

**MINUTES
CITY-COUNTY COMMON
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING, ROOM 113
MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2013
12:45 P.M.**

Present: County Commissioner Jane Raybould, Chair; City Councilman Carl Eskridge, Vice Chair; Larry Hudkins, Deb Schorr, Roma Amundson and Brent Smoyer, County Commissioners; Jon Camp, Roy Christensen, Doug Emery, Leirion Gaylor Baird and Trent Fellers, City Council Members

Absent: Mayor Chris Beutler and Jonathan Cook, City Council Member

Others Present: Cori Beattie and Tory Carkoski, County Clerk's Office

Advance public notice of the City-County Common Meeting was posted on the County-City Building bulletin board and on the Lincoln and Lancaster County, Nebraska, web sites.

The Chair noted the location of the Open Meetings Act and opened the meeting at 12:47 PM.

AGENDA ITEM

1 APPROVAL OF THE CITY-COUNTY COMMON MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 10, 2013

MOTION: Hudkins moved and Fellers seconded approval of the minutes of the September 10, 2013 City-County Common Meeting. Hudkins, Schorr, Raybould, Amundson, Smoyer, Gaylor Baird, Christensen, Emery, Eskridge and Fellers voted aye. Cook, Camp and Beutler were absent from voting. Motion carried 10-0.

Jon Camp arrived at 12:50 PM

2 LINCOLN LANCASTER COUNTY CONSOLIDATION TASK FORCE UPDATE- ANN POST, CHAIR

Raybold introduced Ann Post, Chair of the Lincoln-Lancaster County Consolidation Task Force.

Post provided a brief overview as to why the committee was formed. She said the charge was to make recommendations for consolidation and to identify areas of potential cooperation between the City and the County.

The Committee was specifically asked to review these four areas:

- 1 Public Works and County Engineer;
- 2 Lincoln Police Department and Lancaster County Sheriff;
- 3 City Clerk and County Clerk; and
- 4 City Attorney Misdemeanor Prosecution Division and Lancaster County Attorney.

Post noted the Committee meets twice a month and has been gathering information from department heads in an effort to learn more about the structure of various offices and to find possible areas where duplication may exist. She added that the Committee is aware that some areas of consolidation may need legislative action.

With regard to recommendations, Post said the Committee is working through each area separately and has formulated a couple of very "preliminary" recommendations. For example, she said the Committee felt that all of the City Attorney's Juvenile Court actions could be handled by the County Attorney under an interlocal agreement with the cost of the shifted workload being shared. The Committee felt this would be in the best interest of the children and their families, as well as the staff, since the County Attorney deals with the majority of the juvenile cases filed. She noted the City and County Attorneys, as well as the Juvenile Court Judges were all in agreement that this would be an efficient move.

Schorr inquired about the impact to staffing. Post said City Attorney Rod Confer indicated they have one person dedicated to Juvenile Court issues who spends approximately 50% of their time on such matters. Post reiterated that this is a "preliminary" recommendation and things such as funding, staffing levels, space needs, etc., would have to be addressed through the interlocal agreement.

In reviewing the Lincoln Police Department (LPD) and the Lancaster County Sheriff's Office (LSO), Post said the Committee broke their "preliminary" recommendation into two categories - short term and long term. She added there may be some efficiencies gained in the short term by consolidating training and training facilities, the firing range, vehicle maintenance and the service desks. Also in the short term, the City and County may want to pursue legislative changes which would enable further consolidation in the future.

Post said in the long term the Committee felt that a public safety organization should be formed which would include LPD, LSO and Lincoln Fire & Rescue. The Committee also discussed the possibility of this organization branching out to include Emergency Management, Corrections, the rural fire districts and other local law enforcement agencies. She said this would be a massive undertaking requiring an additional independent study, possibly funded by a group of community stakeholders. Post added the Committee thought an umbrella organization would provide cost savings, allow more flexibility and provide better service to Lincoln and Lancaster County residents.

It was noted that the Committee hopes to have their final report completed by January, 2014.

Hudkins said there is already a lot being done jointly between LSO and LPD and was pleased

that the Committee is looking at interlocal agreements for additional opportunities. He questioned if the Committee could be specific about eliminating duplicate personnel. Post said they are aware in speaking with LPD and LSO that some administrative positions could possibly be eliminated, although, nothing specific was discussed. Hudkins reminded the Committee to take into consideration the difference in pay grades between the City and the County, which might offset any potential cost savings. Post said the Committee is aware of such factors. She added that as the City of Lincoln continues to grow (it is currently around 90% of the County's population) having one organization may be beneficial to the combined community.

Gaylor Baird inquired if they have an overall bottom line on the potential savings or potential cost of this consolidation? Post replied that they do not have any figures at this time but this could be addressed by the independent study.

Camp asked whether there was discussion on a municipal county. Post stated the Committee discussed a municipal county extensively and several members feel that Lincoln and Lancaster County are moving in that direction with some of these recommendations serving as intermediary steps.

With regard to past consolidation, Raybould provided the example of the County Assessor and Register of Deeds (two County departments). She added that there was also discussion on city-county consolidation dating back to 1972, as well as during the 1996-97 County Consolidation Committee. She asked about any potential road blocks. Post reiterated that the Committee is aware of the Municipal County Act. They have also been educated on interlocal agreements and joint public agencies (JPAs). She emphasized that the Committee is very adamant about doing what is best for the City and County and will be forwarding recommendations accordingly, regardless of any perceived difficulties.

Gaylor Baird asked what benefits the public would see with an umbrella public safety organization. Post said in the short term, there would be one service desk. In the future, there would also be more even distribution of resources throughout the City and the County. Specialized training between the offices, so each understands the intricacies of the other, may also help find efficiencies that would better serve City and County residents

Esckridge asked if public schools have been part of the discussion. Post said they have not.

In response to Christensen's question, Post said the Committee is aware of the significant differences between the rural and urban areas - both in logistics and the duties and responsibilities of the agencies.

Gaylor Baird inquired whether there is a perception that resources between LPD and LSO are not properly distributed. Post said it comes down to different policing and having adequate resources to meet the specific area's needs.

Schorr asked if input has been solicited from cities within the County with regard to a

municipal government. Post clarified that the Committee is not recommending a push toward a municipal county-city government right now, although, individuals feel that might be where the area is headed in the future. She added no input had been received from the smaller communities.

Hudkins said the City and County considered the possible merger of the Clerks offices some years ago and he felt there would be a lot of synergy in doing so. Post said she was excited to hear this opinion as she, too, is interested in looking at this area further. She noted the Committee will first be reviewing the County Engineer and Public Works before moving on to the Clerks.

Raybould thanked Post for her leadership, the Committee members for their participation and the County Clerk's office, particularly Ann Taylor, for staffing the Task Force Meetings.

In response to Christensen inquiry, Post said the committee meets the second and the fourth Fridays of every month in Room 303 from 8:30-10:30 AM.

3 ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Amundson moved and Fellers seconded to adjourn the meeting at 1:27 PM. Amundson, Hudkins, Raybould, Schorr, Smoyer, Camp, Christensen, Emery, Eskridge, Gaylor Baird and Fellers voted aye. Beutler and Cook were absent. Motion carried 11-0.

Submitted by Tory Carkoski, County Clerk's office