

**ALLEN COUNTY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 17, 2008
8:30 AM**

The Allen County Council met on Thursday, January 17, 2008 at 8:30 am in the County Council/Commissioners Courtroom. The purpose of the meeting was for additional appropriations, transfer of funds in excess of the current budget, grants and any other business to come before Council.

Attending: Paul G. Moss, President; Roy A. Buskirk, Vice President; Paula S. Hughes, Maye L. Johnson, Darren E. Vogt, Calvert S. Miller and Paulette Kite.

Also Attending: Lisa Blosser, Auditor; Tera Klutz, Chief Deputy; Jackie Scheuman, Finance Director; Bill Brown, Commissioner; Nelson Peters, Commissioner; Linda Bloom, Commissioner and Becky Butler, Administrative Assistant.

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by President Paul Moss with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Paul Moss: The first order of business today is for the election of officers for the County Council. I ask Auditor Blosser to take over the meeting for now.

Lisa Blosser: I will entertain nominations for the President of Allen County Council.

Darren Vogt: Move for Paul Moss to be President.

Paula Hughes: Second.

Lisa Blosser: Do I hear any other nominations?

Darren Vogt: Move that nominations be closed.

Paula Hughes: Second.

Lisa Blosser: All in favor of Paul Moss for Allen County Council President? The motion passed unanimously. Paul Moss will be the Allen County Council President for 2008.

Paul Moss: Thank you, now do I take over for Vice President?

Lisa Blosser: Yes.

Paul Moss: Are there any motions for Vice President?

Paula Hughes: I move that Roy Buskirk be Vice President for the Allen County Council for 2008.

Darren Vogt: Second.

Paul Moss: We have a motion and a second. All in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries. Thank you, Mr. Buskirk. Okay, in order to move things along, we have some board appointments that we need to make. One is to the Alcohol Beverage Commission. Our current appointee is Mr. Mattingly. Is he available? If you could, would you come to the podium for a minute? Is it safe to assume that you have an interest in continuing to participate on that board?

Mike Mattingly: I do.

Paul Moss: Do you have any comments in regards as to how things are going?

Mike Mattingly: Things have been going well. It is sort of difficult for a County Commission to uphold State laws. There have been some challenges and different viewpoints from people who have licenses in Allen County due to the smoking ordinances that have occurred. It was interesting to hear the different viewpoints from people who have licenses in the City versus those in Allen County. Outside of that, things have been well.

Paula Hughes: Mr. Mattingly, this was your first time as a citizen appointed to a government board, have you learned a lot? Have you enjoyed the experience?

Mike Mattingly: I have enjoyed it. One thing, in particular, that has been enjoyable about this board is that you get to see some people, entrepreneurs starting new businesses such as restaurants and bars. Just to see the energy that they have has been one of the most enjoyable parts about it. There are obviously some parts that you don't enjoy such as regulating the laws when it has to be done.

Paula Hughes: I know there is some language being discussed at the State level, which concerns the expansion of liquor licenses. Have you talked about that at all at the local level? Do you have any thoughts on that?

Mike Mattingly: The biggest thing that I hear from people, mainly those with three-way licenses, is the value of the licenses. They have drastically decreased. The supply and demand dictates that. If we put more out there, those values are going to decrease at some point. For those people, it is an investment for them.

Paula Hughes: Thank you.

Paul Moss: Are there any other questions?

Darren Vogt: I make a motion that Mike Mattingly be reappointed to the Alcohol Beverage Commission.

Roy Buskirk: Second.

Paul Moss: We have a motion and a second. All in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0. Thank you very much. We appreciate your service. Is Mr. Rios available? Mr. Rios serves on the Allen County Childcare Facility Board.

Jesse Rios: Yes.

Paul Moss: Is it safe to assume that you are willing to continue to serve on that board?

Jesse Rios: Yes. I appreciate being requested to serve. I have enjoyed my time on the board. I enjoy the things that the staff and Executive Director Chris Dunn do there. I was thinking, on my way in this morning, the President of the United States said that when you help a neighbor, you help a nation. Seeing what is happening there, we are helping the youth that struggles at times. The staff and the whole organization works aggressively to make sure that they continue to go to school and that they complete it. I am very pleased with the results that I see every year.

Paul Moss: Thank you. Are there any questions from Council?

Cal Miller: Move for the reappointment of Jesse Rios to the Allen County Childcare Facilities Board.

Maye Johnson: Second.

Paul Moss: We have a motion and a second. All in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0. Thank you very much for serving.

Jesse Rios: Thank you.

Paul Moss: Mr. Niemeyer serves on the Board of the Regional Sewer District.

Don Niemeyer: Good morning Council.

Paul Moss: We assume that you are willing to serve as our appointment.

Don Niemeyer: I will do another term.

Paul Moss: Do you have any comments in terms of the previous year or anything that we need to be aware of?

Don Niemeyer: It has been an interesting year. New this year is that we have gone to sourcing financing for new projects for the State Revolving Loan Fund. This enables us to finance projects at a very efficient rate. It is around 3.5% on bonds. We have five projects that went for bid and on the 23rd, we will be giving authorization to proceed on at least four of the five. Those projects are tied into the City of Woodburn and Platter Parkway. One is to the City of New Haven and that is Georgian Park. The other three are tied to the City of Fort Wayne. It has been a challenge, this past year, in working with the different municipalities to negotiate terms for charging for the bulk rate. The increase from the City of Fort Wayne, for the wholesale treatment charge, has caused us to do a rate increase about halfway through the year. We never like to do that however, sometimes you just have to pay the bills and move on. One thing we have done this last year is area specific budgeting so that we can do a much better job of managing the district. We are able to track costs and not just treatment cost but also maintenance and operations. I think we are doing a better job in managing this year. This coming year, our maintenance agreement will be re-negotiated and will probably do another five-year contract with our vendor. At some point, we may reach a density in size and customer count where the County may choose to provide that service as they did, some years in the past. I am not recommending that but I think it but I think it is something that deserves a study. Previously, the County funded two operators and their vehicles and due to finances, they could no longer afford to do that. When we went to a private contractor for providing maintenance, operation, billing, clerical and management, it increased costs greatly to our areas. At some point, there should be an efficiency and economy of scale for the County to consider bringing back employees for the maintenance and operations. We are not there yet. I am confident of that. Right now, we have about twenty-three different neighborhoods that are in the process of requesting sewer and I have to tell you, it is not getting any cheaper to do these projects. With petroleum at a hundred dollars a barrel, the first thing that I tell neighborhoods is that if you can get organized and do it yourself with a development agreement, it is sometimes a more efficient way to go. The five projects that we have taken to bid were a year and a half in the making. It is very difficult to hold your costs when you're estimating costs for a year and a half out. Regretfully, some of our projects came in a little higher than we had hoped this last year. Hopefully, with some growth in those areas, we can keep the rates where they are and possibly reduce them. An example of that is the Hessen Cassel area. Despite the wholesale treatment costs, we were able to keep the Hessen Cassel rates flat.

Paul Moss: I am curious, you talked about the critical mass in terms of having the County assume some of the responsibilities. Will you know at some point and then contact us through Becky or something along that line and be willing to come back and talk to us, well in advance of that happening?

Don Niemeyer: Yes. We have an in-house engineer that does all of our standard engineering and I believe that is something that falls under his responsibilities. We had done a five-year contract with our vendor and they are doing a pretty good job.

It is tough work to do and we have some very good contracted employees that take this very seriously. They do a good job with customer service. The problem is, as anyone who is in business knows, you have to increase your costs and pass that along. With the sewer district spread out and the many different areas that are there, we do the projects that a city or town doesn't want to do because it is not a profitable project for them. Allen County, the size that it is, our operators are going to the north side, going to Arcola, going to Hoagland and soon to be going to Woodburn. We are crossing the county and there are a lot of miles that get racked up. With energy and labor costs, it is getting more expensive.

Paul Moss: Do you recall what department, back when the County did have some responsibility for it? Was it the Highway Department?

Don Niemeyer: I believe we had two individuals that were assigned to the Byron Center and were certified plan operators. The County maintained its operations plant there for treatment. When that was sewer, you couldn't justify maintaining the employees in that job assignment. Those fellows are still with the County and have been reassigned.

Paul Moss: Are there any questions?

Roy Buskirk: I have a question. Approximately how many areas or projects do we currently serve?

Don Niemeyer: Right now, some of the projects that we do, Fort Wayne does the billing and maintenance. Those are our favorite projects because it doesn't put a burden on the district. Currently, we have Wheatridge, Canyon Run, Hessen Cassel, North Woodland Heights, which is the Bethel Road corridor, Ridgeway, Muldoon Road, Bluffton Road, Kroemer Road, Georgian Park, Leesburg Road and Platter Parkway is going to be constructed. We probably have an additional five, from what the engineers tell us. We are going to attempt to service these areas. This is homeowner driven. This is not something that we go out and solicit projects. There is a demand for the district to continue to do what it does. If these areas can't be sewerred, it affects property values and makes the home a lot less marketable. Recently, in Georgian Park, we had a hearing and an engineer met twice with the neighborhood residents and for some of the homes, we were looking around \$17,000 to \$18,000 for an on-site treatment system. We hate giving someone a \$150 a month bill which may be higher than some of the mortgage payments. I think that once they have the facts and run the numbers, the majority of neighborhoods say to go ahead and do the project.

Roy Buskirk: You said that currently you have five projects.

Don Niemeyer: Five that we are going to give authorization to proceed, next Wednesday.

Roy Buskirk: You named two of them and what are the other three?

Don Niemeyer: Georgian Park is the one by New Haven. It is east of 24. Platter Parkway is adjacent to Woodburn. The Wheatridge/Beineke area. Kroemer Road is the fourth one. Bluffton Road/Brookfield Place is the last one. We were attempting to do Cedar Shores/ Canyon Run area but we could not get a working agreement with Hometown. We would like to get them, the next time around. Anytime that you are dealing with a municipality that has a given allotment, it gets difficult to work out an agreement for additional capacity. Fort Wayne has been very agreeable with the district over the past few years that I have been on the board. They have been the easiest entity to work with for treatment.

Paul Moss: Councilman Vogt?

Darren Vogt: Are most of people petitioning the ones who currently have septic systems that are failing?

Don Niemeyer: Yes. The Board of Health is scouting the projects. We need a certain amount of density in a neighborhood. Typically these are old platted additions or metes and bounds additions that were created in the 1950's or 1960's that had half acre or quarter acre lots. There are some that exist that are so far out that the cost to convey the affluent back to the treatment area is overwhelming. The ones that we have been concentrating on are the ones feasible to sewer without building two or three miles of pipe. We are going to try to service the ones that are sensible. One of the things I would have liked to have had is for New Haven to pick up the billing, maintenance and operations for Georgian Park. They are on a budget over there two and they just completed a fourteen million dollar sewer separation project. We weren't able to get that done. My goal, at some point in the future, we get some of the cities and towns that are accepting the affluent, to take over the maintenance, billing and operations. I think we can get a better rate for the homeowners by doing so.

Darren Vogt: Thank you.

Paul Moss: Are there any additional questions or comments from Council?

Darren Vogt: Move to approve Don Niemeyer to the Regional Sewer District.

Paula Hughes: Second.

Paul Moss: **We have a motion and a second. All in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0.** The PTABOA Board, Judy Macon is in attendance. I don't believe that Dave Meyers is in attendance. Welcome. Can we hope that you are willing to continue to serve?

Judy Macon: Yes I am.

Paul Moss: Would you mind, just for the folks that may be watching this, what the PTABOA Board is and then if you have any comments that we need to be aware of?

Judy Macon: The PTABOA Board is the property tax assessment board of appeals which is the board that allows homeowners to come and appeal their property taxes if they have specific claims that they can bring forth. What we do is make determinations based on the actual value and use to determine if the taxes do have any deficiencies. I have been a realtor in Fort Wayne for the last twenty-four years and have my own company. I am the Commissioner with the Fort Wayne Housing Authority. I work closely with the staff to come up with good determinations.

Paul Moss: I am assuming that you have been pretty busy.

Judy Macon: Yes I am.

Paul Moss: Are there any questions? Councilman Buskirk?

Roy Buskirk: On the list of appeals, you are working through that. Are we getting caught up to date or are there considerable appeals to be handled yet?

Judy Macon: We are doing the best that we can. As you saw when I came in today, I had an armful of determinations that we had to look over last night. We are doing everything that we can to get them done as effectively as we can.

Roy Buskirk: Also, on the Glenbrook, what is the status on that?

Judy Macon: I have no information on that one.

Roy Buskirk: Okay.

Paul Moss: Are you, in just very general, can you give me a feel for how many people are winning their appeal?

Judy Macon: The taxpayers that take the time to come in are usually pleased when they leave. At least they had the chance to have their voices heard. That is one of the most important things in trying to make a determination.

Cal Miller: Ms. Macon, what happens after the PTABOA appeals process and there is not a resolution? What can they do next?

Judy Macon: They have the option to take their claim to the State of Indiana. That appeals board will look over everything that takes place here.

Cal Miller: Are the greater majority of them resolved locally?

Judy Macon: Generally. We only have a couple of people that go to Indianapolis.
Cal Miller: Thank you for your continued service.

Judy Macon: Thank you.

Paul Moss: Are there any other questions?

Cal Miller: Move for the reappointment of Dave Meyers and Judy Macon to the PTABOA Board.

Maye Johnson: Second.

Paul Moss: We have a motion and a second. All in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0. Thank you very much for continuing to serve. The last appointment is the Woodburn Economic Development Commission. Is Mr. Reichhart here?

Roy Buskirk: Yes, he is.

Paul Moss: Welcome. We appreciate you coming down here and we appreciate your service. Is it safe to assume that you desire to serve another term on there?

Clarence Reichhart: I do. I have been a member of the Woodburn City Council for a number of years, a past Mayor of the City, on the Board of Works and worked on the Platter Parkway sewage issue. We have been working on that project for a couple of years. We feel that Platter Parkway is a part of the Woodburn community and would give them the sewer service since we had the line available.

Paul Moss: Very good. Are there any questions?

Cal Miller: Move for the reappointment of Clarence Reichhart to the Woodburn Economic Development Commission.

Roy Buskirk: Second.

Paul Moss: We have a motion and a second. All in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0. Moving right along, it appears that most of the folks here are interested in the Bostick Road Bridge and I assume that Mr. Hartman is here.

Bill Hartman: Good morning.

Paul Moss: As you recall, we had a pretty lengthy discussion at the last Council meeting. If I could just try to summarize, to the best of my recollection, what occurred there was that we had significant input from the folks that are most affected by this. It certainly appears to me that there has not been anybody that is opposed to

the bridge. They want to have a bridge there and they want to have a useful bridge. They very eloquently stated that. I am going to assume as well that the folks that are in attendance today concur with that. The issue for Council is really the funding component and some of it is two bridges and having to maintain two bridges. The federal funding that we have preliminarily obtained has some concerns as well. What I would like to have happen today is for you to bring us up to date on the summary of various options that are out there and your preferred option. We will have some discussion here and hopefully we will be able to hear from some of the folks that are representative of the folks in that area.

Bill Hartman: Thank you. We had a bridge study several years ago to determine how much it would take to do to rehabilitate it to a point that we could at least get vehicular traffic on it. That would probably have brought it up to an eight or ten ton limit. That would not allow school buses, emergency vehicles and concrete trucks, et cetera. When the estimate came back at nearly one million dollars, I posed the question to the consultant about what would it take to build a new bridge in place that could carry any type of traffic. It came in to be a similar number of one million dollars. We had a public meeting and we posed this to them as to what they preferred. Did they want us to rehabilitate the old bridge or build a new one? With a show of hands, it was about 90% wanted a new bridge. We pursued federal funding for that and were able to get \$700,000 towards a new bridge. Then, as we got into that, the State Historic Preservation folks said that in order to use federal funds, they prefer that we leave the old bridge in place and build around it. That will cost considerably more money but we are at a point now where we can apply for additional money to accomplish that. I am before you here to ask for some match money to take care of the engineering and right-of-way to pursue this project. We are at a point where we need to sign a contract with INDOT of commitment to the project and will take it to completion. Before the Commissioners can do that, we need to have the match money in place. That is why I am here today, to appropriate the money from the Major Bridge Fund.

Paul Moss: I assume it is an accurate statement that with the federal dollars that would be provided for the new bridge, our hands are essentially tied in terms of the old bridge and having to do rehabilitation.

Bill Hartman: Yes, sir. When you accept their money, you accept their standards.

Paul Moss: Is everybody familiar enough with the numbers that we don't need to run through those again?

