

LETTER TO THE EDITOR: Report to the People #9

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Report to the People #9

As County Board District Three Representative, in an effort to improve government transparency I provide Report to the People to local papers. I hope you find the information useful.

Worden Issues

Courtesy Visit February 10: Many thanks to Mayor Preston Hall and to City Engineer Walter Blotovel for explaining ways I might best serve the people of Worden and the surrounding area as their County Board District Three Representative. Mayor Hall and Mr. Blotovel provided me information on three (3) projects that would improve Worden's infrastructure or could create jobs. Mayor Hall provided me a tour of project sites by car.

Follow Up Meeting with Chairman Prenzler February 10: Afterwards, I met with County Board Chairman Kurt Prenzler and briefed him on Worden's needs. I scheduled a meeting for Chairman Prenzler, me, and with Mayor Hall and Mr. Blotovel for Friday, February 17.

Meeting February 17

On February 17, I met with Chairman Prenzler, Mayor Hall and City Engineer Walter Blotovel who provided us a car tour. We discussed specific plan to bring more jobs to Worden, a curb and gutter improvement just south of old Worden, and safety issues related to a narrow road used by Emergency Vehicles and large trucks east of Worden. Chairman Prenzler and I will follow up on these issues and report back to the Mayor.

Highland Issues

Flood Water Grants: I assisted with the interface between Madison County Community Planning and Development and the Highland City Economic Development Office reference grants for FEMA related issues. Kristen Poshard and Lisa Peck have developed a good working relationship to assist with Highland flood water issues. Many thanks to both for keeping me informed of their progress.

Proposed Highland Senior Citizens' Center: I attended a meeting Mayor Michaelis and city staff, and Chairman Kurt Prenzler to discuss creation of the Highland Senior Citizen/Community Center on Friday, February 17. The Weinheimer Senior Citizen's Group led by Elmer Emig provided immensely valuable information. Interested parties will research possible sites for building or purchasing a usable and convenient structure in Highland. We discussed fund raising and grants but, additional planning remains on hold until we determine a possible site and general plan for the building. Chairman

Prenzler and I will work to make appropriate resources available. The next organizational meeting is scheduled for 10 am Friday, March 17, at the Highland City Hall.

County Board Meeting February 15

Law Suit

On February 15, two minutes before the Board Meeting, County Board Member Parkinson filed a law suit alleging the County Board failed to honor the provisions of the Open Meetings Act. I met with States Attorney Tom Gibbons on February 17 to discuss the suit. Mr. Gibbons, who represents the board, stated he believed the suit has no merit. The timing of the lawsuit seems unfortunate as it sparked postponement of an important agenda item that had unanimously passed the Governmental Relations Committee.

No Vote to Proposed Variance

I voted against a variance which would have allowed a manufacturing concern to operate in an agricultural area. I voted against it because; (1) the business desiring a variance provided no definite sketch or plan of the building, (2) a lack of information concerning possible impact to neighbor's property values, and, (3) the knowledge that over 50% of the neighbors didn't want the building constructed. I felt an approval of Resolution Z- 16-0063 would be unfair to neighbors. Given a possible harm to neighboring property values, I believed approval would fail the test of "due diligence".

Respectfully submitted,

Philip W. Chapman

County Board District Three

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