

Scott County Board of Supervisors
September 17, 2019 8:00 a.m.

The Board of Supervisors met as a committee of the whole and pursuant to adjournment with Maxwell, Beck, Knobbe, Croken and Kinzer present.

Supervisor Croken introduced Colonel Robert Sinkler, U.S. Army, (Retired) for a presentation regarding establishing a port area for eastern Iowa and western Illinois. He said that Sinkler presented the concept to a joint meeting of the Metropolitan and Area 9 Transportation Committees.

Sinkler gave background information regarding himself including a 30 year career with the U.S. Army in the Corps of Engineers, commanding the Rock Island District from 2006 to 2009, overseeing construction in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, serving as the Environmental Programs Chief for the Army and working for the Nature Conservancy after his retirement from the Army.

He reviewed a proposed concept for creating the Mississippi River Port of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois. He said he appears as a private citizen and that he recently authored an article about the lack of such a port in the Quad Cities. He said the purposes would be to ensure full utilization of existing transportation infrastructure by marketing their capabilities, to ensure reliable access to the region's exports and to promote environmentally sustainable water infrastructure development. He said secondary purposes could be related to flood risk reduction, ecosystem restoration and other things associated with water.

He said the benefits include better planning services from the federal government which thereby enhances the region's competitiveness for federal grants. He cited that the 2012 inland waterway report from the U.S. Department of Transportation did not show this area of the Upper Mississippi River because there was no single port designation. He said the 50 terminals on the Iowa side and 20 terminals on the Illinois side are too small individually to register with federal planning agencies but combined they become a significant factor. He said the Iowa side alone ships enough products by barge to be the 68th largest port in the United States.

He said the process begins with a letter to the federal government of intent to form the port and receiving feedback from various federal agencies regarding the concept. He said next would be developing a detailed plan for implementation, coordinating the participation and approval of the involved counties and finally legislative approval from both Iowa and Illinois. He said this all could happen no later than September 2022.

Supervisor Knobbe asked if a port in this vernacular is not so much a defined geographical footprint as much as it is a concept.

Sinkler said it is a defined geographical footprint, but people have looked at ports as being something similar to an industrial or commercial park that is confined to a city or

other government jurisdiction and that is not the way waterways ports are recognized in the U.S. He said ports are not necessarily single locations and can include multiple counties. He said such recognition does not confer any bonding or taxing authority.

He said to obtain federal recognition for a Port of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois a non-federal sponsor or some government entity with the authority to work transportation issues needs to be the lead, and that Bi-State Regional Commission has offered to be the lead. He said the port would involve 15 counties and run roughly 222 miles, from Keokuk on river mile 361 to Dubuque on river mile 583. He said Iowa is the only state on the waterway navigation system that is not nationally recognized as having a port despite shipping enough product by barge to be so recognized.

Supervisor Croken said recognition of the port would be an asset that the Board should explore for the economic benefit of the people of Scott County and the larger region. He said he plans to bring a resolution asking for the Board's endorsement of the strategy to move forward with the ultimate goal of federal designation.

Supervisor Kinzer said he sees the value of designation in regards to maintenance of the locks and dams and promotion of the grain terminals.

Supervisor Maxwell said he is in support of being designated. He asked if legislative approval was necessary.

Sinker said either legislative approval or Department of Transportation approval was legally necessary.

Supervisor Beck asked if this designation would help with federal approval for super locks which would allow for long strings of barges to pass through the locks without decoupling.

Sinkler said designation would not directly address that issue but would provide statistical recognition of the economic importance of the port area which should improve arguments for the super locks.

Knobbe asked staff to put together a resolution for Board consideration.

Mahesh Sharma, County Administrator, asked if the Board wanted to wait for the State to take action or bring a resolution of support forward now.

Croken said he will be seeking a resolution of endorsement for the creation of the Port of Eastern Iowa which he would then carry to the Scott County legislative delegation as well as to IDOT.

Angela Kersten, Assistant County Engineer, reviewed the professional structural design services for three bridge replacement projects. She said the department found out that Scott County will receive a federal grant for 55 percent of the projects' costs.

