



MEETING DOCUMENTATION

Planning • Architecture • Engineering • Interiors • Facility Management

PROJECT: Dixon County LEC – Citizens Committee Meeting #1

LOCATION OF MEETING: County Annex Building

PROJECT NO.: 222701 **DATE:** May 17th, 2022 **TIME:** 6:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT:	COMMUNITY/ORGANIZATION:	EMAIL ADDRESS:
Larry Boswell	Allen	boswell@nntc.net
Verlin Hansen	Concord	hansonfarms@nntc.net
Julie Hartung	Dixon	juliehartung@nntc.net
Chuck Chinn	Emerson	chiefchinn@abbnebraska.com
Mathew Michl	Martinsburg	matt67_michl@yahoo.com
Jeanne Blatchford	Maskell	billblatch2002@yahoo.com
Kari Lowe	Ponca	kloweplowe7@gmail.com
John Leader	Ponca	jleader@bop.gov
Dave Armstrong	Rural North	leader65@hotmail.com
Blake Eisenmann	RuralSouth	armfarm@nntc.net
Ken Pavlushik	Township	blake_eisenmann@hotmail.com
Cindy Parucker	County Clerk	kenp151@icloud.com
Tom Decker	County Sheriff	clerk@dixoncountyne.gov
Lisa Lunz	County Board of Supervisors	dixonso@dixoncountyne.gov
		supervisordist5@dixoncountyne.gov

MEMBERS ABSENT:		
Jack Moore	Newcastle	gpajack53@yahoo.com
Ron Mahler	Ponca	debron@gpcom.net

PROCHASKA & ASSOCIATES:		
Linda Quistad	Prochaska & Associates (P&A)	lquistad@prochaska.us
Curt Field	Prochaska & Associates (P&A)	cfield@prochaska.us

GUESTS PRESENT:		
Don Andersen	County Board of Supervisors	jdandersen@gmail.com

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of the meeting was to provide a broad overview of the Pre-Design/Pre-Bond phase, and to complete initial housekeeping tasks. The following points were recorded:

1. Committee members introduced themselves, and slight contact information corrections were made. Minutes of this meeting will be sent out to all members by Prochaska & Associates using emails provided. A corrected List of Members contact information will also be included.
2. Curt spoke from the printed agenda with a PowerPoint back-up, primarily due to the broad range of topics requiring coverage at this initial meeting. In the future, a PowerPoint or projected visual presentation may not always be needed, unless it is deemed useful to present Preliminary Designs and progress made from month to month. Paper copies of the prior phase *Needs Assessment*

document were distributed to each member.

