

TERM OF COMMISSION: May Session of the April Adjourned Term

PLACE OF MEETING: Roger B. Wilson Boone County Government Center
Commission Chambers

PRESENT WERE: Presiding Commissioner Daniel Atwill
District I Commissioner Karen Miller
District II Commissioner Janet Thompson
Information Technology Director Aron Gish
Family Court Services Cindy Garrett
Deputy County Clerk Mike Yaquinto

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m.

Purchasing

1. Bid Opening /First Reading; 22-22MAY14, St. Charles Road East Asphalt Overlay

The following bids were received:

APAC	\$328,748.12 (\$3 unit deduction)
Chester Bross Construction	\$322,929.40 (\$3 unit deduction)
Christensen Construction Co.	\$337,097.60 (\$2 unit deduction)

Commissioner Miller said the engineering estimate on the project was \$352,676.

Commissioner Atwill said the bids will be returned to Purchasing for further review and analysis.

2. Bid Opening /First Reading; 23-22MAY14, Gregory Heights Subdivision Asphalt Overlay

The following bids were received:

APAC	\$67,699.80 (\$3 unit deduction)
Chester Bross Construction	\$67,652.80 (\$3 unit deduction)
Christensen Construction Co.	\$76,245.88 (\$2 unit deduction)
Frech Paving Co.	\$77,376.48 (\$5 unit deduction)

Commissioner Miller said the engineering estimate on the project was \$68,686.60.

Commissioner Atwill said the bids will be returned to Purchasing for further review and analysis.

Resource Management

3. First reading; Approval of Security Agreement and letter of Credit for the Baker Farm

Nicki Fuemmeler said this is a request for approval for the security agreement and letter of credit for the Baker Farm project located at the NE corner of Route K and Hwy. 163. The amount is for \$105,541.22. The project consists of placement of fill in the Northwest, West and South portions of the site. There will also be improvements for future development and installation of a storm sewer along the western edge of the property.

There were no comments or questions.

Commissioner Atwill stated this is a first reading and requested the Deputy County Clerk to schedule this item for a second reading at the next available commission meeting with appropriate order for approval.

4. 1st & 2nd reading; Rescind Commission Order 245-2014 and approve Release of Security Deposit for Midway Heights Elementary School Access Improvements

Commissioner Thompson moved on this day the County Commission of the County of Boone does hereby rescind Commission Order 245-2014 due to an incorrect reduction amount and release Letter of Credit #2100500410 from Landmark Bank in the amount of \$9,500.00. Said letter was issued on behalf of Columbia Public Schools for stormwater improvements located at 8130 West Highway 40, Columbia, MO 65202. The work has been completed as required. The original Commission Order accepting the Letter of Credit is 223-2013.

It is further ordered the Presiding Commission is hereby authorized to sign the attached certificate authorizing reduction in the above Letter of Credit.

Commissioner Miller seconded the motion.

The motion carried 3 to 0. **Order #249-2014**

Information Technology

5. Second reading; Budget Revision to replace 2 Storage Area Network Devices (1st read 5-20-14)

Commissioner Miller moved on this day the County Commission of the County of Boone does hereby approve the attached Budget Revision for replacement of two (2) Storage Area Network Devices.

Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion.

The motion carried 3 to 0. **Order #250-2014**

Commission

6. First reading; Election and Sample Ballot - General Sales Tax

Commissioner Atwill read the following proposed ballot language:

**OFFICIAL BALLOT
COUNTY OF BOONE, STATE OF MISSOURI
TUESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2014**

Proposition EPIC:

Shall Boone County, Missouri, impose a new county-wide sales tax at a rate of one-eighth of one percent for the purposes of providing funding for parks, recreation, and economic development, including the Central Missouri Events Center at the Boone County Fairgrounds, to include the acquisition, improvement, construction, and equipping of facilities for said purposes and operating the same? The authorization for this sales tax shall expire on December 31, 2020.

YES

NO

Instructions to voters: If you are in favor of the proposition, darken the oval opposite the word "YES". If you are opposed to the proposition, darken the oval opposite the word "NO".

Commissioner Atwill asked if there is any further discussion on this issue.

Commissioner Thompson had the following comments:

To give us all a little historical perspective, the first Boone County Fair was held in 1835 and it was the first County Fair held west of the Mississippi River and the first held in the Louisiana Territory. The Boone County Fair was held in several locations in and around Columbia but for MY growing up years, and in fact for over 40 years, the Boone County Fairgrounds, which served as the home of the Boone County Fair, was at the corner of Ash and Clinkscales, which is now the home of the ARC and it was managed by the Boone County Agricultural and Mechanical Society. In 1991, the Ag/Mech Society (commonly known as the Fair Board) traded that land for property at the current location, at 5212 N. Oakland Gravel Road. If you look at the map up above, you can see that the property, which some people believe to be in the far north, the equivalent of Minnesota, is actually almost entirely SURROUNDED by the City of Columbia.

