to make this project better? Mr. Ferry said what part are you talking about. Chairman Liefer said most of the problems were with the fire pump and sprinkler system – how can we be sure we're not going to have those problems again? Mr. Ferry said he can't guarantee anything, but from what he understood of that situation, the mechanical and electrical engineer made some mistakes, and partly because they didn't have the experience with this type of building. Mr. Ferry said that we also accepted the low bid, and the sprinkler contractor was not qualified, and there were mistakes made that weren't caught. Mr. Ferry said first of all the drawings and plans have to be right, but we have to make sure that the level of competence with the contractors is carried over in the construction.

Commissioner Wittenauer said another problem we had was that IDPH approved the sprinkler system and then came back at a later date and said the system was not approved, so changes had to be made. Mr. Ferry said they can do that, so you have to document everything and be

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prepared. Commissioner Liefer said a lot of the problems came back to the value engineering that was done to drop the project construction cost. Ron Polka said all of that went back to the Architect to be approved.

Mr. Ferry said he didn't know all of the details of the construction management on that project with S. M. Wilson, and he didn't want to pass the buck. Commissioner Wittenauer said everybody should have been working as a team, and whenever there was a problem, all that happened was a bunch of finger pointing. Mr. Ferry said the time to do value engineering is when the plans are being drawn up before you go out to bid.

Mr. Ferry said if you are interested in using his company, the County should talk to some of his clients. Mr. Ferry said on the previous project, Bric was not up to the task, and it probably was our (Ferry and Associates) error in considering that firm because they were from the area, and that we let that override their qualifications and ability to execute the contract. Mr. Ferry said that was a big project, and this project should not be as much of a problem.

Ron Polka said if we decide to proceed with your firm, who will be the Project Manager? Mr. Ferry said Greg and I will handle the project. Mr. Polka asked if this would be one construction contract. Mr. Ferry said that's what I would suggest. If you get one general contractor to handle the project, you'll have to pay him a little more, but then it's his problem to deal with all the subcontractors, handle all pay requests to each contractor and make sure the work gets done as contracted. Mr. Polka said is it the same way with the mechanical and electrical engineer – are they working for you? Mr. Ferry said yes, that is how it would be handled.

Dan Borisuk said at the end will we get as-built drawings? Mr. Ferry said yes, you will get a hard copy and electronic copies. Mr. Polka asked if it was possible to get an electronic copy of the current building, since the County has never received one. Mr. Ferry said you never received copies? Mr. Borisuk said he inquired to S.M. Wilson several times, and was told those were not available. Mr. Borisuk said the only contractor that provided the as-built drawings was Automatic Sprinkler Systems. Mr. Ferry asked was Automatic the sprinkler company. Mr. Borisuk said yes, Mr. Ferry said they're not bad, they're a pretty good firm, but Bric was out of their element. Chairman Liefer said you talked about the sprinkler company a while ago, and I thought that was one company we could work with. Mr. Ferry said Automatic is good. Mr. Borisuk said we still work with them. Mr. Ferry said yeah, I would, too.

Mr. Ferry said regarding as-built drawings...these are drawings that show what actually happened during the construction phase of a project, and include changes that may be made by contractors that differ from the final plans. He said these plans (the as-builts) are normally kept in the field office on the construction site, and in this case should have been handled by the construction management firm, and at the end of the project they are turned over to the Architect and engineer so they can assemble all of that into a finished set of as-built plans for the owner. Mr. Ferry said they will go back to the office to see what they have on the previous Nursing Home project. Mr. Ferry said part of their contract with the engineers is for those engineering firms to take the as-built plans and upload them to the original construction documents creating a finished set of as-built plans.

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Chairman Liefer said give us some final comments on why we should pick you. Mr. Ferry said we're coming off of some similar type projects, and we are in gear to keep going with a project like yours. He said he was confident they could do a good job, and explore some design options that would fit the needs of the County. Mr. Ferry said he would not hand the project off to others – he would be directly involved with the County on this addition to the Home. Mr. Ferry said they have an association with the facility, and he would like to keep that going – he said if you come back, we'll treat you right.

