

## Commissioners choose health plan

### Clawson abstains from decision

By Debbie Lowe  
Staff writer

Carroll County Commissioners have known for several months a new county health insurance plan had to be chosen. The county council adopted the 2009 proposed budget in November, setting the appropriation at roughly \$430,000, a decrease from \$516,104.61 in 2008. Commissioners had requested \$675,000 in 2009 for health insurance.

A new plan had to be in place by Feb. 1 or county employees would have no health insurance. County auditor Beth Myers pressed commissioners to make a decision about which plan to fund at Monday morning's meeting so she would be able to inform employees about changes.

Commissioners Loren Hylton and Bill Brown decided no family coverage would be offered.

The county will pay \$402.30 per month for each employee. Employee premiums for highway department and E-911 employees will be deducted from those individual budgets. A total of \$32,988.60 per month will be paid from county general. The county will pay \$4,827.60 per year for each employee as a benefit for a total of \$395,863.20 from county general.

Employees will continue to pay \$10 per month or \$120 per year for coverage. The county paid up to \$1,500 for a deductible for each employee last year. Employees will now be responsible to pay the entire \$2,500 deductible for major medical expenses.

Commissioner Pat Clawson ab-

stained from making the decision. He said negotiations for the plan were held prior to his service to the county and he did not have enough knowledge to make an informed decision.

#### Funding request denied

The county council hired the law firm of Barnes and Thornburg to help them navigate the different components of the Local Option Income Tax adopted in December. The tax was necessary to off-set the loss of property tax income to county general.

However, the council does not have a department budget of its own from which to pay the \$2,500 invoice. Council members decided to request payment from the legal line item in the commissioners' budget when the firm was retained.

Commissioners rejected the re-

quest unanimously. They indicated the council could pay the bill out of the Riverboat Gambling Fund.

#### Highway department

Highway engineer Paul Coutts recommended a delay in signing a proposed addendum to the contract with the Troyer Group to negotiate SR25 road relinquishments with the state on behalf of the county. He said he would talk to the Indiana Department of Transportation about proposed relinquishments when the Hoosier Heartland Highway is constructed before making a recommendation about endorsing the addendum.

Coutts announced the county-endorsed contract with Rumschlag Technical Services for bridge inspections was approved by INDOT. The measure will result in an 80 percent reimbursement from the

state for the services.

Leo Rumschlag reported the county owns 114 bridges which are required by law to be inspected every two years.

A bid for fuel from Excel Co-op and one from CPI Supply for materials for road work were approved unanimously.

Coutts reported the cost of doing highway business is increasing. He distributed a written comparison to help commissioners understand the impact of the rising costs. He cited one example as the cost of ice sand rising from \$3.50 per ton to \$5 per ton

"It all adds up," he said.

The highway head said the department is managing the funds available with the materials needed for road treatment. He said equip-  
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## Council re-organizes, sets regular meeting schedule

### Brown is president, Slavens vice

By Debbie Lowe  
Staff writer



Brown

It took little time for new Carroll County Council President Ann Brown to make her presence known at the Tuesday morning meeting. She took the reigns immediately and began to discuss necessary changes to facilitate the council's workload and the public's right to understand the proceedings and address the elected representatives.

After Slavens was named vice president of the group, Brown announced a plan for a new seating arrangement "so that no one (council member) has their back to the audience." No changes were immediately made, however. It was noted one of the two new council members, Scott Ayres, was present. Marion Huffer, was unable to attend the meeting due to recent health issues.

Council meetings will be held the third Tuesday of each month. Meetings in the last month of the quarter will be at 4 p.m. All other meetings will be at 8:30 a.m.