Cal Miller: I think the numbers are germane to this discussion. I would like to know, personally, to break out the numbers and identify for us the cost of rehabbing the bridge. You said a million dollars before. Is that still the number?

Bill Hartman: Yes.

Cal Miller: When you add the cost of the new bridge, is that still at a million dollars, as well?

Bill Hartman: The new bridge is estimated at \$1.2 million and the rehab of the existing bridge is in the neighborhood of half a million dollars in order to put it into a pedestrian situation.

Cal Miller: So, to do both bridges, if you do the second bridge, you have to put the money into the old bridge, right?

Bill Hartman: Yes, sir.

Cal Miller: So the total cost of the project, to have a new bridge and fill the requirements of rehabbing the Bostick bridge for at least foot traffic, comes up to what?

Bill Hartman: \$1.7 million.

Cal Miller: The cost of just rehabbing the Bostick bridge remains one million?

Bill Hartman: Yes.

Cal Miller: We are talking about a \$700,000 difference between the two.

Bill Hartman: Yes.

Cal Miller: That is really the issue before Council, and having the opportunity to hear from the folks in that community, is whether the \$700,000 in additional expenditure is warranted to serve the folks that are going to be utilizing that bridge.

Paula Hughes: If I may, the additional issue is the swing of federal funding. We heard last month that you had secured federal funding to the tune of \$1.3 million if we do rehab of the old for pedestrian traffic and build a new bridge.

Bill Hartman: At present, I only have \$700,000 in federal funding and am getting ready to apply for the additional. That has come up just since the end of last month. I have been assured by our MPO that it should be available and accomplished.

Paula Hughes: Is that \$700,000 applicable to either rehabbing the existing bridge to an eight to ten ton bridge or doing the combination project?

Bill Hartman: It will do the combination project.

Paula Hughes: But it could not be used for rehabbing the existing bridge?

Bill Hartman: We didn't apply for the funds that way. After the public meeting, we applied for a new bridge. That is the way the funds are allocated. I am using Major Bridge money because the new bridge is a 200 foot span and over and the existing bridge is only 170 feet long. I would have to come up with another source of our funding if we would back up and go to a rehabbing situation. It would have to come out of a different fund.

Paul Moss: To put this into terms that won't make everybody's eyes glass over, we are looking at, for the two bridges, roughly \$1.7 million dollars.

Bill Hartman: Yes, sir.

Paul Moss: I know you haven't secured all of the federal funding, other than \$700,000, right?

Bill Hartman: Yes, sir.

Paul Moss: Of the remaining million dollars, how much of that do you believe would be federal dollars?

Bill Hartman: All of that. The \$1.7 million would be federal dollars. I need \$475,000 all together for our part. I am coming here for \$375,000. I have \$100,000 in the line item now.

Paul Moss: Okay, I have to clear this up so that I can understand. Is the \$1.7 million the cost?

Bill Hartman: That is the construction cost. Plus I need a match to go with that. It brings everything up to \$2.1 million.

Paul Moss: Okay, so the total construction cost is \$2.1 million.

Bill Hartman: Yes, with engineering, right-of-way and everything.

Paul Moss: You believe that \$1.7 million of the \$2.1 million would be federal dollars.

Bill Hartman: Yes.

Paul Moss: Okay, so the remainder, \$400,000, is Local Major Bridge money. The next question is, if we were to just rehab the Bostick Road bridge, the cost of that would be what?

Bill Hartman: Right at a million dollars.

Paul Moss: Of the million dollars, how much of that would be federal?

Bill Hartman: Right now, nothing.

Paul Moss: Do you believe that if you pursued that, there would be...

Bill Hartman: I would have to start over again with the process.

Paul Moss: I know.

Bill Hartman: It could be accomplished but we have to start over.

Paul Moss: Dan, would you be willing to come up and join us? The question is, if we were to simply rehab the current bridge to appropriate levels, do you believe there would be some federal funding for that?

Dan Avery: I suspect that the County could be successful at getting 80% of the construction cost. For federal dollars, it would require reapplication for that. I think the only thing that would come into question would be about the existing structure. The elevation is not necessarily above the flood way or the elevation of the water when they have flood conditions.

Paul Moss: That would not be addressed as part of the million dollars of the reconstruction?

Dan Avery: No. The new structure...

Darren Vogt: Let me clarify that.

Dan Avery: ...would provide a structure that would be above that flood level. My concern would be that if you only invest in rehabbing the existing bridge, you may end up with a structure that is still subject to significant damage during flood events. It could potentially shift off its foundation and rendered useless. That is one of the critical things in the review of that potential application.

Paul Moss: Councilman Vogt?

Darren Vogt: I agree with you but the problem that rises is that when this thing has been declared historic, we have to maintain it no matter what. On a memorandum of understanding that I have from a Gibson County bridge, it says we have to perform such repairs as deemed necessary to ensure that the bridge is suitable and safe for use. No matter if we have one bridge or two, whether there are floods again or not, we have to maintain it. Whether it is a walking bridge or a drivable bridge, we have to maintain it.

Paul Moss: Councilman Miller?

Cal Miller: Mr. Avery, since the application for federal funds, solely for the rehabilitation of the Bostick Bridge has not been initiated for some reason, how long would that process take?

Dan Avery: The current call for bridge projects is out right now from INDOT so we would probably know within four months. I think the applications are due in February.

Cal Miller: So, an application could be timely submitted and have a decision within four months as to whether the federal funds would be available for rehabilitation of the Bostick Bridge.

Dan Avery: Correct. The same process would apply in the current situation, depending on which track you take, either additional funds or a new bridge or ...

Cal Miller: That is a good point. You have to go back through the application process anyway to secure additional funds at this point. Is that correct?

Dan Avery: Correct.

Cal Miller: That four month period of time is going to be lapsing irrespective of whether the focus turns to the rehabilitation of the Bostick Bridge or if it goes to securing funding for both bridges.

Dan Avery: Correct.

Cal Miller: When, in the history of this bridge, has there been the flood damage that you have articulated to be a potential concern?

Dan Avery: It has been my understanding, just through participation in this process, there has been flood conditions, Bill you could probably address that. Where the flood waters have risen to and have they gone over the bridge?

Bill Hartman: Just inches over the bridge.

Cal Miller: I am talking to the damage that was alluded to and not necessarily the conditions.

Dan Avery: Bill can probably address that better being that he is the engineer and familiar with the bridges and how they sit on the structure and can be moved.

Bill Hartman: These old, iron truss bridges are pinned on one end and then on the other, they sit on a nest of rollers so that when they expand and contract with the weather, they expand on a set of rollers. They essentially are sitting there by gravity. There are a couple of one inch iron pins on either end. On one end, they hold it onto the sandstone abutments and then the other end is the nest of rollers. There are wind

walls that help hold that into place on the abutments. It is somewhat precarious when it overtops.

Cal Miller: The question is historically, when has the damage occurred from those?

Bill Hartman: Over the past seven years, I believe it has overtopped about three times.

Cal Miller: I am talking about the damage.

Bill Hartman: The damage, we believe that is part of what resulted in its closure because the deck of the bridge, the floor beams and the stringers have deteriorated significantly. That is why we had to close the bridge, due to the water getting into the super structure of the bridge and causing additional corrosion.

Cal Miller: Is that damage also connected to the age of the bridge?

Bill Hartman: Oh, of course.

Cal Miller: Irrespective of flooding conditions?

Bill Hartman: It hasn't been painted in years and years. It probably hasn't been painted since the 30's.

Cal Miller: The concerns that have been raised by the folks, that I have talked to in that area, are if we have this bridge, what happens if it gets damaged? I think they have been getting this information from the Highway Department that it may only last five years and we don't want to fix it. I can't believe that if a million dollars is placed in this bridge and the level of engineering expertise that would be going into this bridge that this is truly a concern that ought to be haunting the folks that are served on that bridge. Is there some realistic concern based on the rehabilitation that would be proposed on this bridge that it would all be for naught in five years?

Bill Hartman: There again, yes. Like I said, because of the precarious situation and the way these iron truss bridges set on their abutments, a more severe flood and seeing the winter with ice, it could remove the bridge from its foundation.

Cal Miller: In going back to Councilman Vogt's point though, that would be required to be repaired even if it were a footbridge. Is that correct?

Bill Hartman: If it was taken completely out, I don't think there is anything we could do because it would be gone.

Cal Miller: I wasn't talking about it being taken out just about the damage that you articulated.

Bill Hartman: Once we rehab it and paint it, the corrosion shouldn't be as much of a problem but you just don't know.

Cal Miller: It appears that, to bring this full circle, we are talking about a \$1.1 million additional expenditure if the Bostick Bridge were restored for one-lane traffic to serve the community or if an additional bridge were built.

Bill Hartman: Yes.

Paul Moss: From a county perspective, we are talking about a difference between \$200,000 and \$400,000.

Cal Miller: That is a discussion that I think we ought to have. Should we be concerned as the fiscal body only about the expenditure of the county dollars? I have heard, President Moss, on occasion that we are a gatekeeper for expenditures of federal funds. Our job doesn't just focus on the expenditures of County funds. We ought to be worried about the manner in which federal funds are spent in the community as well. I think that is a discussion that this Council needs to engage in and it ultimately boils down to whether there is going to be additional \$1.1 million spent to serve this area or is it more efficient to have the bridge restored.

Darren Vogt: The same point I was getting to is that from our local fiscal expenditure. If we can get the federal matching funds at 80% that puts it at \$200,000. From the County's perspective, however, we would not be able to use the Major Bridge Fund to do that. We would have to come up with either CEDIT or County General dollars in order to have that expenditure. The other way we are going is \$475,000 of Major Bridge money. That includes \$100,000 already appropriated and the \$375,000 that is before us today. Those are the real options on the local level. Then we are going to put two bridges that we are going to maintain in an area that has a traffic flow of 150 cars a day. Hopefully that area will grow economically but I don't see it in the near future. The damage to the bridge overflowing, the bridge has been there over a hundred years, has been minimal. I look at that as a minor issue in reality. If we can do the things we need to do to get the bridge put to where it can have eight to ten ton limit on it that is where I support them. Promises were made to these folks that a bridge would be done and we should have been on the front end of this conversation and not on the back end. That unfortunately happens too many times and things get moved forward without us having the ability to have input from a fiscal standpoint. Things are discussed and a pencil is put to it and then it comes before us. To borrow Councilman Moss' statement it is like toothpaste out of the tube concept that is what happens and we end up having to discuss and debate the merits of it after decisions have been made. The next time, Mr. Hartman, that you have public hearings, we should be on the front end of the conversation.

Paul Moss: Councilman Miller?

Cal Miller: Thank you. I will just put my position out there. I know there are a lot of interested folks. The Bostick Bridge needs to be restored. These folks need a passable bridge to get through. It has to be restored, given the requirements of the historic nature. It is a beautiful bridge. I am having a very difficult time justifying spending another \$1.1 million if the area's needs in the community can be served with a one-lane bridge. Is it ideal and is it exactly what you would want? No. But is it worth spending another million dollars if you could get a way over and across that bridge to be a vital connection to the church area, school area etc? I am struggling with that and I challenge each of the people that I spoke to in the community, to give me their best argument as to why an additional million dollars should be spent for two bridges. Our hands are tied in respect to having to put money into the Bostick Bridge. I think everyone came up with their own interpretation whether it could or could not be justified but ultimately, at the end of the day, that is what we have to determine. I wholeheartedly support the pursuit of federal dollars to get the Bostick Bridge restored for one-lane traffic to continue to serve that community. I am very troubled by spending an additional million dollars in taxpayers' dollars for another bridge, right beside it, given the volume of traffic that currently goes across the bridge.

Bill Hartman: One point I would like to make about the volume of traffic. We did an analysis of our bridge inventory and one-third of our inventory has an average daily traffic of 150 vehicles per day or less.

Cal Miller: How many of those bridges have one right next to it?

Bill Hartman: None. The historic nature makes this a very unique situation.

Cal Miller: That is why we are troubled by the whole situation. If it weren't for the historic issues that we are dealing with, this would be a no-brainer. We have to deal with the cards that were dealt because of the federal dollars that are tied to those.

Roy Buskirk: Clarification on your statement there. The bridge next to it would be the new bridge. I think that is what you meant.

Cal Miller: Right.

Paul Moss: Is it possible for you to give, as objective as possible, an opinion on Councilman Miller's concern? I think it is legitimate. Will that area be served appropriately by rehabbing the old bridge or are their intangibles that we are not aware of, based on traffic studies or anything that you have done out there?

Bill Hartman: You will severely limit what can be done in that area. You would have to go to Ferguson Road or Hoagland Road to cross with anything of any width or weight. That makes about a five mile or so runaround.

Paul Moss: I assume that the concern will increase, in time, if there is any development out there.

Bill Hartman: Yes it would.

Paul Moss: I am just trying to look out a little bit.

Bill Hartman: It would severely limit any type of development out there.

Darren Vogt: I wanted to ask the question a little bit differently. Was the community wanting, was there a petition to make a two-lane bridge in that area, prior to the bridge being closed?

Bill Hartman: No there wasn't. There was a petition to get that bridge put back into service. And like I said, as the result of a public meeting, we pursued a new bridge.

Cal Miller: In all fairness, at the time of the public meeting, it was not known of the constraints of the historic preservation move that would require the rehabilitation of the Bostick Bridge. Is that right?

Bill Hartman: Yes. We thought we were going to be able to dismantle the existing bridge and store it and find another location. The folks that have authority over that expressed that they would like it restored in place. We pursued a couple of locations to try and move it but they weren't found to be suitable.

Paul Moss: Councilman Vogt?

Darren Vogt: One more point on that. With discussion later in the agenda of the Major Bridge Fund and the Maplecrest Road Bridge, would this \$475,000 be able to be used towards the Maplecrest Road Bridge?

Bill Hartman: That or another bridge. It is in the Major Bridge Fund. If we don't use it here, we will use it somewhere else.

Cal Miller: Depending on how the vote goes here, if there is some concern about where the matching funds would come for to restore the Bostick Bridge, I would be fully supportive of having those come out of the Rainy Day Fund so that we don't get into a situation where there aren't existing funds in some bridge fund.

Paula Hughes: I am not certain why we would need to do that when there is \$2.9 million sitting in the Highway Fund that is unappropriated.

Bill Hartman: We will be coming back for the appropriations for those funds.

Paula Hughes: So you would prioritize other projects over the Bostick Bridge?

Bill Hartman: That is a very good question. I haven't looked at that.

Cal Miller: How much money is in the Highway Fund?

Paula Hughes: There is \$2.9 million, unappropriated. I share Councilman Vogt's chagrin of County Council being brought into this issue very, very late in the day. This first showed up on our agenda two months ago and you had made promises to the people in that area three years ago. We have not been involved and for County Council to make a decision, with very little notice and years of promise built on it, is just not a fair thing to do. I think it is inappropriate. I am not feeling the pressure of taking money out of the General Fund, which is a property tax fund, to fund transportation infrastructure. Every one of these people out here is also a property taxpayer and has concerns about their skyrocketing property taxes. They may not realize, that by pushing forward this request, they are asking their property taxes to increase.

Cal Miller: What you proposed, President Moss, how do you want to handle this?

Paul Moss: What I would like to do, I am interested in Mark Royse's opinion, given his vast knowledge and experience on the effect from an economic development standpoint, with regards to comments that Mr. Hartman made about the two options there. You are going to have to base this on intuition but do you believe there is an advantage to the new bridge and the weight load and the width? Is that a legitimate issue?

Mark Royse: I am not a bridge expert but from a development standpoint, that area has infrastructure issues. It is the chicken and egg thing. Do you put in the infrastructure and wait for development? What is called for in the comprehensive plan is pretty much residential or agricultural for that area.

Paul Moss: What I am getting as is if we go with the rehab of the bridge, are we going to be addressing this again somewhere down the road as that area does develop. I know you may not be able to answer that.

Mark Royse: Given the current housing situation, there is no time soon that you are going to have to do that. Even the demand from a development standpoint, as far as platting, there hasn't been, in that area, that much of a demand. The focus has continued to be in Lafayette Township.

Paul Moss: To answer Councilman Miller's question, what I would like to be able to do is have some folks, I am going to assume that everyone in the audience wants a bridge that they can utilize.

Paula Hughes: You could ask for a show of hands.

Paul Moss: Okay, a show of hands for everyone who wants to have a bridge there. We had assumed that this was the case. I think in the best interest of time and trying to make an appropriate decision, I think we all agree that there needs to be a bridge out there. The issue is what is the best approach to take in terms of having two bridges or rehabbing the old bridge? I don't know if there is someone in the audience

that you all would feel would be able to, as objectively as possible, address that. If there are folks that would be able to do that, we are happy to hear you out. I know you had spoken last time, very eloquently.

