

MINUTES
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
September 21, 2010 – SPECIAL MEETING

The Board of Commissioners of Transylvania County met in special session on Tuesday, September 21, 2010 at 7:15 p.m. in the Rogow Room at the Transylvania County Library. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss critical space needs and capital needs in the County.

Commissioners present were Lynn Bullock, Chairman Jason Chappell, Mike Hawkins, Daryle Hogsed, and Vice-Chairman Kelvin Phillips. Also present were County Manager Artie Wilson, Project Manager Larry Reece, Operations Director David McNeill, and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan.

Media: *Transylvania Times*: Mark Todd

There were approximately 35 people in the audience.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Jason Chappell presiding called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

WELCOME

Chairman Chappell welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the members of the audience for participating in their County government.

PRESENTATION OF LONG AND MEDIUM TERM OPTIONS TO MEET COURT NEEDS

The Manager showed a Power Point presentation highlighting the history of Courthouse space needs and offered some medium term and long term solutions for the Board's consideration.

Courthouse Space Needs History

- Facilities Space Needs assessment completed in May 2005 – Commissioners prioritized projects and began plans to fulfill those obligations
- Rural Court Commission completed inspection and recommendations in August 2007 – action taken; created a single portal of entry for security purposes; installed security system
- Commissioners formed two study committees to look at:
 1. Impact of moving Courthouse from downtown
 2. Space needs for new court facility and pros and cons of expansion downtown or new location
 - Locate new Courthouse on existing site (estimated cost of \$38.6 million)
 - Relocate new Courthouse to Public Safety Facility (estimated cost \$30 million)
- The Manager showed conceptual designs at both locations including a parking deck at the existing location
- Commissioners asked staff to revisit Courthouse space needs in September 2009 in light of economic situation particularly to construct a new Courthouse on the Public Safety Facility site

Courthouse Long-Term Options

The Manager reported that it is possible per Moseley Architects and other engineering firms to build a new court facility at the current site of the Public Safety Facility. He showed a conceptual drawing of how a new facility could be placed on that site with connectivity to the Public Safety Facility. The County invited two construction companies to visit with staff and Commissioners to discuss the feasibility and estimated cost of an 81,220 square foot court facility located on the Public Safety Facility site. The Manager met with judicial officials to determine the number of courtrooms and other court space, parking lots, etc. that would be needed with the ability to expand in the future. Responses from the construction companies were as follows:

- Company A Estimated turn key cost \$18,975,828
- Company B Estimated turn key cost \$23,177,696

The average cost of the two companies \$21,076,762

Courthouse Medium-Term Options

Option 1: Court expansion which includes movement of Register of Deeds, Tax Administration and County Administration to other locations and expansion of County Administration Building for court functions

Option 2: Relocate Register of Deeds and Tax Administration to old Sheriff's Building and minor renovations to Courthouse; County Administration stays where presently located

The Manager reported he continues to receive correspondence from the District Attorney and Clerk of Court regarding overcrowding in their offices and the need for space. Either of these options will provide additional space for them and potentially provides an area for the Public Defender for which the County is currently renting space.

Estimated Costs

Option 1

A.	Relocate Register of Deeds & Tax Administration to Old Sheriff's Building	\$0.8 million
B.	Move County Administration & County Commissioners to Old Library	\$1.3 million
C.	Renovate Co. Administration & Courthouse	<u>\$4.2 million</u>
	Subtotal	\$6.3 million
D.	Parking Deck (200 spaces)	<u>\$4.0 million</u>
	Total	\$10.3 million

The Manager showed some conceptual drawings provided by Architect Rich Worley which includes connecting the County Administration Building and Courthouse while continuing to provide adequate security. The renovations also provide additional space for the Clerk of Court, District Attorney, Public Defender, Juvenile Services, juries, inmate transport, etc.

The Manager also showed the drawings for the potential renovations of the old Sheriff's Office. The Register of Deeds and Tax Administrator both agree this space would meet their long term needs.

