

# Petition filed against DCSC project

By Kevin Schnepf  
Staff writer

A "petition requesting the application of a petition and remonstrance process" regarding Delphi Community School Corporation's 2008 Facility Renovation Project was submitted Friday to the Carroll County Clerk's Office.

According to clerk Laura Sterrett, a total of 119 unverified signatures were listed on the forms. The deadline to file a petition was April 18.

Indiana law states those who oppose a school corporation's plans to issue bonds for construction projects have 30 days to file a petition against the action. DCSC posted a legal no-

tice in the March 12 edition of the *Comet* which stated it resolved to issue bonds to borrow up to \$20,465,000 for renovations at all four schools in the district.

Sterrett said state law mandates once her office received the petition she had 15 days to verify names before she sent it to the auditor. As of Tuesday, four days after receiving the forms, the first segment of verification was almost complete.

"There are a few items I asked for clarification on from state officials," Sterrett said. "I plan to present the forms to the auditor's office Wednesday (today), provided I receive responses to my questions."

DCSC Superintendent Ralph

Walker said at this point the corporation could only wait for the petition to be verified before he and the school board decide how to proceed. By law the clerk and auditor each have set numbers of days to verify names on the petition, not to exceed 35 days total.

"At this point we have to wait for the clerk to initiate the (petition verification) process," he said. "It does look as though they have the required amount of signatures, but we will have to wait and see after it is verified."

Walker said the school board would address the petition at its next regular meeting, scheduled for May 12 at 7 p.m. in the corporation office. He said at

that time the board will choose either to cancel the proposed project or fight the petition through a remonstrance process if the petition is verified.

"Probably at the May 12 board meeting the board will have to make a decision whether to go forth with the project," he said. "If they do there will be a re-advertisement (in the *Comet*). Then there is a 30-day waiting period from when it is advertised. The remonstrance petition drive, which would follow the re-advertisement, is limited to a 60-day period. The entire process should take about six months."

## Commissioners From page 1A

CAFOs but rather opposed to them in their immediate neighborhood. He said the dairies would be equal opportunity employers.

Smith said EDC wanted to protect Carroll Manor and has put effort toward that end.

Smith issued a question and answer press release on the EDC Web site, located at [www.carrollcountyindiana.org/news.html](http://www.carrollcountyindiana.org/news.html), to explain the EDC role in bringing dairy CAFOs to the county and the potential benefits of that particular economic development.

### Highway department

Superintendent Ron Francis opened bids for materials and took them under advisement. Recommendations will be presented at the May 5 commissioners' meeting.

Francis presented the 2008 road plan. Concluding that he "can't do something with nothing," a funding flow chart to illustrate from where highway money emanates was discussed.

He summarized the funding is derived through a complicated formula from state tax on fuel, the local option highway user tax

(LOHUT) or "wheel tax," license plate fees, user taxes and Major Moves funding, which concluded this year.

The plan provided an historical perspective of road and highway department progress since 2004 plus cost estimates, road rating charts and recommendations for county road work. A complete plan can be obtained electronically by calling the highway garage at (574) 967-4244 or viewed at the Delphi *Comet* office. A list of roads to be turned to gravel this year will be posted on the *Comet* Web site at [www.carrollcountycomet.com](http://www.carrollcountycomet.com) on the "Government Meetings and Agendas" page after amendments occur when it becomes available electronically.

Francis reported he escorted FEMA representatives through flood-damaged areas of the county last week to help them accurately estimate the damage costs for the county. He said the federal representatives indicated the state was approximately \$500,000 shy of the monetary threshold needed to qualify for federal municipality aid. He said

the representatives seemed optimistic the state could qualify after the second assessment, however no time frame for the decision was given.

### 2008 holiday schedule amendment request

Commissioners took no action on a request from the county council to reduce the number of paid holidays for county employees from 14 to 10 each year.

Speaking on behalf of the council, Steve Ashby explained the measure would not provide county general with additional income but would defray the amount the county pays to employees for holiday-time off.

"There's a lot of time that we owe employees for," he said in asking commissioners to approve the action "in concept" at the meeting. He suggested they determine the exact holidays to be deleted from the schedule later.

Brown asked Francis what it would cost his department to work four more days each year.

"Considerable," Francis said. Commissioners took no action. The matter will appear on the agenda for the May 5 meeting.

### Other business

The final contract with Steve Stringfield for the removal and site closure for underground storage tanks on the county jail property, not to exceed \$11,963, was approved in a two-to-one vote. Commissioner George Mears refused to provide a second to Brown's motion to approve and voted against the contract.

Mears said he thought the county could spend the money in some other area, such as for a deputy's salary.

Stringfield assured commissioners the county would achieve a status of "no further action" from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management within one year.

Commissioners approved submission of a letter requesting funding in a 25 percent grant-match for river clean-up from the Department of Natural Resources. Emergency Management Agency Director Dave McDowell will make the formal application.

A request by T's Flowers and Things to use courthouse grounds and sidewalk to sell flowers and produce from May 14 to Sept. 26 on Wednesdays and Fridays was denied. Local business owners, represented by Daryl Routh of Calico Plus, objected to allowing a merchant to sell duplicate goods and services on the street when other merchants rent buildings, pay utilities and maintain shops.

A retirement/resignation from Robert Morrow, veteran services director, was accepted. Commissioners thanked Morrow for his years of service to the county.

The next meeting will be May 5 at 9 a.m.

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### Keeping the communication line open

Senator Brandt Hershman, left, stopped in Delphi Friday to informally discuss with Carroll County Council member Steve Ashby and Delphi Mayor Randy Strasser the impact of recent state legislation, the Hoosier Heartland Highway and the role of the Department of Local Government Finance decisions as they impact city and county finances. Hershman praised community leaders for collaborative efforts to address county-wide financial issues now and expectations for the future. Hershman also said the state threshold for FEMA reimbursement for the January floods stood at \$7.5 million, which could be difficult to reach given the majority of flood damage was in a limited number of counties. Comet photo by Debbie Lowe

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