

Burns searches for cost-saving medical providers

By Debbie Lowe
Staff writer

Another instance of the effort of a department head to save the county money was demonstrated at the Monday morning Carroll County Commissioners' meeting. Sheriff Tony Burns was granted permission to pursue purchasing agreements with local healthcare providers in an effort to reduce medical costs.

Burns reported he discovered that entering into a purchasing agreement with the Greater Lafayette Health Services would provide for a 20 percent discount for services if paid within 20 days of invoice. A lesser discount would be awarded if paid within 21 to 40 days of invoice.

"I'm just trying to think of where we can save some money," Burns said.

Auditor Beth Myers was granted authority to pay the bills out of the usual bill paying rotation.

In a follow-up interview Burns told the *Comet* that White County Memorial Hospital offered the county an even better arrangement after the commissioners' meeting concluded.

"When I got back to my office, I had a message from White County Hospital," Burns said. "They offered us a 25 percent discount without a prompt payment clause."

"This isn't final yet, but I expect to realize a significant cost savings for the county," he concluded.

Highway Department

After extensive discussion and lobbying to discontinue a bridge project by one county resident, highway superintendent Ron Francis was directed to submit a request to the county council for a

\$17,224 transfer of funds from the Lancaster Bridge project to Bridge #36. That bridge is located on CR300E., south of CR200S. Francis said there was more than \$77,000 left in the Lancaster Bridge account and he did not expect all of those funds to be expended on that project.

Francis explained bids for the rehabilitation and widening of Bridge #36 were higher than expected and not enough money was appropriated for the project initially.

"Spending money on this bridge is not wise," audience member Galen Perry said.

Francis said the Wilson Bridge project would be bid in 30 to 45 days. Construction is expected to begin this year.

Francis will sell decommissioned pick-up trucks rather than put them in auction. He will scrap an old roller,

which is "a complete hazard."

Budget audit

Hylton asked Myers if the county health department was making timely deposits to her office. He said in a past Indiana State Board of Accounts (SBA) Audit report, it was noted that department was not making the deposits in timely fashion.

"This ought to be reviewed," he said.

Hylton confirmed with Myers that her office and the treasurer's office did not balance their fund accounts. Myers said she was told by SBA two years ago that she cannot balance the bottom line with the treasurer's office until the internal books in the treasurer's office are balanced.

Myers said the treasurer is working toward that goal. She referred further questions about that office to the treasurer.

Hylton told Myers that the fund balances should match monthly per Indiana Code. Myers replied that the funds do balance, but not the bottom line. She said every category balances except county general, which is approximately \$3,200 off.

Hylton commented if the two offices balanced weekly or daily, it would be easier to correct mistakes.

Other business

A \$44,500 contract with Ad-Valorem to provide assessing services was approved. The firm will re-work the neighborhood codes, according to assessor Doris McLeland.

The resignation of Kenneth Tribbett from the park board was accepted. Commissioners encouraged anyone interested in serving on the board to contact them or Myers for an application.

Sheriff develops a plan



Carroll County Sheriff Tony Burns surveyed a rash of graffiti on Bicycle Bridge Road Thursday morning. He took special note of what appears on the bridge and the approach to the bridge. Burns said he is determined to eradicate the vandalism and work to make the community safe from this sort of activity. He is developing a plan to work with county highway and probation departments to put man-hours of individuals who are ordered to do community service and materials together to rid the road and bridge of the blight. Burns urged anyone interested in helping with the project to contact his office at (765) 564-2413. Comet photo by Debbie Lowe

County clerk sacrifices staff position to aid financial situation

By Debbie Lowe
Staff writer

Carroll County Clerk Laura Sterrett decided there was something she could do to help overcome an expected shortfall between county expenses and county income when the full time second deputy in her office submitted a resignation. She decided she would do without one full-time position and make do with part-time help. Part-time workers receive no benefits, which can become a costly burden to county finances.

Sterrett's plan was unanimously accepted by council members at their July 31 evening meeting.

However at the same meeting county commissioners proposed a decrease in veterans' burial benefits from \$1,000 to \$250 and council members could not agree that this was the appropriate course of action.

Commissioners' president Loren Hylton said many sur-

rounding counties, such as Tippecanoe, only contribute \$100 for burial expenses for veterans. He said Carroll County paid \$1,000 per veteran in 2006. There were 40 veterans buried, making the total spent \$40,000.

Council president Rob Baker and member Carl Abbott both spoke in favor of keeping the \$1,000 rate at least until the 2008 budget year.

"I'd like to see some things ride this year," Baker said.

Abbott wanted input from Veterans' Services Administrator Bob Morrow before a decision was made.

Steve Ashby and Ron Slavens strongly disagreed with that philosophy.

"When you're up against the wall, you have to make some tough choices," Ashby said. "This is a classic example of why we're in the shape we're in."

"It's a lot easier to say yes than it is to say no," he added.

Slavens, who advocated a de-

Continued page 5A

Flora calls town convention

Two Republicans file for council

Comet staff report

The Town of Flora has called a town convention for Aug. 16 at 7 p.m. at the 4-H Community Building at Flora park.

Two Republican candidates, Troy Helderman and Vince Seward, have filed for the position on the town council that will be available Jan. 1. Roger Daugherty, who currently serves on the council, is not seeking re-election.

"I've been interested in town

issues for quite some time and feel now is the time to step up and give back to the community," said Seward, 44. "I believe I have the skills necessary to diversify the board and give good input."

