

MONTGOMERY COUNTY SUPERVISORS MINUTES
November 30, 2011

The Montgomery County Board of Supervisors met in quorum, Wednesday, November 30, 2011, at 6:00 p.m. at the courthouse for a special meeting. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bryant Amos. There was a roll call of members with Supervisors: Bryant Amos, Karen Blue, Randy Tye, Steve Ratcliff and Donna Robinson.

Motion to approve the agenda by Ratcliff. Second by Tye. Roll call: Yes: Amos, Blue, Ratcliff, Robinson, Tye. No: None. Motion carried.

Minutes of the November 23, 2011, meeting were approved as read.

Chairman Amos then opened the meeting for a public hearing to hear comments and suggestions from the residents of Montgomery County in reference to the current jail facility and it's future.

There were ten residents and three media representatives present at the hearing.

Roy Taylor spoke up first informing the board that the county has let the building fall into disrepair and sees absolutely no reason to attempt to save it now, especially using tax payers money.

Derrick O'Neal informed those in attendance that all older buildings are worth saving and he feels that this one in particular has a significant value not only to Red Oak but to the historic downtown area. He mentioned that he can envision refurbishing the building as a gateway into the newly planned downtown area and would fit perfectly into the master plan. He also suggested that the board wait and see how that project progresses and simply place the old facility into a mothball state. He did also later inform the board later that if the decision is to raze it he would like to see a Historical America Building (HAB) from the National Historical Preservation Commission. This would allow future residents and others the opportunity to see what the building was like and can be accomplished using grants.

Jackie Adams then echoed O'Neal's comments and stated that she highly recommends that the board and all residents read the nomination packet that placed the building on the historical list. She also stated that buildings cannot and should not be saved as a monument, they need to have a purpose and use. She also stated that she thought it would be a wonderful Chamber and Industry building in conjunction with city and or county offices. She also encourages the board to hold off and allow those interested in saving an opportunity to develop a plan.

Henry Elliott then spoke and mentioned that he for the first time that he can recall agreed with Jackie and would like to see it saved. He mentioned offering up for bids, selling it outright or just hold off to see what transpires.

Ken Rech spoke to the board and mentioned that when the bond issue was being presented and when it was voted on with an approval percentage of 79% he felt the consensus of those voters was that the old facility would be razed. He also mentioned that it would be shame to have the new Law Enforcement Center covered up by the aging and dilapidated current facility for any amount of time. In closing he asked the board to raze the building.

Judy Rolenc asked the board to look at other small towns that have historic buildings such as Walnut and she would like to see it at least attempted to save it.

Connie Mellott was not present but she did send in some comments that stated she was in favor razing the facility and only way she would agree to saving it would be if a developer came in with the wherewithal to completely and effectively refurbish it, she did not want any of her tax dollars spent on saving the building.

After the public comments the supervisors spoke about their opinions and feelings on the subject. Chairman Amos stated in his personal opinion he would agree to develop the property if a developer could prove by bond and by planning documents that it would be completed, otherwise he does not want to see it sit empty and fall into further disrepair. Ratcliff mentioned that has talked to four constituents that were in favor of saving it and only two that opposed that idea. Blue stated that one person told her not to raze it but not to use county money to save it. Another individual wants it razed. Tye stated simply that if preservation is an option on the table then we need to see a solid plan with timelines that are reasonable and without using county funding. Robinson mentioned that throughout the process of town hall meetings last year educating the public on the LEC and bonding she felt that the vast majority of those in attendance were in favor of razing the old facility and wanted to see both issues on the ballot but the LEC commission and BOS decided they should be two separate issues and dealt with separately.

At 6:35 p.m. Chairman Amos closed the public hearing.

The board will be in regular session December 1, at 9:00 a.m.

Motion by Ratcliff, second by Tye to adjourn. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
BRYANT AMOS, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST: TED SCHOONOVER
AUDITOR