

## MERCER COUNTY BOARD MINUTES

May 7, 2019

Board convened at 6:38 p.m.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance roll call showed the following members present: Board Members Flowers, Frieden, Fullerlove, Gregg, Hare, Hawn, Moreland, Rind, and Sarabasa. There was a quorum present.

Wallace Green asked if the County was going to try to get Federal funding to help with the County's road situation. Chairman Sarabasa advised him that the road conditions would be addressed later in the meeting during the Rick Walker's presentation for the Highway Department.

Prior to the discussion regarding the sale of Genesis Senior Living, Chairman Sarabasa recused himself citing comments on social media alluding to a potential conflict of interest due to the fact that his wife is employed by Genesis Health Systems. Ted Rogalski and Mike Bowns then introduced themselves and stated that there is a New York-based firm interested in purchasing the Genesis Senior Living facility. They stated that the County had the right of first refusal per the previous purchase agreement. After some discussion, Vice Chairman Fullerlove asked why the Board was not given notice of the proposed sale prior to the meeting to which Mr. Rogalski responded by saying letters had been sent to the Board Chairman and the State's Attorney. Neither was present to speak on the matter. After further discussion a motion was made by Board Member Frieden, seconded by Board Member Hawn, to allow Genesis to move forward with the sale of the facility. The motion was approved by vote of the Board. Vice Chairman Fullerlove then asked Clerk Blaser to send a letter to Genesis Health Systems confirming the Board's decision.

Gary Heard was scheduled to speak on road conditions, but was not present.

Bradley Swartout and Corey Hardin were present to discuss the possibility of legalizing UTVs on County roads. There were also several members of the gallery present for this discussion. Mr. Swartout stated that UTVs were gaining in popularity and it would be a source of income for the County. Chairman Sarabasa stated that the matter had been discussed and the Board was potentially in favor of a permit system for UTVs. Board Member Frieden reported that the Highway Committee had discussed the issue but more research is needed on the subject, especially regarding speed limit postings. Rick Walker stated that the County could possibly post certain routes for UTVs to get around the speed limit issue. A member of the gallery, Gerry Gillette, stated that he frequently rides UTVs in Wisconsin and that there are separate speed limit postings for automobiles and UTVs. A question was then posed as to how much speed limit signs would cost considering the state of the County and the lack of funds available. Mr. Gillette stated that he pays \$35 a year for a sticker in Wisconsin. Another member of the gallery reported that the City of Aledo charges \$50 per year for a sticker. Mr. Hardin stated that the people in the gallery were just a small sample of the number of people in the county who would be willing to pay to legalize UTVs on the roadways. He also stated that the revenue generated from the sale of UTV stickers/permits could potentially help pay for speed limit signs. Mr. Hardin then asked if speed limit signs stating UTVs travel at 35 mph could be placed at the main county lines instead of on every road. There was much discussion on all sides regarding this subject. Sheriff Terrill suggested that more research needed to be done on whether dual speed limits could be posted on county/township roads in Illinois. He stated that the laws in each state are different, so what is legal in Wisconsin may not be legal in Illinois. Kyle McEwen from Mercer County Better

Together then addressed the Board and stated that he was going to Springfield, IL at the end of the week and would gladly speak with Dan Swanson and other representatives to see if they could offer any answers on this matter. Chairman Sarabasa accepted Kyle's offer and asked him to report back to the Board with his findings.

Rick Walker, highway engineer, gave a presentation on the Highway Department and how it funds its projects. He explained that there are several factors that go into choosing which roads and bridges get repaired. Most of the projects take years of pre-planning before getting final approval. He also explained how the Federal Aid Match and State Aid Match programs work. Several members of the gallery were interested in this presentation. And many questions were presented to Mr. Walker. At the end of the presentation Wallace Green addressed the Board and asked if any members had spoken with their state representatives/congressmen to see about available funding. He stated that when he was the Board chair he traveled to Springfield, IL and Washington, D.C. several times to secure funding for roads in the county. Suggestions were made as to how to pursue funding. Discussion ensued on this subject. The Board thanked Mr. Green for his input.

Motion to approve the consent agenda by Board Member Fullerlove seconded by Board Member Rind was approved by vote of the Board.

Board Member Hawn presented two bids for mowing McClure Cemetery. One bid was for \$2,600 and one bid was for \$3,500. A motion to accept the \$2,600 bid was made by Board Member Fullerlove and seconded by Board Member Gregg. Motion was approved by vote of the Board. Board Member Fullerlove thanked Matt Lower for assisting the Properties Committee in obtaining the bids.

Motion to approve claims by Board Member Fullerlove seconded by Board Member Gregg was approved by roll call vote of the Board – 9 ayes, 0 nays. The claims presented for payment on May 15, 2019 are as follows: General Corporate \$110,411.79, Public Health \$40,359.82, Veterans/Bogardus \$262.36, County Highway \$17,093.90, Township Motor Fuel \$129,463.76, Motor Fuel \$45,029.13, Animal Control \$393.21, AC Building Fund \$3,000.00, Law Library \$1,022.78, Capital Improvements \$480.00 Liability Insurance \$7,984.33, Circuit Clerk Automation \$35.00, Probation Fees \$2,059.64, Circuit Clerk Document Storage \$447.30, Drug Crime Lab \$75.00, for a total of \$358,118.02.

Motion to approve Resolution Consolidating ESDA, EMA, and Mercer County Health Dept. Office of Emergency Preparedness into Mercer County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) by Board Member Rind seconded by Board Member Frieden was approved by vote of the Board.

Entered closed session at 8:51 p.m.

Re-entered open session at 9:51 p.m.

Chairman Sarabasa tabled the time clock discussion to the June due to the length of the meeting. Board Member Fullerlove reminded the Board that anything discussed during the closed session was not to be discussed.

Motion to adjourn to Tuesday, June 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. by Board Member Hare was seconded by Board Member Sarabasa and was approved by vote of the Board at 9:53 p.m.