

**CITY-COUNTY COMMON
MINUTES
TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2009**

Present: Dan Marvin, Chair; Robin Eschliman; Bob Workman; Ken Svoboda; Doug Emery; Bernie Heier; Ray Stevens Jon Camp and Mayor Chris Beutler.

Absent: Deb Schorr, Larry Hudkins, John Spatz, Jonathan Cook

Others Present: Gwen Thorpe, Deputy Administrative Officer, Russ Shultz, JoAnne Kissel and Marvin Krout.

Chair Marvin opened the meeting a 8:31 am.

1. Approval of Common Meeting Minutes of Monday, December 1, 2008.

Eschliman moved approval of the Common Meeting minutes of Monday, December 1, 2008, seconded by Emery. Motion passed 8 - 0

2. Year In Review and Recommendations from Weed Control Authority.

Russ Shultz Superintendent, Lancaster County Weed Control Authority distributed a Weed Awareness insert that is produced once a year by Lancaster County Extension Service Netline, (Exhibit A). He also distributed the 2008 Annual Report and Recommendations for the Combined Weed Program, (Exhibit B). Total of 5,386 inspections were made at 2,492 sites. with 1,972 violations found on 924 acres in all of 2008 for the combined weed program.

Forced controls increased this year from 115 in 2007 to 210. Shultz attributed the increase to foreclosures, due to the lag time before the bank takes control and no one is mowing. Due to this increase, the current expenses are exceeding budget. This shortage needs to be addressed in order for the weed abatement program to respond to the spring complaints. Shultz will research raising rates in order to increase revenue.

Noxious weed infestations were found on 309 sites and 322 acres as a result of 739 inspections on 375 sites. There were 17 infestations of Phragmites, the newly designated noxious weed. This is a very aggressive invasive weed but is still in its early stages of introduction in the county and city. An aggressive plan has been implemented to find the infestations and inform and assist landowners to eradicate this plant.

An amendment to BL338 would allow the option of posting the site as a legal notification of weed abatement violations in the City of Lincoln. Having the

option of posting would allow quicker response, eliminate the need for publishing notification in the paper and save \$1,000.00 - \$2,000.00. If this amendment passes the city ordinance would need to be changed.

There were a total of 1,663 weed abatement multiple violations. Twenty four (24) were City of Lincoln properties. Some of the city properties were allowed to exceed the weed abatement heights due to city budget restraints. Shultz expressed concerns regarding the creditability of the weed abatement program as it is based on uniform application of all properties if the city properties are allowed exceptions. He asked for criteria to be established if there are to be such exceptions. Svoboda offered to work with Shultz to set up a meeting with Public Works and Parks and Recreation to open dialog regarding this issue and to propose criteria back to the City Council.

3. Horse Park Update.

The project began last summer initiated by 2015 Vision Group, who was charged by the University to look at creative ways to deal with the impact of the campus development of the State Fair Park Grounds and find a new home for the race track. In the course of that discussion it became clear there were other potential partners in the city who have interest in the equestrian industry. One of those partners is the Lancaster County Event Center. The 2015 Vision Group feels the horse park could be an economic development tool for Lincoln and have met with the Visitors and Convention Bureau. They are currently in the stage of fund-raising in order to move to the next step, and are in the process of meeting individually with the partners and touring their facilities to understand their individual needs. There have been regular meetings with city staff who will be involved with the development process.

Workman questioned if they were aware of the progress being done at 84th and Havelock corner. They are working with Bob Hanson on helping to supervise that site plan and develop the cost for the infrastructure that needs to happen to retain the hotel developers. Emery questioned if there was no horse track would the project be viable. The feeling is the equestrian market will be there whether the horse track is or not.

4. City Council Correspondence Regarding Joint Receptionist.

The Lancaster County Commissioners received a letter from Robin Eschliman regarding the joint receptionist position. Heier asked for clarification from the City Council. Eschliman responded the letter was due to direction from the Mayors' Office to produce a 91% budget. In order for the City Council to accomplish this, they would probably need to eliminate this position. However, since then, the City Council have been advised by the mayor's office they would work with the Council to retain this position. Heier inquired whether this is still on the table. Eschliman stated she didn't believe the full cut would be, they might still be faced with some kind of cut. Heier inquired if the funding for this position was cut, where would the money come from to

fund that position. Eschliman responded it would be their problem. Heier stated if this position was eliminated from the City County Department, it could be utilized in the County Commissioners Office, however, that would mean the lone position left would be responsible for all City responsibilities. Eschliman agreed that would be a challenge.

5. Approval Process for Comprehensive Plan.

Heier suggested the City Council and the County Board review comprehensive plans prior to the Commons Meeting. This would speed up the process and allow each entity to be better organized at the Commons Meeting. Svoboda inquired when the comprehensive plan was due for review. Marvin Krout indicated they are required by federal mandate to do a major update every five years. The last time a major update was adopted was the end of 2006. The next major update will start sometime in 2010 in order to be completed by 2011. The planning department would be willing to meet separately with the County Commissioner and the City Council if this would help shorten the process at the Commons Meeting.

6. Approval of Common Meeting 2009 Schedule.

Svoboda moved to approve the schedule with the changes of June 1 and December 1, 2009, seconded by Camp. Roll called, motion passed 9-0

Heier made motion to adjourn meeting, seconded by Marvin. Roll called, motion passed 8 -0

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 am.

Minette Genuchi - Administrative Aide