

St. Clairsville, Ohio

March 11, 2008

The Board of Commissioners of Belmont County, Ohio, met this day in special session. Present: Charles R. Probst, Jr. and Mark A. Thomas, Commissioners and Jayne Long, Clerk of the Board. Absent: Gordie W. Longshaw

**“SPECIAL MEETING”  
BELMONT, HARRISON AND GUERNSEY COUNTY  
TRI-COUNTY WATER MEETING 11:00 A.M.**

**MEETINGS ARE NOW BEING RECORDED**  
**ALL DISCUSSIONS ARE SUMMARIZED, FOR COMPLETE PROCEEDINGS**  
**PLEASE SEE CORRESPONDING TAPE FOR THIS MEETING DAY.**

**ATTENDANCE**

Brianna Sadler, Reporter, Times Leader  
Al Molnar, Reporter, The Intelligencer  
Donald Bargar, Holloway Water Dept.  
Charles Holley, homeowner  
Della Holley, homeowner  
Robert L. Ford, Water Line Community  
Steve Douglas  
Franklin Shaffer, Pultney Twp. Trustee  
Tom McVicker, Superintendent  
Randy Mercer, Byesville Village Administrator  
Paul Sherry, City of Cambridge  
Tim Lara, Kirkwood Twp. Trustee  
Robert M. Steptoe III, Investment Banker, Crews & Associates  
Phil Madzia, Harrison Co. Commissioner  
Mike Vinka, Harrison Co. Commissioner  
Ben West, Citizen  
Robert Sterling, Harrison Co. Engineer  
Karl Bowers  
Bill Host, Harrison Co. Commissioner  
Barb Bashline, Flushing Mayor  
Sue Douglass, Associate Director, Belmont County CIC/ DOD  
Del George, Guernsey Co. Engineer  
Tom Laughman, Guernsey Co. Commissioner  
Clarence Ridgley, Guernsey Co. Water  
Dave Merritt, Kirkwood Twp. Trustee  
Bill Morgan, Assistant Director, Belmont Co. Port Authority  
Larry Merry, Director, Belmont Co. Port Authority  
Nina Dutton, Intern, Belmont Co. Port Authority  
Larry Bayless, Citizen  
Jarold Massie, Citizen  
Matt Coffland, Mead Twp. Trustee  
Dave Totterdale, Kirkwood Twp.  
Steve C. Allen, Guernsey Co. Commissioner  
Dave Gombeda, Guernsey Co. Commissioner  
Bob Graham, York Twp. Trustee  
Ginny Favede, City of St. Clairsville  
Roger Deal, Village of Barnesville Administrator  
Dave Grum, former Belmont Co. Water Superintendent  
Mark Esposito, Director, Belmont Co. Sanitary Sewer District  
Keith Bennett, Hammontree & Associates

**AGENDA**

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- A. **Purpose:** Obtain general input for the feasibility of a tri-county water project serving the needs of western Belmont County, eastern Guernsey County and southwestern Harrison County.
- B. **Expected Outcomes:**
1. To build waterlines throughout the region for current residents in the region.
  2. To build waterlines to help facilitate and create economic development in the region.
- C. **Mission Statement:** What is the mission of this potential project?
- D. **Discussion Agenda:**
1. Welcome/Introductions: Mark Thomas – Belmont County
  2. Roundtable Discussion: Commissioners/Engineers/Development Directors
  3. Funding Sources: Loans and Grants: Federal/State - Open Discussion
  4. Short/Long Term Plans – Open Discussion
  5. Future Meetings – Mark Thomas

**DISCUSSION HELD** – Commissioner Probst thanked all for attending and Commissioner Thomas welcomed everyone and explained the reason for this project is to provide water to this area to help facilitate and create economic development. He advised the board is revisiting this issue and that back in 2002 Belmont County Commissioners and Harrison County met in Cambridge for initial discussions regarding this type of project. At that time it went no further, but now it is felt the time is right for regional collaboration to seek funding through state and local sources to “help us help ourselves.” He said there are many challenges faced in finding funding for local and county governments. Mr. Thomas noted the many experts in attendance including Commissioners, Engineers, Water Department Directors and Economic Development Directors.