Dave Lechleitner: I am Dave Lechleitner and I live at 12412 South Anthony Extended. I have prepared a statement but I feel a need to address some issues that have come up in this discussion before I go forward with my prepared statement. Everybody here does want a new bridge. I understand your position as trying to watch the dollars that are spent. I assure you that the people out here will sound it with me in saying that you want to be the gatekeepers of the funds. You are elected to be the gatekeepers of the funds in Allen County. You also want to be the gatekeeper of our federal funds. I ask you this, if you are the fiscally responsible gatekeepers of our federal funds, can you assure us that our federal taxes are going to go down because you did that? We all know that those monies will be spent somewhere else in this nation and will not serve us. I ask if these people do agree with me.

Applause.

Dave Lechleitner: It goes back to you being elected to be the gatekeepers in Allen County. As far as economic growth in our area, as we know, yes, homes and development is slow right now. Our area is an area where people are seeking to build their new homes. There are places along US 27 that a lot of businesses are looking at. We need a bridge that will link us to those things. A lot are willing to accept rehabbing the bridge, but I heard comments up here that said an eight to ten ton limit. That doesn't work, folks. That doesn't get a fire truck across the river. That doesn't get a heavy ambulance across the river. It has to be twenty ton or greater to serve the safety needs in our area. We can not sit back and watch you rehab a bridge to just satisfy us but don't really satisfy the really basic needs that you have and we all have and that is of safety. Through our tax dollars, we are paying for ambulance service and the fire service and we live in a volunteer department. What price are you going to put on lives? You sat here and said that the difference between rehabbing that bridge with federal funds and building two structures there is a difference of \$200,000. We have all seen bridges, in this County that had lots of money spent on them to beautify them. We are asking for function. We are here, not to beautify it but have a functional situation where the bridge can work for us in our community. We are all very involved in our community. Our community is pretty tightly linked. We go and support our grandkids and our neighbors at all the functions at their schools and churches. We all went back and forth across that bridge many times when it was open. People here feel that they are willing to accept any kind of bridge that you are going to give us because we need to get from one side of the river to the other. We also want you to stop and think about the future. We have heard a lot of comments about maintaining two bridges. Yes there will be some maintenance to those bridges but there always is. If it means that we are going to get an eight to ten ton limit, let me take you back to 1995. They spent \$18,000 on the bridge deck to reopen it for us. They said that the load limit would easily be ten ton and that it would last for twenty

years. In 2004, they closed the bridge and prior to that, the load limit had been lowered. To talk to us about an eight to ten ton bridge that won't protect our safety, I don't feel it is acceptable. Many of the people here are willing to accept a one-lane bridge and rehabilitated to twenty ton or greater because you need that for a fire truck.

Paul Moss: I have a couple of questions. One is on the promises that were made on the engineering and things of that nature that, according to you, have not been accurate, those folks need to have their feet held to the fire. That is frustrating. The other question is in regards to the response times for fire and ambulance, do you have anything that is objective that shows that the response time would be if we went with the newer bridge?

Kenny Gerardot: My name is Kenny Gerardot and I am not a great public speaker. Being a fireman in the City for twelve years, I was also a volunteer for four years with the City of New Haven. For a basic med run to Poe, we would be there fairly quickly pending that they have someone at the station. The problem is that in the daytime, they have three or four people that could get to the station. You have Hoagland and TRAA and they would use that bridge quickly. It is 3.2 miles difference to get across that bridge at Bostick and South Anthony over to Bostick and US 27. I have been driving a fire truck for twelve years and that is a four or five minute difference. We lost a whole pole barn over there a couple of years ago and it may have been saved if we could have gotten a water supply there in time. You are talking, for any secondary source, for any major fire a four minute difference to get the secondary trucks. The secondary has a thousand gallons of water, tops. That is the difference of saving a bedroom or saving a house with the secondary response of a tanker coming from Monroeville, New Haven or Hoagland. All we have right now is Southwest Fire District and Poe. For the safety cause, there is a big difference.

Paul Moss: I think that is an important consideration for everybody to keep in mind.

Darren Vogt: It is but I want to make sure the traffic flow, as I have researched the area and looked at it, I think we need to take into consideration, the traffic flow.

Troy McDonald: Some of you know me, I am Troy McDonald and I represent the Hoagland Fire Department and EMS. We have been mutual aiding with Poe since the creation of both fire departments. We feel it is absolutely necessary that there is a structure put there for emergency purposes and will support a 40,000 pound fire truck. Trucks aren't getting any smaller. We need to carry more equipment because of federal and state mandates and for our own safety. We just feel that it is absolutely necessary that a larger structure is put into place. You can not rehab that bridge to make it handle a 40,000 pound fire truck. I have crossed that bridge many times and you kind of wondered when you were going across it if we were going to end up in the drink or not. You just held on and prayed a little bit and you made it. I agree with Mr. Gerardot that as a twenty-seven year member, we have made several

responses and in today's world of lacking manpower, we rely on each other more and more.

Paul Moss: Councilman Buskirk?

Roy Buskirk: I am in favor of a new two-lane bridge. I want the Cadillac. I have problems on some of this testimony. Your route from Hoagland would be down the Hoagland Road to South Anthony Extended...

Troy McDonald: No.

Roy Buskirk: You would go up 27?

Troy McDonald: The safety factor for my firemen. I am an officer and was Fire Chief for ten years in Hoagland and it is a much safer road to go on. It is a straighter shot. Have you ever gone down Hoagland Road by the gravel pits?

Roy Buskirk: Yes.

Troy McDonald: When you go down those roads in a 40,000 pound fire truck, and you are trying to make a little time, you will try to get up to 60 or 65 miles per hour. It is better to go a straight shot. If you turn right off of Hoagland Road onto 27, everybody gets out of your way. You go right up to Bostick Road and turn left. When you go into Poe, there is the old levy area. The roads go like this (gestured that the road is crowned). If you aren't dead in the middle of the road, that fire truck will be in the field.

Roy Buskirk: I am not a volunteer fireman.

Troy McDonald: It is a safety factor for the men responding. We are serving our time freely.

Roy Buskirk: If they are north of Bostick Road or south on South Anthony Extended, you would probably...

Troy McDonald: It depends. It is one of those things where these people live there every day. I live in Hoagland and I am lucky because every bridge that we cross is fine. These people deserve a new bridge. They deserve it for their own wellbeing. I am also an elected official and I know what you mean about being the gatekeeper of the money. I agree to some extent with that but what price do you put on a life? I can't put any price on that.

Paul Moss: It sounds, I'm sorry. Go ahead.

Roy Buskirk: So that people understand on the different funds, the bridge money is not from your federal taxes that you pay. The federal bridge money comes from your

gasoline tax. Right now, for your information, in Congress there is a bill to raise it forty cents a gallon.

Cal Miller: To forty cents or an additional forty cents?

Roy Buskirk: An additional forty cents. Eight cents per year for the next five years so if they don't get you one way, they will get you another way.

Paul Moss: It is all coming out of the same pocket though.

Troy McDonald: We can look at it that way but to be real honest with you, I would have a hard time feeling right about not passing or voting the right way. You all know what the right way is even though you are the gatekeepers of the money.

Paul Moss: What I want to bring up, since Councilman Vogt brought up the traffic flow and all of that, his comments seem to resonate to me in that regard. Does that answer your question?

Darren Vogt: Sure.

Troy McDonald: Thank you for hearing us. I really appreciate it.

Paul Moss: Again, I don't have a particular interest in having everyone come up and basically repeat themselves but in the interest of time, if you have something new to add.

Steve Berning: I have another option for you. I am Steve Berning and I own the property directly west of the bridge. I have lived there all my life. I just wanted to throw another option at you. I heard briefly that the bridge couldn't be moved and that they preferred that it stayed there. If you do any modifying to it, haven't we lost the historical end of it? I don't know what the historical people want. If they truly want it to be historical, shouldn't it stay just the way it is? If you change it good enough for a car to go across, it isn't the way it was originally built. I am throwing at you, I own the property, and you can move the bridge and sit it there. All of these two or three people that want to come and look at it can look at it all they want. You can put a new one in right where the old one is. I am serious.

Applause.

Steve Berning: I am just saying, aren't we going down the wrong road trying to modify it? It is a cool, old bridge and that it is still standing is amazing. I would think that the County wouldn't want the liability of it being there across a waterway. The chance of it falling and it is not going to be there forever. It is a rusty, old fencepost. It is not going to hold its own weight for long. The new floor was put on in the 80's, as I recall. All of the I-beams are just about rusted through. The damage to the bridge is from the salt that has been put on it and deteriorated the ironwork underneath.

With the equipment that they have now, I know it could be moved. It doesn't have to be dismantled. You can move it a quarter of a mile down the road and it can sit on my property and anybody can come and look at it.

Applause.

Steve Berning: The engineer for the bridge is here and when we were first talking, at Wayne High School, about this they thought it was a piece of cake job. The best place for the new bridge is right where the old one is. Sometimes, when you have a curve in the road, you want to line things up different and it is sometimes better to be in a different spot. But the best place for the new bridge is right where this one is. You can raise it a foot to get it over a 100-year flood level or something. That is what I am throwing at you. Move it and put a new one in. Thank you.

Applause.

Paul Moss: Councilwoman Hughes?

Dave Lechleitner: If I may, at this time, I would like to propose another option. Last night, in a discussion with the Hoagland Area Advancement Association, they are willing to allow you to place that old bridge in their park as a footbridge. They are in need of one. They will even paint it. That goes back to the movie and the story of the Bridges of Madison County. This would be the Bridge of Madison Township. But they are in need of a footbridge, they are willing to have it moved there but they don't have the money to move it.

Cal Miller: Is that going to satisfy the historical requirements?

Dave Lechleitner: This just came from the meeting last night.

Paula Hughes: I don't believe that it would. What we have been given to understand by the experts is that the hook with the federal funds is for the project. I agree with you. I don't think it is our job to be the gatekeepers. It is implausible that the actions of the Allen County Council will impact our federal gas tax or income tax. I made that statement last month. I agree with you from that perspective but because of the hook with the federal funds, it would cover 80% of the project, we were given the understanding that we are required to rehab the bridge at least to a pedestrian level in its current location. I believe the engineers that have spoken to us are the experts on this say that this is what we have to do.

Cal Miller: I think the gentleman to your left is the one who spoke at the last meeting about those requirements. Is that who you are referring to?

Paula Hughes: Yes.

Paul Moss: It would be interesting to have this gentleman come up address...

Cal Miller: We can move it to Madison Township tomorrow.

Paul Moss: It is pretty simple, I hope. A simple yes or no question, could you move it or not? Is that something that is even in the realm of possibility?

Josh Smith: Josh Smith. It is not uncommon for bridges to be moved to new locations for parks and walkways. That is the last resort but I don't speak for the State agency. They have given me their preference. The local preservation groups have all stated that their number one priority is to keep it in place. Whether it would be rehabbed for vehicular traffic or pedestrian use but to answer your question, it is possible that it could be moved. You are talking about a lot more time as far as getting through the process. You would have to go back through the State Historic Preservation Office and it is a more lengthy approval process. And outside of the Section 106, which is the law that we have to abide by when we are using these federal funds, there is another catch. If we decide to move the bridge and you want to build a new bridge over its current crossing that is where the catch is. This is when you want to use your local funds, to move the bridge. Once you apply for an Army Corp permit, then you have to be placed back through 106. We are talking, as far as time management is concerned, the fastest and easiest way is to A- rehab it or B- bypass it and rehab it.

Cal Miller: It could be explored, however, if the decision here were to go forward with two bridges, the options that were discussed here?

Josh Smith: It could be explored. Just because a group said they are willing to take the bridge, you still have to come up with the funding to dismantle it, move it and rehab it up to carry pedestrian traffic. It is real easy for someone to say that they will take the bridge but finding the money is a completely separate issue.

Paul Moss: Councilman Buskirk?

Roy Buskirk: On the rehabbing, the rivets have to be replaced and part of the I-beam that is rusted or deteriorated also has to be replaced. That is the reason that you get into the half-million dollars or so cost. It is basically the same whether it is pedestrian traffic or vehicle traffic.

Josh Smith: I believe the estimate to get it up to carry light truck traffic was approximately \$850,000. That is in 2006 dollars. The new estimate to get it up to pedestrian traffic is roughly \$450,000. There is less work that has to be done. I am not an engineer but I talked to our bridge inspector yesterday and he said that once the money is put into this to bring it up to speed for pedestrian traffic, it should last for a long time. The wear and tear will be less on it then.

Roy Buskirk: And part of the maintenance of it is that it has to be painted.

Josh Smith: Correct. That was in our rehab cost.

Roy Buskirk: And then painted in another thirty or forty years.

Josh Smith: That's right.

Paul Moss: Councilwoman Hughes?

Paula Hughes: I wasn't finished earlier. I wanted to speak to the audience. This is an issue that is very near and dear to your hearts which has been proven by your attendance. I appreciate that and am very sensitive to that. The County Council, just over two years ago, approved an \$8 million bond for bridges in this county. The Commissioners chose and the Highway Department chose to not use those funds on the Bostick Road Bridge. They are coming to Council to ask for an additional appropriation, which I am supportive of. I think we should do the two bridges. I didn't know the ten versus twenty ton issue. Having been given that information and I believe it to be true, I am supportive of that appropriation request. But I think it is unfair that anyone out there would think that County Council is the bad guys in this. We have seen this for just over two months now and I believe the Council is supportive of doing the bridge, in just over a two-month period of time. I appreciate you all coming out because this is what the process is about. But, again, I am chagrined with how the process has gone.

Mike Galbraith: I am Michael Galbraith and I am from ARCH which is the Allen County Historical Preservation organization. I wanted to have a couple of quick comments about this. One is in regards to the maintenance and moving and if you change the bridge at all, it is not historic. We are not talking about changing the bridge. We are talking about maintaining the bridge. We heard Mr. Hartman say that the bridge has not been painted since the 1930's. The other thing is that I think we are missing the point here about the use of federal funds versus the use of Allen County funds. If we want to use the federal funds, we have to play by the federal government's game. If we decide to not use those funds, Josh spoke to Section 106 which is the rule that governs the use of those federal funds. This process will not drag out months or years but decades. Not only does the State weigh in on this, the federal government will weigh in on this and the Army Corp of Engineers will weigh in on this. This is something that, Section 106, is going to go away. Dealing with it is something that you need to address straight on.

Paul Moss: I appreciate your comments. I am going to differ from Councilwoman Hughes a little bit in terms of our impact on the federal expenditures. Yes, we don't have a direct impact on it but we can continue to enable them by not bringing up these types of issues. Frankly, the historic preservation, while I think there are certainly historic things that need to be preserved, but it complicates matters, pretty significantly, and sometimes appears to add some needless costs to certain projects. I could site some examples. We have a couple of homes out on Lima Road that one Commissioner thought would be really neat to get a historic designation and now all the taxpayers have to pay to maintain these houses on Lima Road that won't end up doing a whole lot.

Mike Gailbraith: We could agree to differ on what is historic and what is not.

Cal Miller: Let's just allow President Moss to have his say before we banter back and forth.

Mike Galbraith: I apologize.

Paul Moss: I don't want to keep going back and forth. I am just making the point that if not for some of the historic preservation efforts related to this particular project, we probably wouldn't be having some of these conversations. I think that right now, we have a couple of choices even though there have been additional options thrown out there. I want to try to bring this around. Councilman Miller was first and then Buskirk?

Cal Miller: Mr. Lechleitner, I appreciate your comments and the people that I spoke to, I told them what a fine representative I thought you were of voicing the concerns of the folks in the community. I want to address your point about the gatekeeper role or our role as the fiscal body of Allen County. My response would be something that my mother told me since the day I was born. Two wrongs don't make a right. If there is not a justification with respect to safety or economic development for two bridges, side by side, that million dollars extra should never be spent. I can tell you, as an elected official, I would be happy to be voted out of office if the constituents that elected me wanted me to spend one additional penny that wasn't justified. You could throw me out today because I will never do that. Even under the scenario that the money will be spent somewhere, I don't care. I will never spend a dollar that I don't think is justified to be spent merely because it will be spent somewhere else. With that said, when I spoke with some of the folks, I said that I fully support getting a bridge back, at least one way. I will reserve my opinion after I have heard from the folks in the community as to the justification of spending the additional million dollars. I have heard it and I think that I agree with Councilwoman Hughes that now that we have heard about the safety issues and the potential economic impact. I agree that we ought to go forward with two bridges and have the opportunity to pursue the options that you have raised. I do want to respond and it was put well by you, the challenge about the federal dollars but I want you to know that my response has nothing to do with "it will be spent somewhere else if it isn't spent here". It will never move me to spend a penny. I will, given the reasons that you articulated so well, support investing the funds to move forward with the two bridges.

