

## COMMISSIONERS MEETING, TUESDAY, JANUARY 2, 2007

Stephen D. Hambley called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m. with Sharon A. Ray and Patricia G. Geissman present.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer.

The oral reading of the minutes of December 14 and December 18 was dispensed with as each Commissioner had read them personally. Ms. Ray moved to approve the December 14 and 18 minutes; the motion was seconded Mrs. Geissman. There was no discussion. Roll call showed all commissioners voting AYE.

Doug King, Administrative Assistant in the County Engineer's Office, presented and reviewed the following resolutions: (1) approving the final plat for the Cobblestone Park Subdivision Phase 2B in Montville Township; and, (2) approving annual assessment on improvements on approximately 21.8672 acres of land in lots 21, 22, 31, and 32 of Montville Township known as Cobblestone Park Subdivision Phase 2B and establishing a public watercourse. Ms. Ray moved to approve the two resolutions; seconded by Mrs. Geissman. There was no discussion. Roll call showed all Commissioners voting AYE.

Commissioners reviewed the weekly permits lists for December 21 through December 27, 2006.

Chris Jakab, County Administrator, presented and reviewed the following resolutions: (1) declaring Medina County property as excess property; and, (2) authorizing a request for proposal process for the Tobacco Grant marketing services. Mr. Jakab requested payment of the weekly bills in the amount of \$320,031.77. Ms. Ray moved to approve the two resolutions and payment of the weekly bills; the motion was seconded by Mrs. Geissman. There was no discussion. Roll call showed all commissioners voting AYE.

Gary Berkowitz, Human Resources Director, presented and reviewed a resolution approving personnel changes for the employees under the jurisdiction of the Medina County Commissioners. Ms. Ray moved to approve the resolution; the motion was seconded by Mrs. Geissman. There was no discussion. Roll call showed all commissioners voting AYE.

Jim Troike, Sanitary Engineer, presented and reviewed the following resolutions: (1) obtaining easements for a sanitary sewer improvement project on West Liberty and State Road; and (2) obtaining easements for the Hinckley Waterline Project. Ms. Ray moved to approve the resolutions. Mrs. Geissman seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Roll call showed all Commissioners voting AYE.

Lynn Remington, County Home Superintendent, reported at the end of December they had 49 residents and two people in Adult Day Care. Projects were touching up paint and woodwork throughout the Home and working with Medina County Career Center Culinary Arts Class instructor Jill Schubert in the kitchen. The inspections were to the elevator and the fire alarm system, and they had a fire drill. Ms. Remington commented that they had an awesome Christmas. They had 18 groups of over 400 guests to share the holiday festivities. Gift giving was very generous and the County Home was beautifully decorated. Forty-six individuals donated 277 hours. Total volunteer hours for the year were 3,202.

Ross Santamaria, Diversion and Forensic Services Director, reported they are in the process of finalizing the year and the statistics. As of December 1, they have about 200 open cases and they closed about 200 cases. Medina Municipal Court had 56 cases closed and there should be 9 or 10 added to that by the end of the year. So far this year, Brunswick Mayor's Court had about 6 cases, Wadsworth Municipal Court had 54 cases, and the Common Pleas Court had 22 cases. They did 35 psychological testings for the Sheriff's Office for new candidates and about 8 for other departments. They have about 56 cases for county employees

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and employees of the courts that they keep open in case they need additional services. Dr. Santamaria explained that they are a program that has to be accessible to everyone including those that cannot afford it. That makes it difficult to project the fees, but they should have collected about \$30,000 in fees for 2006. The final statistics will be presented next month.

Del Saffle, Dog Warden, reported that the Animal Shelter has been compiling year end statistics. The placement for dogs was 77.1% of all the dogs they received. Neighboring counties' rate was only in the 20 to 25% range. He credited Save Ohio Strays for finding homes for many hard-to-place strays. Dog license sales are up this year and doing well, with many people renewing online. Calls and license checks are up. The Animal Shelter received many Christmas donations of pet food. A Wadsworth woman passed away and left the shelter \$23,400 in her will and there will be more to come when her property is settled. Mr. Saffle said he would like to buy some much-needed items for the animals. Mrs. Geissman commented that Mr. Saffle is doing a great job and they can all be proud of what has been accomplished at the Animal Shelter.