Jon Burgstrum, County Engineer, said Iowa received the biggest amount from the federal government of any state that applied, including 70 bridges in Iowa and four in Scott County.

Burgstrum reviewed bituminous seal coat projects. He said he has been in discussions with the City of Eldridge regarding Cody Road, but the city is not interested or prepared to do more than seal coat the road. He said the road was last seal coated ten or more years ago and needs a lot of work. He said there is a proposed 28E Agreement with Eldridge that addresses repayment for the portion of work in city.

Kersten said the second project is for Spencer Road, which is much deteriorated, especially the part near the Mississippi River that frequently floods.

Knobbe asked how long the seal coating would last.

Burgstrum said that seal coating should last for five years on Cody Road and ten years on the less traveled Spencer Road.

Burgstrum also reviewed approval of the acceptance of the Project Development Agreement with the Living Roadway Trust Fund for an Ag Shield Roadside Sprayer. He said the sprayer is a self-contained unit that fits into the back of one of the existing trucks. He said the current homemade sprayer is not as effective as the newer sprayer. He displayed pictures of the requested sprayer system.

Maxwell asked why the department would spray the roads.

Burgstrum answered that the department sprays the shoulders on paved roads. He said on gravel roads a lot of grass and weeds grow up on the shoulders and blend with the gravel, and the department often sprays to keep down that vegetation.

Maxwell asked how many tanks the system has and if the grant pays all the cost.

Burgstrum said there are two tanks and the sprayer has different nozzles for different applications. He also said this sprayer is not for blanket spraying in ditches. Burgstrum said the grant is for \$15,000 and the sprayer costs \$20,000.

Kinzer asked if the operators are trained in regards to the chemicals being used.

Burgstrum said yes, they are trained and certified.

Croken asked if it was prudent to use Round Up and if Round Up gets into groundwater from the County spraying it.

Burgstrum said using Round Up was a concern, and that staff follows all application recommendations such as not spraying when rain is forecast.

Maxwell said the spray was very limited and quickly adsorbed by the plant and therefore unlikely to get into the groundwater.

Tim Huey, Planning and Development Director, updated the Board on possible revisions to the Scott County Subdivision Regulations, Chapter 9. He said the Planning and Zoning Commission has held four separate work sessions over the course of the last year to discuss the subdivision ordinance.

He said there were two major subdivisions in the past year where the developer requested that the County accept the subdivision roads. He said the County Engineer recommended that the roads remain private and the homeowners associations pay for maintenance, and the Board approved the subdivisions with that recommendation. He said that the developers appealed the decision and the court upheld the Board's decision. He said the Commissioners felt it was important to look at the subdivision ordinance to clarify the provisions regarding road acceptance and maintenance.

He said the subdivision ordinance was last amended in 2008. He said staff identified seven areas for proposed revisions for the Commission to discuss, which included dedication and acceptance of roads and many other detailed items. He said the Commissioners were encouraged to submit their own questions and comments, and those have been incorporated in the discussion during work sessions. He said at this time the Planning Commission has not developed recommendations. He said that a joint meeting with the Commission and the Board is scheduled for October 15, 2019 at 4:00 p.m.

Knobbe asked if there had been any public comment on the possible amendments.

Huey said that several developers have expressed their opinions.

Croken asked if the meeting time should be changed to after hours to allow the public to attend.

Huey said the Commission meets on this date and the Zoning Board of Adjustment meets at this time regularly.

Kinzer said that he agreed with Croken about setting meeting times which better accommodate the public but has gotten nowhere with his requests.

Sharma reviewed seven tax suspension requests.

David Farmer, Budget and Administrative Services Director, reviewed FY19 year-end fund transfers. He said there are 14 transfers most of which are coming from the General Fund and going to the Capital or Secondary Roads Funds. He said there is a transfer to supplement the insurance fund by \$465,000. He said money is being transferred back into the General Fund from the Recorder Management Fees Fund.

Farmer also reviewed FY20 fund transfers which are made monthly.

Knobbe announced a vacancy on the Civil Service Commission and said the Board has received two applications.

