
Gibson County Board of Commissioners
Regular Session
February 16th, 2016

The Gibson County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on February 16th, 2016 at 6:00 PM at the North Annex Meeting Room.

Members Present: Included President Gerald Bledsoe, Vice-President Stephen E. Bottoms, Administrative Assistant Kay Vore, County Attorney James McDonald III, and County Auditor Sherri Smith.

Members Absent: Commissioner Alan Douglas

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and Welcome were recited and led by President Bledsoe.

Minutes: The minutes from the February 2nd, 2016 Commissioners meeting were read and approved through a motion by Commissioner Bottoms and seconded by Commissioner Bledsoe. With no further discussion, the Motion carried 2-0.

Claims:

County General - \$195,670.82
Courts - \$21,086.50
Highway - \$45,150.55
Sheriff - \$42,896.91
ACH - \$20,146.26
CAW - \$8,046.80
Payroll - \$273,817.38 – February 5, 2016
Payroll Deductions - \$128,917.35
Non Union Insurance Claims - \$47,898.76
Union Insurance Premiums - \$275,510.60

Commissioner Bottoms made a motion to approve the claims and was seconded by Commissioner Bledsoe. With no further discussion, the Motion carried 2-0.

Treasurer's Report

Commissioner Bottoms made a motion to approve the Treasurer's monthly report for January 2016, seconded by Commissioner Bledsoe. Motion carried 2-0.

Department Reports:

EMS Director Jim Allen presented the monthly report. Commissioner Bottoms made a motion to approve write offs in the amount of \$44,784.23, seconded by Commissioner Bledsoe. Motion carried 2-0. Commissioner Bottoms made a motion to approve the contract between Rooney & Co, LLC and the Gibson County EMS in the amount of \$4,000 for Medicaid Reimbursement, seconded by Commissioner Bledsoe. With no further discussion, the Motion carried 2-0.

Old Business

- Animal Services Ordinances - Commissioner Bottoms made a motion to waive the second reading of ORDINANCE ADDENDUM TO THE GIBSON COUNTY ORDINANCE concerning “Animal Rescue”, seconded by Commissioner Bledsoe. With no further discussion, the Motion carried 2-0. This will be published and it will go to the County Council due to fees being charged.
- BEP Blight Elimination Program Bid Award – Debbie Bennett-Stearsman with EDCSO made a recommendation to accept the bid from Naas & Sons LLC in the amount of \$94,550. Due to a concern on two of the properties, the awarded bid will be to tear down eleven of thirteen houses in the second set of houses to Naas & Sons LLC in the amount of \$77,500 and hold the bid on the other two houses, numbers 2 and 8 on the Bid Group List for sixty days. County Attorney McDonald stated this was not the low bid, Ms. Stearsman stated that after review of the low bid and after due diligence she could not recommend them. Commissioner Bottoms made a motion to accept the recommendation of Debbie Bennett-Stearsman, seconded by Commissioner Bledsoe. Motion carried 2-0. Commissioner Bottoms made a motion to allow President Bledsoe to execute the contract of any post documents necessary after review by the county attorney, seconded by Commissioner Bledsoe. With no further discussion, the Motion carried 2-0.
- Non-Union Health Insurance Renewal – Commissioner Bottoms made a motion to accept the proposal for renewal of Health Smart Benefit Solutions for the non-union health insurance with the compliance dashboard option at a cost of \$25 a month, seconded by Commissioner Bledsoe. With no further discussion, the Motion carried 2-0.
- Major Medical Leave – Commissioner Bottoms made a motion to approve a major medical leave for an employee in the Assessor’s Office, seconded by President Bledsoe. With no further discussion, the Motion carried 2-0.
- Norfolk Southern Railroad – CR 150 E Crossing – Railroad Yard consists of 5 tracks total, a main, siding and 3 storage tracks.