Scott Uhas, Transit Director, reported that the snow storm on December 7 and 8 had no major incidents and he attributed that to the professionalism of the drivers. The drivers alerted each other via radio which intersections and roads were dangerous. For the second month in a row, the ridership and fare box revenue were both up. Many of the employees attended the county's Defensive Driving Course and he suggested that it be offered twice a year. This month, he attended the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) meeting and the Emergency Management Agency (EMA) training with the Sheriff's Office.

Jeff Van Loon, Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) District Manager said they received correspondence from the State Conservationist to inform them that their request was approved to add additional soils of multiple parts to the area maps. That allows them to formalize the soils that are not considered prime soils, but are utilized intensively in agriculture (the muck around Lodi and soil on high slopes, for example).

Mr. Van Loon said in the past, the SWCD has facilitated the rental of equipment, such as straw blowers, to landowners on a trial basis before they purchased it. The SWCD plans to meet with the County Engineers, Farm Bureau and others to discuss the possibility of offering that program again.

Clerk Pam Vereb read the regular resolution to allow expenses for County officials' expenses. Ms. Ray moved to allow the expenses; seconded by Mrs. Geissman. There was no discussion. Roll Call showed all Commissioners voting AYE.

Mr. Hambley read the notice from Medina Golf Management Corporation, 5420 Wolff Road, York Township, regarding a new application for a Class D5 Liquor Permit, "Spirituous liquor for on premises consumption only, beer and wine for on premises, or off premises in original sealed containers, until 2:30 a.m." There were no comments.

The meeting was opened for public comment. No one wished to speak at this time.

The meeting recessed at 9:45 a.m. for the commissioners to move to the Conference Room for the Discussion Session at 9:50 a.m.

### Discussion Session

Ms. Ray informed the group that the Neuter Scooter (the mobile spay and neuter vehicle) would be in Medina County on Saturday, January 6. They will spay and neuter cats and give free shots for \$50 per cat or \$40 if they pre-pay online at [www.neuterscooter.com](http://www.neuterscooter.com). People do not need to be of low-income to receive this service that is provided at a significant savings.

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They cannot divulge the location until registration because, unfortunately, when it's been done in the past, people have dropped off pets.

Mr. Hambley discussed a memo he sent to Ms. Ray, Mrs. Geissman, Mr. Jakab, and Mr. Miller on December 23, 2006, regarding the proposed higher education set aside. They have been asked to come to a decision fairly quickly so the schools have an idea how to proceed. He said public response was not supportive of including funding for higher education with the proposed 1/2% sales tax for public schools. He received messages from various people (Tracy Mattern, Mark Dolan and some school board members) saying that they would prefer that the sales tax stay focused on the public school system, therefore, he withdrew that proposal from official consideration. About six weeks ago, Mr. Hambley was asked by Holly Harris Baines, The University of Akron (UA) Associate Vice President for Strategic Initiatives, and Elizabeth Stroble, UA Senior Vice President and Provost, to explore the feasibility of obtaining future funding for the Medina County University Center (MCUC) under the sales tax proposal being discussed by the Medina County Alternative School Funding Committee. Fortunately, he was later advised that the \$1 million potential shortfall to fund the current 33,000 square foot phase of the MCUC was expected to be mostly resolved by using The University of Akron's own resources.

Mr. Hambley said he asked Gary Werner to attend today's meeting to discuss the higher education project proposed for the City of Brunswick. The overall concept was somewhat mis-communicated in the Gazette article saying that it was affiliated with Cuyahoga Community College. It is not affiliated with Tri-C, but they may be one of the schools to hold classes there. They are also negotiating with other area colleges and universities. They will formalize the construction project in the next few months. If Mr. Werner shows up he can enlighten them about the project, given Mrs. Geissman's concern with higher education and the University Center proposal last week. They certainly need to keep other parts of the entire county in mind. Ms. Ray said she thought Holly Harris Baines was coming to today's meeting as well. Mr. Hambley said Mrs. Geissman's proposal for the Real Property Transfer Tax (RPTT) is something they could still study, discuss with the City of Brunswick, and develop a plan. If they do not need it for this phase, perhaps it will be needed for future phases. They need to identify how the needs of adults and higher education will be met in Medina County. Perhaps the sales tax is not the best way to approach it, but her proposal for the RPTT may be something that would garner support.