Paul Moss: Councilman Buskirk?

Roy Buskirk: Mike, do you know, as far as the old bridge, who put it on the national registry?

Mike Galbraith: The bridge is eligible for the national registry. The State Preservation Officer has held that it is eligible and in order to protect the bridge, the funding won't be available for something that would intentionally harm it.

Roy Buskirk: So it is not actually on a list?

Mike Galbraith: It is eligible for the list. The law is written is that objects that are on or eligible for the list of inclusion.

Josh Smith: They are considered to be the same thing, in the eyes of the law. It reads that it is eligible or on a register. It has been determined eligible.

Paul Moss: I don't really want to keep going through this but what is the value of protecting that bridge to the majority of the community?

Mike Galbraith: I am not an elected official and can not speak to what the majority of people think.

Paul Moss: That gives you an advantage.

Mike Galbraith: I can't state what the majority thinks. The value, in my opinion, is that it is the finest example of a Canton Three Truss in the State of Indiana. It is the only remaining one.

Paul Moss: Do you believe that people will go and look at it?

Mike Galbraith: I believe that people will go and look at it.

Darren Vogt: How many other Canton Three Truss bridges are throughout the United States?

Mike Galbraith: I can't answer that question. In Indiana, there is one and it is on Bostick Road.

Paul Moss: Given the property tax issues that people are dealing with, we are beyond the point where nostalgia can override the expense.

Applause.

Mike Galbraith: Can I respond? With the federal dollars, the federal government has an obligation to protect the historic resources of this country. The federal government has withheld that this bridge is historic. They are obliged to protect it and they are obliged to fund the protection of it. They are obliged to not fund the destruction of it.

Cal Miller: Let me support you in this. That is a bridge that I would go out of my way to go over. I am happy that it will still be there and I will go out of my way to go over it again. It is a beautiful bridge. Now that we have to pay for it, I will enjoy looking at it and traveling over it once again.

Darren Vogt: To your point though, the federal government is not going to maintain this bridge. This county will be on the hook to maintain that bridge. That is the problem with a carte blanche law that says that anything that is old is historic. We are going to be stuck repairing anything that needs to be done to that footbridge for the two people and Councilman Miller that go across that bridge.

Man in the Audience: What happened to the condemnation process? That bridge has been down and out for years and there it still sits. If anything else goes on around the country that they don't like, they condemn it, give you fifty cents for your two acres and put a road through it. Why don't they condemn this baby and take it down like we voted on years ago and put a new one up?

Paul Moss: You have less of an impact making your comments from there as opposed to coming up here. But you made some valid comments. We are all getting to the same conclusion. One more comment.

Angie Quinn: I am Angie Quinn and I am also with ARCH. I am the Executive Director. That is an excellent point, Darren. One of the things that make it eligible for the national registry is that should the County decide to put it on the national registry, you can apply for grant funds that are only available for historic preservation. As you have to do maintenance in the future, that could be a pool that you can go to. Then you are not just spending county taxpayer money. It is going to go somewhere else if it doesn't come here.

Roy Buskirk: That is terrible.

Paul Moss: That is the type of attitude that people are frustrated with.

Angie Quinn: On a personal basis, I agree. When you look at what happens in other states, where the funding goes and for what projects, it would be great to see some of that happen here.

Paul Moss: One more very brief comment and then we are going to wrap this up.

Dave Lechleitner: As you have noticed, there is some frustration in the room. The reason why I have this box here is because in that is all kinds of newspaper clips and communications that have gone out to Commissioners and to road people. That box is filled with those things and a lot of that is promises. That is why you are hearing all of the frustration that is here in the room. We have a good group here in the room but I also place before you, a petition that has been signed by over 200 people who were unable to come today because they had a commitment with their employer. I also have a letter from the Hoagland Area Advancement Association which has a 700 family membership. They are saying that they support a bridge at that site. I know you want to draw to conclusion and you may have more questions here but one question that they asked me to ask you is "for those of you who oppose it, why

do you not feel they deserve a bridge for their safety, transportation and their link in the community?"

Paul Moss: I don't think we need to sit up here and individually answer that. I think we need to draw some conclusions here hopefully by someone coming up with a motion and moving this forward.

Roy Buskirk: I think a lot of the frustration is from the Council also. I would like to make a motion that we approve the appropriation from the Major Bridge Fund in the amount of \$375,000.

Paula Hughes: Second.

Paul Moss: There is a motion and a second. I would only echo Councilman Buskirk and Councilwoman Hughes' comments as well. We have been boxed into a corner on a lot of issues and this is another glaring example of if we would have been brought into this earlier, we probably wouldn't be going through a lot of this stuff. Having said that, **all in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0.**

Applause.

Paul Moss: Is there another motion that you want to make?

Darren Vogt: This is more symbolic than anything else. I would like to make a motion that before any bridge projects are promised to the community, that the County Council is made aware of those bridge projects and not three or four years after the fact.

Maye Johnson: Second.

Paul Moss: We have a motion and a second. All those in favor of the motion on the table...

Paula Hughes: Is that a motion to control the Commissioners?

Darren Vogt: The motion is to be notified of bridgework.

Paul Moss: All in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0. We appreciate all of you taking your time to join us. We have the approval of the minutes for December 13th. I am assuming that everybody has perused those minutes.

Roy Buskirk: I make a motion that we approve the minutes of December 13, 2007.

Cal Miller: Second.

Paul Moss: We have a motion and a second. All in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0. Let's do a five minute recess while everyone clears out.

Recess.

Paul Moss: We are going to reconvene here. We are at the financial report with Auditor Blosser.

Lisa Blosser: I will give you a quick summary of the 2008 General Fund budget. There is \$6.1 million available to appropriate in the General Fund in 2008. \$4.5 million was due to rollover including the following major unspent items. In the County Council compensation study, there was almost one million dollars that rolled over. Allen County Jail, \$878,500; Superior Court, \$382,600; ACJC, \$361,000 and the Sheriff, \$262,000. The 2007 interest revenue was \$5.2 million and that was significantly more than we had projected. It exceeded our projections by \$1.6 million. I also want to give you a quick review of what you have budgeted in your County Council budget. There is money set aside for one new position, the Election Board Assistant. For the County compensation project, the executives have still not been addressed. There is almost a million dollars set aside for that. You set aside, for the IT Department, \$335,000. You set aside, again this year, \$563,000 for storm water drainage with the Surveyor. One million has been set aside for General Capital Expenses. \$3.5 million is for General Contractual expenses. The Rainy Day Fund has a balance of \$13.1 million.

Paul Moss: Councilwoman Hughes?

Paula Hughes: I have one question. At one point, I questioned Auditor Blosser on this and found out that County Council set aside one million for General Capital Expenses. She has the detail and we spent just over \$700,000 of that. We actually had \$265,409 of the \$4.5 million from the rollover of the Capital Expenditure line. I have a question for the Auditor's Office. I can't remember what we budgeted for on our projection for interest in 2008.

Tera Klutz: About \$3.6 million.

Paula Hughes: Okay, so we did increase it. Thank you.

Paul Moss: Councilman Vogt?

Darren Vogt: That is the same interest question I had, as well. But the other question I had was, of the storm water that we put, did any of that roll?

Tera Klutz: We had encumbered it at your discretion.

Darren Vogt: That's right. Thank you.

Paula Hughes: I can follow up on that. I had a couple of meetings with the Surveyor after the budget process and he is actually not ready fill more details in that. There are some hang-ups in the process in determining how to spend that money. We don't have a firm proposal on how that is going to be spent because the Surveyor is not ready to present that.

Roy Buskirk: Adding to that, I think part of it is that he is working with the Commissioners on an ordinance on the storm water issue. The last time I checked with the Commissioners, it is back in his hands.

Paul Moss: Of the \$1 million for General Capital Expenses, how much of that has been expended already?

Paula Hughes: \$734,000.

Lisa Blosser: That was last year. He was talking about this year, right?

Paul Moss: Oh, right. I misunderstood...

Paula Hughes: For 2007, we spent \$734,000. For 2008, we have a \$1 million budget line which has not been appropriated from.

Paul Moss: Can someone add all of these together? What is the total for those items?

Paula Hughes: About \$6.4 million.

Paul Moss: Okay, any other questions on the financial budget summary?

Cal Miller: Move to approve the financial report.

Darren Vogt: Second.

Paul Moss: **We have a motion and a second. All in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0.**

Paula Hughes: Councilman Moss, I would like to suggest to Council that we schedule, sooner rather than later, a discussion of the unappropriated \$6.1 million. Last year, we waited until April and I would like to see a more expedited process.

Paul Moss: I think that is a very good idea. Do you think it would be worthwhile to have a subcommittee get together to make some recommendations?

Paula Hughes: I would be happy to chair the effort to put together some recommendations and then I think the full Council should meet in a separate meeting like we did last year. It was pretty useful because it gave us time to fully discuss things without being in the Council session.

Paul Moss: Councilman Miller?

Cal Miller: I see that Mayor McDonald is here and I wanted to see if he is going to be addressing us. We didn't want to hold you up.

Terry McDonald: I am here with Commissioner Peters about Maplecrest Road.

Cal Miller: Okay. I just wanted to make sure that if you had something to say to us, you didn't have to wait until the end of the meeting. I was going to ask President Moss to make some accommodations for you.

Paul Moss: The Maplecrest Road was an addendum but unless there are some significant objections, I would like to obviously move them up. **We have a motion and a second on the floor for the financial report.** Let's do that first. **All in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0.**

Roy Buskirk: I have a question on the subcommittee. Is this primarily on the Capital Expenditure and what else?

Paula Hughes: There is \$6.1 million that is unappropriated in the County General Fund budget. Last year, the Council met as a body and discussed earmarking those funds and I would suggest that it is a significant enough amount that we should do that again.

Roy Buskirk: Okay.

Paul Moss: Will you just blast out an email for anyone that is interested?

Paula Hughes: Absolutely.

Darren Vogt: Along those lines, keep in mind that a very, very large portion of that is interest.

Paula Hughes: Yes.

Darren Vogt: I know that there is conversation about CUM Bridge and we need to be very mindful of our rollover is interest related.

Paula Hughes: Yes and what is a one-time windfall and what is not. And we have not yet begun to consider the external equity issues for wages and salaries for County employees. We waded through 95% to 98% of the internal equities and there is still some of that hanging out there. We have not begun to deal with the external equities. We need to be careful how we allocate funds for that because it is an ongoing, annual commitment.

Paul Moss: I would like to get through this economic development issue before we get into the other appropriations. What we will do is insert the Maplecrest issue.

Ashley Steenman: I am Ashley Steenman with the Department of Planning Services. At your December meeting, you approved an inducement resolution pertaining to the issuance of Economic Development Revenue Bonds to assist Indiana Tech in financing the construction of their new residents' hall. The bonds will be issued in the amount of \$3.6 million which will cover the cost of the facility as well as the cost of issuing the bonds. The issuance of these bonds will have no adverse affect on the taxpayers of Allen County. On Tuesday, January 15th, the Economic Development Commission held a public hearing on behalf of the County Council, the County Commissioners and the City Council. They approved the financing agreements and the other bond documents. The ordinance that you have for your consideration today is the next to the last step in this process. This will allow the Commissioners to execute and sign the final bond documents. I just wanted to note that this project has received nothing but positive feedback from anyone who has heard anything about it.

Cal Miller: Move for approval for the ordinance authorizing and providing for the issuance of the Economic Development Revenue Bonds for Indiana Institute of Technology.

Paula Hughes: Second.

Paul Moss: **We have a motion and a second. All in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0.** Are Commissioners Brown, Peters and Bloom going to discuss Maplecrest?

Nelson Peters: We are just trying to get a game plan together here. Today we are here, more informational than anything else, to tell you what we intend to do tomorrow. Subsequent to that, the entire issue will come back to you. I think there are two questions to ask at this particular point. The first question being, are there concerns or opposition, from this Council, in extending Maplecrest Road? If the answer is yes, then we do have a number of people who are interested in speaking in favor of it. If there is no objection, the second question begs as how best to fund it, moving this thing down the road. We would like to talk from two perspectives about the interest and then how to fund it. I guess the first question is, are there objections from this body in moving forward with the Maplecrest Road project?

Cal Miller: As I sit here today, I can't articulate a response one way or the other, Commissioner.

Paul Moss: I would tend to echo that. Honestly, I haven't had a whole ton of information on the project, other than what I read in the newspaper. It is difficult to state a position one way or the other. From my perspective, and I don't want to reinvent the wheel, I would like to know what the primary reason for the project is.

Nelson Peters: Okay, that's fair.

Linda Bloom: Absolutely.

Nelson Peters: With that said, why don't I turn this over to Commissioner Bloom who will then hand it off to whomever?

Linda Bloom: Good morning, Linda Bloom, County Commissioner. This was brought out of the archives and I am sure some of you are aware because of the press that we have taken on Maplecrest. We brought this out in 2004 but the original plans for Maplecrest were from 1964. A lot of things have happened in those forty years. At that time, we hired Barnes and Thornburg in D.C. who was able, not only with the help of Congressman Souder but also Senators Lugar and Bayh. They got us the largest contribution, in the State, out of the transportation bill, \$11 million. We were with the understanding, from the lobbyist that because this was the largest funding at the time, there would be yearly appropriations that we could apply for. So far, we have not received any money since the original transportation bill money. That money has a deadline on it. It has to be used starting in September, 2009. I don't want to lose that money but then again, we don't have enough other money to complete this project.

Paula Hughes: What is the total budget for the project?

Linda Bloom: Preliminary, \$47 million. That includes engineering, utility relocation, right-of-way, construction and inspection.

Paula Hughes: Don't we have \$11 million of that in federal...

Linda Bloom: Yes. No. Actually, we have a lot more and I will give you that. There is federal money, City money, City of New Haven money, railroad contribution and Major Bridge Fund. The total that we have is \$22,560 million.

Paul Moss: Can you, if you have it...

Linda Bloom: I do.

Paul Moss: breakdown...

Linda Bloom: Federal funding is the \$11 million but we have to match that so the federal amount is \$8.8 million. Remember, it is 80/20.

Darren Vogt: So we are only receiving \$8.8 from the feds?

Linda Bloom: Yes and then we match it. The City of Fort Wayne's contribution is \$1,926,771. City of New Haven is \$2,333,781. The railroad contribution is half a million.

Paul Moss: Is that actually cash or is it in-kind?

Linda Bloom: Cash. I thought the total was \$533,000 but I am going back a long time to remember that. It truly is a number of \$533,000 because I remember the City of New Haven is going to receive \$100,000 of that and the County will receive \$433,000. Don't ask me how I remember that but I do. The last one is Major Bridge Funds is \$9 million that we have set aside and is our match.

Paula Hughes: Is that appropriated?

Linda Bloom: Is that appropriated? No it's not.

Paul Moss: Does anyone have a good calculator? Is that all of it for now?

Linda Bloom: That adds up to, add \$33,000 to this number, \$22,560,552.

Paula Hughes: If I could ask a question.

Roy Buskirk: \$22.6

Linda Bloom: Sure.

Paula Hughes: If there is \$9 million set aside in Major Bridge, you have a budget for 2008 of \$2.5, 2007 encumbrances of \$6.3 and unappropriated of \$4.6.

Linda Bloom: That, I can't answer.

Bill Hartman: In the Maplecrest line item, there is \$3.9 million unappropriated. The money that we are using for right-of-way and engineering, and we are getting 80% back and that will go back into the cash. With another \$1.9 million next year, we won't need all of the money until next year because we are acquiring the right-of-way this year. That \$9 million should be solid.

Paula Hughes: But you have earmarked \$9 million but are getting it over multiple years?

Bill Hartman: Yes.

Paula Hughes: So the amount that is there, right now, is about seven because \$1.9 is coming next year?

Bill Hartman: Yes.

Paula Hughes: And that is in the encumbered or...

Bill Hartman: I show \$4.6...

Paula Hughes: Unappropriated.

Bill Hartman: Available for appropriation but also, in the line item for Major Bridge, I have another \$3.9 million.

Paula Hughes: That must be the encumbered. But actually, you don't have \$4.6 because we just allocated \$375,000 for Bostick Road.

Bill Hartman: Right. But there will be \$1.9 hopefully next year.

Paula Hughes: Thank you.

Paul Moss: Councilman Buskirk?

Roy Buskirk: That is what makes it so difficult for us to follow some of the figures. Some of it is being spent, like we spend a million dollars but we get \$800,000 back...

