



Office of Lee County Board
Rick Ketchum, Chair

www.leecountyil.com

June 9, 2016

Dave Navechy
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Re: Docket No. FD 35952

Members of the Surface Transportation Board:

During the May 17, 2016, meeting of the Lee County (IL) Board, the Members present voted unanimously to oppose the Great Lakes Basin Proposal of a 278 mile rail line through parts of Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana, part of which would go through our county. The determination of need for this rail line is in your hands. We are taking this opportunity to voice our opposition because we feel the need is questionable and the

Lee County residents, including all Board members, oppose the taking of prime farm ground and a few homes for this use. Our paramount concern is the safety of our citizens. In the 1970's farms were bisected to build US Route 39, a four lane highway that was needed. Several local roads were severed.

If built, this proposed rail line would also sever farms and roads. Lee County would have several homes and farm parcels landlocked during time trains are passing. This would delay emergency response times and impact bus routes for the four schools affected.

Further, there is the probability that property values, especially for homes, would decrease in that part of the county. Lee County is a P-TELL county, thus, this would add costs to all county property owners. The rural homes along the proposed route would diminish in value, another negative impact on our property tax payers.

Questions include fairness of compensation if eminent domain is used to confiscate property. We have heard of no benefits to Lee County. There has been no mention of transporting our crop harvests. Other trains are already taking out products and by-products from companies based in or around Rochelle, IL (our Ogle County neighbor and part of which extends into Lee County). The transportation of Bakken oil through our county is of no value here.

Again, on behalf of Lee County Illinois residents, their safety and their homes, Lee County Board opposes the Great Lakes Basin Transportation rail line.

Sincerely,

Rick Ketchum
Lee County Board Chairman

Great Lake Basin Railroad Project discussion

Mrs. Truckenbrod spoke on the proposed Great Lake Basin Railroad Project. This project has been proposed starting in Wisconsin and going over to Indiana. Counties around Lee County are opposing it. There are safety concerns that need to be studied by the Surface Transportation Board, however, the comment period ends June 15, 2016. Roads may be closed and field tile cut. Road closures would make concerns for emergency vehicles and school buses routes. There could be safety concerns on what is going to be transported on the railroad.

Mr. Zeman had distributed to the Board Members a handout showing other entities that are opposing this railroad project. Granting eminent domain to a private corporation and ruining farmland will have a negative effect. GLB does not need to provide evidence, it is up to the public to object to this project. June 15, 2016 is the last day for public comments concerning this project, if we are going to oppose this, it needs to be done now.

On a motion by Mr. McClain stating **the Lee County Board with the information provided so far, is opposing the Great Lake Basin Railroad Project**, second by Mr. Witzleb; motion carried by a voice vote.

On a motion by Mr. Farster to **approve Resolution #05-16-003 approving the hiring of two additional correctional officers to the Lee County Corrections staff at wages and benefits consistent to and commensurate with the collective bargaining agreement between Lee County and the FOP Lodge Number 220**, second by Ms. Shippert. Chairman Ketchum opened the floor for discussion.

Mr. McClain stated that the Finance Committee did recommend sending this to the full Board, but he would like the Board Members to be aware that by next year we will be using reserve funds from the landfill to fund these salaries. He realizes the need for the Correctional Officers, but reserve funds will be spent to support these new hires.

Mr. Deem agrees with Mr. McClain. The Sheriff has made a strong case for the need of these two employees but the County needs to search for additional revenue in order to stop this deficit spending.

Mr. Witzleb feels that this expenditure for the two Correctional Officers is a necessity to avoid something tragic happening in our jail.

Mr. Buhrow feels that long term overtime is not good for anyone, this is a priority that needs to be taken care of.

Sheriff Simonton addressed the Board explaining the Jail Improvement Plan that has been presented. He is projecting there could be a 20-25% decrease in overtime.

Mr. McClain again stated that he supports the Sheriff's request but again, the cost savings will not be as much as the new expenses.

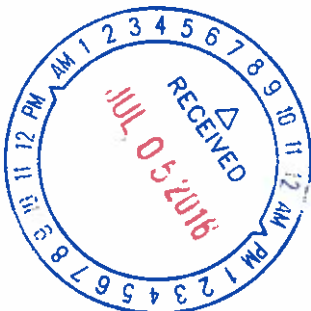
Chairman Ketchum called for the question; motion carried by a voice vote.

Appointments

On a motion by Mr. Palen to **approve Resolution #05-16-004 appointing James M. Smith to the Board of Review for a term beginning June 1, 2016 and ending May 31, 2018**, second by Mr. Leffelman; motion carried by a voice vote.

On a motion by Mr. Nicholson to **approve Resolution #05-16-005 appointing James D. Schielein to serve on the Farmland Assessment Review Committee for a term beginning June 1, 2016 and ending May 31, 2018**, second by Mr. Gusse; motion carried by a voice vote.

Lee County Board Chairman's Office
112 East Second Street
Dixon, Illinois 61021

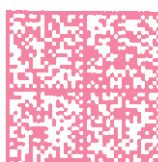


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