3. Mathew Michl volunteered to act as Committee Chair, with Blake Eisenmann volunteering to be Vice-Chair. It was determined that meetings in the future would be held on the third Thursday of the month, at 6:00pm. The location may vary from the present County Annex building, if a projected presentation is not required.
4. Mr. Michl is also a Martinsburg Council member, and reported that he had been empowered by the council to offer 3.3 acres of land, at no cost in Martinsburg, for some kind of project scope, should the Committee wish to consider this option. Clerk Parucker reported that a move of the County seat would require a vote from the entire County.
5. Curt asked the membership to understand the initial process driving the present phase. By Nebraska statute, the *Nebraska Crime Commission, Jail Standards Division* was formed (1969), and all modifications or replacements of County Jails must follow a specific procedure, and are required to submit to the Jail Standards Board at regular milestones, including the former "Letter of Intent", and Needs Assessment" documents. The next mandatory submittal is preliminary design drawings, or Schematic Design. **Formal submittal of these two items should be verified by the County Board.**
6. The current phase is thus not strictly required by the statutes, but has been designed by Prochaska & Associates (PA) as a technique to improve upon a County's chances of passing a Bond, or if bond financing is ultimately not used, to improve upon a County's transparency and publicity of intentions to modify or construct a replacement County facility. The end result of this phase is usually a preliminary design, in which the Committee has participated fully, is hopefully unanimously in favor of, and the public is thus better informed. The final drawings are typically submitted to the Jail Standards Board, and their staff is available for assistance, if requested. Beyond this submittal, additional formal submittals are mandated at 60% Construction Drawings, 100% Construction Drawings, and finally, following County acceptance of a Contractor's Bid, Jail Standards Board approval is required before construction may begin.
7. Curt reviewed selected high points from the Needs Assessment document, including statistical evaluation of County population, projected out 20 and 30 years, as well as Jail Inmate population, also projected out 20 years. Despite the sophistication of the data collection and statistical analysis methods used, there are limitations to accuracy of such predictions; for example: County population decline may in fact plateau (meaning it does not behave following previous trends), or law enforcement/judicial staff might change, or laws may be enacted which impact future arrest records.
8. Curt also summarized Building and Life Safety Code deficiencies discovered, and Jail Standards-based deficiencies as well. Chief among these deficiencies is the lack of accessible upper floors of both the original and newer portions of the facility, including the Jail area, and the safety and security concerns posed by this lack of accessibility for arrestees and staff. The route a law enforcement staff and arrestee must take to the third floor booking and jail includes climbing the main stair, a dangerous task for intoxicated or unruly individual. There are also significant deficiencies which were noted, also safety concerns, related to the Jail's inability to properly classify and separate dissimilar inmates, and properly separate inmates from county staff.
9. Another aspect of the PA Needs Assessment, not specifically required by the State Jail Standards, is the Facility Assessment of the 1883 Courthouse and 1940 County Offices. Curt summarized the Needs Assessment section in which PA provided a broad mechanical/electrical/plumbing report of the present County facility, describing obsolete systems, or those either needing repair, or those which would not support either remodel or addition to the present facility.
10. In-depth structural assessment was not performed for concealed elements of the existing building, despite concerns expressed during the latter period of the prior phase of potential structural deficiencies, such as evidence of roof and wall leaks, and degradations of concealed masonry. Curt reported that PA had apparently borrowed and scanned drawings of the present facility, but that it appeared that there were no drawings available of the original 1883 Courts building. Those drawings scanned of the County Offices addition depict a three story reinforced concrete structure. It is believed

that the original Courts building is composed of wood floor and roof joist framing, bearing on multiwythe (several widths) of brick wall/footing masonry, and containing no basement. The County will continue looking for drawings of the original Courts structure.

11. Clerk Parucker provided a cell phone video taken recently above a lay-in ceiling in the County Offices portion and this was shown to the Committee. Depicted were apparent roof and wall leaks, leading to interior plaster damage. Clerk Parucker reported that some kind of repair had been performed some time ago—an unknown length of time—and the type of roof material is not currently known. **Curt offered to inspect the roof as part of the next meeting, and will plan to arrive prior to the meeting time to do this. It is requested that county staff be made available as required to allow access to the roof.**
12. Depending upon what is located in the way of drawings of the existing structure, measurement and drafting of that portion may be desired. **If this is determined, PA would like to propose and invoice separately for this work.**
13. As an in-depth reporting of the building's [concealed] structural deficiencies was not included in the prior phase, the Committee expressed a desire to have this performed in the near future. Supervisor Lunz stated that expenses under a \$20,000 limit were not required to have competitive bidding, but would require approval of the Board. **PA was asked to provide a fee for a structural evaluation, and Committee Vice Chair Blake Eisenmann was asked to arrange a structural proposal from JEO, the company he works for, located in the Sioux City area. Cindy will report her success at locating drawings of the existing structure to Blake and Curt.**
14. Curt also summarized the PA preferred process for conducting the Committee work during this phase relative to a potential Bond Referendum. Successive Estimates of construction Budgets and total project costs will be assigned to various Drawing options either requested by Committee, or promoted by PA, and the Committee will be asked to determine the best course of action. No predetermination of the proper course will be made by PA.
15. A Committee member inquired about conversations between members outside the meeting venue, or without staff and/or elected officials present. Curt suggested all conversation is good—hopefully there is no intent to conceal thoughts—but the intent of the Citizens Committee is for members to frankly discuss with the voting public the County's needs.
16. An option for financing a capital project, often termed “Nickel Tax”, was also described, if a County Board feels the potential for passage of a Bond Referendum is slight, and the need is significant. Paperwork officially defining this available funding option will be made available by PA to any Committee member expressing further interest. A committee member also asked what this actual dollar figure might be, and Curt suggested the Clerk or a bond banker might be able assist with the potential sum arising from this method. Cindy mentioned that DA Davidson has assisted the County with street construction bonds in the past. Another member asked if the County's potential Bond indebtedness could also be determined in advance, and this task, too, can usually be performed by a bond specialist. **Either Curt or the County might request attendance at a future meeting by DA Davidson personnel, to discuss this potential, and this type of request has typically been arranged.**
17. Curt suggested a principal goal of the Committee might be to determine what scope of project might satisfy the most critical, or minimal needs which have been identified, i.e., “What is the potential for repair of the current facility?” Also: “What is the potential for adding an Elevator to the current building?” The Clerk described the many level differences between the older and newer structures, making elevator stops more complicated.
18. Another approach described was an option allowed by Jail Standards of a “Hold and Transport” option, whereby a County elects to always transport and board an Inmate out of County, but requires at minimum a proper code-compliant Holding Facility. PA described such an option considered by Webster County (Red Cloud, NE), also facing decisions of the disposition of an older historic, but