Mrs. Geissman said that is something that can be looked at. She said she received comments on the sales tax proposal. One caller said it was a good idea, but possibly to have a fund set aside for scholarships for Medina County students. The point the person made was that only 35% of county students seek higher education. Mr. Hambley said almost all of them go outside the county for higher education. The university concept at Lorain County Community College for adjunct was started in 1996. They found a jump in enrollment because they could take the complete degree program in Lorain County.

Gary Werner, Vice Mayor of the City of Brunswick and Ward 1 Councilman, arrived at this time. Mr. Hambley advised him of the earlier discussion about not going forward with the proposed set aside on the sales tax for higher education. He wanted Mr. Werner to have an opportunity to inform them about the Brunswick higher education center. Mr. Werner said they have proposed a three-story, 50,000-60,000 square foot facility on five acres of property in the Brunswick Town Center area. The expectation is for a regional professional and educational center where 40,000 square feet would be targeted for two- and four-year institutions for degree programs and distance learning. The type of curriculum has not been finalized. Holly Harris Baines arrived during this discussion.

Mr. Warner said Mr. Hambley's idea of incorporating into the proposed sales tax for the school districts a set aside for higher educational purposes would have been a smart way to

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fund these projects by spreading the smaller tax burden across a larger pool that impacts less people. He is pleased there are other mechanisms and proposals on the table such as the Real Property Transfer Tax (RPTT) that Mrs. Geissman proposed for MCUC. Having gone through the "Voices and Choices Program", the word stressed was regionalism. He said Mr. Hambley was kind enough to ask him to participate in an interview he did on that process for the local cable station, and his comment was, "Regionalism is a very easy word to use and a very hard walk to walk". These kinds of proposals with higher education in mind at the local level, (using local monies to support local opportunities for Medina County residents) is a smart, innovative method and bold strategy. Their objective is to make higher education opportunities available to all county residents, and they would like to dovetail that objective with the very worthwhile objectives of those discussions recently about transfer taxes and sales taxes and funding for local schools.

Mr. Hambley added that they would be entering into agreements with various institutions and the intent is not to just have one institution providing the services. Mr. Werner said there have been significant discussions with The University of Akron, Cuyahoga Community College, Lorain Community College, Baldwin Wallace, John Carroll University, and others. The point is to put "regionalism" on the street and show a cross-county effort to draw folks to work together, to not only raise Medina County's profile, but to make a concrete improvement in the quality of life. Significant effort has been made to life-long learning and that is what Brunswick wants to be part of. They "shifted gears" on how the property would be used because they felt there was significant demand for this type of educational opportunity in northern Medina County, particularly for the families of Brunswick's 36,000 residents (the county's largest city). This is a good opportunity for many institutions (educational institutions and levels of government) to cooperate and make these services available. They plan to make this as broad a project, in terms of participation, as they can.

Mrs. Geissman asked if the City of Brunswick would own the building. Mr. Werner said that is not the intention. The request for quotation (RFQ) was for an owner-built and designed building that will meet certain specifications that will be developed in coordination with the participating schools. The objective is to have a privately-owned facility with space allocated for higher education purposes, perhaps for City Council offices, perhaps for a county office, and essentially to be a touch-point for opportunities in the northern part of the county. It will be privately owned, but with dedicated square footage for these purposes.

Mr. Hambley added that the land is publicly owned, which is the city's contribution to the project. The intent was once the leases pay off the structure, the agreement would be that the building would eventually be owned by the City of Brunswick. Mr. Werner said, as with every other level of government, they are working on ways to keep it off their shoulders for as long as they can, but with the long-term objective that it would be publicly owned.

Mrs. Geissman asked if the city is involved in running the school. Mr. Werner said yes, as a landlord, if nothing else. They want to leave the actual running of it to experts. The participating institutions would be primarily responsible for determining what degree programs it would offer. There are turf issues they do not want to violate. There is a project in Medina County that they want to compliment.

