The Steuben County Commissioners and the Steuben County Council met at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, August 14, 2018, in the Commissioners’ Room of the Steuben County Community Center. Present this day were Commissioners Ronald Smith, James Crowl and Lynne Liechty, Council Members, Richard Shipe, Ruth Beer, Jim Getz, Dan Caruso, Wil Howard, Ken Shelton and Linda Hansen.

Richard Shipe, County Council President, thanked the Commissioners for coming in and meet regarding some of the larger issues.

Mr. Shipe said that Crystal Dadura, HR Director and Jody Kinsey, USI, have proposed a one network provider to try and help insurance costs. Dan Caruso asked what other counties are doing. Crystal Dadura said that a lot of them are going to PPO and high deductible health plans and others are going to a one network option, so it is all over the place. Ms. Dadura said that DeKalb has nonsmoker versus smoker premiums and they have two (2) different plans with the same network. Jody Kinsey said that she would agree with that information. Ms. Kinsey said that Allen County and the City of Fort Wayne are currently evaluating single network options. She said that it is a difficult decision, but the discounts given by each independent facility system are too aggressive to ignore. She said that claims costs continue to escalate and pharmacy costs are out of control so something has to be done to begin slowing down the costs.

Lynne Liechty asked about the Grandfather Status. Jody Kinsey said that depending on the option that the County selects, Grandfather Status would most likely be lost. She said that the County could go one step further and negotiate and probably keep Grandfather Status, but any of the other two (2) options giving greater savings, the County would lose Grandfather Status.

Jody Kinsey said that the major thing with losing Grandfather Status is that the County would have to add mandated preventive services to the Plan as required by the Affordable Care Act. Ms. Kinsey said that it is a difficult number to put onto something because you don’t know how many people will take advantage of that. She said what they have seen in the past ten (10) years is that preventative services are less than one percent (1%) of the claims. She said that if someone gets the preventive care exam and something is caught early as opposed to late, there could potentially be hundreds of thousands of dollars of plan savings.

Ms. Kinsey said that you also have to add a third level of an appeal into the Plan. She said that there’s a maximum out of pocket limit that the Affordable Care Act says you have to stay within and right now that limit is $6,350.00. Currently, the County’s out of pocket limit is $1,000.00 so there is a lot of room to go and a lot of years to get to that step which increases every year with inflation. She said those are the main things that would have to be changed if the Grandfather Status is lost.

Jody Kinsey said that if the County moved away from offering two hospital systems and just went to the next level, eliminating the Lutheran and going strictly to Parkview, it would be about $112,000.00 of annual potential claims savings. She explained that she took three (3) years of data and divided it by thirty eight (38) months to come up with the $112,000.00 annual potential claims savings. Ms. Kinsey said that going to the next step would be closer to $200,000.00 of potential savings and then the last step would be closer to $300,000.00. Jody Kinsey said that she would not recommend going to the last step right out of the gate as that is what they call an exclusive provider organization plan and there is a lot more changes that would have to happen with the benefit plan. She said it is very confusing as a three (3) tier network discount arrangement would be created and that would not be her recommendation. Ms. Kinsey said that she would recommend going to either the Signature Care Exclusive or go to the Exclusive Elite which again would require the County to only change the out of network benefits but it would cause the loss of the Grandfather Status.

Jim Getz asked what the savings were if the County goes exclusively with Signature Care with exactly the same program. Jody Kinsey said that it would be $112,000.00 a year. Ms. Kinsey said that she took the total estimated savings of $1,371,663 compared to the $1,728,867 and she said that gave her $357,204 in difference.
then divided that by thirty eight (38) months and that gave her the $112,801.00, which is not on the paper handout. She said that the next step was $196,302.00 and then $300,221.00 on the last one.

Crystal Dadura said that a survey was sent to the Lutheran Insureds and she said that a lot of them just don’t know what the change would do.

Jody Kinsey said that going to step one does not change anything with the current plan. Ms. Kinsey said that if the County decides to go beyond step one, it changes the out of network. She said at the bottom grid in the green, shows if Steuben County goes to Signature Care Elite, as an example, they want a difference between the in and out of network coinsurance of thirty percent (30%), a deductible of $1,000.00 and a maximum out of pocket of $5,000.00. Again, she specifically stated that would only be changing out of network claims, the in network claims would be staying exactly the same as they are today. She said that they want it to hurt a little bit more if someone doesn’t use the network put in place because they are giving better discounts for that.