In 1999, the Boone County Commission purchased the 134 acres that comprise the so-called Fairgrounds property for \$2.4 M. At that time, the Commission entered into a contract with the Fair Board under which the Fair Board would manage the day-to-day operations of the property. The Fair Board in turn subcontracted with Heartland Management to care for the property and run events.

In 2002, the University of Missouri's Parks & Recreation Department, working with Columbia's Parks & Recreation Department, developed a plan by which much of the property would be developed with park-like amenities--including various athletic fields, picnic areas, and a dog park. And, a few years thereafter, Boone Countians were surveyed to discover THEIR vision of what the property could and SHOULD include, were it fully developed. Many of their views were incorporated in the plan that had been created in 2002. Heartland Management tendered its resignation as property managers effective October 1, 2011 and TAG Events LLC, of which the principals are Mike Teel and Brent Gibson, entered into a contract with the Boone County Commission whereby TAG Events would manage the property to ascertain the continuing viability of the property and the degree to which public and private support would be necessary to maintain the property as a

community asset. At that time, the Commission understood from community stakeholder groups the desire that, should the results of the TAG experiment indicate that public support would be necessary to sustain the property, the voters be asked to decide the question.

TAG initially entered into a short term contract, which they renewed for a two year period, ending December 31, 2013, with an option to renew. That period has been extended through the end of 2014.

Significant changes to the property during TAG's tenure include the winning of a federal grant to replace lighting in the coliseum, making that facility better for user groups and also lowering utility costs; replacement of portable stalls with permanent wooden stalls in the horse barns, and most significant, the gift of a vast amount of fill dirt by Mel and Charlotte Smarr, which dirt has transformed the property immediately west and south of the horse barns and which has significantly added to the usable space for the agricultural section of the property. The gift by the Smarrs, coupled with the promise by Doug Mertens of Mertens Quarries for ALL of the gravel needed to convert that area into an all-weather parking lot, and the promise from Jeff Cook, the president of the Boone County Fair Board, to spread that rock at no cost to the County, have significantly added to the value and usefulness of the land at issue.

An additional component to the picture that I have painted for you involves the 80 acre piece of land immediately north of the property, which was donated to the City of Columbia and County of Boone by Tom and Linda Atkins with the express purpose that these two entities work together to develop a recreational facility for the people of Boone County. What is now known as The Atkins Tract was originally designed to include eight ball fields and other park-like amenities. Of the original plan, three ball fields have been developed and are in full use. The remaining ball fields are thus far simply the vision for the future.

Last year, when I first came on the Commission, I followed up on some investigation done by Commissioner Elkin and visited and contacted the management of various similar

properties around the country--including the Kentucky Horse Park. That investigation confirmed the following: Our property is not an anomaly. Similar properties across the country have this in common--they ALL exist by virtue of what I call a three-legged stool: they have some sort of public support, they have private support--usually through a not-for-profit foundation created for that express purpose, and they have activities on the property that generate income to the property and drive economic activity in the area. The public support differs from facility to facility but it is ALWAYS there.

Last year, because the initial contract with TAG was due to expire, and because we knew, based on the numbers that had been analyzed by both TAG's principal and accountant, Brent Gibson, and County Auditor, June Pitchford, that the facility needed some sort of public support in order to continue to exist and thrive, the Commission called together a Task Force to study two things--public support for the property (and what the public's vision for the property entailed) and whether the public support for the property would extend to ongoing financial support. Some of the Task Force members are with us today. The Task Force, which was comprised of members from throughout Boone County, and from many sectors of the community--both sectors with historical contacts to the property and with none--met through the late summer and fall and conducted public meetings to ascertain the public will. They issued a report at the close of their work--and that report indicated that YES, there exists public support for maintaining the property--both the traditional "fairgrounds" portion and the park-like portion--and that the public thought the cost for that support was worth the maintenance and development of such a premier community asset.

This leads us to where we are today--and the question for many is--why a parks sales tax? Well, as we look at this particular piece of property, ESPECIALLY in light of the adjoining Atkins Tract and the current and planned use for that property, and, as we consider the identified needs of Boone Countians, it becomes clear. While there is a traditional, Fairgrounds or livestock and equestrian component of the property that ties us to our past (and indeed, draws many visitors, along with their tourism dollars, to our community), the

VAST majority of the property has been envisioned ---by those with whom the 2013 Task Force met and indeed by those surveyed back in the first years that the County owned the property-- as essentially a PARK. What has been identified time after time as appropriate and NEEDED uses? Multi-purpose ball fields, an enhanced trail system that connects more of Boone County--both properties within the County and the trail network itself, an accessible trail system, an open-air amphitheatre, an accessible playground, archery areas, and more. We knew, based on conversations with the Columbia Parks & Recreation Department--one of the PREMIER parks departments in the country, that they could only do so much with existing resources. They WANT to do more but, even with the existing parks tax revenues in Columbia, they haven't been able to do all that we, the users of the parks, want. They also haven't been able to create the amenities that will keep our athletes in central Missouri AND bring other athletes (along with THEIR tourism dollars) TO Central Missouri. And, you know what? when we bring people to our community through activities at a facility like this--be it a horse show, a baseball tournament, the opportunity for a walking or biking tour throughout the County to explore its historical sites or merely its beauty-- our community sells itself and people stay or they return--for school, for work, for health care, for business, or even just for another vacation.