Kinzer reviewed the application from Jasmine Newton-Butt. He said that she is an attorney in private practice, president of the local chapter of LULAC and her husband is a Davenport Police Detective.

Beck reviewed the application from Michael Limberg. He said the retiring member was from the rural area of Scott County while the remaining members are from Davenport. He said that as a resident of rural Scott County and Mayor of Long Grove, Limberg would bring the perspective of someone who relies on the Sheriff's Office for law enforcement services.

Croken said that appointing a minority person, such as Newton-Butt would enhance the credibility of the Commission and would bring a perspective not easily found.

Knobbe pointed out that there are two openings on the Scott County Library Board.

Sharma reviewed routine beer/liquor license renewals, a resolution recognizing September 15th to October 15th as National Hispanic Heritage Month and a resolution recognizing October as Juvenile Justice Action Month.

Maxwell asked if there was a policy or protocol on who is recognized by a proclamation.

Sharma said there is no formal policy or protocol and, in this case, the items came from Supervisor Croken.

Knobbe said he reached out to several area mayors and asked them the same question. He said they said it was the prerogative of the mayor in those cities to make the decision based on the requests that come to them. Knobbe said the mayors also play a significant role in the wording of the proclamations.

Beck said he has been an advocate that the decision of what goes onto the agenda regarding recognitions is a Board issue and that the Board has put Mr. Sharma in a disadvantage. He said requests for recognitions should go to the Chair who would then contact each member regarding whether that recognition should go on the agenda. He said it should be taken out of Sharma's hands.

Croken said it is the prerogative of any Board member to make a motion.

Maxwell asked if Croken contacted Jeremy Kaiser or Mike Walton regarding the Juvenile Justice Action Month.

Croken said he did not.

Knobbe said he agrees with the National Hispanic Heritage Month resolution. He said in regards to the Juvenile Justice Action Month resolution he has done some research and finds himself in disagreement with a number of the statements and questions the sources of some of the items. He said in researching the organization he found that throughout the United States only three municipalities supported the resolution. He said he will not be in support of the resolution on Thursday.

Beck said he contacted Kaiser and asked him he knew of the association that sent out the resolution and that Kaiser said no. He said Walton did not either. Beck said he does not see that the resolution evens needs to be on the Thursday meeting agenda.

Croken said October is Juvenile Justice Month.

Captain Joseph Caffery, Sheriff's Office, updated the Board on Administrative Building security and bailiff staffing. He said before the next meeting Deputy Kohler will perform a site visit and assessment of building security. He said the Sheriff just hired two new bailiffs that started last week and are in training.

Beck said that his discussion with the Sheriff was that the two new bailiffs would be assigned to the Administrative Center but fill in as needed at the Courthouse or related duties.

Kinzer said that he was concerned about protecting the customers and staff in the Administrative Center and that he had particular concerns about adequate staffing for bailiffs to make rounds at the Center, installing and staffing a metal detector and the blind spot behind the bailiff's desk at the building entrance.

Caffery said that some changes have been implemented or soon will be, including enhanced monitoring of current security cameras, bailiffs conducting rounds to check on each floor and the start of the security assessment.

Kinzer asked if there has been active shooter training.

Thee said there had been some active shooter training.

Croken asked if any thought had been of installing a metal detector.

Tammy Speidel, Facility Support and Services Director, said that the number one concern of departments is to have full time bailiffs assigned to the Administrative Center. She said some want metal detectors which will require building modifications and more staff. She said some observed that there is no way to alert staff if the detector identified someone with a weapon.

Croken said having someone know that a gun is in the building is better than no one knowing a gun is in the building.

Beck asked if training came up as a preferred option before a metal detector.

Speidel said that DHS personnel emphasized having de-escalation training for all staff. She also said that some offices want better physical barriers to protect staff from a variety of threatening situations not just an active shooter.

Moved by Kinzer, seconded by Maxwell at 10:10 a.m. a motion to adjourn. All Ayes.

Tony Knobbe, Chair of the Board
Scott County Board of Supervisors

ATTEST: Roxanna Moritz
Scott County Auditor