

SPECIAL SESSION OF THE MOWER COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

November 16, 2007

The Mower County Board of Commissioners in and for the County of Mower, Minnesota, met in Special Session November 16, 2007 at 1:30 p.m. at the Courthouse in Austin, Minnesota.

All members present, viz: Dick Lang, Chair
Richard Cummings
Raymond Tucker
David Hillier
Dave Tollefson
Craig Oscarson, County Coordinator

The Mower County Board of Commissioners met in special session to discuss the potential sites for the proposed Jail / Justice Center.

The Commissioners offered the floor to the County Departments for comment. Judge Wellmann, Court Administrator Ball, Sheriff Amazi, Jail Administrator Roche, County Attorney Nelsen and Correctional Services Director King all addressed the Board. Their comments were that the downtown site scenario was not adequate in comparison to the greenfield site and a concern that the Law Enforcement Center was one block away from the Jail. Comments also indicated that it was time for a decision.

Mayor Stiehm read a prepared letter to the County Board dated November 16, 2007 thanking them for looking at a downtown location and their cooperation.

Commissioner Tollefson asked Pat Harty to comment on the issue of geo-thermal on a downtown location.

Pat Harty indicated that geo-thermal was an available option on the downtown site by using parking lot areas and space around the Paramount Theater. It would be more expensive than at the greenfield space due to horizontal borings but the costs was not significantly more.

Each Commissioner in turn commented in detail on each of the criteria for the comparison of Scenario 5, Option 9 in terms of cost, expansion and parking.

The Board recessed at 2:55 p.m. and reconvened at 3:12 p.m.

Each Commissioner continued in turn to discuss in detail on each of the criteria for the comparison of Scenario 5, Option 9 in terms of LEC co-location, security, operational efficiency, geo-thermal, urban renewal and Health and Human Services relocation.

Each Commissioner summarized their thoughts and comments regarding the location of the jail / justice center. Commissioner Tucker commented that the City has indicated that if the County builds in downtown Austin that there will be City support for the project. The County needs to know the extent of the support to give direction to the Board's decision making and indicated a need for the third block (Robbins) for the project.

Mayor Stiehm indicated that the Council had not discussed numbers in terms of support.

Commissioner Tucker stated that not all criteria issues were satisfactorily addressed in terms of parking, the cost differential, LEC relocate / remodel, energy, the Robbins block and there may be an issue of unforeseen soil conditions of the proposed site location.

Motion made by Commissioner Tucker, seconded by Commissioner Tollefson to direct County staff to compile a list of issues with the downtown location as determined by discussion and submit to the City of Austin to give the City an opportunity to address and respond to these issues prior to the County Board's meeting on November 27, 2007. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Tucker aye, Commissioner Cummings nay, Commissioner Tollefson aye, Commissioner Hillier nay and Commissioner Lang aye. Motion carried 3 – 2.

Motion by Commissioner Cummings, seconded by Commissioner Tollefson to adjourn the meeting at 4:31 p.m. until November 27, 2007 at 8:30 a.m. Motion carried.

THE MOWER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BY: _____
Chairperson

Attest:

By: _____
Clerk/Coordinator

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