

Commissioners sign county road extension contract

Long-term funding concerns expressed by other county leaders

By Debbie Lowe
Staff writer

Carroll County Commissioners signed a contract with the Troyer Group for the first phase of work signaling the formal beginning of the county road extension of SR75 project through Camden Monday morning. The county leaders delayed signing it at a Dec. 15 meeting in order for the Troyer Group to make minor amendments and provide detailed financial information requested by new county highway engineer Paul Coutts. Coutts distributed the financial information to Loren Hylton, Bill Brown and outgoing commissioner George Mears at the meeting. He said all parts of the project were identified and he said it was a "manageable situation."

"Everything is explained," he reported to the commissioners.

According to the financial forecast, the total county financial obligation for the project is \$2,319,464 - or \$2,105,343 after a \$963,546 federal credit - over six years. The local cost for 2009 is \$328,000, for engineering only. Overall engineering for the project will cost the county \$993,990. Right-of-ways will be \$147,808 and construction will total \$1,177,666 local dollars, after the federal credit.

The situation was not as clear to two county council members and commissioner-elect Pat Clawson, who were in the audience. Outgoing council member Steve Ashby urged commissioners to have a funding plan in place for the entire project before spending money in 2009 for the first phase. He said the state financial forecast was "bleak" and said some dollars for the project might not materialize as promised.

He reminded commissioners the county borrowed from the cumulative bridge fund in 2008 and it has not been repaid. He said it might not be fully repaid in 2009 as well. Ashby warned the county highway department could be "shorted" if money was not available from other sources for phase one.

"I am concerned about having the money," he said.

Ashby's concerns about funding the project were echoed by another county leader.

"Are you planning to deplete all of the EDIT (economic development income tax funding) for this project?" Clawson asked. "This is going to tie up a lot of dollars for a long time. What's the goal - industrial or jobs?"

Commissioners' president Loren Hylton said EDIT was the only fund commissioners control.

"This project is top priority, not a short-term thing," Hylton said. "The sooner we do something, the sooner we see results."

Bill Brown said the extension project would save other county roads from further deterioration. He explained the Rockfield area is the only area in the county fully suitable for many industries. He noted it offered heavy-rail service, gas, electric and sewage for development purposes.

Brown said the Indiana Department of Transportation changed construction plans to accommodate the alignment of the proposed county road, which would connect SR75 and the new highway when completed.

"Up until this time, Carroll County only pretended to do economic development," Brown said. "In some ways, See Commissioners page 5A"

The Andersons cob fire battle continues



Cob fire pictured Monday

By Debbie Lowe
Staff writer

A fire in a cob pile at The Andersons on SR25 was discovered early Saturday morning. General manager of cob products Dale Theis said Saturday the cause of the fire was unclear. He said the plant was shut down for the weekend at 5 p.m. Wednesday of last week and there were no personnel on the premises when the fire broke out.

Theis said Delphi Tri-Township Volunteer Fire Department was first to respond. However, by mid-afternoon every available truck and firefighter in Carroll County and surrounding communities were working to control the blaze.

According to an Andersons' press release, approximately 150 local responders representing 15 fire departments made the scene Saturday. The fire posed no danger to the local community and there were no injuries. Roughly 25 percent of the 17,000 tons of cob on the pile, which reached a height of approximately 10 stories, were charred or damaged as of Saturday. The value of the cobs destroyed or the impact on plant operations was not immediately known.

Theis said workers hauled away as many cobs as possible from the fire area to alleviate additional fuel for the fire. He said preliminary estimates were for the fire to last more than a week.

Area Red Cross workers and the Delphi Tri-Township Fire Department Auxiliary were on the scene to provide relief to firefighters.

Delphi Tri-Township VFD Chief Denny Randle said Tuesday there were 21 departments, including the county's seven departments, working the fire since Saturday. He said the goal was to keep the fire down to protect the surrounding area.

Randle said the strategy to protect other Andersons property was to establish water barriers between the two additional cob piles in the general vicinity of the fire. The burning pile is kept wet to retard flying embers from traveling, which could spark another blaze. He said there were still no conclusions reached about the cause of the fire, however it was noted there was a lightning storm within 48 hours preceding the fire.