Linda Bloom: That is why we think we should have a separate fund for federal projects. So that it never goes back into the mix again. As we pay up front and are reimbursed, it would go into, only the federal projects. That is put in the pot so that we don't have to come back to re-appropriate money that has been returned for the same project. Does that make sense? Because now, when you look at these numbers and we are making expenditures, all of the money isn't gone. Eighty percent is coming back in one way or another. I have found out the hard way, all of them are different. Some are 90/10. Some you pay up front, all of it and then get reimbursed. Some of you pay part of it and that goes to construction. To make you understand this, I don't understand it.

Roy Buskirk: And you also sometimes have the right-of-way acquisition is not reimbursable. Engineering is not reimbursable but you can use the money spent on that as part of the 20%.

Linda Bloom: Toward construction. You are exactly right. But the fund is really necessary for federal projects only. So that you never see a double entry on the money, see what I am saying?

Paul Moss: So we have established that there is about \$22.5 million already earmarked, for the lack of a better term, of the \$47 million.

Linda Bloom: That's right.

Paul Moss: So, the other \$44 million or \$24 million, where does that come from and what sort of a timeline is there for securing the rest of the funding?

Linda Bloom: The money that we would like to receive would be through a bond.

Paul Moss: So that is what we are really looking at today is the roughly \$24 million.

Linda Bloom: We want to be bonding \$25 million. That would be with the backup of the Major Bridge Fund.

Paul Moss: Right.

Linda Bloom: Without increasing. We are only going to talk about without increasing the Major Bridge Fund and with existing money.

Paul Moss: Everybody is essentially up to speed with the breakdown of the \$47 million and what we are looking at today is the remaining funds and how we want to finance that.

Linda Bloom: The reason we are committed to these numbers is because we had an interlocal, remember? An interlocal with the City and the City of New Haven.

Cal Miller: There is one other consideration. The mechanism of financing that Commissioner Peters posed when he asked us whether we were in favor or against it. That needs to be considered and questions asked since it is a significant bond issuance request.

Linda Bloom: Absolutely.

Paul Moss: That is a tough question because again, this is all out there, pretty much. It seems a little bit perfunctory if this body was to say that this is not a project that we feel is worthy of \$47 million. We are going to look kind of foolish, I think.

Cal Miller: Why is that, because it has already been started?

Linda Bloom: Engineering, yes.

Paul Moss: We have one gentleman back there who is counting on it. He has already putting in \$2.3 million. It takes us full circle to the comments that have been made by several people about being brought into this late in the game. And now we are boxed into a corner about what we can do.

Cal Miller: It does, doesn't it? I think this is a much better example than even the last given...

Linda Bloom: Bigger.

Cal Miller: ...cost of this project. I would love to hear some of the answers to the questions from the gentleman that emailed all of us today.

Paul Moss: The economic impact thing and things of that nature?

Linda Bloom: Yes.

Paul Moss: Going back to the root need...

Bill Brown: Bill Brown, Allen County Commissioner. I just wanted to talk about that a little bit. This is a project that has been on the drawing board since 1960?

Linda Bloom: 1964.

Bill Brown: It has been out there, in the community, for a long time. I think that what we are doing today is bringing it before you, somewhat to the request of what you mentioned earlier. And this is rather than, last Friday at the Commissioners meeting, signing the paperwork to continue moving it forward with the attorney and through the bond, et cetera. We have established a timeline to have it ready to bid by June of 2008. So, to the point of getting you guys into the loop, I think this would be an appropriate time, if you wanted to vote it down or send us back or however you want to do it. The only clarity that I wanted to make is that we are trying to get up front and get you in the loop on this.

Paul Moss: We appreciate that. I can only speak for myself but I don't recall this initiative back in 1964.

Linda Bloom: Neither do I.

Paul Moss: That doesn't help me a whole lot.

Bill Brown: Just a real quick point. I read about this in the newspapers all of my adult life.

Cal Miller: I would like to respond to that because Commissioner Bloom made that same response. That comment suggests to me that County Council needs to get its information, in affect to how the Commissioners want to spend the taxpayers' dollars, through the newspaper articles. I for one, and no disrespect to our local newspapers, do not make it a practice of my day to read the newspaper. If I get to pick it up on Sunday, then that is about it. There is no way that I intend to get information needed to make a decision about the appropriation expense to the taxpayer dollars through the newspaper.

Bill Brown: I agree with that.

Linda Bloom: We do that all the time.

Bill Brown: It is important to read the newspapers, morning and night, to understand what is going on in Allen County.

Cal Miller: But you specifically said, this dialogue has been going on in the newspapers. What dialogue has been going on between County Council and the Commissioners?

Bill Brown: There have been public hearings but the only point I am trying to make is, here we are ahead of sending the paperwork out.

Paul Moss: And that is appreciated. My comment and Councilman Miller's comment is the references to 1964 and how long this has been discussed. That is pretty much irrelevant at this point.

Bill Brown: Do we need the dates on the public hearings?

Linda Bloom: When we hired federal representation to help us and I personally was making trips to D. C. and the transportation money was then acquired, the \$11 million, this was always, the interlocal that we did with the City of Fort Wayne...

Paula Hughes: If I could interrupt. I have something that could further illustrate the point Commissioner Bloom is trying to make. I do recall the Maplecrest Road but probably because I have been involved in the Urban Transportation Advisory Board. I know it has been talked. I fully support the quibble that this Council has with the Commissioners about moving these projects forward without bringing us in. This is the first time that this has formally come before this body. We should not have to receive information about projects from the newspaper. I am chagrined again to read in the paper that the Commissioners are seeking a \$25 million bond and that is the first I had heard of it. That is not the appropriate way to conduct County government. It puts us on the defensive from the start. We have never formally been advised of that until now and it has been in the papers for over two months. That is not the way to develop a conducive relationship. But I am supportive of the project but I am at an advantage over a lot of these Council members. I fully support the impact for economic development. We got an email from a concerned citizen and I believe that they don't fully understand the impact that this road could have. I compare it to what the County did on the west side with the opening of Ardmore and Hillegas. They built bookends on the City that opened up transportation. This will revolutionize what happens in New Haven and South of New Haven. There is so much available land for development. So much land has been earmarked for that type of economic development that is cut off from population right now. The person, in this email, suggested that because the area north of the river is already developed, it was useless to connect to it. That is exactly why we should connect to it. St. Joe Township is directly north of this river and has a population of 71,000 people. It is the largest single township in the State of Indiana. To connect that population, to the opportunities south of the river, is going to be good for the community. I think it is a good project but I wasn't happy to read about the bond in the newspaper and hear it on the radio before I was approached as a member of the fiscal body of Allen County. I would like to know what is going on before the papers do.

Bill Brown: You are making a very good point. What you said was a wonderful dissertation about the value of Maplecrest. I hear what you are saying about learning things but one thing that we need to remember is that the Commissioners, for the last year, have a new mode of operation. We have the concept of more open government. When we get together Monday and Friday, we have open discussion meetings with the press. We may be just talking about ideas, when are we going to get this bridge started, are we going to bond for it, How do we bond? We are in conversation with the press about a number of things. We don't control the press. They want to look at the ideas and understand what the vision and the future is that the County Commissioners are speaking towards. Unfortunately, there may be an article that says that the Commissioners are floating a \$25 million bond or the Commissioners are going to have a health card in everyone's hands by March 1st. That isn't quite the way it was presented but my point is that we want to have a good, strong relationship with Council. We want to get you in the loop but because of the way that information is now shared and the openness of how we are trying to operate, there will be things that are just in the discussion phase that will make the paper.

Paula Hughes: However, with all due respect Commissioner Brown, employees of the Commissioners, Highway Commissioner Hartman made statements to the New Haven Chamber of Commerce that there was going to be a \$24 million bond posted to fund this bridge, back in October. That is different than casual conversation.

Bill Brown: It is not casual conversation. I would say that when you go to a meeting, Bostick Road Bridge for example, promises made. But I do know when you talk about something, and if Bill Hartman, the Highway Director came out and said emphatically that it was going to happen, people want to know what is going on. The reverse of that is, you say nothing and you discuss it, what is going to happen is that things are going to get misinterpreted. We can't keep everyone in the loop and there are going to be things said. In the system that we are living in, the reason we are here now is to try to get you in the loop before we move forward with the paperwork. It was actually on our docket for last week and we decided to wait.

Cal Miller: May I suggest, Commissioners, that when you say that people say things, what we ought to say is that this is a project that we are working on. That there are at least two branches of government and that while we are working on this, there is a fiscal body and their scrutiny and analysis of this project is important to the overall success. One is funding and two they have a totally separate job from the Commissioners. They have a job of overseeing the tax dollars. Without their approval and input, we can't do this. But to make a commitment for something that hasn't had one of the branches of government approve it, it can't be done.

Bill Brown: I don't get who has made the commitment.

Linda Bloom: There was no commitment.

Bill Brown: Many times, I have people come to me and say that they hear that the Commissioners are doing this or I hear the County is doing this. No, no, no, no. We have talked about these things.

Paul Moss: Would you agree though, that the perception, in the public, is that the Maplecrest Road extension is going to occur?

Bill Brown: The perception?

Linda Bloom: Yes.

Bill Brown: I was always under the impression, as a citizen of Allen County, that this was something that was going to happen someday. As Ardmore came on line, those are the kinds of things...

Paul Moss: I think it is reasonable to say that the perception is that it is going to move forward. When you have these types of commitments for dollars, intuitively people are going to think that they are moving forward with that. Whether you read the newspaper or not, that is the impression that most of the people would get.

Bill Brown: But shouldn't we be here with that information for you? It would be premature for us to come if we didn't have all of this worked out, right?

Paul Moss: Not necessarily. I think what's premature is that surely there has been an economic impact study done by somebody but I have never seen it. I don't know anybody, here on this Council that has seen it. That is the first step. What is the reason to spend \$47 million? That would have been the first step, in my opinion. I don't want to sit here and rehash all of this though. What I would like to do is get us to a point where briefly and Paula did a very good job at it...

Linda Bloom: She did.

Paul Moss: ... talk about the economic impact. Then we can get into the financing of it.

Bill Brown: I will just say yes and let others talk that are more knowledgeable about it. I guess, just to be clear, what I am saying is that we are here to share information about something that has come together. That will be our mode of operation in the future.

Paul Moss: It is just timing. Councilman Buskirk?

Roy Buskirk: The one thing that would help is, as liaison to the Highway Department, that I would be invited to some of those discussions. It used to be, a year or so ago, that almost monthly I was involved in a meeting with the Highway Department.

Linda Bloom: And we have a liaison though.

Roy Buskirk: No, no, no, no. I am talking about the Highway meeting. I am the liaison to the Highway Department.

Linda Bloom: Okay.

Roy Buskirk: We had a meeting with the Highway Department, every other month, at the most. Now we don't have any. I think that would help if I would have the privilege to attend the meetings and be notified of the meetings. I think that is some of the frustration. In discussion, with other members of the Council, items of this type are brought up. The other comment I want to make is that a lot has changed since 1964 that even makes me wonder about this project and the fact that we don't have the traffic to Harvester and Zollner that we had in 1964.

Linda Bloom: And there is no additional population anywhere. That was snidely.

Roy Buskirk: The letter that we received about the concerned citizen, was pointing some of those issues out. Traffic flow now is not as great as it was.

Linda Bloom: But then we have Do It Best and the world headquarters. We have 650 acres of land that were given to the City of Fort Wayne and the City of New Haven by the landfill. It goes to Lake Avenue and stops.

Roy Buskirk: I understand that.

Linda Bloom: There is no other north-south on the east side like Hillegas/Ardmore on the west. To complete that project, which is a mile and a half or less...

Roy Buskirk: The distance is not as important as what the cost involved would be.

Linda Bloom: The cost, the bridges, right.

Roy Buskirk: The cost per mile is tremendously high because of the bridges involved.

Linda Bloom: Absolutely.

Roy Buskirk: I would appreciate it if you would go on and make your presentation.

Linda Bloom: This is a show going here.

Nelson Peters: There are a number of individuals that would like to speak and answer some of the questions that you have.

Paul Moss: Then let's go down that road. We are officially beyond the issue of communication with the Commissioners. Let's get to the presentation. Again, if we can just briefly focus on why this project is important and then we will talk about financing.

Terry McDonald: The majority of my comments are exactly to that point. I would like to thank Council for having us and Councilwoman Hughes for your comments. I will just expand on those comments.

Paula Hughes: Mayor, could you introduce yourself for the record, please?

Terry McDonald: Oh, yes, I am Terry McDonald, Mayor of New Haven. It is kind of nice to be on this side of the rail though. The City of New Haven stands ready with its \$2.3 million plus in road funds in order to undertake this project. It has come with some increase in cost, some \$500,000 over the last couple of years. I would speak for the need for this. The largest employer in the area is Do It Best, the world headquarters, which is the second largest hardware retailer in the world. They have just over \$36 million in payroll from the facility with 600 employees. You need to take into consideration, the Norfolk and Southern railroad yard. They are a major headache but they are also a major employer as well with over 300 employees. They have a hefty salary that goes out on a bi-weekly basis. There are other manufacturers such as Signature Products who acquired some additional equipment to develop an additional line. That line was removed because of railroad delays. He couldn't get his employees there in a timely manner. We also have Chem Central and Almet Steel. While not on Nelson Road, they are directly affected by the railroad delays. They would have immediate access to Maplecrest Road via Hartzell Road and Parrot Road. Central States Screen which brings in millions and millions of pounds of soy beans and corn on an annual basis. We are also in the works of developing a dinosaur building, the old Lake End Sales building, for 145,000 feet of warehousing space. This building has been vacant. There is a small operation in there currently that does product recycling. If a case of catsup is damaged, they pull out the undamaged containers and sell that to discount retailers. There are other facilities along the area too. On the economic development, continuing on that fashion, this opens up the north-south corridor, as you had said. This is not only for the Adams Center/930 area. That intersection takes just over 31,000 cars a day. It also provides better access to the Adams Center Industrial area which is south of the Conrail tracks and across the way from the landfill. That area is home to Watkins Trucking Company. There is also potential development which will take up the vast majority of that facility and is being worked on, currently. There are employer issues. Employers are sometimes at their wits end in trying to get their employees to the facilities on time. There would never be a train delay. Two train-crossings on Estella Avenue would be closed permanently. There is a loop that the City of New Haven is funding that will provide instantaneous access to Nelson Road. You also have the public safety factors. As a medic with the City of New Haven for many, many years, and a police officer who backed the County police on many occasions, we were blocked by trains on a pretty consistent basis. I am quite sure that Councilwoman

Kite, when she was with the Sheriff's Department, had numerous times when she couldn't get there to render aid because of the railroad. The elimination of those delays will be invaluable. Not just from a public safety perspective but from economic development too. Many of you are employers and you understand the necessity of having your employees at work and on time. Again, this is a major north-south corridor and is a way over the river and railroad and also will have a small impact on air quality. There aren't as many delays over the railroad and vehicles can keep moving. When cars idle and are sitting, waiting for a train, there is additional pollution. And then the gas economy, of a vehicle when it stops and takes off, and those kinds of issues. This is government cooperation. This is City of New Haven, City of Fort Wayne and Allen County. I only wish this would have been done in 1964 and then we wouldn't have to have this conversation. We appreciate your time and consideration of this. I think if this had been done with 1964 dollars, we wouldn't even be worrying about it. I would be happy to answer any questions, from the City of New Haven's perspective.

Paul Moss: I have a question about Do It Best. Are they committed to that location?

Terry McDonald: I believe so. In not being a spokesperson for Do It Best, they are a cash only business. In the last five years, they have put millions of dollars into their facility. They expanded their office space in that facility as well as a brand new façade. To look at the building before the new façade, they have done that for their clients. It is a more professional look and more comfortable.

Paul Moss: Do they have many clients coming into that building?

Terry McDonald: From all over the world.

Paul Moss: I don't know how to put it. It's not like it is retail.

Terry McDonald: It is not retail. It is strictly their headquarters. They don't warehouse out of there. The only thing that they really do out of there besides sales is customer relations and advertising.

Paul Moss: If they have clients coming in from throughout the country, they are probably coming in from the airport.

Terry McDonald: Yes, they are.

Paul Moss: What route would they be taking?

Terry McDonald: Currently they would take Highway 469 to Highway 30 and come in that direction.

Paul Moss: That wouldn't be affected by this.

Terry McDonald: It would when they got to Highway 30 and Estella. If they get stopped by a train there, they could be sitting there for 20 to 30 minutes. That is a common complaint that they have there. It can be difficult for their potential clients to get to them when that happens. This would make it a shorter route. They could take the Marion Center exit off 469 and that becomes Adams Center Road. They would take it right over the railroad and use the Nelson Road loop, as I like to call it, and then they are at the front door just after they get off the Nelson Road loop.