Kim Meyers asked if Ms. Kinsey calculated any figures or deductible change in the first plan so we could see the difference. Ms. Kinsey said that in the event that the $500.00 individual/$1,000.00 family deductible was changed to $1,000.00 individual/$2,000.00 per family, projected plan savings would be $87,887.00 over and above the $112,000.00. Ms. Kinsey said that if it was taken to a $1,500.00 individual/$3,000.00 family deductible estimated plan savings would be $162,522.00. Ms. Kinsey said that the bottom two (2) options are if the County implemented a high deductible health plan with a health savings account and a deductible of $3,000.00 the potential plan savings would be $270,000.00.

Jody Kinsey said that they did the benchmarking as well so the County could see how they compare with USI Midwest clients of groups of similar size, groups of public entities and groups of all sizes/all industries. Ms. Kinsey said that in the public sector, Steuben County is very competitive and in line with what most of the Midwest public institutions are doing relative to the deductible and 80/20 plan. She said that Steuben County’s out of pocket and office visits are a little low with prescriptions being a tad high. She said public entities, because of the nature of their business, recruiting, retention and taking care of their public employees, tend to still stay at a very good aggressive low benefit structure.

Ms. Kinsey said that the second page of the handout takes the premium information and breaks it down into the monthly contributions for employees. This shows what percentage of the premiums and what dollar amounts employees are paying relative to the cost and how that compares to other groups. She said that the employee only cost is very aggressive with Steuben County paying ninety eight (98%) of the costs. In looking at the percentages they are fairly even, but the costs are running a little bit higher on dependent costs. Jody Kinsey said that if any of the deductible changes are made, Grandfather Status would be lost.

Jody Kinsey said that the final piece of information in the packet is a surcharge based upon smoker/nonsmoker status. Ms. Kinsey said that it is not restricted to just tobacco/nontobacco, she said that she would like to see it paired with a population health management program where people are asked to simply get to the doctor and have their blood pressure, cholesterol, glucose, etc., tested. She said those things can help individuals manage their health if there was a surcharge based on health status. She said health outcomes from those visits would not be measured it would just be included in any type of surcharge that was considered so one group isn’t isolated. For instance, it would also include diabetic, obesity, etc. She said that her recommendation would be to not isolate it to one particular condition, but try to include the top four (4) or five (5) health issues to help offset future healthcare increases.

Jody Kinsey said that she wanted to point out that if it is decided to move forward with the single hospital system, USI will make themselves available to everyone. She said that they would be happy to sit down with everyone, Parkview will be here and a welcome clinic will also be set up for physician transitions. Ms. Kinsey said that there are things that they can do to get people access to care.

Dan Caruso asked the Commissioners to give Council a sense where they would like to see things go. Ronald Smith said that they have not yet had the discussion, but they would like to see the savings be significant to the County, but not disparage the employees. He said in that respect, they look at the two (2) levels to see which plan they should work towards. Dan Caruso said that attraction has been a struggle for the County and insurance is
a part of the piece. Mr. Caruso said that he thinks the County has carried this out as long as they can at the current level. The Commissioners said that they will discuss the matter on Monday and have it for Council on Tuesday. Ronald Smith said that it is a tremendous benefit to our present and future employees and asked Dan Caruso if he thought it was a deterrent if they do not come up with the proper plan. Commissioner Smith asked if people are looking for insurance as a number one (1) issue, or if it is wage or the workplace. Dan Caruso said that in looking at the age of the employees that are being hired, personally he would like to see the benefit be available more in the wage than in the benefits. He said that he doesn’t want to hurt the people that have been here and he doesn’t want to see a radical swing. Mr. Caruso said that the County has a great plan for the employees and it could give some to help on the other end. Dan Caruso said that even at the second or third tiers, it is still a really nice plan compared to the private sector.

