

## Brown blasts council for loss of highway head

By Debbie Lowe  
Staff writer

Carroll County Commissioner Bill Brown expressed strong emotions about why the leader of the county highway department decided to leave his post at Monday morning's commissioners meeting. Brown compiled and verbalized a list of financial accomplishments, roughly \$1,340,000 he said highway superintendent Ron Francis saved the county in one year. He disagreed with resistance by the council to go outside of the county personnel wage scale to augment Francis's annual salary by several thousand dollars. Francis stated he was leaving because the council would not guarantee \$8,000 to \$9,000 additional compensation as a result of removing payment for compensatory time for salaried employees in 2009. "We have a council who would quibble over \$7,000 in his pay," Brown emphatically stated. "I think

it's disgusting the way we run our financials and it's to the detriment to this county."

George Mears concurred with his fellow commissioner and said, "I totally agree with what Bill says."

Commissioners president Loren Hylton said he thought Francis "had been driven out of his position" with the county.

Francis said he appreciated the support commissioners have given to him in the department head position.

After permission from council is granted, commissioners will advertise to hire a highway superintendent/engineer. Brown warned against the possibility of finding a certified engineer for the position.

"Engineers won't work for minimum wage," he said. "That's not hardly a possibility for us."

Hylton said he did not see a need to hire a certified engineer.

### Wilson Bridge

Francis announced, due to change orders, costs for the Wilson Bridge

project were \$99,086.85 over contractor Village Blacksmith's estimate. He said the county match amount for the cost overruns would be \$19,817.20.

Francis said he would request an additional appropriation or transfer from the council to pay the difference. He said the total project cost to the county was less than \$80,000.

Commissioners approved the change orders although the state has not.

"The changes have already been done," noted Hylton.

Brown made the motion to approve the additional money for the contractor and Mears provided the second.

### Culvert 1071

Francis said the Culvert 1071 project was completed for \$85,212, well under the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) estimate. Work was needed due to storm and flood damage. He said the contractor outperformed expectations.

"That pipe will outlast anyone here," he said.

Proposals to provide county-wide bridge inspections were opened. Francis said he would tabulate the results to develop a recommendation for commissioners at a later meeting.

### Other business

Commissioners approved a moratorium on billboard erection near the proposed Hoosier Heartland Highway. The moratorium restricts billboards along the route and for 2,000 feet past the proposed right-of-way on each side. The moratorium will expire April 1, 2009, or when the Carroll County Area Plan Commission adopts a county zoning overlay for a further permanent additional layer of regulation for the area.

An updated county flood hazard ordinance was also adopted.

### Courthouse roof

Commissioners will contract with an architect to determine specifications for repairs for the courthouse roof. Custodian Sheryl Shockley said

one individual was contacted and provided a price quote for services to determine what will be advertised for the project to proceed.

### Yeoman Community Center-EMS Garage

Grant coordinator Amy Miller announced the second round of bids for the project would be opened at the Oct. 20 commissioners' meeting. She said the Yeoman Town Council rejected the first set of bids because they were all higher than funding allowed. Miller said she has since learned that the project could receive additional funding from the state, which she was encouraged to pursue if the next round of bids were also higher than expected. She said the additional state funding would require more local match.

Miller said she is closely watching the timetable for the project.

"We are not behind yet," she said. "We are on some very strict guidelines for the grant."

See Loss page 5A

## Time running out to adopt LOIT increase

A great bargain or a risky proposition?... council makes a decision

By Debbie Lowe  
Staff writer

Carroll County Council members met Monday afternoon to discuss how to proceed with a Local Option Income Tax (LOIT) increase to be adopted by Dec. 31.

Commissioners' attorney Barry Emerson presented a proposal from London Witte Group (LWG) of Indianapolis for between \$3,500 and \$4,500 to analyze data from the 20,000 land parcels in the county. An explanation of LOIT to aid council members in

making a tax increase decision was included in the proposal. Emerson said he queried another firm about the same services and received a verbal quote of \$35,000.

Council member Ann Brown said she spoke with a third firm who also gave a \$35,000 price tag for the service. She said Montgomery County officials paid \$50,000 for help with how to proceed with LOIT in that county.

Council member consensus was the county could not afford to make a mistake and lose money with the tax increase. See LOIT page 6A

## Public to be given opportunity for Q & A about school renovations

By Debbie Lowe  
Staff writer

The Delphi Community School Corporation will hold a public meeting Oct. 13 at 7 p.m. in the high school commons to allow residents and taxpayers the opportunity to question school board members and learn about the decision to proceed with a renovation project.

The scope of the project was reduced from an approximate \$18 million proposal earlier in the year to an estimated \$13 million current project. To reach the lesser amount, the original proposal was curtailed to omit some items.