Paul Moss: Is that primary or secondary, in your mind, to the employees' ability to get there on time.

Terry McDonald: As an employer, that is very important. The employees need to be able to get to work on time and be able to get themselves home in a timely manner too.

Paul Moss: The reason I ask that question is because as you went through your list, it appeared that a lot of focus was on being able to get their employees there on a timely basis. The other question I have is with regards to the railroad and the issues of getting caught behind them. Have the options been explored to adjust elevations or something along that line?

Terry McDonald: To be able to put the railroad over the top of Estella, the proximity of the crossing to the yard is too close. They are only allowed a one percent grade increase because trains don't have tires for traction. They need to have a very low, slow grade. The possibility of doing an underpass, with the Nelson Road interchange with Estella is far too close.

Paul Moss: These are all questions when you talk about \$47 million.

Darren Vogt: One question, the traffic on the cloverleaf and when you talk about public safety, the cloverleaf can be very dangerous. Has any traffic flow study been done on it? Will that eliminate a lot of that cloverleaf traffic?

Terry McDonald: I think anecdotally it would. Oftentimes, I will use the cloverleaf instead of North River because I may not want to get caught by a train.

Patt Kite: I have a comment. You brought up the public safety factor and I do have experience with that in that you may be on your way to go somewhere and need to be in a hurry. You get caught by a train and snake through all of the back roads to find out that you just didn't make it in time and go caught by another train.

Terry McDonald: That is very true.

Paul Moss: Councilman Buskirk and then Miller?

Roy Buskirk: I know that what you asked about the hardware, I recently had some right-of-way transactions with them and I was amazed at how much traffic they have through that office. Salesmen and advertising representatives and everything else, there was tremendous outside traffic coming in. Something else, as far as the railroad traffic, the trains are not scheduled. It used to be that you knew what time the train was going. I have talked to some of the employees and many times they scheduled to get to work on time and they would be late because they were stopped by a train.

Terry McDonald: This opens up literally hundreds of acres south of Highway 930 for economic development as well.

Paul Moss: Councilman Miller?

Cal Miller: I have some questions for the Commissioners.

Terry McDonald: If I could make just one more comment. This will also help to do some storm water remediation and some issues that affect that area. Part of the project will be working on some of those issues. We have been talking to NIPSCO and some of the area that they have near the Sunnymede addition. That would be on our dollar. I know that the Surveyor's Office has had numerous complaints about the ditch that runs in that particular area. It goes under Highway 30 and literally flows under the Do It Best organization. That would be eliminated and blocked off and rerouted. Thank you very much.

Paul Moss: Thank you. Appreciate you taking the time.

Nelson Peters: Could I briefly ask that Greg Leatherman come to the microphone? He has an 11:30 engagement and we wanted him to speak on the City's commitment to this project as well as some parallels to the Ardmore corridor and some of the things that have happened there.

Greg Leatherman: I am Greg Leatherman, Executive Director of the City of Fort Wayne Redevelopment Commission. Three very brief points I would like to make for this discussion. As you probably know, the Redevelopment Commission has an Adams Center Industrial Park located immediately to the east of the former landfill site. The land was donated to the City by the former owners. It has a FedEx facility at the moment and is being marketed actively by the Fort Wayne and Allen County Alliance for industrial relocations and expansions. We are interested in developing that park. We believe that a couple of different things in the future that are very publicly known. There is the possibility of an intermodal facility being located there that would be able to transfer on the railroad tracks all the way from the Far East to our community. The cargo is on rail and then transfers them to trucks. That would be a very huge job creator. We are hoping that the announcement on that will be finalized soon. If that should not come to pass, because of things outside our control, we still think this industrial site would benefit from a north-south corridor on the east side of Allen County just as the west side did with the Ardmore corridor. The final

point I would like to make is that the City of Fort Wayne Redevelopment Commission has indicated that to the extent that the TIF revenues generated by the additional investment in this park would not be necessary for the completion of infrastructure to host those businesses, would be available in the out years to help retire some of the debt that this bond might represent. At this point, we can not tell you how much or when it would be available but the plan for Adams Center and any TIF generated by Adams Center is dedicated solely to the installation of necessary infrastructure to host businesses that might choose to locate there. Anything that would be generated over the course of the life of that area, beyond that, could be used to help pay off what we believe would be an additional infrastructure benefiting this park, ie: this major north-south corridor on the east side of the county. We think it is a worthy project and to the extent that we can support it with revenues, we intend to do so. Are there any questions?

Paul Moss: We appreciate you coming before us and making those comments.

Nelson Peters: I know that Councilman Miller had some questions. We would still like to bring Dan Avery up, if you don't mind. He can further speak to some of the economic impact and some of the other things going on.

Dan Avery: Good morning. My name is Dan Avery and I am the Executive Director of the Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council. I will try to hit a few comments that were made earlier. I want to start back, even prior to the 1966 plan. There was something that I have on file called the Parkway Perimeter Plan. It had a similar concept in mind both on the east side and the west side of Fort Wayne to provide good north-south connectivity from an accessibility and mobility standpoint for transportation. That concept is carried through and revised numerous times and reevaluated numerous times to make sure that we are not just continuing to perpetuate an idea that originated fifty years ago. The concept of the current transportation plan that we are in the process of implementing and have for the last twenty-five years, developed in the late 1970's and early 1980's. This was a plan that focused on several main components. It was referred to as the Bypass Plus Arterial Plan. The three main components of that plan are the first one being 469 was the bypass component of that. It would circumvent the urban core to keep traffic that didn't need to come into the downtown area or into the urban core out of the way and from that area that allows the available capacity within that ring to be used for the internal trips that we need to promote economic development and maintain good mobility on our transportation system. The other two critical components of that plan were the Ardmore/Hillegas corridor on the west side and the Maplecrest/Adams Center on the east side. If you historically look at the design of our transportation infrastructure, it is primarily a radial system with most of the major corridors feeding into the downtown and then back out. While we have a few corridors now east-west, like State Boulevard, Paulding Road to the south, we really have a lack of good continuous north-south corridors that can serve the long trips through the region. That was the justification at that time for those two main arterial pieces. In addition to that, there are a whole host of other improvements that reside

on the plan that we continue to evaluate over time. This particular project, from a transportation standpoint, really hits almost every critical piece of concern or consideration when we look at the value of a project. In terms of vehicle miles of travel, VMT, it will reduce VMT in the region because it provides better mobility and accessibility. What you couple with a reduction in VMT is that you get less energy usage and less emissions. As Mayor McDonald mentioned, there is an air quality benefit to this project because it makes more efficient traffic movement and patterns. In addition, there is the safety benefit. Any time that we can separate grade crossings, provide a safer passageway over railroad facilities, we improve safety and the safety benefit of the accessibility into certain parts of the community that may be obstructed due to train traffic. Then lastly and maybe sometimes most importantly, is the economic development benefit and the potential that a project like this brings to the community. Opening up the southeast portion of Allen County, the southeast portion of Fort Wayne and the southwest portion of New Haven for economic development and economic growth and the ability to link areas where we want job growth and population growth that lies north of the river. In addition to those, Councilman Vogt asked about the cloverleaf. That is directly a benefit of this project. Currently, Landin Road is a parallel corridor and Broadway, as it gets into New Haven and has several railroad crossings. To the west, 930/Coliseum corridor which has limitations on its capacity and limitations that we don't expect to see capacity increases on. There is a project to improve safety at the cloverleaf and would be happy to discuss that at a future date. We know that there are limitations on that corridor to carry traffic and as you know, within a mile or so south of there, it is diverted and there is no connectivity unless you go through Pontiac and get onto Hessen Cassel. We do see a benefit to that corridor as well and a benefit to the Landin Road corridor. Traffic will be diverted from those onto this corridor and we do have some projections of travel. I don't have those with me but we feel it will carry a significant amount of traffic. Councilman Buskirk has talked about how that area has changed. There has been replacement employment in that area. We have see reuse of the Harvester building with Tippmann in there. We know other businesses are located in there. In addition to that, we know that the vehicle miles of travel and we monitor this on an annual basis. It continues to climb and has since the 1960's. We are a more mobile society, we travel more and we put more miles on our vehicles. While there may be some trip desires due to employment that may have diminished, in general, we are moving more and don't see a decrease in the amount of traffic and the desires to utilize that corridor and to move through that area.

Paul Moss: Councilman Miller?

Cal Miller: Thanks, Mr. Avery. That was very informative. You were alluding to some other projects that were similar in nature. Did you say that Ardmore Road was a similar project?

Dan Avery: Yes sir. The basis of the transportation plan had those three components. The Ardmore/Hillegas corridor is very similar in that the missing piece between Hillegas and Ardmore was joined by several bridges over the railroad.

Cal Miller: How much did that project cost?

Dan Avery: At that time, it was probably in the twelve to fourteen million dollar range.

Cal Miller: That was just completed a year ago?

Dan Avery: No, that has been open for three or four years.

Cal Miller: For three or four years?

Dan Avery: The County portion.

Cal Miller: Whose portion went from Lower Huntington to the Airport?

Dan Avery: Oh, I'm sorry, that section? That was the City's portion. The extension to the airport was part of that corridor concept and was just completed in the last year or so. That was a much cheaper piece to do. It was probably five to seven million dollars.

Cal Miller: What other connectivity projects have been done before, in the recent past. Then we can get an idea of the scope of the project. \$47 million is a lot of money and I want to ask the Commissioners where else they have concentrated \$47 million of investment? The rest of us, in the County, are going to be contributing to the success of this project, that don't live over there and I want to know how that is going to benefit the rest of us that have to pick up a \$25 million bond issue. I understand the Hillegas and Ardmore connectivity and that is a beautiful shot straight to the airport. I was glad to see that happen but what other projects, as we consider how this is going to benefit that area and if it is going to benefit the County as a whole, can we point to, as models, the kind of connectivity that you are attempting to achieve?

Dan Avery: These are very expensive projects and that is why you don't see very many of them. The extension of Engle Road would be an example of a corridor to connect Aboite Township area to the southern part of Fort Wayne, as a similar type of where we have a deficiency because there is not connectivity. If I could take you back to the very first federally funded transportation plan that we had put together, there were a lot more that we would have liked to have seen put together but because of development getting in the way, Notestine Road and Dupont was one that used to be considered. There are a number of those that have kind of gone by the wayside but I believe that the Hillegas Road is probably the best example.

Roy Buskirk: Dan, excuse me, but you have the Airport Expressway.

Dan Avery: You're right. That was probably a \$15 million project. That was for economic development and economic development opportunity.

Cal Miller: That is a good example and I do use that a lot. The question that I have and this is your livelihood and what you have been doing for the County puts you in a good position to address this, but this is a \$47 million project. In an area that is just as important as any other quadrant in the County, what project of this scope can you point to that those tax dollars have been concentrated in any one area for what you are trying to achieve?

Dan Avery: Are you asking in terms of dollar for dollar? Fort to Port, Highway 469 was a \$130 to \$140 million project. The widening of I69 to maintain a good corridor to what used to be the outside of the urban core, as the urban core continues to move a little to the west. While it is not through the City, we have spilled over to the west side. That project is three phases at \$70 to \$80 million a crack. The cost of this project is tied to the bridges. If it was flat, open land, it would be very similar to the Airport Expressway. The bridge structures are the critical thing but at the same time, they provide the most benefit because you have the obstructions of trains and the river. The geographical and physical barriers that those present and are what we can't circumvent.

Cal Miller: What would you say the response, I represent the fourth district, that we are going to put \$47 million for this project. I understand from Mayor McDonald's comments that of the benefits to that area. How is that going to overall benefit Allen County and why should they be chomping at the bit to be a part of the contribution to a \$25 million bond?

Dan Avery: I would say that exactly the same reason that we do regional planning and why we do regional economic development. What is good for southeast Allen County is good for southwest Allen County. The fact that we have an entire region here that we need to maintain and need good economic development and growth means that southwest and everybody wins. The Chairman of my Board, Mayor Yoder from Auburn, you can often here him say that what is good for Auburn is good for Fort Wayne and what is good for Fort Wayne is good for Auburn. It is that type of regional impact that we are going to benefit from this project. It makes every resident, within this region, a benefactor of that project.

Cal Miller: In your tenure, in your position, have you been involved in a larger bond issuance than \$25 million?

Dan Avery: I don't get involved in the actual bond. I am a transportation planner and that is their job and others.

Paul Moss: Councilman Miller, an analogous question to your question that people ask pretty frequently is what benefit is Harrison Square to somebody out in Huntertown or New Haven or something like that? I am not debating that one way or the other but it is a similar question, I think. It is a tough one to answer.

Cal Miller: I will go back to my mother's lesson, early on. I am not saying that Harrison Square is a wrong or a right but just because you are spending money in one area doesn't justify the expenditure in the other unless it's justified. That type of analogy gets you nowhere.

Dan Avery: I would agree but I think there are some very tangible benefits to this project.

Cal Miller: I agree with you and it sounds like it. I just want to make sure because this is a big bond issuance. I want to ask the Auditor how this is going to impact each one of us on the tax burden. This is something that is going to hit the tax roles and it is going to have an impact and that is why it has to be justified. I am sure that is why Mayor McDonald is here. He sees what the justification is. I am sure that is why you are standing up here and doing the same thing. But we have to ask these questions as the fiscal body so that we can make an informed decision about whether we should support it or not. I hope you appreciate the vein in which these questions are being asked.

Dan Avery: I appreciate that.

Paul Moss: Councilman Vogt?

Darren Vogt: A couple of questions that are almost down to the nuts and bolts of it. The intersection of Monarch and Maplecrest currently is a four-way stop. I expect that traffic to come, not only from Lake Avenue but from State Street as well. What are the plans for the improvements for that intersection as well as, have those neighbors been informed of the increase in traffic flow? That intersection needs to be improved.

Paul Moss: That whole corridor from State on down will need to be improved.

Dan Avery: I will answer that by stating that they are aware and they have been very well represented at the public meetings. The City of Fort Wayne has a companion project to this one that we have already started to program some federal money towards. It would address the traffic flow concerns on Maplecrest Road between Lake Avenue and State Street and even further north towards Stellhorn Road. I have had quite a few discussions with City Councilman Smith because he represents that area. We know that there will have to be some modifications to that area. The intersection with Monarch will be changed. There are some special challenges there with the elementary school. We have a continuous traffic conflict situation with Georgetown Square. That should be addressed as part of that. So my short response would be that Fort Wayne understands that and we have a project planned that is not designed yet. We don't know exactly how we are going to address it but we know what needs to be addressed and are programming money to fund that project and those improvements.

Darren Vogt: And that was my concern to make sure that those areas are addressed. Obviously you have to put a plan in place but I want to make sure that the people who live in that area aren't adversely impacted.

Dan Avery: At the public meetings, we have had folks from Tanbark, which is clear up by 469, participating in those meetings.

Darren Vogt: Great, thank you.

Paula Hughes: I wanted to share information that I have concerning the bond impact to the taxpayers. If Councilman Miller had been paying attention in County Council sessions, he is aware that we have been striving to make the municipalities aware of their responsibilities in terms of the care of the bridges in this County. There is actually a meeting scheduled this afternoon. That is going to pull some of the pressure off Major Bridge, not Major Bridge but some of the other bridge responsibilities. But it frees up money from Major Bridge to be allocated. I believe Commissioner Peters said that this bond will be funded fully through Major Bridge without any increase in the fund.

Linda Bloom: No new money.

Paula Hughes: Correct?

Paul Moss: Okay, are we ready to talk financing? Who is going to lead that effort?

Nelson Peters: Thank you. I didn't want to take anything for granted. I appreciate you allowing the opportunity for some of this dialogue. The other part of the equation is the financing part. To Councilman Miller's concerns, part of what has taken us as long as it has to get to this point today is we have really worked hard to figure out how to put this thing together without having to go back to the taxpayers. I don't know, even at this point, that all the way through the process that we are going to be able to make that a reality. If you will indulge me for a second, I will explain. We need \$25 million and it is our position that we need to float it in a bond. The bond would be backed by Major Bridge funds. What it does, to our Major Bridge Fund right now, is it consumes most of everything that we have in there for the next twenty to twenty-five years. That doesn't really allow us the opportunity to do a ton of things with the other expanses that are 200 feet and longer. We are comfortable, from the current standpoint, that we have about a five or six year leeway with Major Bridge Funds in that we don't have anything huge on the horizon that will necessitate the majority of those funds for the next four or five years. In the meantime, we have gone to the City of Fort Wayne and the City of New Haven and have asked them to partner with us on creating Tax Incremental Financing Districts along Maplecrest Road from Lake Avenue to 469. That is with the hopes that we will be able to capture some of that increment in the next five to six years to supplant any major bridge dollars that are being utilized to pay for the bond. The short of it is, we hope not to ever have to go back to the taxpayers to get them to pay for this. We

are sure, over the next five to six years that we won't have to do that. We hope that in the next five to six years, the Tax Incremental Financing will put us in a position that we'll never have to do this in the life of this bridge. We will have to see how this five to six year period pans out.