Nikki Franklin, Peters Municipal, was introduced to discuss funding options for the potential Judicial Center Project. Ms. Franklin said that the County has two (2) financing options. The County can do a general obligation bond like was done in the past with Motorola. She said that has to fit within the debt capacity which is one third (1/3) of two percent (2%) which is currently a little over $14 Million. She said that the County doesn’t want to use all of that on one (1) project. Ms. Franklin said that if the project is over $15 Million and anything that is property tax backed, has to go to referendum. She said that they have not personally seen anything except schools be successful on the ballot.

She said if the County doesn’t want to use up the debt capacity, a lease rental financing option is available. She said that a building corporation would be created and it is a way to finance outside of the debt capacity. She said that the building corporation will issue the debt and the County will pay lease payments from either the property tax debt levy or income tax. Ms. Franklin said if it is done through income tax, you are not subject to a referendum. She said if income tax is use, they can attempt to fit it within the existing income tax model; however, she is not sure there is enough capacity to do a major project without raising the income taxes.

Nikki Franklin said that the County could raise income taxes. A couple years ago they simplified the income tax and it is no longer certified shares in CEDIT. It is now expenditure rate and within the County’s expenditure rate there is now certified shares, public safety and CEDIT. Ms. Franklin said that Steuben County is at one and a half percent (1.5%) with those three (3) combined and could go up to two and a half percent (2.5%), so there is a one percent (1%) ability to raise income tax to fund a project.

Ms. Franklin said that in 2018 a Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility income tax was passed. She said that it is two tenths of a percent (.2%) and it goes straight to the County. All other income taxes, unless a special one is obtained through legislation, it has to be shared. She said that is the most efficient way to fund a major project; however, for Steuben County it only provides about $1.5 Million of annual revenue and that isn’t going to fund a $15 Million project.

She said that if the County has to raise income taxes, the most efficient way to fund the project would be using the Correctional Facility and CEDIT in order to have the lowest tax rate to fund the maximum project.

Ms. Franklin said that out of bond proceeds the County would have to pay capitalized interest if the lease rental route is taken because you cannot pay a lease until the building is able to be occupied. She said that if income tax is used, an annual coverage will have to be done. Whoever buys it will want to see that the County’s annual revenue can cover principal and interest payments, plus twenty five percent (25%). She said that on a $20 Million project, $2 Million of annual revenue will be needed to use income tax.

Lynne Liechty said that she and Jim Getz discussed some things with the Sheriff’s Department. Jim Getz said that he has a ten (10) minute presentation on another option. Mr. Getz said that he spent some time with Elevatus Engineering which is the company that bought Schenkle & Schultz.

Rick Shipe said that he would like to hear the ideas, but this Board’s concern is whether funding can be found for the options that the Commissioners decide upon, more so than having an actual input on what project it is going to be. Ronald Smith said that if Mr. Getz has done his due diligence and he thinks it is pertinent at this point in time, he would like to hear the presentation.
Jim Getz said that he was an advocate of going up another story above the Jail because when that was built 25 years ago, it was engineered to go up. Mr. Getz said he met with Michael Gouloff, Doug Dukes, Cory Deitz, and Cory Miller, two of which are owners of Elevatus Architecture, the old Schenkle and Schultz. He said Doug Dukes, the Justice Specialist, is a retired Highway Patrolman/Noble County Sheriff and he knows the Judicial System. Mr. Getz thought he was meeting with one (1) person, but he ended up meeting with four (4).

Jim Getz said that he found out a new jail costs $400.00 per square foot, new high school $400.00 per square foot, parking garage $15,000.00 per parking space and a new courthouse $300.00 per square foot. He said that during the meeting they discussed different things and put a stop to some things as well. He said that he asked them what the best option was. Mr. Getz said that going up one story on the jail is an option, but is not the best option because of sky lights and keeping up with daylight requirements for the prisoners is a concern. He said that once they go up, they are automatically subject to possible new codes which would possibly cost a lot.

Jim Getz said that during the meeting, they said that the best option would be to extend from the Annex, where EMS is currently located, to the south. This was the best option because it would extend the current basement, add parking for Judges and staff and it would reserve existing jail space for future expansion if needed. It would also offer consolidation of the complexes, connectivity, security which is partially in place and engineering fees would be reduced. Mr. Getz said that Elevatus Engineering would be more than happy to come to a Committee Meeting and talk about some of the options.

