

**STAFF MEETING MINUTES
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING
ROOM 113
THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 2007
8:00 A.M.**

Commissioners Present: Bob Workman, Chair
Bernie Heier, Vice Chair
Ray Stevens
Deb Schorr

Commissioners Absent: Larry Hudkins

Others Present: Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer
Dan Nolte, County Clerk
John Glynn, Deputy County Clerk
Ann Taylor, County Clerk's Office

The Chair opened the meeting at 8:03 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM

1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE STAFF MEETING MINUTES OF THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 2007

MOTION: Stevens moved and Heier seconded approval of the Staff Meeting minutes dated March 15, 2007. Schorr, Heier, Workman and Stevens voted aye. Motion carried.

2 ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None were stated.

3 MOTOCROSS FACILITY AT ABBOTT SPORTS COMPLEX - Del Lienemann, Jr., Lincoln Sports Foundation President; Glenn Johnson, Lower Platte South Natural Resources District (NRD) General Manager; Ariana Kennedy and Dan Schulz, Lower Platte South NRD; Mike DeKalb, Planning Department; Doug Pillard, County Engineering; David Samani

Del Lienemann, Jr., Lincoln Sports Foundation President, said when he first met with representatives of the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission regarding plans for a motocross track at the Abbott Sports Complex in northeast Lincoln they indicated that they had been running the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) for ten years with no motorized projects and that \$1 million that was to go to motorized projects had been reallocated to non-motorized projects. **NOTE:** The program is funded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and administered in Nebraska by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. He said Game and Parks indicated that if the motocross track was the first motorized project to be brought forward, it would try to reallocate those funds back by giving excess funds to the project. Game and Parks instead awarded the project \$255,000 and agreed to provide three grants of \$150,000, over the next three years. Lienemann said that is not enough to fund Phase I, which is projected to cost \$913,000 (construction of the track, parking lots and access roads). He noted that David Samani has agreed to contribute labor and materials and said the project could go forward if the funds that were promised come through. The process could be accelerated if an alternative funding source were located or if some entity would agree to advance those funds.

Schorr inquired about corporate sponsorship.

Samani said Kawasaki Motors has expressed interest in a track the past, but would likely want to see support from the County and City before agreeing to sponsorship. He added that it has been difficult to raise money from riders and other groups because of uncertainty about whether the track will be built.

Glenn Johnson, Lower Platte South Natural Resources District (NRD) General Manager, said RTP is willing to fund a track and the minimum facilities necessary for recreational purposes, not for competitive events, and suggests that corporate sponsors fund the rest of the facilities.

Lienemann explained that Phase I is the recreational component.

Heier noted that the track is within the City's zoning jurisdiction and asked where the City stands on the issue.

Mike DeKalb, Planning Department, explained that a governmental project for a public purpose is exempt from zoning requirements. He said the City Attorney can sign off on the exemption and no official action by the City will be required.

Johnson noted that FHWA has not signed off on the project, pending an appraisal. He said that has not been done, as he does not have funds available to pay for it and the preliminary engineering work. Johnson said a full-blown design, Section 404 permit (wetland permit), floodplain permit, wetland mitigation plan and design and construction engineering will be required once there is sign-off by FHWA. He estimated the cost at \$50,000.

Workman asked whether the County has any economic development funds available.

Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer, said the Board would need to ask Troy Gagner, Economic Development Coordinator, and Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer.

Schorr proposed seeking a \$25,000 loan from the Ethel S. Abbott Charitable Foundation, to be repaid from income from future events, with the County Board providing the other half of the \$50,000 through Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Lincoln Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) or Keno funds.

It was noted that the County Board has also set aside funds to pave Arbor Road east of North 70th Street to provide access to the track and the Lower Platte South NRD has agreed to administer the RTP grant and to oversee engineering.

Heier suggested that the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce and City of Lincoln also be asked for contributions.

Lienemann expressed concern that federal funding may be cut.

MOTION: Heier moved and Schorr seconded to allocate \$50,000 from the Keno Fund to pay for the preliminary engineering, appraisal and track design, and to temporarily reduce the allocation to pave Arbor Road, if necessary.

Eagan noted that a public hearing will be required.

ROLL CALL: Schorr, Heier, Workman and Stevens voted aye. Motion carried.

MOTION: Heier moved and Schorr seconded to send letters to the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce, City of Lincoln, Nebraska Department of Economic Development and the State Tourism Office asking them to match Lancaster County's contribution.

Workman suggested that a similar request be made to the CVB.

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT: Schorr offered a friendly amendment to send a letter to Kawasaki Motors indicating the County Board's support of the track and asking Kawasaki Motors to sponsor the track.

Samani said he will also seek funds from the Husker Off Road Club.

Schorr withdrew her friendly amendment.

Board consensus was to provide letters of support for additional fundraising efforts by Samani.

ROLL CALL: Stevens, Workman, Heier and Schorr voted aye. Motion carried.

4 ADJOURNMENT

By direction of the Chair, the meeting was adjourned at 9:07 a.m.

Dan Nolte
Lancaster County Clerk