And, let's not forget the REST of Boone County, the smaller communities that want and deserve the opportunity to build a healthier community through access to recreation. Our City/County Health Department has recently undertaken a health assessment of our county and that assessment confirms that a healthier community top to bottom, east to west, north to south, is one which promotes recreation--and recreation that is ACCESSIBLE. Our smaller communities CAN provide those local, accessible opportunities IF we join together, if we, as a LARGER community, help to make it possible.

So, this county-wide Parks Tax will be utilized to maintain AND DEVELOP the property currently known as the Central Missouri Events Center as the PREMIER park of Central Missouri, including the parks amenities that Columbia's Parks & Recreation Department, has

been thus far unable to accomplish because of limited resources, and to create an application fund whereby smaller entities and communities within our County can access funding for projects that will enhance the health of their particular communities and ultimately, our one, broader community.

This parks tax will NOT supplant the need for support of existing parks taxes. Let's be clear about that. This tax MUST be in ADDITION to the taxes currently in place there and in Centralia. The question is--can we, MUST we, do better? I think an eighth of a cent is a small price to pay for Boone County's "Central" Park, as well as for recreational opportunities in Hallsville, in Harrisburg, in Rocheport, in Ashland, in Sturgeon, in Centralia, in Columbia.

Commissioner Miller said that she would like to point out that this is a county-wide sales tax, not under the Park Statute. It is a general tax, but the focus will be on parks, recreation AND economic development and everyone needs to remember that piece of the proposition. There are times, and have been times that the County is asked to partner with the City of Columbia, the State, MODOT or the University to enhance infrastructure that will help locate a new business to our community and we need to be in a position to do that. A successful example was getting American Airlines to serve the Chicago market. The only way they would come to this community was with a revenue sharing guarantee.

Commissioner Miller said the City partnered with Boone County, the Chamber of Commerce, the University, Jefferson City and Cole County. We would not have been in a position to partner with them had we not received a one-time, \$1 million funding source through our hospital lease re-negotiation. We took ½ of that amount and put it into the revenue guarantee. The first two weeks, there was a small payout, but since then, they have more than paid it back through interest over the course of time. That was money well spent, but money we would not have had. Now, this will give us the opportunity, should a partnership opportunity arise, to have a place that we can go to and be a partner with other

governmental entities.

There were no further comments or questions.

Commissioner Atwill stated this is a first reading and requested the Deputy County Clerk to schedule this item for a second reading at the next available commission meeting with appropriate order for approval.

7. 1st & 2nd reading; Approval of invoice for installation of a Locking Thermostat Guard at CMEC

Commissioner Thompson moved on this day the County Commission of the County of Boone does hereby approve the attached invoice for installation of a locking thermostat guard at the Central Missouri Events Center Coliseum in the amount of \$310.97.

Commissioner Miller seconded the motion.

The motion carried 3 to 0. **Order 3251-2014**

8. 1st & 2nd reading; Appointment to the Health Trust Committee

Commissioner Miller moved on this day the County Commission of the County of Boone does hereby appoint the following:

Name	Board	Period
Martha Johnson	Health Trust Committee	May 22, 2014 through July 28, 2016

Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion.

The motion carried 3 to 0. **Order #252-2014**

9. 1st & 2nd reading; Approve Closed Session authorized per RSMo Sec 610.021 (1) at 2:00PM on May 27, 2014

Commissioner Thompson moved on this day the County Commission of the County of Boone does hereby authorize a closed meeting on Tuesday, May 27, 2014, at 2:00 p.m. The meeting will be held in Room 338 of the Roger B. Wilson Boone County Government Center at 801 E. Walnut, Columbia, Missouri, as authorized by RSMo 610.021(1), to discuss legal actions, causes of action or litigation involving a public governmental body and any confidential or privileged communications between a public governmental body or its representatives and its attorneys.

Commissioner Miller seconded the motion.

The motion carried 3 to 0. **Order #253-2014**

10. Public Comment

Commissioner Atwill asked if there are any public comments.

James Pounds said he is concerned about who is going to administer the tax revenue that is collected. Is TAG going to be responsible. Also, it was mentioned that there was going to be a gravel parking lot. If it was a private business, it would be required to be paved with stormwater and the other amenities that go with it.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Pounds for his comments.