Mr. Getz said that he personally measured the courtrooms, spoke to the judges and had a conversation with Jeremy Musser. He said that Elevatus Engineering just needs to know what is wanted for courtrooms and what is needed in terms of square footage. He said that he was given a benchmark number of around $7.5 Million, depending on how big the courtrooms are. Lynne Liechty said she wanted to point out that would be only moving the Criminal Courts to the Jail and keeping EMS. She said the Family Courts would be remodeled and completely redone in the current Courthouse. Jim Getz said that would depend on the square footage of the courtrooms and what they could work into the existing Courthouse. He said again, it’s just an option and they would be more than happy to come and present to the Committee. Mr. Getz was pretty confident that $7.5 Million would do it.

Judge Allen Wheat thanked the Council and Commissioners for keeping toward the necessity of remodeling the Historic Courthouse and recognizing the need for expansion in the future. Judge Wheat said he hears a lot of dialog back and forth and he feels that this is being made too complex. He it needs to be determined how much money we willing to kick in on this project. Second, where is this project going to take place at? Then how many square feet of space is the Commission willing to give up? Lastly, what is going to be put in this new facility? Judge Wheat said that three (3) full size courtrooms are needed. Magistrate Coffey has a small courtroom that only seats six (6) person juries, so he is not able to preside over a major felony case. He said that the Clerk needs to be contiguous or very close to the courtrooms, the Prosecutor needs to be close and so does Community Corrections. Judge Wheat said that it would be nice to have a space for Public Defenders to sit down and chat with their criminal clients as well. He asked for an absolute drop dead ceiling as far as funding the project is concerned. Judge Wheat said that whatever monies are available, must be used on the current beautiful courthouse to bring it up to speed and make it ADA compliant.

Wil Howard said that he heard ‘wants’ more than he heard ‘needs.’ Jim Getz said that he would go back to the Judges and ask how big of a courtroom they think they need. Judge Wheat said that he doesn’t want to waste his time giving his wants when there is a monetary limit. He asked to know how much money is going to be spent on the project, where it will be located and then he will sit down and go into detail regarding what they truly must have.

Dan Caruso said that he has an idea of where they could absorb a project of this size and that $7 Million mark was definitely a ceiling for him, not $10 Million, not $12 Million, not $15 Million. He said whatever the ceiling this body agrees to then the Commissioners have to go back and figure out the needs.

Linda Hansen said that regarding the issue of bonding versus increased income tax, she is vehemently opposed to having to raise income tax. She said that this County has been settled with enough tax. She said that no Council Member or Commissioner wants to have to deal with the issue of bonding, but they’ve been very careful about never having more than two (2) bond issues floating at the same time. Ms. Hansen said that currently there is one (1) bond outstanding at the moment and her opinion is that if they bonded, everybody pays and if you go income
Dan Caruso said that the Courthouse has been on their minds for a long time. Mr. Caruso said that they chose a shorter amortization on the radio bond so the time that the project would get bonded, that debt would be half way paid off already. Jim Getz said that he agrees in not creating any new taxes.

Judge Randy Coffey said that we don’t know what we are doing and after three years we still don’t know what we are doing. Judge Coffey said that we are not experts in this and we still haven’t found someone to say this is the most efficient and complete use that we can make of a new building and save the most money. He said that Mr. Daniel was a very nice guy, but all he did was a poll of what everyone wanted. Judge Coffey said that we are all guessing, we are really out of direction and not getting anywhere close to what we need. He said that he doesn’t know the solution, but he does know that Mr. Daniel didn’t provide it to us and he thinks we are still walking blind.

Judge Coffey said that it is the Judge’s genuine worry that the County is going to get sued and what happened with the Jail will happen with the Courthouse. He said it won’t be what we need or what is the most efficient, it is going to be what some other judge in Fort Wayne or South Bend says we must have.