Ms. Keckritz said she would contact Mr. Ferry for some reference contact information. Mr. Ferry distributed some reference information to the Commissioners.

Mr. Ferry and Greg Perkins left the meeting.

Chairman Liefer said we've heard from both firms...how do you want to proceed? Mr. Polka said just to continue with the previous conversation, it brings back horrible memories. He said we took money from MPA, S.M. Wilson and the Fire Contractor, but we did pay Ferry, because if we didn't pay him, he had already paid Bric for the engineering work. Commissioner Wittenauer said he feels that the Architect was responsible for some of that problem with the engineer. Mr. Polka said part of the problem was that Gary Kobes with MPA didn't get along with S.M. Wilson.

Dennis Knobloch said he found it interesting that during the interview Mr. Ferry first said that Automatic Fire was totally unqualified for this project, and then at the end of the interview he said that Automatic fire was a very good company to work with. Commissioner Wittenauer said that he felt it was still the responsibility of the Architect to make sure things went the right direction.

Chairman Liefer said so what do we do from here – he said it appears that both of these companies will be charging from \$5,000 to \$10,000 to take the next step and do some preliminary planning. Kim Keckritz said she felt that both of these firms have the background and experience with IDPH to help make this project successful, but she said she would still like to talk to some other clients who have used both companies.

Dennis Knobloch asked – has there been any discussion on the finance side of this yet, has anybody talked with the Treasurer about what needs to be done with our bonding situation, and our existing bonds, etc.? He said maybe some of that should be discussed before we spend any more money on planning. Ron Polka said what is the size of the addition? Chairman Liefer said it's about 15,000 square feet. Mr. Polka said at \$200 a square foot, that would be a \$3 million project. He asked Ms. Keckritz if she had \$3 million, and she said no, not quite that amount. Mr. Knobloch said then you're still going to have to think about bonding to complete the financing for the project, and there will have to be discussions with the bonding company that holds the existing debt to see if this is something that they will even allow. He said if the bonding company says you can't incur additional debt, then it doesn't make sense to spend more money with an Architect at this time.

Mr. Polka said you shouldn't have to worry about rushing into this project. Commissioner Wittenauer said he felt it would be a mistake to move too fast. Chairman Liefer said he was surprised at the different ideas on how long the project would take to complete. Mr. Polka said if

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you do decide to proceed, it would make the most sense to plan the project so work could start in the Spring of 2016, with the bulk of the work taking place during that Summer.

Chairman Liefer said he would talk to Kevin Koenigstein about the financing. Ms. Keckritz said while the financing is being researched, she would check more references on each of the Architectural firms.

Commissioner Wittenauer said if we have to bond for this project, are we going to the voters – if we have that much time to build, why not? Ms. Keckritz said her opinion is that the voters won't understand, because they won't have all the information. Commissioner Wittenauer said the other option would be to wait until Oak Hill has accumulated enough excess funds to pay for the project. He said if we continue to make a profit, that would be the way to go, but we really need to talk to the Treasurer. Mr. Polka said and then if you don't have enough money, you're going to have to take it away from the other County offices, because of the tax cap limitations.

Commissioner Wittenauer said money is the first thing. Chairman Liefer said we have to know how much the project is going to cost before we know whether we need to bond or not. Commissioner Wittenauer said I think we have a pretty good estimate on the cost. Ms. Keckritz said Ferry had given her an estimate of \$2.5 million. Mr. Polka said that would be using \$160 per square foot. Ms. Keckritz said the \$2.5 million is also what was used for the feasibility study.

There being no further business to come before the Board, motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Elmore, with a second by Commissioner Wittenauer. All voting Aye, none Nay and none Absent. Motion carried.