Council members decided by consensus to maintain the finance committee. Members will be appointed by Brown. Duties include providing preliminary annual budget preparation reports for the group, consulting with other counties, tracking income

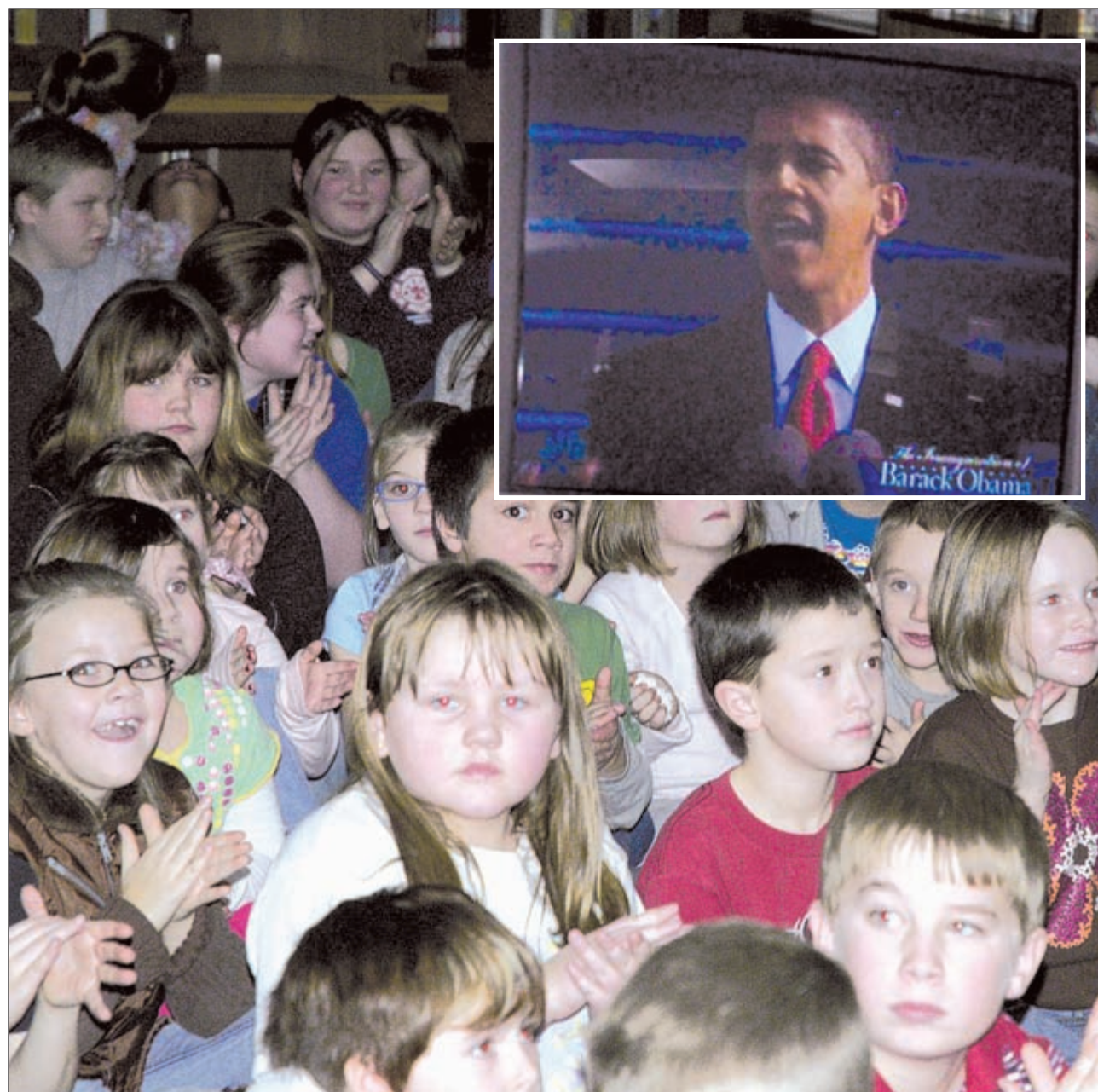
and expenditures, and maintaining a "running balance sheet" to help council members stay informed of the county financial status in a timely manner.