Ronald Smith said that one of the things that he hoped to get from this meeting was the ball park figure for the project. Richard Shipe said that if this Council is ready to make that ceiling based upon some of the information that was discussed today already, we already know pretty close what the ceiling is going to be in order to handle and not hurt the County. Wil Howard asked Nikki Franklin if the $14,770,000.00 included what is outstanding currently. Ms. Franklin said that figure does take into account what is already outstanding currently, so as of today, the County could issue bonds for that. She said that the max is closer to $20 Million but she deducted the Communication Bond from that amount. She said that the County can do the lease rental and it would not go towards that tax cap.

Dan Caruso said that he is not a part of the Courthouse Study Committee and he would hate to take a stab at a number without a firm telling them what is realistic. Richard Shipe said that the concern all along was trying to get close to a number but is it time to work backwards and give it a number to go by and then make it fit. Judge Randy Coffey said that you do not go and buy a house until you know how much your budget is. Dan Caruso said that without being a part of this Committee, the only thing he can do is work with a budget.

Wil Howard said that number puts us at about 75% of our capacity based on current outstanding obligations. He said that is a pretty safe number to work with, a little less would be better, but it’s still safe. Lynne Liechty asked what the number was. Mr. Howard said that the $7.5 Million is not out of line. Dan Caruso said that whoever is doing the engineering, design and cost estimates, tell them that we would like to be at $6.5 - $7 Million and see what they come up with and then we can decide where to go from there. Wil Howard said that $10 Million is pushing the envelope. Dan Caruso said that for $10 Million we would go with a 20 year amortization and if we are at $6.5 Million so we’d shorten up the amortization so the monthly debt service would be the same, we’d just get it paid off faster.

Linda Hansen said that all of the numbers that have been presented have pretty well taken care of us investing in a parking garage. She said that we own areas of parking capacities and that is just overboard. Dan Caruso said that is just a luxury that would be nice to afford someday.

Ronald Smith said now that a consensus of approximate costs has been reached, the Commissioners need to either go with the thoughts of Martin Riley and some of the things that they have submitted or back up and take a more serious look at the Masonic Lodge or a building that would be located in the next block north. He said that several counties have stepped outside of the box and put up new facilities and it has cost them a lot less than trying to attach, renovate or put band aids on things and try to make it work. Commissioner Smith said that if the numbers are ever crunched on the Community Center to see what it has cost to maintain, that dollar we used to buy this building is the most expensive dollar we have ever spent. He said that we need to take a serious look at the block right next to us because it has close proximity to the Jail, to the Courthouse and we may not be able to attach everything unless there is some sort of passage way. Ronald Smith said that if the Courthouse is added on to, the
aesthetics would go away. He believes that a new separate building with proper HVAC and all of those other
considerations should be considered.

Lynne Liechty said that her preference is adding on to the current Jail. She said that we still have to be
ADA compliant at the Courthouse. She said that $7.5 Million will spend very quickly, particularly if a lot of
consultants are included on the project. She said that perhaps builders and architects that are interested in the project
can quote on it instead of getting anymore consultants involved. Richard Shipe said that County Council is trusting
the three (3) Commissioners to do that.

Ronald Smith said that they will reconvene the Judicial Committee and begin to try to get feedback.

Ken Shelton said that he has been an advocate of looking at the Masonic Building and that entire sector.
He said it seems to make sense to him for more reasons than one. He said that we are in Angola, this is the County
seat, and they are very interested in what we are doing Mr. Shelton said that he thinks that the City of Angola
should be a part of this Committee and be a part of what we decide to do.

He said that there has been discussion about the Masonic Building and he’s talking to a couple contractors
as well. He said that the possibility of taking those structures that already exist may not be as monumental as we
might think. He said that the contractors independently told him that if renovation is done correctly, then you won’t
have any more exposure to problems. Ken Shelton said that Trine University has renovated beautiful old buildings
and they are getting ready to do another renovation to the Engineering Building. Mr. Shelton said that it appears to
him that possibility has been ignored and maybe it should be looked into to see what is involved. He said that
maybe the County should talk with the City of Angola to see what their commitment would be on a project like this.
Ken Shelton said that we have to be realistic and flexible in the numbers.

James Crowl said that Martin Riley seemed like a nice choice, but the first thing they did was throw the
Masonic Building under the bus. There were other engineering firms that were very excited about it. He said that
he thinks that a number should be taken to several different firms and tell them this is what we have and get their
opinions.

