

**COOK COUNTY BOARD MEETING
SEPTEMBER 19, 2006**

The meeting was called to order by Interim President Bobbi Steele at 10:10am. A quorum was present and the meeting was recessed and the Finance Committee was called to order at 10:15am by Comm. John Daley.

All agenda items were approved without discussion except for the last item on the agenda.

Item #281359 recommended approval of the sale of real estate owned by the county at 1340 South Michigan Ave. in Chicago to Concept Developers, Inc. for their bid of \$4.25m.

- A motion for approval was made by Comm. Silvestri and seconded by Comm. Peraica. At first it appeared that this was going to be approved without discussion but
- Comm. Murphy asked when this had been discussed in the committee and about the amount of the bid, stating that she thought the appraisal of \$3.7m had come in too low.
- Comm. Collins asked what the developers were going to do with the property. Comm. Silvestri stated that Mr. John Davis had met individually with several of the commissioners to discuss this issue and asked him to address the board. Mr. John Davis, who has been in charge of real estate for the county for many years, stated that he did not know what was going to be done with the property. He stated that
 - the bid process had been an open bid process and 16 bids had been received with only one bidding over the appraised value and that was the one that was being recommended for approval.
 - Comm. Collins asked who had done the appraisal. Mr. Davis reported that Pres. Stroger had developed a list of approved appraisers over his years in office and this was the list of appraisers that was used. He stated that the county as an owner of this property was selling it to get cash.
 - Comm. Collins said that this was an issue that needed to be discussed in an open committee meeting and that she hoped next year the rules for committees would spell out the procedures for dealing with issues in committee.
 - At this point Comm. Hansen made a motion to amend the item with his amendment stating “All funds will be held in escrow in the capital budget to be used when and if the renovation of the old Cook County Hospital takes place.”
 - The amendment passed with only Comm. Butler voting against it but a roll call vote was not taken. Discussion continued concerning referring the item back to committee with some discussion about what the motion was that was under discussion.
 - Comm. Silvestri and Peraica withdrew their original motion for approval. Comm. Butler stated that if it was referred back to

committee what would be discovered – the appraisals are in and no new appraisals would be done. Comm. Murphy stated she thought the property was worth more money.

- Comm. Butler stated that then they should reject the bid and put it out to bid again.
- Comm. Peraica stated that this was the reason no one wants to do business with the county because they (the county) can't make a decision. He said the surplus property should be liquidated and the money used for the hospital.
- Comm. Peraica moved that the sale be approved with the money being put into an escrow account as Comm. Hansen had amended the original motion. This motion was seconded by Comm. Butler. Comm. Moldonado stated that it is a matter of respect for the board members. Once an item is referred it needs to go to committee.
- Comm. Silvestri stated that this meeting was Mr. Davis' last meeting – that he is retiring from the county - and he asked him if there was a time limit on the bid from the developers. Mr. Davis stated that there is no expiration date on the bid but that the developer could back out from the deal at any time. There was more discussion of referring the issue back to committee for discussion at which point Comm. Butler withdrew his second of the motion that had been made.
- Comm. Moldonado then moved that the item be deferred for consideration. This was seconded by Comm. Collins.
- A roll call vote was called for with the following results:
 - Yes: Claypoole, Collins, Goslin, Moldonado, Murphy, Quigley, Silvestri, Sims, Steele, Daley
 - No: Butler, Gorman, Hansen, Peraica, Suffredin
 - Absent: Moreno **Motion passed and the item was deferred for further discussion in committee.**

All bid reports were accepted and all highway bills were accepted and the Finance Committee meeting was adjourned at 11:05am.

Zoning and Building Committee meeting was called to order at 11:05am by Comm. Silvestri. All items were approved. Comm. Hansen stated that there seem to be more requests for extensions on variations, and wanted to know if there was a reason for this. Andrew Shavillo, a county spokesperson, stated that contractors and builders are having more and more financial difficulties in doing expansions and it often takes longer to put finances together for a project thus necessitating requests for extensions. Comm. Hansen said that these issues then continue to reside in committee and just result in more work all the way around. Mr. Shavillo stated that he will report to the board on why extensions have been requested. The meeting was adjourned at 11:12am.

Roads and Bridges Committee meeting was called to order at 11:13am by Comm. Hansen. All items were approved and the meeting was adjourned at 11:15am.

The Board meeting was reconvened at 11:15am. Comm.Gorman's grandmother, Betty Haemer, was honored with a resolution and a plaque in honor of her 90th birthday.