The new plan includes in the high school:

- Renovations of two sets of science rooms with shared preparation rooms between the sets and include lockers in new corridor;
- Upgrade of seating and

lighting in the auditorium;

- Moving the art room into the choral room;
- Renovation of FACS labs, one larger room and four computer rooms;
- Remodel Pod C into two foreign language labs;
- The Arts/Industrial Technology area would feature a remodel of one area to make two art rooms, renovation of a construction and CAD lab;
- The kitchen area would have a larger receiving room and additional storage and the serving line in the cafeteria would be made ADA accessible;
- Tennis courts would be

See Questions page 6A

## Rossville VFD groundbreaking



A groundbreaking ceremony was held last week for a new fire station for the Rossville Volunteer Fire Department. Pictured l-r are: Jerry Frey, Clay Township advisory board; Wayne Remaly, Clay Township advisory board; Marla Milazzo, Clay Township trustee; Allen Remaly, Rossville Town Council president; Matt Marley, Ross Township trustee; Rick Ryan, Owen Township trustee; Lewis Flohr, Owen Township advisory board; Dan Lahrman, Ross Township advisory board; Carl Seest, Ross Township advisory board; Jim Unger, Owen Township advisory board. Tecton of Lafayette is the construction manager. Comet photo by Jennifer Archibald

## Rossville to get new fire station

By Jennifer Archibald  
Staff writer

Site work has begun on a new fire station for the Rossville Volunteer Fire Department.

A groundbreaking ceremony was held last week on Tuesday with representatives of three townships and the Town of Rossville present, along with members of the fire department and other interested parties.

"This is the result of work

by all the townships and the town over the past five years, to get a new fire station constructed," said Allen Remaly, president of the Rossville Town Council.

Remaly said the station will have four bays and will hold eight trucks. The station will also have a meeting room inside.

The townships involved in the project are Owen and Ross townships in Clinton County and Clay Township in Carroll County, all served by

the Rossville fire department.

Clay Township advisory board member Jerry Frey said the project is a work in progress.

"We have the \$600,000 for the construction of the building," he said.

"It might take a year to finish the inside (restrooms, furniture, office, etc.)," he said. "We need another \$125,000. The total cost of the project is \$1.5 million."

Frey said he is confident that the community will raise

the necessary funds.

"This is a very tight community," he said. "There have already been donations, and I'm sure there will be more to come."

Frey said the land for the station, three acres on State Road 26, was purchased from Kenny and Mary Lou Gray.

"This was the old turkey hatchery property and also the old Legion Hall site," Frey added. "The current fire station used to be the old Opera

See Rossville page 6A

## Delphi's Indiana St. to go one-way

By Debbie Lowe  
Staff writer

Delphi Mayor Randy Strasser was urged to proceed immediately to eliminate a visual obstruction for traffic at a busy intersection near the downtown area at the Monday night board of works meeting. Board of works member Brian Garrison said a bush at the corner of Indiana and Main streets was a safety hazard for traffic attempting to turn onto Main St. from Indiana St.

Strasser said an ordinance to make Indiana St. a one-way was in progress to address the issue, but it was not finished. Noting that the board of works discussed the situation in the

past, Garrison urged Strasser to either have the bush removed or present the ordinance as soon as possible. He said the city should not wait any longer and "keep pushing it around" until a crash occurs at the intersection. Garrison said the view must not be obstructed for safety reasons.

### Other business

According to Strasser, the section of the new roof on the city building over the street and fire departments has failed. Attorney Kurtis Fouts reported the roofer for the job, CCI, submitted a proposal to remedy the situation. He said CCI agreed to re-apply the roof at no cost to the city, but expected the materials supplier

to reimburse the contractor for \$8,478.50, or one-half of the cost of the installation. Fouts said the materials supplier agreed to provide the replacement materials at no cost to the city. Fouts said the city agreed to help with disposal of the roof materials currently installed.

Star Development was

named grant administrator for the city's low-to-moderate housing rehabilitation program.

Claims for \$141,853.87 were approved after discussion. Both board of works members Bob Conner and Garrison questioned an expense for seven new guns for the police department not pur-

chased locally. Conner asked for an explanation of a claim to an out-of-county insurance company for the fire department. Garrison questioned a claim for coffee which led to clarification that the city pays for coffee for the city building.

The next board of works meeting will be Oct. 20 at 4:30 p.m. and is open to the public.

## Delphi City Council passes '09 budget

By Theresa Replogle  
Contributing writer

A public hearing for the 2009 budget was held at Monday night's Delphi City Council meeting. No questions or comments were heard from the

public.

Mayor Randy Strasser said the economy made putting the budget together painful. He said Delphi lost revenue because many businesses closed. Reassessment of property translated to unknown income

levels. Strasser explained an additional unknown variable was how the county council would deal with the Local Option Income Tax (LOIT).

### Combined dispatch

A proposed memorandum of See '09 budget page 5A



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