Rick Shipe said that the $6.5 Million to $7 Million was the low number and $10 Million is getting to the
painful number that we can maintain, but the $14 Million mark that is beyond our means. Dan Caruso suggested to
see what could be produced that solves problems at $7 Million and if that figure doesn’t solve the problems, then we
would have to come back and figure out what it is going to take. He said that the lower number is going to make
them look harder at what other options are available in the Community.

James Crowl asked for the Council to give the Commissioners a number. Dan Caruso made a motion that
they target a new Courthouse Project funded through bonded debt, not to exceed $7.5 Million for the investigative
stages of the project. He also said that he wants to include fixing the Old Courthouse. Linda Hansen said that fixing
the old Courthouse is the reason why she has not been pushing on the Cumulative Capital Fund because there is $3
Million in there that she assumed would be going to the Courthouse so she doesn’t know if that weight should be
added to this project. Richard Shipe asked that Dan Caruso reiterate his motion. Dan Caruso made a motion to have
a target of $7.5 Million of bonded debt for a new Courthouse/Renovation. Kim Meyers said that the current motion
is to target $7.5 Million for a bond issue to fund either a new Courthouse Building or Reno Project of the
Courthouse. Wil Howard seconded that motion and the motion carried with six (6) ayes and one (nay).

Ken Shelton said that he is glad to see flexibility being built in through other sources that the County has
available, but he is concerned that it is vague. He said he feels that when it comes down to it, we are committing
ourselves, we are looking at a $10 Million project and it will be tied up in a bond. James Crowl said that if they
have a number to work with, they can go to several engineering firms with no money up front and tell them this is
what we have, what can you do for us? If the Commissioners have to come back, that’s fine, but right now they
need something to go on.

Rick Shipe said that the RES Polyflow Agreement looks straight forward. If and when the County ever
gets paid back from RES Polyflow, the County may consider loaning the Town of Ashley money to do their
infrastructure for the project. Ronald Smith said that a revised copy will be forthcoming because the address for the County is incorrect.

Kim Meyers said that somewhere in the wording it says that RES Polyflow and the Town of Ashley are asking that this Agreement be contingent on the funding being there for the Town of Ashley. Ms. Meyers said that we don’t have the money back yet, so County Council can’t appropriate it. She asked if County Council needs to pass something with regard to this Agreement or give verbal approval. Lynne Liechty said that there is a private Agreement with the Town of Ashley based on that. Richard Shipe said that he would feel more comfortable not entering in to this Agreement because without the payment and several other things, this isn’t going to happen. The Commissioners said that the Agreement was already approved based upon RES Polyflow paying it back.

Ronald Smith said that he asked Jay Schabel once the loan is repaid and the money is loaned to Ashley, when construction would start. Jay Schabel said that construction would start in September, so they are looking for expediency. Richard Shipe said that RES Polyflow is holding the dominoes right now and at this point it would be September until it comes before County Council.

Dan Caruso said that point three (3) on page two (2) talks generally about a loan that we shall give to the Town of Ashley and he doesn’t know if the Commissioners or Donald Stuckey have come up with the terms of the loan. James Crowl said that it comes back from the TIF District in approximately seven (7) years. Dan Caruso asked if the Town of Ashley has come up with detailed costs of the infrastructure to come up with the requested loan amount. He said that he would like to make sure that the County is not lending more than the cost of the project and that they have the capacity for any overages to satisfy it. Lynne Liechty said that the Town of Ashley has $600,000.00 of their own money to add to this; however, she needs to get the most recent numbers.

Dan Caruso thought that Steuben County took a risk and should get something in return.

Jim Getz said that the County should see some benefit. Linda Hansen said we should, but we need to find out whether or not, as a government, if we would be allowed to benefit or not because TIF Districts are different. Ronald Smith said that it is going to be Ashley’s road and infrastructure which would support anything that might happen there and he thinks it should remain the Town of Ashley’s. Richard Shipe said that he is disappointed that DeKalb County won’t help with this project.