Seward, who has resided in Flora for 14 years, is energy manager at Excel Co-op. He and wife, Dawn, have three children.

Helderman, 37, has resided in Flora for eight years. He and his wife, the former Shelly

Wiles, have two daughters.

"Flora has been good to me and I want the opportunity to give back for what the town has given me," said Helderman.

Helderman co-owns two Flora businesses, T&M Heating & Cooling and T&M Property Management.

Because there are no Democratic candidates, the Republican candidate who receives the majority vote will receive the party nomination and win the

office. Paper ballots will be cast and the vote will be announced that night.

According to town clerk-treasurer Joretta Tinsman, to be eligible to vote, a resident must reside within the town limits of Flora and be a registered voter. Political affiliation is not relevant.

Each candidate will have five minutes to speak before votes are cast.

"Come and exercise your right to vote," added Tinsman.

Main Street site is committee's choice for new fire station

Susan Scholl
Editor

The committee appointed by the Flora Town Council to re-

search and review all opportunities for a new Flora Volunteer Fire Department (VFD) presented its findings and recommendation at Monday night's council meeting.

Alan Flora, committee spokesman, said the committee had been meeting since the first of April and several of those meetings involved the VFD. The committee's recommendation was to pursue building a new fire station at the Main Street location on the former Abdon property.

Flora said the committee researched and analyzed three available sites in Flora expected to meet the needs of the VFD: Main Street, SR 75 South and SR 18 East. He explained strengths and weaknesses for each site were determined and then prioritized for greater impact. A preliminary financial analysis was done to compare the impacts of each site.

"Hopefully our cost comparisons are fairly close," said Flora. "All were within \$50,000 of each other."

Projected costs for the Main Street site were the highest at \$942,500, with \$894,000 for SR 75 South site and \$918,000 for SR 18 East site. The esti-

mated costs for the latter two sites did not include undetermined costs associated with the need for traffic signals and deceleration lanes.

As per the mandate by the council, the committee looked into possible associations with other entities, including the Flora Police Department and looked into ways to reuse the existing fire station.

Flora said the committee has no recommendation as to whether or not to have a joint fire and police station, instead suggesting that a feasibility study be undertaken.

"We (the committee) hope we've done something to stimulate the process and to keep working toward a goal," said Flora.

"We appreciate all the effort you put into this," said Council President Josh Ayres, "and we may need some more down the road. There is a lot more work to be done."

Council members will review the study and make a decision as to which site to pursue at the next meeting.

Others on the committee were community members Curt Hufty and Michelle Cox; firemen Mike Cottrell and Mike Kingery, and police offi-

cers James Bishop and Randy Larimore.

The report is available for copying and inspection at the town office.

New group homes

Trena Anderson, director of programming for Spectrum Community Services of Indiana, addressed the council and community on why her company chose Flora to build two group homes.

"Flora was picked for a reason," she said, because her company specifically wanted a community where "folks understood developmental disabilities and was tolerant and accepting." She cited the fact that Flora already has a group home, Carroll Village.

Anderson said that the home on Sunset Street is finished and she is currently training staff. The home on Third Street is expected to be ready for occupancy in six to eight weeks.

The people occupying these homes will not be sex offenders, she said. They will have developmental and physical disabilities.

"We expect them to be fully functioning members of the community."

She further explained that

Continued page 10A

Facade grant applications on the rise

By Debbie Lowe
Staff writer

Delphi's facade improvement grant program went through a period of relative inactivity in 2006 so much so that the city council did not appropriate money for the program in 2007. However, city council members learned at the Monday night meeting that might have been a premature budget deletion.

Main Street Association member Anita Werling presented the second application of 2007 for consideration. The law firm of Obear, Overholser, Huffer and Rider requested a matching grant to make the front of the building at 102 S. Union St. more attractive by replacing wooden windows with new vinyl ones. They are also requesting help with installing standard canvas awnings over windows in the alley and in the rear of the building.

The first grant awarded in 2007 was to the Odd Fellows for their building on south Washington St.

"That was money well spent," Werling commented.

She explained there are two additional applications expected soon from local businesses that want to improve the look of their structures.

The city will advertise for additional appropriations for the budget line item to be able to fund the approved project for \$4,814.25, one-half of the total cost of the project, and one to two more, depending upon the improvement characteristics.

Other business

The contract with the group to install, take down and store Delphi's Christmas decorations is set

to expire at the end of August. Delphi Main Street Association will search for options to compare with the current service. Members will choose which firm to use next year and sign the contract for service.

A resolution to detail enforcement response procedures for industry was adopted. The document was requested by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management and developed by city attorney Miriam Robeson and the engineering firm of Butler, Fairman and Seifert.

Robeson said Indiana Packers Corporation was consulted during development and was comfortable with the language. Mayor Lee Hoard declared August to be Delphi Tri-Township Volunteer Fire Department Appreciation Month. He read a proclamation in honor of the occasion.

Tree ordinance 2007-03 was adopted by suspension of the rules after the second and third readings.

The ordinance provides for tree species to be planted, spacing, distance from curbs and sidewalks, utilities, public tree care, treatment of street and parking trees, pruning, corner clearing, removal of stumps and interference with the forestry commission among other topics.

All city residents are encouraged to review the ordinance at the clerk's office prior to planting or destroying trees on their property.

Department reports

Parks superintendent Richard Farrer announced the skateboard

Continued page 5A