

PUBLIC PROPERTY AND SAFETY COMMITTEE STATED MEETING - TUESDAY, JULY 1, 2008

The stated meeting for the month of July was held in the Stephenson County Board Room on the above date with Mr. Senn, the Chairman, presiding. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Committee members present were Mr. Senn, Mr. McKenna, Ms. V. Hooper, Mr. Graham, Mr. Hilton and Mr. Cashmore. Absent was Ms. Boynton. County Board Chairman Blum was also present.

Minutes of the stated meeting of Tuesday, June 3, 2008 were approved, without reading, on a motion by Mr. McKenna, seconded by Mr. Hilton.

Mr. Groves reported that the Pecatonica River is currently at 12 feet, having crested at 15.75 feet. County Emergency Management worked well with the City and Red Cross, during the flooding. There were no Federal or State declarations because the damage was not sufficient. A disaster assistance center was set up in the Taylor Park School.

Mr. Groves said that he attended a Prairie Shield Alliance meeting in Belvidere. The meeting was a requirement for the radio grant. Federal grants are requiring that units of local government, applying for these grants, be NIMS compliant.

Mr. Groves thanked Mr. Hilton for his assistance during the east side flooding.

Mr. Senn reported on the meeting with representatives of the Unified Command. The County is looking for support among the first responders for the Public Safety Sales Tax Referendum. The Unified Command is looking for a financial commitment for sharing the revenue. A 30% commitment was discussed during the meeting. These committed funds would be distributed by the Unified Command. The remaining funds would be budgeted for additional staff and expenses in the Sheriff's Office and other County public safety issues. The Sheriff has yet to calculate these additional costs. There was a discussion on the need for all first responders to support the Public Safety Sales Tax Referendum. The Unified Command needs new and additional equipment. However, the Unified Command will not support the referendum, without the Sheriff supporting it. The Sheriff expressed his concern with how these additional funds would be spent, even though he currently does not have a plan. Mr. Senn is scheduled to meet with the fire chiefs tomorrow. The Sheriff doubts the referendum will pass and feels that the public does not want to pay any more taxes. Schools now have the authority to ask, through a referendum, for a sales tax. The Sheriff said that he supports the idea of additional funds for public safety.

The Sheriff said that the Federal government is auditing the equipment recently purchased through Federal grants. He reported on his flyover of the County to check on the flooding. He took a video of the flooding caused by the river and has given copies to the Emergency Management Agency, the Soil and Water Conservation District and the Mosquito Abatement District.

The Sheriff explained that he is not renewing the mental health contract with FHN. Effective August 1, 2008, Health Professionals will also handle the mental health needs of the inmates, at a lower cost than FHN. Director Schroeder is now in charge of the

Jail. Chairman Blum said that he was contacted by Lee County and asked if there was space available in the Stephenson County Jail. Dr. Reedy is the Jail dentist.

The Sheriff noted that the TLEP traffic deputies have written over 2,000 tickets.

Chairman Blum explained that the Lena Park District is helping to promote a river fest, August 16th and 17th. They would like the Sheriff's Reserve Unit to provide security. The Sheriff said that they need to put their request in writing.

Chairman Blum said that Winnebago County is considering a conceal carry ordinance. There was a discussion of conceal carry laws.

The Sheriff and his staff are still reviewing Chapter 12, Motor Vehicles and Traffic, for possible updates.

The County Administrator explained that he had an invoice from Thomas McGuire, the Sheriff's attorney, for \$1,078.58. He is handling the Wuebben case, on a not to exceed \$10,000 basis. Mr. McGuire is claiming a distinction between "legal fees" and "legal expenses". There was a discussion on the advantages of continuing the case. It was the consensus of the Committee that the "legal expenses" should be paid.

The scheduled Executive Session was not needed.

Claims of \$49,919.24 were approved, on a motion by Ms. V. Hooper, seconded by Mr. Hilton.

The Committee adjourned at 8:05 p.m., on a motion by Mr. Hilton, seconded by Ms. V. Hooper.

Approved: August 5, 2008

Next Stated Meeting of the Committee:
Tuesday, August 5, 2008 6:30 p.m.
Stephenson County Board Room