Paul Moss: Do you have any type of information that shows the Major Bridge Fund over the course of how many years you can project out? You indicated that this would essentially take all of that. Incorporating that factor into it and something that shows there has to be some projections. We talk about TIF and maybe being able to do this or that and that is where I get a combination of frustration and I don't know what else. It is tough to make a decision. There has to be something that somebody has done some analysis of that.

Nelson Peters: I thought I had run the copies but I do have a copy of a report titled 2007 Distribution of TIF and this is for each TIF District. I will be happy to share this with you. As you look at the numbers, you will develop some comfort that some of the projects that Dan Avery spoke about, have been able to pay for themselves.

Paul Moss: Will that also show the affect on the rest of the County in terms of the TIF District taking money out of the pot and so it has to be made up somewhere? Are we capable of having some analysis in that regard?

Nelson Peters: I think this does answer that question. It provides a fairly comprehensive overview of TIF throughout the County. I will ensure that each of you get a copy.

Paul Moss: The last thing, before Roy takes over here, all that the three of you are talking about now is 25 years on the bond issue. That is all you have on the table because you agree on the 25 year bond.

Nelson Peters: Right, again, to be backed through other revenues.

Paul Moss: Councilman Buskirk?

Roy Buskirk: I am going to yield to Tera. I think you have the answer to what the question was on the TIF stuff. Didn't you want to make a comment on that?

Tera Klutz: I was just going to say that any new growth created by the Maplecrest Extension, would be used possibly to pay back some of these bonds. It just becomes a question of would that growth have come anyway to reduce all of our taxes and if not, would the growth come as a result of Maplecrest, and then those taxes from the growth will be used.

Nelson Peters: Right.

Paul Moss: Then that begs the other question. How do you identify what is the litmus test there to see if it was the expansion that created that? Is it geographical that we are going to use or is it basically anywhere along that corridor? Are there specific areas that would be included in the TIF?

Nelson Peters: We have looked at going a quarter of a mile to half a mile each side of Maplecrest Road from Lake Avenue to 469.

Roy Buskirk: So your intentions are to pledge in Major Bridge to pay the bond and we have had other things thrown out here that we might be able to get some money and we might not be able to get some money. What the City presented was kind of iffy. If they got extra TIF left because they are having a TIF District, part of this would be overlapping their TIF District?

Nelson Peters: What Mr. Leatherman represented, was the TIF out of that particular area. We are in the process of negotiating the final documents that would create a greater commitment than just that.

Roy Buskirk: But they already have that area committed to interstructure.

Nelson Peters: That is correct. That is our hope that there will be other development to the east and west of that as there has to many other projects including the Ardmore corridor.

Roy Buskirk: What you and I discussed last night on the phone, I want to point out to the fact that with the current legislation of setting the maximum at one percent for residential, the County will be losing about \$4 million of revenue. That would include the Major Bridge Fund. That is how the Major Bridge Fund is collected, through the real estate taxes. Major Bridge will possibly be impacted by that. In talking with Mr. Hartman yesterday, right now with the projection of Major Bridge, we would have about \$100,000 excess. The amount that is not pledged for the bond is \$100,000 with the current revenue that we are receiving annually?

Nelson Peters: I will take your word for it.

Linda Bloom: I will too.

Nelson Peters: We talked last night but I haven't talked to Mr. Hartman today to follow up on it.

Roy Buskirk: I just want to point out to the fact that there is a real good chance that we are going to be limited at one percent of the homeowner's assessed valuation. We will lose \$4 million at the current rate. With the real estate market in a downward trend, through the trending, our assessed valuation might be less than what it currently is now. That would be additional over the \$4 million that we are talking about.

Nelson Peters: Absolutely something to consider. Now, to that end, it is our hope that this project is successful enough to increase the assessed valuation to where there is a little more cushion between it and the one percent.

Roy Buskirk: Through the TIF.

Nelson Peters: Well, yeah, but I mean...

Roy Buskirk: This project isn't going to increase the assessed valuation.

Nelson Peters: Potentially, a project of this magnitude will have a positive affect on the countywide assessed valuation. I understand the argument made.

Paul Moss: Councilman Vogt?

Darren Vogt: This kind of echoes Councilman Buskirk's comments. It is a twenty-five year bond and what are the contingencies, other than going back to the taxpayer, is that contingency B or A? Where does that fall in...

Nelson Peters: After five or six years, that is Plan B.

Darren Vogt: So Plan A is it makes it. What are the contingencies for Major Bridges for the next twenty-five years?

Nelson Peters: That will be in having to go back and increase the Major Bridge Fund.

Darren Vogt: So if any of our current structures need repair, we are going to have to back to the taxpayers.

Nelson Peters: We believe that right now, up through years five and six, we are okay. We don't believe that we are going to have to do anything and believe that the TIF revenues that come in will help supplant the dollars that are going towards the Maplecrest Road extension. In year five or six, if for some reason the TIF revenues don't do what we believe they will do, then we will have to increase the Major Bridge Fund.

Darren Vogt: And those TIF revenues are on the sheet that you have there.

Nelson Peters: Not the Maplecrest TIF but every other one that is being used throughout Fort Wayne and Allen County.

Darren Vogt: Okay. We are going to have to make the analogy that the Maplecrest Road TIF is going to create the same kind of impact that these others did.

Nelson Peters: Correct.

Darren Vogt: I guess that is what concerns me that we have to see that. I say we should look at the TIF's that are directly related to road improvement and not TIF Districts that were created for retail environment. We need to be comparing apples to apples.

Nelson Peters: Right.

Darren Vogt: We need to make sure that our comparisons are fair.

Nelson Peters: Understand.

Paul Moss: Councilman Miller?

Cal Miller: Commissioner Peters, since the Commissioners are hoping that the TIF District, after five or six years, is going to support the bond payments, could you describe the analysis that was undertaken to project whether that would actually happen or not? Whether the likelihood that the TIF revenues in five or six years would be sufficient to serve as the debt service for the bond.

Nelson Peters: Again, all I can do is present the sheet that I have that shows all of the TIF's and what they have generated throughout Allen County.

Cal Miller: Doesn't it have to be a little more of an analysis? How does that sheet and those numbers, if we are going to be handed a sheet that shows TIF revenues that exist in Allen County, there has to be more to the analysis to try to project...

Nelson Peters: I understand what you are saying.

Cal Miller: If TIF revenues will be sufficient enough to be generated out of the area where the improvements are going to be made. It has to be more than just that sheet, right?

Paul Moss: Half of the equation, you have already. The bond payment so all we need is to understand that TIF piece. I agree that we are just going to base it off of how the other TIF's have performed.

Nelson Peters: I don't have the debt service numbers in front of me. I will be happy to provide them to you as part of what you see here too. It is our understanding that if you take some of the projects like the Ardmore project, the dollars that have been generated there will take care of the debt service. I don't know what that direct number is.

Cal Miller: That is what I would appreciate because it sounds like the Commissioners are hoping if not anticipating, the TIF revenues to be the central source of, Commissioner Bloom is shaking her head no...

Linda Bloom: It isn't. It is going to supplement in case, number one, the Major Bridge number decreases and/or, this will avoid not having to increase the Major Bridge amount. The primary thing is to be able to make the payments. First of all, there are only thirty bridges that can be included in the funds of Major Bridge. We have a study that shows that those bridges are in good shape. The TIF isn't going to pay this bond payment. It is strictly a supplement.

Cal Miller: Let me ask it in a different way, then. What level of confidence do the Commissioners have that the bond issuance and the debt can be retired by a generation of TIF revenues and the Major Bridge Fund without having to go to other sources of taxpayer dollars?

Linda Bloom: I am hoping because, if and when we get to do this, we will be able to apply and receive money from the federal government. This week already, I have talked to Souder, Bayh and Lugar about additional appropriations and we have no intentions of dropping that.

Cal Miller: To retire the \$25 million debt service...

Linda Bloom: Sooner. This is the only project that we are going for money. We were told when I got that huge amount of money, that once we got that large appropriation from the transportation bill, we would receive yearly money. We have not. They are calling me to see if we are submitting another.

Cal Miller: Have you, in your tenure as Commissioner, has there ever been a \$25 million bond issuance?

Linda Bloom: For what type of...

Cal Miller: For this type of project, locally?

Linda Bloom: For this type of project? We have had \$25 million in bonds before.

Cal Miller: For this type of project.

Linda Bloom: I don't know. I can't remember any.

Cal Miller: You would agree that this is a big bond issuance.

Linda Bloom: It is a very big bond. But I also, with your statement about the district that you represent, when we do bridge bonds, and we have done a lot of bridge bonds since I have been with the County, many of those bridges, I have never been over. You can't say that just the people you represent because we really represent the whole county. The importance of it, if we can do something in one area, doesn't that mean that we should be able to do something in all areas?

Cal Miller: Yes. Whoever suggested that that wasn't a true statement, Commissioner? I am elected by people in the southwest district to ask questions regarding the expenditure of tax dollars that are located anywhere in the County. Never did I suggest that you can't spend money in the southeast quadrant because you aren't spending in the southwest. That was never my suggestion, ever.

Linda Bloom: But your question was what to me?

Cal Miller: My question to you, Commissioner...

Linda Bloom: No, your question several hours ago.

Cal Miller: Several hours ago or two minutes ago, Commissioner?

Linda Bloom: No, when I was up here before. When you were suggesting that your constituents want to know how that is going to benefit them.

Cal Miller: Don't we all want to know?

Linda Bloom: Absolutely.

Cal Miller: What is the overall benefit? This is a \$47 million project and don't we all want to know if it is a justifiable project or not and who is going to be paying for it in the long run?

Paul Moss: I think that we have had Mayor McDonald and Dan Avery address that, to a certain extent. If I recall correctly, Commissioner Bloom tried to address that as well.

Cal Miller: No, that question has been answered. She asked me what my question was three hours ago.

Paul Moss: Let's move on from this.

Nelson Peters: If I could just add and summarize my thoughts. Councilman, your point is valid, there is no question about that. The mix of funding that we came up with in making this decision and determination to move forward, was simply the mix that we believe allowed us, as a County, the greatest flexibility to deal with the issue right now. There are other avenues. We could go out and just float a general obligation bond. Nobody really wanted to go back to the taxpayers and say that we want to pick there pockets right now. We could have increased the Major Bridge Fund and we really didn't want to do that for fear of having to raise taxes for that. We could go back and reestablish the CUM Bridge Fund that might allow us to do some of those things. As Councilwoman Hughes alluded to earlier, there are still discussions in the process to allow us to hopefully to arrive at the most sound decision. Is this the best approach? We think so because it will allow us the flexibility

to move this project ahead without having to go back to the taxpayers. Are there other alternatives? Probably so.

Paul Moss: What we need is the information that you have...

Nelson Peters: I have written it and it is headed your way.

Paul Moss: that has helped you arrive at that decision. Councilman Vogt?

Darren Vogt: That is what I was going to try to wrap this conversation up with. We can't do anything without those numbers. We may have this conversation again next month when we have those numbers. The merits of those numbers need to be validated.

Nelson Peters: Right.

Darren Vogt: That is where we are at.

Nelson Peters: Agreed, agreed. That is fair. We have been through those exercises. As Commissioner Brown and Commissioner Bloom said at the outset, the purpose of this meeting was purely informational. We are not asking for anything today. We don't want you to act on it. We just wanted to provide the information for you as we move ahead in the process.

Paul Moss: We will wrap this up. The last comment or question that I have, and I brought this up when I met with you all a while back and didn't get much of a response, the \$25 million bond is pretty significant. There will be attorney's fees associated with that. There will also be bond broker fees.

Nelson Peters: Right.

Paul Moss: Is it your intention, as opposed to using the same people that we always use for those services, to actually try and get a better deal?

Nelson Peters: We have directed our County Attorney to proceed...

Paul Moss: He is the person who traditionally does this.

Nelson Peters: I don't know where he is heading with it.

Paul Moss: What do you believe the attorney's fees will be as the result of a \$25 million bond?

Nelson Peters: I couldn't begin to guess. I know that the soft costs have been figured into the total bond.

Paul Moss: I want to state, publicly, that I am frustrated with that. I don't think it should be perfunctory that the same people should just have it handed off to them without question or looking for other sources and possibly saving the taxpayers some money.

Darren Vogt: Councilman Moss, if history serves me correctly, on some of the other bonds that we have looked at, it is a percentage of the bond when this is really from my research when looking at the county attorneys. I still believe we have some room to go on that but that is another story. This work is really boilerplate work and is not detailed research. I think we need to be diligent with the amount of attorneys' fees that we pay.

Nelson Peters: Fair.

Paul Moss: That is exactly my point.

Cal Miller: So you are requesting a projection of what the fees would be?

Paul Moss: I would like to know how much it is expected to cost and what efforts have been undertaken, there are a lot of hungry attorneys out there and I just don't think it should be provided to just one person. Or, the brokerage firm that puts the bond out there...

Nelson Peters: I understand what you are after.

Roy Buskirk: You might possibly have a couple of submitters on bond costs and attorney fees.

Paul Moss: I think you will find that there are lots of people willing to do it. That is all I had. Any other questions?

Paula Hughes: I was going to say that I think it is very appropriate to go through the bid process for this.

Paul Moss: We do appreciate the information.

Nelson Peters: Thank you for your time.

Paul Moss: Let's see, where are we?

Paula Hughes: Item 3.

Paul Moss: Item 3 is appropriation in Surveyor's Mossman Drain Fund.

Larry Weber: My name is Larry Weber from the Surveyor's Office. That drain fund was established by development dollars from Jonathon's Landing and Bridgewater

Development. There is no tax dollars involved in it. It was set aside to accrue tax interest. To make a withdrawal from that account to pay for downstream development, we have to come before you. We are requesting \$3,840.

Cal Miller: Move for approval of the appropriation of the Surveyor's Mossman Drain Fund for \$3,840.

Paula Hughes: Second.

Paul Moss: We have a motion and a second. All in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0. Salary ordinances are next. Veterans Service Officer, this is the one we talked about at the Personnel Committee meeting.

Nelson Peters: Right. I must be a real glutton this morning. As you may recall, it was about July of 2006, I believe, when we approached you with an idea to share a position. It was Matt Schomburg and I who approached you with the desire to share an Administrative Assistant position with the Wayne Township Trustee's office. At the time, he was fully prepared to come forth with the funding agreement and make the thing work. We didn't have all of our ducks in a row by the time he left office so consequently, by January 2007, it didn't come about. We approached Wayne Township Trustee, Rick Stevenson, with the same idea. At the time, he suggested that he may or may not have some interest in doing that. The Wayne Township Trustee's Office came back to us, the later part of 2007, and said okay, we think it makes sense. What they required from us was a job description, which is part of establishing the salary ordinance, and any other paperwork such as an interlocal agreement. That is in the process of being drafted right now. We went to the Personnel Committee a couple of months ago with a request for this salary ordinance at an OSS3. This is with the idea if we can gain concurrence to get a signature on the agreement with the Wayne Township Trustee's Office, to split salary and benefits for that position, costing each side about \$18,516. All I am here for today is the salary ordinance.

Cal Miller: Move for approval of the Veteran Service Officer salary ordinance.

Paula Hughes: Second.

Roy Buskirk: Whoa.

Paul Moss: Did somebody second that?

Cal Miller: Yes.

Paul Moss: Would somebody, preferably other than me, who is on the Personnel Committee, care to talk a little about the discussion there? Councilman Buskirk?

Roy Buskirk: I want to be very careful that we don't get the cart before the horse.

Nelson Peters: I agree and I know where you are going.

Roy Buskirk: I would appreciate if the motion could be amended that this be subject to Wayne Township signing that interlocal agreement.

Nelson Peters: Absolutely.

Roy Buskirk: And the County is not getting stuck with having to pay the full bill.

Nelson Peters: We would not move forward in this regard if we were unable to gain the funding from the Wayne Township Trustee's Office anyway. We simply don't have the money, by ourselves.

Cal Miller: This is a discussion that I remember having last year and I assumed that, by your comments, that was going to happen. That is why I made the motion the way I did. I would be happy to amend it.

Paula Hughes: I don't think it is necessary to amend. This is a request for an ordinance and not a request for funding. It would not be filled without the funding.