Option 2

A.	Renovate Old Sheriff's Building and Move Register of Deeds and Tax Administration	\$0.8 million
B.	Renovate Courthouse (minor renovations)	<u>\$0.2 million</u>
	Total	\$1.0 million

This option allows some movement and expansion of the current offices in the Courthouse.

Next the Manager reviewed other space and capital needs in the County and methods of funding them.

<u>Project</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>	<u>Funds Set Aside</u>	<u>Annual Debt Service</u>	<u>Tax Rate Impact</u>	<u>4.25%</u>
Animal Shelter	\$0.8-1.0 million	\$0.8 million	0	0	n/a
Courts					
<u>Medium-Term</u>	\$1-10.3 million	\$1.4 million	\$0.7 million	1.15 cents	20 years
<u>Long-Term:</u> New Courthouse	\$21.1 million	0	\$1.6 million	2.72 cents	20 years
40,000 Sq. Ft. Facility	\$10.6 million	0	\$0.8 million	1.37 cents	20 years
CTE Building	\$2.1 million	\$1.3 million	\$0.13 million \$0.06 million	0.1 cents	12 years 20 years
Renovate Old Jail for Probation/Parole	\$1 million ?	0	?	?	n/a
Brevard High School Football Field	\$0.2-0.7 million	0	\$0.025 million \$0.087 million	0.04 cents 0.15 cents	10 years 10 years
Community Park Near Rosman Phase 1	\$0.35 million	0	\$0.026 million	0.05 cents	20 years
Board of Education					
<u>New</u>	\$3.2 million	0	\$0.2 million	0.4 cents	20 years
<u>Renovate</u>	\$2.7 million	0	\$0.2 million	0.35 cents	20 years
Board of Elections	?				
Recreation Study	\$6.35 million	0	\$0.5 million	0.82	20 years

The Manager explained each in greater detail.

Animal Shelter: The estimated cost of constructing an animal shelter is between \$800,000 and \$1 million. Staff has not gone out to bid on this project. Commissioners are still negotiating the location. There is \$800,000 reserved for this project.

Courts: The cost would be determined by the Commissioners' decision to move forward. The cost range for the medium-term solution is between \$1 million and \$10.3 million. There is \$1.4 million reserved for this option consisting of \$200,000 for minor renovations in the large courtroom and \$1.2 million identified for the old Library; however the funds can be used how Commissioners see fit. To complete all the projects identified as a medium-term solution, the County would have to borrow \$8.9 million with an annual debt service over a 20 year period of \$700,000. A 1.15 cents increase on the ad valorem tax rate would cover the cost. The long-term solution is to build a new courthouse consisting of 81,000 square feet. The estimated cost is \$21.1 million. The annual debt service over a 20 year period is \$1.6 million, or a 2.72 cents increase on the ad valorem tax rate. As an additional option, the Manager provided the figures on a smaller facility consisting of 40,000 square feet. The estimated cost is \$10.6 million with an annual debt service of \$800,000, or 1.37 cents on the tax rate.

CTE Building: The CTE project was approved last year. Commissioners borrowed \$1.3 million in QSCB funds to pay for the cost of the facility; however the bids came in over budget at \$2.1 million. Staff continues to work with the Board of Education on different alternatives. Assuming the Board would have to borrow the additional \$800,000, the annual debt service on the current loan would increase by \$60,000, or a tenth of a cent on the tax rate.

Renovate old Jail for Probation/Parole: The County currently leases space for Probation/Parole. The space in the current Probation/Parole office is the same as in the Administrative offices of the old jail. With some renovations, this would be suitable space for them. The Manager does not know the cost of those renovations at this time.

Brevard High School Football Field: The Board of Education brought this up for discussion during the budget session last year. Discussions are continuing. The cost range, depending on the solution, is between \$200,000 and \$700,000. The lower cost consists of putting in a new drainage system and keeping the current grass field. The higher cost consists of putting in artificial turf. Over a 10 year period, the annual debt service would be \$25,000, or 0.04 cents on the tax rate, up to \$87,000 in annual debt service, or 0.15 cents on the tax rate.

