

Commissioners pursue HHH relinquishment information

By **Debbie Lowe**
Staff writer

Carroll County Commissioners voted to hire the Troyer Group, Inc., to determine the scope of relinquishments of state road miles, from the state to the county, when the Hoosier Heartland Highway is completed. The measure was recommended by county highway superintendent Ron Francis.

Francis said he was urged by the county council to learn how many additional miles would be added to the county road inventory upon completion of the new state highway.

Francis said he chose the Troyer Group for the evaluation, for \$28,600, over others suitable to per-

form the task, such as the current county bridge inspector, because the Troyer Group had no ties to the highway project. He said all small bridges and structures along the route would be evaluated. Francis said there was approximately \$16,000 in the cumulative bridge account and he would fund the remainder of the cost from the local roads and streets fund and Major Moves.

Bridges and culverts

Engineering firm Butler, Fairman and Seifert Engineering was awarded the contract for services for Bridge #147. Commissioners and Francis used an Indiana Department of Transportation scoring system to evaluate the highest bidders.

Rinehart Excavating was

awarded the contract for \$81,500 for Culvert #1071 replacement. Francis evaluated the bids during the meeting to formulate the recommendation. He said the goal was to begin before harvest season was underway.

Francis said although another bidder gave a lower price for the work, Rinehart provided the lowest bid on equal evaluation. He said FEMA would submit approximately 50 percent of a reimbursement due to flood damage for the project, which is expected to cost roughly \$187,000.

County road 75 extension

Francis also reported a representative from the Troyer Group made application for earmark funding from State Sen. Brandt Hershman's

office for the county road extension project.

Yeoman Community Center/EMS Garage

Yeoman town engineer Ken Smith reported bids for the joint project were opened Aug. 18 and JR Kelly Construction was determined by the Town of Yeoman to be the lowest responsible bidder at \$463,555. However, the bid amount exceeded the funding available. Smith said town leaders decided to guarantee payment of the overage by using investment money. Smith requested commissioners approve the town's choice and sign the contract with the construction company.

Commissioners' attorney Barry Emerson questioned if the Indiana State Board of Accounts approved

the use of the investments for the funding given it was the third quarter of a the budget year.

Commissioners directed Smith to obtain a letter of approval from SBOA and a draft copy of the proposed contract with JR Kelly Construction. The matter will be addressed at the Oct. 6 meeting.

E-911

The contract for telephone provider service for E-911 expires at the end of September, according to program director Jay Dee Cree. Due to unforeseen obstacles encountered when negotiating a new contract with a different service provider, Cree said the department is not ready to change providers.

Commissioners tentatively ap-

See E-911 page 5A

Camden's wastewater rate is going up; how much is unknown

Comet staff report

Grant writer Ken Smith requested delaying the opening of bids for the Town of Camden's wastewater grant project until Sept. 25 to enable more contractors to bid. He said at the Sept. 11 town council meeting that he hoped the delay would help lower costs with additional competition.

Steve Brock of Therber and Brock gave a preliminary wastewater rate analysis. Complete information will not be known until the bids are opened and accepted.

The town has been accepted into the State Revolving Loan (SRL) Program for the project and this loan requires a rate study. The interest on the SRL loan is currently 4.02% for 20 years, however the rate is subject to change on Oct. 8.

Without any project costs calculated into his work, Brock said the department needs a 10.97% rate increase for the sewer portion of customers' bills. The minimum rate (3,000 gallons) would increase from \$13.86 to \$15.38, an increase of \$1.52 per month. If the town borrows the anticipated \$250,000, the rate will increase to \$20.59, up \$6.73.

The town is considering applying more of its own funds to the project and not borrowing the full amount. The option will be reviewed further when all the costs are known.

Brock said the \$500,000 grant that the town received will save the citizens a nearly \$30 price increase.

Dogs and cats

The council adopted an ordinance relating to the control of dogs and cats in town. Registration tags will be required as of January.

Neutered pets can be tagged for \$3 and non-neutered pets for \$5. Penalties will be applied for animals deemed a public nuisance. The duties and responsibilities of pet owners are set forth as well as the requirements for vaccinations.

The town marshals will be responsible for enforcing the ordinance. Stray animals will be returned to the owners whenever possible.

Council member Andy Kelly reported no progress on county-wide animal control.

2009 budget

The 2009 budget was adopted. Council president Pete Wagoner reiterated the budget expenses for 2009 were the same as 2008. Any changes made were in line item adjustments as a means to keep the total 2009 expenses the same as 2008.

Wagoner said that the town's expenses have increased just as they have for citizens. Inflation is across the board and causing concerns on many levels. As an example, he explained about the town's difficulty in securing road salt for this winter. Sand will probably be used instead of salt because of the cost.