Steve Spellman said he has several comments/observations. The events center has gone through some hardships. The Fair Board has had trouble keeping it up. The County then bought the property. There have been problems with keeping track of what events were

profitable, keeping up with funds for improvements to the property. The TAG events group seems to be turning things around. It is difficult to ascertain what the County taxpayers are being asked to keep up. There are gun shows, horse shows, great occupancy rates, yet not enough revenue to keep the place up.

Mr. Spellman said that although this is not a private business, there are still costs. If something goes bad, for instance the roof, and there is no money to pay for that, maybe the prices are good enough. There seems to be a high demand, but prices need to be looked at. That certainly is a concern.

Mr. Spellman said it is not clear as to whether the taxpayers are being asked to subsidize the Fair because that needs to be covered to keep rates low so there are nice things for people that attend or is it to subsidize gun and horse shows and things like that. The discussion about a County park, this one in particular, is a worthwhile discussion. That, grouped together with the Fairgrounds makes some sense. I did not understand the economic development portion previously, but now there is some good information. Commissioner Miller once made a remark, and not certain of the context of the remark, but it concerned the difficulty of dedicated funds. I don't know if it was about general government. These seem to be dedicated funds for some specific things so I am not so sure about that either.

The Commission has looked at attracting funds through public support from taxes of one sort or another for the events center. The hotel tax has been looked at and was unpopular. Once again, the talk of a premier park and taxpayers asked to participate in that and it being an ongoing, long-term strategy type of thing, there has not been proper public discussion on that. To have this on the August ballot seems like a short window to communicate these fairly strategic changes in what County government is doing for us. These are big issues and the public process is a slow process.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Spellman for his comments and Commissioner Atwill said

that Mr. Spellman's questions will be answered in due time.

David Thomas said he would like to commend the Commission on the decision to maintain the CMEC at the recommendation of the task force and that he was a member of that task force. He would also like to commend the Commission on the professional manner that the RFP's were extended for management and the decision to extend the existing contract for six months. The task force felt it is extremely necessary to have dollars to manage, operate and more importantly maintain the CMEC. He doesn't exactly know the specific number that the County has had to subsidize the events center over the last few years, but it is a significant number. The possibility of an increase of one-eighth of one percent tax would be a means to offset those costs and end the necessity to subsidize the events center.

Mr. Thomas said there has been interest in the events center by the University of Missouri, specifically the College of Agriculture. He has been involved in several meetings with Dean Payne and other members of the task force on ways they could use the events center. He has not had the opportunity to meet with Chancellor Lofton at this point in time. The CMEC is a strong plus for the City of Columbia and its residents. Sometimes it appears that it is a distance away, but is only about two miles for the 63 and I-70 interchange. With Battle High School, we will see a rapid development in and around the center.

Mr. Thomas said he is also in favor of the economic development portion of the proposal. He currently serves on the Airport Advisory Commission and is very familiar with the necessity of being able to come up with the \$3 million in order to get American Airlines here. As was pointed out, that money was only used during the first two weeks. Since then, it has not been touched and the interest has more than paid for the usage. They have added a second flight and there is a combined capacity usage at 82-84 percent.

It is important for people to realize that the CMEC is not just a Fairgrounds. That is only one activity and that basically occurs one week out of the calendar year. It's other events that can

be brought in. At the present time, there are very few exhibit centers for the equestrian industry. There is one in O'Fallon and one in Kansas City that will be torn down. The potential is very great just in this area alone. In real estate, its location, location, location and we have the location and people will come and that is why it is important to look at the total possibilities. The City of Columbia Parks and Recreation have been excellent in working with the County in the past. There is a need to maintain that relationship in an equitable manner. Also, the County owns some additional acreage just north of the Atkins property which can be used for equestrian trails, biking trails, walking and jogging trails. There is a lot of potential for what can be done.

Lastly, I favor aggressively putting this on the August ballot because of the number of issues the voters will be facing within the next 24 months. August is doable. This will take a lot of work and effort to make this happen and I support the proposed increase in the sales tax.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Thomas for his comments.


11. Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Miller said she really appreciates the comments expressed today. This is exactly what is needed so we can address the issues. We have answers to most of the questions/comments but this is not the right forum.

There were no further Commissioner comments.

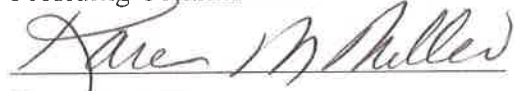
The meeting adjourned at 2:14 p.m.

Attest:


Wendy S. Noren
Clerk of the County Commission



Daniel K. Atwill
Presiding Commissioner



Karen M. Miller
District I Commissioner



Janet M. Thompson
District II Commissioner