Mrs. Geissman asked if they saw a need in the City of Brunswick to have an additional higher educational facility to the Medina County University Center Project. Mr. Werner said they had over 60 development groups that responded to the RFQ that thought this was an exciting proposition for northern Medina County and ten companies submitted responses. The excitement that has been generated with their discussions with the schools and potential developers and architects makes the case. They see an opportunity to compliment what is being done at the Medina County University Center and not duplicate it.

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Mr. Hambley added that there is a distance issue for the northern part of the county going to Lafayette Township; it takes 35 to 40 minutes from Brunswick. Students can get to Berea or Tri-C much quicker. The market goes north for higher education seekers that travel. This project is not meant to compete, but to appeal to areas that might provide higher education that the University Center will not provide, and they would be seeking it in Cuyahoga County.

Mr. Werner believes there is a very significant demand for this kind of educational opportunity, particularly for families, who are trying to manage finishing degree programs or pursuing some additional education such as life improvement types of opportunities. Brunswick is a big city (36,000) with a lot of families and young children. It is an excellent transitional location for folks who want to get into educational opportunities and move into a four-year institution afterwards. There is a generalized interest in higher education beyond what will be offered at the University Center. There is no sense in “cannibalizing” what is going on in the county. The intention is to compliment that project with what they are doing in Brunswick and broaden Medina County’s appeal in terms of higher education and not duplicate what goes on in Lafayette Township.

Mr. Hambley pointed out that Brunswick’s proposal is for it to be built on about 40,000 square feet. The University Center will be 140,000 square feet in the eventual plan. He has been hearing for years that the Commissioners need to create a community college. He is convinced that they really don’t need to create a community college; they need to make sure that they have the infrastructure to support the current colleges and universities and county facility where residents can take the classes. They have enough institutions of higher learning without creating another one. That gives them the opportunity and if they build the building, somebody is going to serve that population; they have that flexibility, whether it ends up being The University of Akron, or Tri-C, Cleveland State University, etc. They can fill the classrooms with the students, faculty, and equipment, but at least they would have it in the county (where the demand is). Mr. Werner commented that Mr. Hambley came close to saying, “If you build it, they will come”. That is the kind of optimism that underlies this project. That is absolutely true, particularly with technology being where it is. Through discussions with The University of Akron and Lorain Community College, they have been able to review some of their distance learning facilities and they are extraordinary. If there is a place where these types of institutions can participate in offering those kinds of services, he thinks that is dramatic for the county, not just for Brunswick.

Mrs. Geissman expressed concern with dividing the students that the county has that might want to go on to higher education. She said she had not had much information about the Brunswick project. She has a commitment to University Center and it’s a Medina County University; Brunswick’s is a city university. Mr. Hambley said it is city affiliated, but would serve the area. Mr. Werner said the universities that are present in this funded facility are not Brunswick schools. They are all of the schools that they know and love (The University of Akron, Kent State, Cleveland State, and anybody else that wants to participate that they can accommodate). He does not look at this as dividing the pool of potential students; he looks at it as multiplying it. They would have two radii of locations for higher educational purposes in the county. They are not going to draw from exactly the same market. If they are successful, they are not even going to target the same market necessarily. They would be complimenting the offerings that are going to be made. He does not see this as, if they have two, they have 50% less of what is going on. This is an overall increase in terms of the population receiving higher educational resources in Medina County.

Mr. Hambley said Ms. Lauscher’s activity has been workforce development and working with industry such as polymers. She has had conversations with firms in Brunswick to serve their needs, but this higher education center largely would not be involved with that. The University Center’s initiative will be able to provide some of those services, even in Brunswick, but basically they are talking at the community college level in the first two years

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and additional courses. Baldwin-Wallace was about their music conservatory and that was never anything the University Center has talked about. If anything, they have received some criticism because the curriculum is not going to be broad enough. They need more space and there is only so much money for those programs. The main focus and the grant they received was for workforce development. Brunswick's initiative has not been workforce oriented specifically for those businesses or industry. It is for the larger general population. Mr. Werner said these projects are meant to reinforce each other and broaden the opportunities for folks. They understand there is another project going on, but this is meant to compliment that. Given that they are both making offerings in the realm of higher education, there might be some overlap, but that is certainly an unavoidable feature of having two institutions like this. The design of the facility is going to be for another purpose, and that will be to compliment what is going on in Lafayette Township. Neither one is going to be all things to all people. So they need to figure out what the one institution does and then design the other one to complement it.