deteriorating Jail/Sheriff's Office structure. This facility is significantly smaller and less expensive than a formal Jail replacement facility, but will clearly do nothing to stop the escalating transport/out-boarding costs.

19. PA depicted a slide of data collected for our recent Adams County (Hastings) Jail project, showing a calculated 20-year total of Transport and Boarding costs, with personnel salaries, gasoline, vehicle maintenance, boarding and inflation calculated at the 100-year US average of 3.02% per year. While the inmate numbers are not comparable between Adams and Dixon counties, **the difference between 20 years of Bond re-payment and 20-years of accumulated Boarding and Transport costs shows that the boarding option is over 2 ½ times more expensive over the same period.**
20. Curt suggested a near-term task should be for the Committee members to formally tour the existing Jail and Sheriff's Office facility. Sheriff Decker also suggested touring another, newer Jail facility for purposes of comparison. **The Sheriff suggested arrangements be made to take as many of the Committee to tour the Dakota County facility (South Sioux City), as well as the Antelope County Jail (Neligh, NE), and will make inquiries to arrange these tours.**
21. If a Bond Referendum is decided by the Committee, PA would suggest serious efforts be made to achieve unanimous agreement from the Citizen's Committee, and recommendation to the Dixon County Board of Supervisors. PA will provide graphics for brochures, Display Boards, inclusion in traditional News publications and Social Media, without charge (beyond printing costs), if desired, and within our fee. This publicity approach might be a good idea even if the Nickel Tax option is determined for financing.
22. If a Bond referendum is decided, the Citizen's Committee would hopefully form a Campaign Committee, and Curt described two options for this formation: (1) a "Please Vote"-type, and (2) a "Vote Yes"- type; the latter requiring formation of a 501(c)3 to raise and expend funds. The latter type also would allow a more direct and persuasive appeal to voters to pass a Bond. Needed funding in this case is generally for professional printing. PA will assist with this formation, if desired, and the State also maintains simple guidelines for creation and reporting.
23. Curt also spent a brief time outlining the process for Special Elections and All-Mail Balloting in Nebraska, two techniques which oftentimes produce a more positive voter outcome for a Jail Bond than to hold a referendum vote on a more traditional election day. Clerk Parucker stated that Dixon County is already an "all mail" County, and has a very high degree of voter turnout.
24. The meeting ended around 8:30pm with a thank you to the Committee from the Sheriff for time and willingness to address the County's building concerns. **The next Committee meeting is now scheduled for Thursday, June 16th at 6:00 PM, location as yet to be determined.**



BY:

Curtis Field, AIA
Architect - Principal

May 18th, 2022

Date

If any of the parties present take exception to these meeting notes, please notify Prochaska & Associates within five (5) days of issuance for correction or they shall be presumed to stand as written.

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