It was decided by consensus members would receive monthly financial reports from auditor Beth Myers at least three days prior to council meetings to allow members to understand the information and be ready for discussion. It was also decided one council member would lead the discussion about the financial reports at each meeting. Slavens will be discussion leader in February.

The council will consider adoption of a cumulative capital improvement fund budget, hiring a county manager, developing a council budget and hiring legal counsel for the council in 2009. Council members plan to review department budget line

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## Inauguration Day



Most school children in Carroll County had a chance to watch the swearing in of America's 44th president, Barack Obama, and/or pre and post inauguration activities on TV screens at school. Depending on the school, students watched the proceedings on TVs or big screens in their libraries, cafeterias, hallways, and classrooms. At DCHS, teachers had the option to take their students to the Little Theatre at noon to watch the events. The inauguration, Obama's speech, and other related topics were buzzed about all day on Tuesday, and discussions will no doubt continue in the classrooms this week and beyond. Comet photo by Jennifer Archibald

### Annual Performance Reports provide picture of school progress

Indiana school corporations are working with newspapers across the state to publish education report cards for local communities. Required for publication by Jan. 31 under state law, the Annual Performance Reports include the most recent data available on student test scores, graduation rates, school safety, teacher salaries, school corporation expenditures and more.

"From standardized test scores to graduation rates, we must always aim high and keep constant score of how Indiana schools are serving their students," said Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Bennett. "The annual performance reports offer an important opportunity for local communities to track their schools' progress."

The Annual Performance Reports are part of an ongoing effort to encourage Hoosiers to become more knowledgeable about their schools and for schools to become more accountable to the public they serve. To provide an even clearer picture of local schools, the Indiana Department of Education makes additional detailed information available year-round online at [www.doe.in.gov/schooldata](http://www.doe.in.gov/schooldata).

The School Performance Reports for Delphi Community, Carroll Consolidated, Rossville Consolidated, and Twin Lakes school corporations can be found in the second section on pages 3, 5, 6 and 7B.

## Carroll purchases three defibrillators

By Jennifer Archibald  
Staff writer

Carroll School Corporation has something in common with the Boy Scouts. They both adhere to the motto, "Be Prepared."

To that end, the corporation is taking steps to be prepared in case of an emergency.

At the Jan. 13 Carroll School Board meeting, superintendent John Sayers announced that three automated external defibrillators (AEDs) have been purchased for the schools. Two will be kept at the high school and one at the elementary.

Sayers said the staff will be trained in the use of these particular AEDs.

"About 15-20 staff members are CPR certified and are already trained in the use of

AEDs," Sayers said. He added that all bus drivers also are trained because they are CPR certified.

For several years now, at the annual joint meeting between students and the school board, students have pushed for the purchase of defibrillators.

Total cost for the recent AED purchase was \$4,954. Sayers said the purchase includes small pads for small children.

The corporation has two school safety specialists - junior-senior high school assistant principal Fred Schnarr and Flora Town Marshal Paul Redmon. Both have had special training for their school safety positions.

Schnarr said that almost all classrooms now have a flip chart that is a quick reference

for what to do in case of an emergency. He said he hopes to get a school safety committee organized.

Also in the interest of child safety, the corporation scheduled two programs. One was held in December, with the topic, "Cyber Bullying." The next one will be Jan. 26 and 27, on "Body Safety," preventing and identifying child molestation. The Jan. 26 program is for parents and the community, and the Jan. 27 program is for students. (See related story.)

In other business, the board approved an additional appropriation of \$1,040,000 for the Debt Service Fund. Sayers said this is for paying off the 2009 bond issue. He said money had already been built into the budget for repaying  
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Delphi Community High School presents

January 31 at 7:00 pm

in the High School Gymnasium

Tickets available at the DCHS Athletic Department

Floor Seats - \$10 for both adults and students

Reserved Lower Level Bleacher Seats - \$10 adult, \$5 student

General Admission Upper Level Bleacher Seats - \$10 adult, \$5 students

Call 765-564-3481 for more information.

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