Item #25 – Cook County Assessor, James Houlihan spoke to this item which involves an Intergovernmental Transfer of \$1.5m of state funds for the continuation of the South Suburban Tax Reactivation Project that assists municipalities in acquiring and land banking delinquent properties for commercial, industrial and/or residential development.

- The project has been operating in the south suburbs where it has acquired 513 parcels.
- This program is funded by the state with no cost to the county and is the prime pump for development of “gray fields”- properties with clouded titles.
- Comm. Sims stated that this has been a start to development in her district and has been an economic engine.
- Comm. Peraica stated that the southland is surrounded by counties with a tax structure that encourages businesses to leave and locate outside of Cook County. He stated that you have to also look at the causes for why properties are abandoned as well as looking to this program as a solution. Owners give up and let the county take over.

Comm. Daley did point out that there were several items in the agenda that were committing funds for fiscal year 2007 including a contract with Xerox Corporation for \$375,000, and a contract with Cook County Suburban Publishers Inc. to provide publication of the state mandated publication of the proposed assessed values for the 2007 real estate assessment for \$482,669.20.

Item#40 requested authorization to enter into a contract with IBM for the design and implementation of a county wide business plan for \$1.2m.

- Comm. Peraica asked how long the contract was for. Catherine Maras O’Leary, the Chief Information Officer, stated that it was a one time purchase and constituted the first phase of the plan. She stated as IBM goes through each department they will be returning to the board to look at creative ways for implementing phase 2 which will deal with hardware. She referred to this as a business continuity plan which will replace the paper plan. With 90 buildings and 26,000 employees a formal plan for business interruption is necessary – a disaster plan.
- Hardware will be distributed across the system and used everyday but will be available for disaster recovery.
- All systems are backed up daily and sent to a secure site. Comm. Peraica questioned the overall approach, stating it seemed piecemeal. Comm. Collins stated that there is a technology committee and she expressed concern about getting caught up in technology purchases. She stated it should be tied in with homeland security. The money does come from bond funds but it does cost the tax payers money.

Item #61 – Comm. Hansen asked about this Proposed Ordinance Amendment concerning floodplains. Mr. Kos, the Superintendent of Highways, stated that the amendment is a formality - when FEMA changes their map defining floodplains the county must amend their ordinance.

Item # 68 – requests approval for establishment of an \$800,000.00 lending pool to provide low-interest secondary mortgage financing to pre-qualified investors to provide 20 affordable housing units for low-income Housing Choice Voucher holders, using HOME Investment Partnership funds.

- Comm. Collins asked if contracts go out to bid when the county enters into contracts with HOME. Bud Fleming from the Dept. of Planning and Development stated that they do not go out to bid. Turnstone Development Corp. which is the development arm of the CCHA works with the Housing Choice Voucher Holders.
- The targeted area will be the north and northwest areas to provide the 20-25 units to be close to jobs. Turnstone brought the project to the county.

Item #75 – Comm Suffredin asked about this wage resolution with the House Staff Association. Mark Kilgallon, Chief of the Bureau of Human Resources stated that

- this was a collective bargaining agreement but the House Staff Association is not a union.
- He also stated that the county is in negotiations with the physicians at Oak Forest Hospital and was uncertain about when that contract would be completed.

All items on the agenda were approved as printed.

Prior to the Public Comment and the Committee Reports a motion was made to suspend the rules to consider 11 new agenda items. The motion to suspend the rules was approved. The items were all referred to committee – Zoning, Finance or Labor. The items included

- proposed ordinances concerning: board approval for persons appointed to the Zoning Board of Appeals;
- requiring 60% of board to approve any tax increases if proposed budget is voted on after Jan. 1;
- zoning enforcement in unincorporated areas of Cook County;
- charging fees in Cook County parking lots;
- requiring that the President of the Board hold no other office and devote his/her full time to county business.
- These items were not available to the public for viewing at the meeting but are included in the minutes of the meeting.

There were 7 public speakers.

- The daughter of the man who was allegedly accosted by Cook County Police at the Core Center spoke about the attack.
- Two other speakers addressed issues of police abuse at county hospitals.
- Two women were not allowed to speak because they had not submitted the form required to speak at the meeting.

Committee Reports –

- Comm. Butler read a letter from a social worker regarding the email alert about sex offenders and requested that the Law Enforcement and Corrections Committee report be withdrawn so that a Public Hearing could be held concerning this issue.
- All other committee reports were accepted.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30pm.

Submitted by
Cynthia Schilsky
Observer for LWVCC