County Council and the Commissioners discussed the Ambulance Billing Services Contract. Commissioner Smith said that the Contract includes the billing process which relieves the County from having to do it. He said that in cost analysis, this was the proper thing to do, but the accuracy is even more important. Lynne Liechty said that the important things in this Agreement is the oversight it offers, software and everything is the responsibility of the billing company. She said that they also handle the training of the employees and teach them how to use the new software. She said that the County does not pay for the software as it is included in the 5.75% of the funds that have been received, not the non-collectibles. Commissioner Liechty said that it is a two (2) year contract and if we are unhappy in ninety (90) days, we can get out of it.

Lynne Liechty said that she really likes that everything is updated and current and that the training was getting fairly excessive. She said that this company is also local and if we need help, they can be here. Kim Meyers said that she spoke with the Vice President of the company yesterday trying to figure out the banking side of it. She said that it sounds like they are on good terms with the State Board of Accounts and is well established with Indiana Counties. Lynne Liechty said that the County’s payback with this company is much faster than what we are currently getting.

Kim Meyers said that they also recommend going with another collection agency for any bills over the ninety (90) day period.
Richard Shipe asked if any employees lost their positions with this Contract. The Commissioners told him that no positions were lost. Dan Caruso thought that the County should be realizing some savings benefit by not having time allocated to doing the billing. Jim Getz said that the way he understood it, the EMT’s will be entering the information. Lynne Liechty said that since there is oversight, those inputs will be checked so if there is a question, the company will come back to the EMT’s. Dan Caruso asked if the Commissioners have asked Cameron for recommendations on billing and coding. Lynne Liechty said that Cameron told her that they use an outside source for their billing and this company was highly recommended, particularly for County Government.

Ruth Beer said that they have talked about purchasing two (2) homes and she asked the Commissioners where they were on the process. James Crowl said that one already sold and the price was raised on the second home. Ruth Beer said that we may need to take advantage of some things even though we don’t currently have a purpose for the property. She said that she’s not trying to throw money away, but when it comes to real estate in the correct areas, it makes a big difference. James Crowl said that house would be a real asset to Community Corrections.

Kim Johnson, Assessor, asked for guidance from the Commission Board and County Council. Ms. Johnson said that she needs to know if she should pursue an audit of Personal Property Tax. She said that she presented it to the Commissioners last year and they decided to not pursue the audit; however, it is coming back around. Ms. Johnson said that she spoke to other Assessors and they are finding money. She explained that they go out and audit the personal property tax returns for the last two (2) years, not the current year. Ms. Johnson said that they look for machinery, equipment and assets that are being incorrectly reported. She said that if someone is doing it right, there isn’t an issue, but if someone is doing it wrong, that is what the audit would find. She said that DeKalb County has found over $150,000.00 of mistakes in their County alone.

The Council and the Commissioners asked how much it would cost to have it done. Kim Johnson said that the fee is 50% of the findings and the other 50% would come back to the County. She said that they would not take more than 50%. Another company charged a flat fee for whatever they found. Ms. Johnson said that one of the vendors is one that she knows and loves and they would keep track of their hours, what is collected and then they would calculate an hourly fee and only take half.

Richard Shipe said he really doesn’t want to hear anymore. Kim Johnson asked if she should pursue it further. Richard Shipe said that he thinks this is someone’s busy work to create a job. Ms. Johnson said that it is an audit that she is supposed to be doing in house but she doesn’t have time for it.

She said for example, if you have a piece of machinery or equipment in a big industry that has cement under it because it is a standing machine and the machine jams all of the time, the cement is not part of the building, it is part of the machine. She said when you having piping and electricity for the machine that isn’t part of the building, it’s part of the machine. Richard Shipe said that he would argue that because when that machine is moved, that concrete is staying, so it isn’t part of the machine. Kim Johnson said it is necessary for the machine. Richard Shipe said that there is a lot of things necessary. Ms. Johnson said she knows that, but those are the kinds of things the audit would look for.

Lynne Liechty said that the Commissioners discussed this before and they said no. Ronald Smith said that they perceived it as a nitpicking annoyance. Kim Johnson said that she was just searching for guidance. Linda Hansen said she thinks the answer is no. Ms. Johnson said that is all she needed to hear. She said she would pursue more companies because there are several more that can do this.

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August 14, 2018 Commissioners’ & Council Joint Meeting Continued

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