

Board of County Commissioners of Lincoln County

Agenda for October 25, 2012 Special Meeting

2:00 Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance

2:05 The Board will discuss CDOT's proposed changes to their statewide regional boundaries and the effects it will have, what alternatives to suggest, and the issues to address in their comment letter to CDOT

1. Old business
2. New business

The Board of Lincoln County Commissioners met at 2:00 p.m. on October 25, 2012, for a special meeting to discuss CDOT's proposed changes to statewide regional boundaries and the effects it will have, what alternatives to suggest, and the issues to address in their comment letter to CDOT. The following attended: Chairman Steve Burgess, Commissioners Gary Beedy and Ted Lyons, County Administrator Roxie Devers, and Clerk to the Board Corinne M. Lengel.

Chairman Burgess called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance. The following people attended the CDOT discussion: Travis Miller, Dennis Gilbert, Wayne Brown, Terry Hubbell and Bob Johnson with CDOT, Joe Kiely and Dave Stone with the Town of Limon, Kit Carson County Commissioners Dave Hornung and Gary Koop, Cheyenne County Commissioner Jerry Allen, and Will Bublitz with the local newspapers.

Mr. Burgess opened the conversation by asking Travis Miller to explain the proposal to change the CDOT boundaries. According to information from CDOT Chief Engineer Tim Harris, the purpose of the effort is to improve customer service and provide better continuity with existing Transportation Commission Districts and Transportation Planning Regions. Travis explained that CDOT's proposal is to move from six regions to five; thus, half of Lincoln County would be in Region 2 and the other half in Region 4. The headquarters for Region 2 is in Pueblo, possibly resulting in a longer response time for the southern half of the county. Travis said that they would like support to keep the eastern counties together, adding that if the commissioners will support the plan, there may be a better chance of the state granting the request. He commented that COG needs to be involved, too.

Mr. Burgess said he was concerned with Elbert County, as this may cause problems for them as well since the maintenance shop in Limon services Agate and Matheson. Travis said they would prefer to have Cheyenne, Kit Carson, all of Lincoln and all of Elbert County in the same region. Mr. Burgess also commented that the shop in Punkin Center would then have to be a part of the Pueblo region.

Mr. Lyons stated that he couldn't find anything good about the proposal and Mr. Beedy wanted to know if there was an advantage to remaining in Region 1. Mr. Kiely said his concern with that is that Region 1 is mainly the metro area, and being a part of Region 4 may at least give Lincoln County a bigger voice. He added that he feels the effort right now needs to be in slowing the process down, and recommended sending letters to request an extension of time. The comment period ends on November 2, so Mr. Kiely suggested sending at least an electronic request today for the extension, but to begin immediate work on the response for the comment period, in case the request is not granted, or even ignored.

Travis said that he had asked Tony DeVito what the reasoning was behind the proposal and was told that it would be solving problems for the metro area, where most complaints are based out of. He added that he had also been told, however, that the boundaries may be flexible, so it was imperative to get some comments in regarding that.

Joe Kiely felt it was a huge decision to be making in such a hasty manner, considering not only the physical and political problems it may cause, but the fact that Jo Downey would be reporting to, and making grant applications for, three different regions.

The comment was made that three or four of the eastern counties make up ten percent of the state's highways, which was mentioned as a point for the comment letter. Mr. Kiely also added that it would be good to include coming together regarding long term revenues for transportation. He did say that the bad part of keeping I-70, I-76, and the northern portion of I-25 all in the same region is that that region would then have the highest level of expensive rights-of-way to maintain.

Dave Stone asked if there was any particular reason to choose one region over the other, and Travis said that their main reasoning for wanting to be in Region 4 was to keep the Transportation Planning Region all together. Travis asked how much time the commissioners were considering requesting as an extension, as it would be good for all the counties to ask for the same time period. The decision was made to request an extension until December 31, 2012.

Ms. Devers will put together several points for the comment period letter and will forward that to Mr. Burgess, but will send an e-mail today requesting an extension until December 31. After further discussion, it was agreed that she would also contact Elbert County to see if they would be interested in joining the effort, and Mr. Beedy asked if letters should be sent to the Transportation Commission and the governor, as well. Mr. Kiely said it certainly wouldn't hurt to include the Transportation Commissioner.

When the group had gone, Mr. Burgess said that he had a matter of new business; he'd received a complaint from Gary Withington regarding noise coming from the new NextEra wind towers near his property. Mr. Burgess said he checked on it and it seemed not to be too bad, but then he received another call from Mr. Withington this morning telling him the noise had been better, but then gotten worse again. Mr. Burgess said he talked to Land Use Administrator John DeWitt about the noise decibel level in the land use regulations, and was told that it cannot exceed sixty decibels, which is no louder than a normal human conversation. He said he had contacted NextEra, but no one had responded, so he will go and find someone to speak with tomorrow. He added that it might be beneficial to purchase a hand-held sound meter in order to test the noise level. Mr. Beedy stated that he felt that the NextEra towers are definitely louder than those made by Vestas.

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned until 9:00 a.m. on October 30, 2012.

Corinne M. Lengel, Clerk to the Board

Steve Burgess, Chairman