Commissioner Thomas explained that back in 2001 Belmont County solicited a waterline expansion study that was completed by Hammtree and Associates, Ltd. of North Canton, Ohio. Mr. Keith Bennett of Hammtree & Associates, Ltd. was in attendance today. Mr. Thomas said the Commissioners have been working off of this study since 2001. The study was done in six or seven different zones and is down to two zones predominately in Belmont County. Zone A, which is the northwestern part of Belmont County, is the area in question that is being talked about today. The commissioners have 2001 cost estimates and have solicited Mr. Bennett to continue to look at 2008 pricing. There is a general idea of the design, and cost estimates. The second issue is the southeastern quadrant, which is in the Mead, Smith, York Townships area towards the Village of Powhatan Point. This too is designed and ready to go. The Board is seeking different funding sources for that, explained Commissioner Thomas. He said this project is a lot further ahead than the project being discussed today. Because of the cost per home, the Board has not looked too far beyond the actual design.

Commissioner Thomas opened the discussion, first asking Guernsey and Harrison Counties exactly where they are as far as current water lines. Harrison County Commissioner Phillip Madzia said a waterline has recently been completed in Moorefield Township and their focus is now is the western end of the county in the Freeport area. Guernsey County said they want to extend lines to Londonderry Township. Their current lines are approximately 8 ½ miles from the Belmont County line. Engineer Delmar George advised that they are doing some major water projects now and have already done some studies. Former Belmont County Water Superintendent Dave Grum suggested a study be completed of the whole area. Commissioner Thomas said we need to know the number of potential customers in each area. Monies are needed to do a study. Commissioner Thomas has already contacted the Ohio Department of Development to ask about some types of funding sources to do the study. It is not known if those monies are out there.

Guernsey County Commissioner Steve Allen reported that one of the things that allowed them to be successful in their county was a collective group of elected officials went to Washington, DC to talk to their Senators and Congressmen about their problems, and then were able to get monies earmarked for their projects. They also went to their residents and most of them took part in a voluntary assessment where they pay a portion of the cost of the lines. Mr. Allen suggested all Commissioners and Engineers take a trip to DC as state funding has dried up. Commissioner Thomas was in agreement with this idea, but suggested first a plan be in place with this information ready to be presented.

Belmont County Deputy Auditor Andy Satak suggested going to the USDA since this would be a tri-county application. Commissioner Thomas felt we need to tap the state first before seeking federal funds as state funding may be more easily obtained.

Dave Grum suggested that Larry Merry (Director) and Bill Morgan of the Belmont Co. Port Authority would be a good choice to spearhead this project and form a committee to further this study. Commissioner Thomas said he would like to see the Belmont County Department of Development and the Port Authority to work together on this as it is a must for residents and economic development in all three counties. It was agreed that Belmont County would take the lead on the project to determine how to marry all three jurisdictions. Harrison County Commissioners thanked the board for taking the lead.

Robert M. Steptoe III from Crews & Associates, a public finance group from Morgantown, WV, introduced himself and offered his company’s services as a funding option.

Randy Mercer of the Village of Byesville and a Guernsey County resident/water customer, asked what the impact might be on the rates. Commissioner Thomas replied that at this point they can’t begin to answer that question. Keith Bennett said that’s the reason for a study. Larry Merry stated he will need contact names and information and will proceed to get mapping of the affected areas.

Commissioner Thomas stated he would be meeting with Governor Ted Strickland tomorrow and would inform him of today’s meeting in regards to funding for this project.

Commissioners thanked all for attending today.

**IN THE MATTER OF ADJOURNING**  
**COMMISSIONERS MEETING AT 12:19 P.M.**

Motion made by Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Probst to adjourn the meeting at 12:19 p.m.

Upon roll call the vote was as follows:

Mr. Thomas	Yes
Mr. Probst	Yes
Mr. Longshaw	Absent

Read, approved and signed this 19th day of March, 2008.

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Gordie W. Longshaw - Absent

We, Charles R. Probst, Jr. and Jayne Long, Vice-President and Clerk respectively of the Board of Commissioners of Belmont County, Ohio, do hereby certify the foregoing minutes of the proceedings of said Board have been read, approved and signed as provided for by Sec. 305.11 of the Revised Code of Ohio.

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VICE-PRESIDENT  
CLERK