"The Andersons have been stepping up as to help us keep See Andersons page 8A"



Indiana Farm Family of the Year
The Minich-May Family was honored as the 2009 Indiana Farm Family of the Year at the Indiana Farm Bureau state convention in Evansville. The award is presented annually by Beck's Hybrids and Indiana AgriNews. From left are Beck's Hybrids vice president Scott Beck; Angie, Steve, Drew and Adelle May; and Dave and Marilyn Minich. Photo provided by AgriNews Publications

Family honored for efforts on, off the farm

The Minich-May Family is Indiana's Farm Family of the Year. The Carroll County family was honored during a presentation at the Indiana Farm Bureau state convention in Evansville.

Dave and Marilyn Minich received the award with their daughter, Angie May, her husband, Steve, and their children, six-year-old Drew and four-year-old Adelle.

The award is presented annually by two family agricultural businesses, Beck's Hybrids and Indiana AgriNews. It honors a Hoosier family for outstanding efforts on and off the farm.

This year's recipients are making history in north-central Indiana.

At the end of World War 2, Dave's parents, Ernie and Betty, started the family's farm with 200 rented acres.

They bought their first 65 acres when Dave was a junior in high school in 1962.

Following their junior year at Purdue University, Dave and Marilyn married. The next year, they began renting their own land. After graduating from college in 1968, they joined forces with Dave's parents.

They progressively farmed more acres, cash-renting additional property and buying it when possible. They farmed about 1,800 acres 15 years ago.

Today, their farm consists of 4,000 acres of corn and 2,100 acres of soybeans, and they own about a third of that land.

It is a large operation. But it still is a family farm, said certified crop adviser Craig Spray, who nominated the family for the award.

"With Dave's management of the daily agronomics and Angie's expertise in running the finances, this makes for an unbeatable combination," he said.

The family attributes their success to respecting and valuing the different skill-sets of each family member and farm employee.

Angie and her brothers, Mark, who works as an engineer near Chicago, and Robb, a lawyer in Indianapolis, were very involved in the farm throughout high school and college. Mark and Robb still enjoy helping out whenever possible.

Angie works from the family's grain storage, tool shed and office complex, nicknamed "The Depot," which was built in 2005.

Managing the financial records and yield maps for more than 6,000 acres - as well as relationships with 20 landlords across four counties - isn't easy.

It's not just simple record-keeping, Dave stressed.

"Keeping the books is not an easy job anymore," he said. "And we have numerous entities to manage."

Dave said he is particularly proud to continue his parents' farm operation and now have his daughter and son-in-law carry on that legacy.

"That's what we live for. Having family come back to farm and making it work is the success we want," he said.

"You can be all different sizes. But being able to work with your family and continue it on, that's the success I appreciate."

But, he noted, he hasn't forced any of his children into farming. Likewise, his father originally discouraged See Family page 3A"

Changes for Delphi residents begin this week

Delphi police dispatch changes hands Jan. 1

By Debbie Lowe
Staff writer

The way Delphi residents will access the local police department will change beginning Jan. 1. According to police chief Justin Darling, the change will streamline emergency calls and should not hinder non-emergency calls.

Darling said residents will continue to use the 564-2345 number to reach the



Darling

department for all calls. The calls will be received by county dispatch located at the county jail on Main St., however the caller will hear "Delphi Police Department" when the call is answered.

Darling said the plan is for non-emergency calls to be transferred to the city building. After business hours, voice-mail will record messages. Emergency calls will be dispatched immediately from the jail to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Darling said the city will save close to \$60,000 due to the move. Response times will be improved also, because communication will be more direct. Darling said most residents will not notice the changes.

"Police department telephone calls will not go directly to the city building anymore but they will be answered in the same way," Darling said. "Response times for emergencies will be quicker, which will benefit all city residents."

Delphi trash and recycling will be picked up this week

By Debbie Lowe
Staff writer

Delphi's trash removal service is due to change hands Jan. 1, which could have left residents holding the bag(s) this week. However, the city street commissioner Aaron Lyons said Monday city workers will pick up trash and recycling Friday in order for residents to not



Lyons

have curbs cluttered over the weekend.

Lyons said the new trash service will begin Jan. 6. Trash and refuse will be collected in Delphi on one weekday only, which will be each Tuesday, by the new service. He said the city coordinated the recycling program with the trash removal for the same day to streamline city services.



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