Community Park Near Rosman: Staff is going out to bid on a portion of Phase 1 in the very near future. The full cost of Phase 1 is \$357,000 which would result in an annual debt service of \$26,000, or 0.05 cents on the tax rate.

Board of Education: The Board of Education has expressed the need for a new administration building. They estimate the cost of a new facility at \$3.2 million and the cost of renovating the existing building at \$2.7 million. Staff is discussing the possibility of seeking energy related grant funds to replace the windows in the current facility. The annual debt service over 20 years for either option is \$200,000, or 0.35 cents on the tax rate.

Board of Elections: For a number of years, the Board of Elections has expressed the need for additional space where they can house their personnel and equipment in one location. In the original plan presented by the Manager sometime ago, the proposal was to move the Board of Elections to the old jail. There are no monies set aside at this time.

Recreation Study: Transylvania County and the City of Brevard participated in a joint study to explore recreation needs in Transylvania County. The study identified \$6.7 million in recreation needs. The annual debt service to borrow \$6.7 million over a period of 20 years would be approximately \$500,000 and impact the ad valorem tax rate by 0.82 cents.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Commissioners discussed and commented on the following:

1. Expressed desire to stop leasing property for the Public Defender and Probation/Parole
2. Inquired about bids for phase 1 of the community park near Rosman and was informed that staff would be going out for bids this week on the grading, seeding and drainage for phase 1
3. Expressed concern and discussed the logistics of borrowing monies and the Manager offered the options of either borrowing through a lending institution or through bonds, which could require a vote of the people. The Manager noted the school bonds will be paid off in 2018 and the debt payment could be used to leverage borrowing funds to address County needs.
4. Discussed uses for the old Courthouse if the County decides to build a new facility and uses for the old jail
5. Inquired about the cost and logistics of building a new Courthouse facility for half the proposed square footage
6. Expressed desire to move forward with providing relief to the Tax and Register of Deeds offices and free up space in the Courthouse for court related departments
7. Discussed long term solutions and location of new court facility

DIRECTION TO STAFF

Commissioners directed the Manager and staff to:

1. Determine the amount of work and cost to renovate the old jail
2. Add item to next meeting on September 27, 2010 to decide whether or not to go out for bids on the old Sheriff's office for the Tax and Register of Deeds offices
3. Provide breakdown of how staff arrived at cost estimates for renovating old Sheriff's office
4. Meet with Board of Elections staff to determine their space needs and whether or not the old jail would provide adequate space for them

Chairman Chappell called for a 5 minute recess. The Board reconvened at 9:15 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Gayle Ramsey: Mr. Ramsey expressed concern that the Board is only addressing space needs and not functions. He said moving the Tax offices and Register of Deeds offices out of the Courthouse will place a burden on his staff by increasing their work time because of having to travel from office to office. Mr. Ramsey asked the Board to reconsider its decision to spend a large amount of money to solve one problem and wait until there are more funds available to determine a solution that will ensure members of the public can conduct business in an efficient manner.

Mason Sexton: Mr. Sexton offered the option of expanding at the current site of the old jail and believes it can be accomplished with the reserved funds. He also encouraged Commissioners to

sell parcels of property the County is not using. Mr. Sexton urged the Board not to borrow money and take on debt in this economy.

Jeff Hunt: (District Attorney) Mr. Hunt thanked the Board for this meeting and for any relief the County can provide his office with regards to space. He reported that the space needs issue is limiting his staff's ability to perform their jobs efficiently because they are tripping over each other. He again thanked the Board for being accommodating over the past several years and also thanked them for not borrowing monies at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, **Commissioner Bullock move to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Phillips and unanimously approved.**

Jason R. Chappell, Chairman
Board of County Commissioners

ATTEST:

Trisha M. Hogan
Clerk to the Board