Street commissioner Jerry Snavelly said a ton of salt in 2006 cost \$40.07, including delivery. This year's price will be between \$191 and \$196, plus a delivery fee. Camden has joined with other communities to purchase large quantities in the hope of lower prices. To

See Camden page 5A

50 years in Flora



Stephan's IGA celebrated its 50th anniversary Saturday with a customer appreciation BBQ and special tribute to the store and community. Mark Grube, area sales director for Super Valu, the store's distributor, and Jim Poller, Super Valu retail business consultant, were on hand to lead the tribute. They presented store owner Trent Stephan with a framed picture commemorating 50 years of family ownership. Stephan credited his parents, the late Robert and Bonita Stephan and the store's original owners, with the opportunities they presented to him. He was also appreciative of current and past employees and the community for its support. He recognized long-time employees, Chuck Wolf, 38 years; Nancy Maxwell, 37 years; and Tim Ballew, 35 years, along with eight other employees who have worked between 10 and 27 years at the family-owned grocery. "And we would not be here without all our great customers," he concluded. Pictured with Stephan are his wife, Stephanie, and sister, Cynthia Walton of Lynchburg, Va. Not pictured, but on hand for the festivities, was Stephan's and Walton's 102-year-old grandmother, Mildred Gasaway, herself a former Stephan's IGA employee. Comet photo

Prosecutor plays 'Let's Make A Deal' for full-time secretary

By **Debbie Lowe**
Staff writer

Carroll County Council members interrupted a series of budget discussions, which included reducing many department requests for funding, to hear a request to fill a recently vacated full-time secretarial position from prosecutor Tricia Thompson and deputy prosecutor Christine Smith.

Smith explained that a full-

time secretary is a central component to any law office, noting the prosecutor's office is a law office. She said the prosecutor's office initiates all paperwork for each case filed in court and reviews every case submitted by local law enforcement.

Thompson said the position, which was vacated nearly a month ago, is the only full-time position in the office not funded through the state, as is

her salary and the salaries for the deputy prosecutor and IV-D Child Support clerk. Other department staff include a part-time secretary and a part-time IV-D attorney.

"The full-time position is critical," she said. "We can't survive without it."

Council member Carl Abbott made the motion to approve the request and Rob Baker provided the second. Jerry Hendress told Thompson

that she asked for increases in the 2009 budget, noting there was limited funding available for the office. Thompson said if it became a choice between any increases and the full-time position, she would not hesitate to choose the position.

The motion passed in a five-to-one vote. Ron Slavens, who suggested the IV-D clerk share secretarial duties in the prosecutor's office voted to deny the request.

Fall Festival starts Friday in Burlington

Comet staff report

Burlington's Fall Festival promises a weekend of family fun. The event will get underway Friday afternoon at 4 and continue through the weekend, concluding Sunday afternoon at 4:30 with a wrap-up auction.

The festival will feature entertainment, an antique tractor show, bingo, kiddie and pony rides, contests, a pioneer village, food, and much more.

Wagoner Medical Center will offer free health screenings. Stop by the Center's booth for a free body mass index.

Pre-festival events include the crowning of a festival queen tonight, Wednesday, at 7 p.m. in the community building. The prince and princess pageant will be held Thursday evening at 6:30 in the commu-

nity building.

The queen, prince and princess will all participate in festival activities and the parade set for Saturday afternoon at 1:15. Registration will begin at 12 noon at the Brethren Church. The parade will start from the downtown area and proceed to the park.

Kiwanis Club and Burlington VFD will serve a sausage and pancake breakfast from 6 to 10 a.m. on Saturday. A fish fry will be held in the evening from 4 to 8 in the Community Building.

Saturday's activities will include karaoke contests, entertainment by Granpa Cratchet, a mock rescue with Lifeline by the Burlington VFD, quilt auction and more..

Sunday's events will include a community worship service

at the park beginning at 10 a.m. The Rev. Dr. Peter Rousakis of the First Brethren Church will bring the message. The Scoop will serve a chicken and noodle dinner afterwards from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the

Community Building.

Sunday's cruise-in will be from 12 to 4 p.m. And Ramin' Fever Band will perform under the tent from 1 to 4 p.m.

The barn drawing will be at 4 p.m. Barn proceeds benefit

the maintenance fund for the community and Lilly buildings at the park. The clean-up auction follows at 4:30.

A schedule of events is found on pages 6&7A of this week's Comet.

Dairy appeal is postponed

Comet staff report

An appeal with the Indiana Office of Environmental Adjudication by Carroll County landowners trying to stop a dairy from being built in northern Carroll County was postponed Monday.

Administrative Law Judge Mary Davidson assumed jurisdiction over the appeal of the Vreba-Hoff Carroll County Optima Dairy hearing.

Optima Dairy will be a 2,200-head controlled animal feeding operation at CRs 100N and 300E.

A conference call was held with attorneys for Vreba-Hoff/Optima, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, and the petitioners, Bob and Bobby Shaffer, Walt and Eva Keller and Dr. Tom Anderson. By mutual agreement, Judge Davidson cancelled the hearing sched-

uled for Sept. 16, 17, 18, 22, and 23 and reset the hearing for Jan. 12-23.

"The petitioners were fully prepared for trial, with strong evidence to present," said the petitioners' attorney Courtney Justice. "The judge's four-month postponement was completely unexpected."

The petitioners are all members of a citizen action group called We Americans Love Our Land.



Mailing label goes here

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