



8/5/19

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Because of the pending litigation, we have been advised against speaking to specifics related to the courthouse. However, I do want to address some misinformation. As board chairman, I was briefed on the courthouse settlement offer in early May. Contrary to allegations, just two weeks later, the full board was briefed by the acting states attorney, during the May board meeting. The full board was then briefed again during the June board meeting, by the outside counsel handling the case. To be clear, the members of the county board have been aware of the settlement offer for quite some time, and have been advised by counsel of the legal consequences of acceptance.

I would also like to clarify some other governmental matters that I believe there is a general lack of understanding about. When the county board votes on an action item, it becomes a binding piece of legislation. Whether it's passing an annual budget, appropriation of funds, or entering into an Intergovernmental Agreement with another entity. We cannot re-vote or break our contracts simply because there are new board members or because an individual changes their mind. Such action makes the county subject to lawsuits.

Furthermore, we as elected officials realize that we will not always agree with one another, nor will our constituents always agree with our decisions. That being said, we must act based on the best information available to us, and in the long-term best interest of the county overall, while considering the full scope of our responsibilities. County residents should expect no less.

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COUNTY BOARD**

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We have had to retain outside legal counsel because WE are being sued. Our County, our Public Building Commission, our Board, and our County-Wide Elected Officials did not bring forth any recent litigation. Additional legal expenses have been incurred because of outside lawsuits, which we have a duty to defend. Any deviation from previous votes, including policy, Intergovernmental Agreements, and contracts, would only subject our county and the taxpayers to further litigation costs. Again, this is not specific to any situation, but an explanation of how our local governing body functions.

With that said, we believe in the hard work and counsel of our attorneys, who are currently defending not only our county, but also the Peoria County Circuit Judge's initial decision related to the courthouse.

We look forward to a quick decision, and continuing our work in the long-term best interests of the county and all its residents.

Included with this release, is a copy of the brief submitted by our attorneys, to the Appellate Court.

Thank you,

Richard H. "Quijas" Brunk
County Board Chairman

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