Roy Buskirk: It is a salary ordinance. We are approving...

Paul Moss: I think technically, Paula is correct. We can hold off on that if it is duly noted and on the record. The only other thing I would mention, as part of the Personnel Committee meeting, was that the Veteran's Affairs Officer was there and made a very good case for this position. He also indicated that essentially he would have this person move into a role with similar capabilities of what he is doing though my comment at the time was that we may be starting out as an Administrative Assistant. Then they come back and say that the role has changed and so we need to bump up the salary. Who knows what the timeframe is on that but you talked about a pretty quick timeframe to get that person up to speed. It is just an FYI for people to be aware of.

Cal Miller: I feel comfortable that the case was made before the whole Council and the Personnel Committee and I appreciate the FYI. I feel comfortable that the need is present now. You are still pursuing the other funds.

Nelson Peters: Right, the last communication with us was to put together the job description and the interlocal agreement and we think we are ready to go.

Paul Moss: **We have a motion and a second. All in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0.**

Nelson Peters: Thank you very much.

Paul Moss: Building Department.

Dave Fuller: Good morning, Dave Fuller, Allen County Building Commissioner. I come before you with a request for a salary ordinance to change the Assistant Building Commissioner from a PAT 6 Step 5 to a PAT 7 Step 5. During the process of the compensation job description, this was originally proposed as a SAM 7, when there was going to be a SAM scale. That was subsequently changed to a PAT 6 and that was the highest option at the time. Since that time, a decision was made to expand the PAT scale from one to ten rather than one to six. It was rescored by Human Resources and was determined that it fit within the PAT 7 range. It went before the Personnel Committee and was approved and so I am here for the salary ordinance. There is an increase in the salary but we are not asking for additional funds this year. We have a funded position that is unfilled and we don't anticipate filling that until the new housing market picks up.

Paula Hughes: Move for approval of the salary ordinance for the Assistant Building Commissioner from a PAT 6 to a PAT 7.

Roy Buskirk: Second.

Paul Moss: We have a motion and a second. Councilman Vogt?

Darren Vogt: To clarify a little more on the downturn in the housing market, how do you see that if this continues, with your staffing levels and such? Where do you see that going?

Dave Fuller: We are hearing a lot, in the newspapers, about single family residences. In Allen County, commercial construction has stayed pretty consistent for the last several years. We had about a ten percent increase this year. Total residential construction, permitting I should say, only dropped 1.5% last year and last year was 10% over the previous several years. We are not seeing a big decrease in permit activity. We have seen a significant decrease in permits for new single family homes. That is typically what you read about in the paper. Last year, we did 21,200 inspections and this year we did 20,600. That is not a significant change. When we terminated the Housing Inspector, last year, we decided because we were in the middle of winter, we weren't going to replace him right away. At this point, until we feel that we are going to need it, we are not going to interview and process that job. We haven't seen a significant decrease in the number of inspections required so we don't anticipate there being a lot of change. My gut feeling, and I have talked to a number of people in the industry, is that we are going to start seeing the housing market improve in the last half of this year. We are waiting to see if that happens and if we don't need to hire, we will leave that position vacant.

Darren Vogt: Thank you.

Paul Moss: We have a motion and a second. All in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0.

Dave Fuller: Thank you.

Paul Moss: ACJC.

Chandra Reichert: Chandra Reichert, Allen County Juvenile Center. I come today to request a salary ordinance for an Office Manager. It is an OSS 4 position with an effective date of December 8, 2007.

Paul Moss: This went through the Personnel Committee as well. One suggestion that I would like to make for the future is, if possible and appropriate, to have some sort of consent agenda for those items that have gone through there and been approved. If somebody wants to pull something for discussion, we can do that but it might expedite things a little bit. If the Council is okay with that, I will try to work that out with the Auditor.

Paula Hughes: Do you need a motion for that?

Roy Buskirk: We could just put a checkmark beside it or something.

Paul Moss: I will work with the Auditor's Office to make sure the agenda is consensual.

Cal Miller: If that were the case, unless someone who is not on the Personnel Committee wanted to hear more...

Paul Moss: You would just say to pull this, I would like to have it discussed.

Cal Miller: Okay. That would mean, in this case, that Chandra wouldn't have to come before us.

Paul Moss: Wouldn't have to sit through all of this.

Cal Miller: Great, let's do it that way.

Paul Moss: Was there a motion and a second? Would anyone care to make a motion?

Paula Hughes: Move for approval of an Office Manager for ACJC as an OSS 4 with an annual salary of \$33,908.

Cal Miller: Second.

Paul Moss: We have a motion and a second. All in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0.

Chandra Reichert: Does there have to be an additional motion for a transfer?

Paula Hughes: Yes.

Chandra Reichert: We are also requesting a transfer from the County Compensation budget line item to the appropriate salary line, FICA and PERF.

Paula Hughes: Move for approval for items four through seven, transferring \$6,672 from County Compensation to Office Manager, FICA and PERF.

Cal Miller: Second.

Paul Moss: We have a motion and a second. All in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0. Board of Health and their salary ordinance.

Paula Hughes: Move for approval of a salary ordinance for Vital Records Director with a classification change from a PAT 4 to a PAT 6.

Roy Buskirk: Second.

Mindy Waldron: That was easy.

Paul Moss: You don't even get to speak.

Darren Vogt: We need to clarify that some of these are minor corrections that were done and were in the overall review process. They either were overlooked or reevaluated within the normal timeframe of how this worked. We had to bring it back before us in January.

Paula Hughes: I also say that these are not the only ones. Building Maintenance has a complete reorganization that is pending.

Paul Moss: We have a motion and a second. All in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0. Do you want to talk about your grants now?

Mindy Waldron: Sure. Mindy Waldron, Department Administrator for the Health Department. I am here to request permission to apply for two grants. They are both very similar in our use projections. They are from two different pots and are State money. Lin is here to explain anything related to it that I can't answer. These would be monies used for either screening refugees or for physician hours. That is one amount we were seeking for 2008 and beyond as to how we would accommodate for

the extra physician hours. This \$50,000 would do that. The \$25,000 grant is to be used very similar but for screening only. That would be coming from the State as well.

Paula Hughes: Move for approval for permission to apply for a grant from Community Health Center/Indiana State Department of Health for \$25,000 and to apply for a grant from FSSA for \$50,000.

Cal Miller: Second.

Paul Moss: We have a motion and a second. The only comment I would make is, and we have talked about this before. The country was founded on an open-armed policy for folks. I appreciate that and I think it is important to retain that but we are one of six resettlement sites and I continue to say that I am not so sure it is a great designation. At some point, we are going to have to address it and understand what we can and can not do and whether or not there should be other communities helping shoulder the burden. I hope that we keep that in the back of our minds. **All in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0.** Discussion and other business to come before Council, the only thing is Commissioner Brown is going to talk about Strategic Planning.

Bill Brown: I think both of us are.

Paul Moss: The only thing that I have here, I am going to pass out a preliminary list of liaison appointments. There are no significant changes to it other than a couple that have been requested by folks. Hopefully, we won't start a firestorm like City Council. If there are any questions or concerns, let me know. Okay, Strategic Planning.

Nelson Peters: Thank you. We will make it quick. Somewhere along the line, I have gotten the idea that we don't communicate with the forethought that is intended. We are here to do exactly that with respect to Strategic Planning. As some of you know, we began a process, a couple of years ago, Councilmen Moss and Vogt and Councilwoman Hughes were a part of that effort. We didn't get a whole lot of wheels in part because it was a hard process for any one individual to drive. We have begun to give it a little bit more thought in terms of how we might be able to make it work. We have done a couple of things. We have procured the services, at this point, of Professor Barry Hancock at IPFW School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He has not accepted any payment up to this point. We have approached the Foellinger Foundation with the idea of procuring a grant for this very purpose of to get him to help us with this process. We believe that Strategic Planning is the wave of the future and a way to allow this County, as a body, to begin to make quantifiable decisions more readily and with more information that what perhaps is available now. We believe it will allow us to look down the road and understand the types of criminals that may reside in our county and the number of police cars that will be necessary. We could understand the types of programs that we will need to have to

deal with those types of decisions and a whole host of other things. Counties generally are not doing this. We believe, if we can extract business principles to the extent possible, it will allow us to provide efficient cost effective government into the future. That is what this whole process is about. We are hoping that we can get your buy-in as we move through this process.

Bill Brown: I just wanted to add that in my first year in county government, I have seen that there are a lot of things that people are trying to do and a lot of good things that they are trying to do. I think, to some of the comments here today, maybe some things don't move along as quickly as they should. With the Strategic Plan, a vision and a mission for county government, which may help us get things done a little quicker. I am impressed with the way county government works, in general. What I would like to say is that this document, we want to emphasize that this is not our Strategic Plan but it is for all of the people in county government. I want to read one part that is bolded here. "These are only our ideas and are, by no means, intended to represent the view of all departments in Allen County government. These are only meant to be a starting point for further discussion." We met with the judges and are meeting with you folks today, and we want people to take these ideas that we have put down and add to them what you think are the best things to do and the best modes of operation. I would have to say that busy people like myself, don't get the opportunity to read the paper morning and night. I want to apologize for that comment earlier.

Cal Miller: Let me add that I have a five-year-old and a three-year-old too and I get to see them about a half hour a day.

Bill Brown: My comment was a little uncalled for earlier.

Cal Miller: That's okay. Some of my comments were as well.

Bill Brown: Just as an aside, there is a lot of good information in the newspaper but it is hard to read it morning and night. It is amazing how much you can learn and people get connected to what is going on. I am really glad that we were here today for the Maplecrest presentation.

Paul Moss: We appreciate that.

Bill Brown: That project, just as a side, is it a good idea or not? Let's either do it or not. I might add one quick thing here. We are going to be having this discussion about the concept of the CUM Bridge Fund. We are asking these municipalities to take over these responsibilities. Folks have gotten back with me saying that they feel it is an unfunded mandate from the County. I am not asking you for a decision today but we need to be talking about that and how it is going to work.

Paula Hughes: Commissioner Brown, when someone says that they believe that the transfer of responsibility is an unfunded mandate, you can remind them that with

annexation, they have been receiving the funds to provide those services for years without having to spend it on the bridges.

Bill Brown: That is good information. I continue to learn.

Nelson Peters: Can I leave you with one assignment? There was a document that was sent out on December 26th. All County Council members should have received it along with department heads and elected officials. The reference that Commissioner Brown made earlier was to a number of objectives that we had spelled out, just in our own feeble minds and seemed to make sense, as far as moving county government ahead. You may agree with them and say that this is great. You may say that this is the dumbest thing that you have ever seen. Take the opportunity to say what is on your mind and to create additional objectives, strike out the ones that don't make sense. We are then going to go back with this process, to the various departments, and ask you to help us build strategies from the respective departments to allow us to obtain those objectives. It is important that there be agreement, ultimately, and buy-in on those objectives.

Paul Moss: You didn't get much of a response from that? Is that what you are indicating?

Nelson Peters: I don't know.

Bill Brown: The Commissioners Office is in the process of reorganizing and there are a number of things up in the air. We are reviewing our department heads and past accomplishments and future goals and objectives. We are really working on our end to try to lead by example.

Paul Moss: Councilman Vogt?

Darren Vogt: I like the idea of a Strategic Plan countywide. I think the key important thing is that it needs to be countywide. That is why you are going to see a new Tax Adjustment Board that comes in 2009 and looks at the overall picture. I think that when you send these kinds of things out, you need to include the school systems and all of the entities involved in the Strategic Plan. It is our community, as a whole. It is not the County as a whole. To come up with a Strategic Plan for all of those is a challenge. Everybody's plan has to meld together. What funds the Strategic Plan is usually property taxes.

Bill Brown: I will, in closing, just as I have experienced county government, there are incremental things that happen such as looking at contracts for copiers. There are so many that I could go on and on. I see the improvement in people that are interested and dedicated towards finding those ideas.

Paul Moss: For those of you that don't read the paper, I have a little advice for you. I personally focus on Amanda and Kathleen's articles. I find that it is all I need. Any

further business? We have recent and upcoming meetings to discuss. Do we have a Personnel meeting scheduled?

Roy Buskirk: No.

Paul Moss: Apparently not. One thing I would like to mention is that now that the legislature is in full swing, for those of you that have an interest and here about different committee hearings and things, if you intend to go down to those, please share that with us. There are going to be a lot of committee hearings and I think it will be important for us to attend as much as possible.

Paula Hughes: If I could echo on that. I know you were aware that I was in Indianapolis for a couple of days and had the opportunity to speak to several members of our legislative delegation about the property tax bills that are going through and the Blue Ribbon Panel recommendations. I focused my efforts on discussing the impact of Family and Children Services budget and had some great follow through from our Deputy Auditor Tera Klutz. She resent an earlier email to me and reminded me that the Division of Family and Children Services budget is 24% of the Allen County property tax levy. Our State Legislators were not aware of that. During the budget process, the Division of Family and Children Services implied that starting in 2009 they would be required to put every substantiated CHINS case through the court process. As we delved into that, we discovered that this is not actually a requirement. It is something that is done at the agency level and is not State statute. The State agency has not implemented that. We are at a point where we can impact that which would have a tremendous tax savings.

Darren Vogt: It all goes to the point that this is an agency that the State runs and the County has nothing to do with it.

Paula Hughes: That was exactly my point and that we would be delighted if they would take that from the local budget.

Paul Moss: Councilman Buskirk?

Roy Buskirk: That is one reason why Senator Meeks is real concerned and has made the comment to the fact that the State is not sure that they want to take over Children's Services because they are not able to control the expenses. So just let the County keep fighting with it. I pointed out to our State Representatives, six months ago, that it was 23.6% and that they wanted a 46% increase. You sent that into appeal on the increase and I realize that it was a few days ago but have you heard any comment on that?

Lisa Blosser: Not yet.

Darren Vogt: A hearing will be set on that, right?

Lisa Blosser: A hearing will be set. I will notify you so that you can attend the hearing with me.

Roy Buskirk: Are we going to receive any money back on the trial?

Lisa Blosser: On Rios?

Roy Buskirk: Yes.

Lisa Blosser: Yes.

Roy Buskirk: I mean on the Public Defender that we had to appeal.

Lisa Blosser: Yes. We are getting almost all of our expenses back except for \$40,000. I can get you some more documentation on that.

Roy Buskirk: That was like \$150,000 or something?

Paul Moss: If you want additional detail, why don't you get that offline? Are there any other upcoming meetings that anybody wants to report on?

Darren Vogt: One other quick comment that I would like to say thanks to the Commissioners. I shared an email with you on a contract that we got renegotiated with the Cooperative Extension. I want to thank IPFW for really sitting together with the Commissioners on this and agreeing that the contract we had was probably not the most advantageous for the County. We saved \$11,000 a year. It may not sound like much but if we work together more often, we can continue to move forward.

Paul Moss: Any other comments?

Roy Buskirk: Can I have two minutes to make some quick comments about legislation that is going on now?

Paul Moss: Sure.

Roy Buskirk: Commissioner Peters pointed out to me, last night, that House Bill 140 is the one where they are going to increase the amount that the County can be sued for from \$300,000 to half a million dollars. That is going to cost the County \$50,000 in premiums annually.

Paul Moss: Liability insurance premium?

Roy Buskirk: Yes. This is something that the State keeps saying that the local government has to be better managers of the money and then they throw in something like that. The one thing that I mentioned a little bit on the Major Bridge

Fund and is something that we all need to be pointing out to our legislators. With the one percent on household, there are 48 different tax districts in this County and what is going to occur in the ones that exceed the one percent levy for household, like the County levy, the Airport levy and the Library levy, it is going to be reduced. Therefore, you are going to have people in some tax districts that are not paying as much on the County levy as what you have people in other tax districts. That is not fair. There has been some talk of going to the Option Income Tax to make up for that but the Option Income Tax is disbursed on the tax rate. One way for fair distribution would be if you put the Option Income Tax on a levy that was the same countywide. We really have to be aware of what is taking place in the State legislation bills.

Paul Moss: Thank you for that information. Thank you again for your support for Councilman Buskirk and I as your officers.

Darren Vogt: I move to approve to waive the second reading on any matter approved today for which it may be deemed necessary for the County Council meeting of January 17, 2008.

Paula Hughes: Second.

Paul Moss: **We have a motion and a second. Is there any further discussion? All in favor signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0.**

Darren Vogt: Move to adjourn.

Paula Hughes: Second.

Paul Moss: **We have a motion and a second. All in favor please signify by saying aye. All opposed same sign. The motion carries 7-0.** The next meeting will be held on February 21, 2008 at 8:30 am.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.