Mrs. Geissman said she has some concerns if, for example, Wadsworth were to decide to have a university also. On the county level, they would have more diversity, but also a different pattern for giving funds out that are public funds. They have had several phone calls regarding higher education with the sales tax. Many say the universities should provide their own funds. It gives them some food for thought and asked what this would be for Medina County. Mr. Werner said if Medina County gets busy populating itself with these kinds of opportunities, they are moving in the right direction. Obviously, there are limits on what they can and cannot do, but if Wadsworth develops a plan to create such an institution, go Wadsworth! Mrs. Geissman said they do not want to forget the Career Center that also has many opportunities to offer the county. Mr. Hambley said they are also limited by space. They have their current curriculum and the students they have to serve. They have additional curriculum that the University people have been working on with them regarding some certificate programs. Mrs. Geissman said they do not want to duplicate services. Mr. Werner said some duplication is unavoidable in the end, but that is not the design of the project. If Wadsworth came up with a project, his guess is that, given how bright those folks are, they would design something that compliments what was going on at the University Center and going on in Brunswick. He is envisioning a powerhouse of higher education in Medina County and that is all good. This shows that Medina County is in the forefront of actually doing regionalism and not just talking about it.

Ms. Ray asked if all of the Brunswick City offices would move into the facility. Mr. Werner answered no; the way the RFQ is set up, it would be council offices, possibly the Mayor's Court would be moved there, which would open up facilities for other uses such as Police Department expansions. Ms. Ray commented that it would make her nervous to contribute county funds to transfer offices. Mr. Werner said they were trying to "kill two birds with one stone". They need more space for the Police Departments so they thought it wouldn't be a bad idea to use current structures for that purpose. There would not be a wholesale transfer of city offices to the new facility, but council offices are on the "radar screen" for that.

At 10:23 a.m., Ms. Ray motioned to adjourn the meeting and Mrs. Geissman seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Roll call showed all Commissioners voting AYE.

**RESOLUTIONS PASSED 1/02/07**

<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>RESOLUTION TITLE</b>
07-001	ALLOW CLAIMS AND AUTHORIZE ISSUANCE UPON THE TREASURER IN SETTLEMENT OF SUCH LIST OF CLAIMS
07-002	APPROVING THE FINAL PLAT FOR THE COBBLESTONE PARK SUBDIVISION

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PHASE 2B LOCATED IN MONTVILLE TOWNSHIP LOTS 21, 22, 31, AND 32

- 07-003 APPROVING ANNUAL ASSESSMENT ON IMPROVEMENTS CONSTRUCTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF SECTION 6131.63 OHIO REVISED CODE ON APPROXIAMTELY 21.8672 ACRES OF LAND IN LOTS 21, 22, 31, AND 32 OF MONTVILLE TOWNSHIP KNOWN AS COBBLESTONE PARK SUBDIVISION PHASE 2B & ESTABLISHING A PUBLIC WATERCOURSE
- 07-004 DECLARING MEDINA COUNTY PROPERTY AS EXCESS PROPERTY
- 07-005 AUTHORIZING A REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL PROCESS FOR TOBACCO GRANT MARKETNG SERVICES
- 07-006 APPROVING PERSONNEL CHANGES FOR THE EMPLOYEES UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE MEDINA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
- 07-007 AUTHORIZING THE SANITARY ENGINEER TO OBTAIN EASEMENTS FOR A SANITARY SEWER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
- 07-008 AUTHORIZING THE SANITARY ENGINEER TO OBTAIN EASEMENTS FOR VARIOUS WATER IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS
- 07-009 ALLOW EXPENSES OF COUNTY OFFICIALS

All deliberations concerning official business and formal actions by this Board of Commissioners were conducted in an open public meeting this second day of January, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

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Pam Vereb, Clerk

COMMISSIONERS \_\_\_\_\_  
Stephen D. Hambley

OF \_\_\_\_\_  
Sharon A. Ray

MEDINA COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_  
Patricia G. Geissman