

Great Game Huddle Notes

September 5th, 2017

READ ALL ABOUT IT - PART 2

Today we continued our open discussion about current Greene County decisions and issues that have appeared in the news lately. It is important to remember that when a reporter sits in on a Commission Daily briefing discussion, that it is just that a...**discussion**. We covered a lot of ground today. Some highlights:

Tax Initiative

Once the sales tax initiative is passed, an oversight committee will be set up to oversee how the money is spent. The question was asked, "How will the passing of a half cent tax actually affect me?" Basically, you would see a .50 increase for every \$100 you spend. A breakdown of how sales tax is divided between state and local entities can be viewed by going to the Financial Dashboard link on the Greene County website.

As we get closer to the November 7th election, Greene County employees will begin receiving important information in order to be able to effectively answer questions asked of them regarding the sales tax initiative. Please remember that we cannot campaign either for or against the tax while we are "on the clock".

Location of New Jail

The proposed site on the west side of Boonville is the most cost-efficient location to build a new jail facility. A preliminary estimate came in at \$37.8 million. The four story facility would accommodate an additional 576 inmate beds for a total of 1,176. If the tax is approved, the properties known as the Hogan Building and Building Operations would be demolished. A skywalk would connect the new facility to the existing Justice Center. Demolition is not included in the cost estimate. The new jail would house medical, laundry and kitchen facilities, therefore freeing up more space for beds in the Justice Center. It is cheaper to build these facilities new rather than updating the current facilities to accommodate the extra inmates. The cost estimate is for construction only, and does not include future operating expenses.

Raises for Sheriff Employees

The salary structure of Jail and Sheriff's employees is an acute problem. Law-enforcement turnover is off the charts. Not only are seasoned employees leaving to go elsewhere for more money, new employees can't even be hired to replace them because current salaries are not attractive. The Sheriff's office currently has 24 positions unfilled in all areas including the jail, the records division, and evidence storage area. The county commission voted unanimously to grant two step increases for Sheriff's employees. This was a very difficult decision for the commissioners but a decision they felt necessary to attract good candidates for law enforcement positions.

A link is provided to the Commission Corner each week as part of our Huddle preview. Questions and comments can be directed anonymously to the County Commission through this link, or can be placed in the box located outside room 212.