Jim Olds, Attorney for Norfolk Southern Railroad, spoke to the Commissioners about the railroad crossing at CR 150 E. Mr. Olds stated “My name is Jim Olds. I am a lawyer. I represent Norfolk Southern. We’re here to, we had filed a petition with the commission to close the public railroad crossing at CR 150 E and it’s our section with the main line just southeast of the city limits. I’ll start off by saying this is a unique situation. This is not a

normal crossing. We don't, the railroad does not go around the state asking governments to close crossings just for the fun of it. We wouldn't be here if this weren't unique. This is a public crossing that goes right through the middle of Norfolk Southern's rail yard. So this is the railyard in Princeton that has been around for a long time. It has, time has gone the railyard has expanded. This is at the east end of the railroad. In a perfect world Norfolk Southern would have, where they'd've owned land both to the north and the south side of the crossing here. There'd be no need to have public crossing. But unfortunately that's not the case. Because this is a yard versus a regular what I would call a regular crossing where you have mainline tracks that cross 'em, a public highway. There's some distinctions, because it's a yard integrating a number of tracks. There are five tracks at this crossing. We have a main line track, standard through line track, one siding, then there are three storage tracks or yard tracks, say storage, cars are stored there temporarily when trains are taken apart and put back together. That's the yard's central function is a place for trains to come in, for cars to be unloaded, trains may come in carrying certain cars in Princeton and they drop off cars and those cars are added to another train usually within a day or as quickly as possible but they need a place to be stored in the meantime. That's what those three storage tracks are for in the east end of the yard. The difference is the greater number of tracks you have the greater the safety issue becomes in addition to just the obvious longer distance across the tracks public road. You also have sight obstructions that are a bigger problem when you have yard because you are going to have cars there regularly sitting on the tracks both east and west of the crossing. There will be sight obstructions so that there may be cars sitting that block your view down the tracks east or west if you were trying to cross the crossing. Trains, through trains in there regularly travel up to 35 miles an hour. Federal speed regulations allow the train to travel 60 miles an hour. Because of the location of the yard that's usually not likely. But even at 35 miles per hour there moving pretty quickly and if you can't see that as you're approaching the crossing from the north or the south that can create a safety hazard for you. Another distinction because these are yard tracks, your middle of the yard, you've got more traffic. You have essentially here eight regular trains that come into the yard every day. You have an additional four through coal trains that usually run between Mt Carmel and then further east you have three or four trains sometimes daily going back and forth to Toyota depending on what they're doing. All that creates additional traffic in the yard and that doesn't even begin to talk about the switching the regular switching operations that take place so not only the trains moving back and forth across the crossing but then you're taking trains apart when you're putting them back together. You're moving back and forth across the crossing multiple times. You have, this crossing is going to be blocked fifteen sometimes twenty times a day depending on the activities that are occurring for varying lengths of time. And because you have the switching operations occurring which just would not normally happen at most other crossings you have the additional problem is the crossing is blocked for a longer period of time. So when you are putting the trains backed together and you're taking them apart, you add trains to the consist I'm sorry when you add cars to the consist of the train federal regulations mandate break tests regulations be conducted depending on how long the cars have been sitting. That can determine how long a break test is going to take. Those can take anywhere from a half hour up to an hour depending on temperature, on length of the train all kinds of things when you're putting them back

together. Obviously anytime you have a car sitting and blocking a crossing that creates an additional safety hazard other than the trains passing through. Again because the greater number of traffics, the more traffic more often then longer periods of blocking these are hazards that are not normally present at a regular crossing where the railroads travel such as even if you get to 150S further east or the crossings further west in town then you're not going to have many of these same considerations. Unfortunately given railroad operations, there is not a whole bunch more Norfolk Southern can do to avoid this. They try to limit blocking the crossing when they can but the fact of the matter is we run trains that are over two thousand feet long nearly up to two miles, you have hundreds of cars coming in, going out, every day they have to be stored somewhere. It's inevitable the crossing is going to be blocked. It's inevitable the crossing is going to be blocked multiple times. It's inevitable the crossing is going to be blocked for sometimes long periods of time because the regular operations of the railroad. There is no way to change some of that without substantially changing the way the railroad operates. And that really is an option we're talking about running shorter trains or bringing in fewer cars there daily. But if you don't do it there you have to coin those operations somewhere. So for example if the operations were moved further east well 150S would be blocked more often and for longer than CR 150E is. Same as west there is certainly a lot more crossings as you get uptown. Bottom line is it has to happen somewhere and there's going to be inconvenience because of it. There's no way around that. Just for background, Indiana, Norfolk Southern operates in twenty two states and the District of Columbia. Indiana has more crossings per track mile than any other state in which Norfolk Southern operates. As a result of that, they also have more incidents at crossings than any other state. It's a function really of the roadway house and how many crossings crisscross Norfolk Southern's lines. Norfolk Southern has a greater number of track in other states, but really it's a unique situation of Indiana with the number of crossings. Here fortunately there are crossings a half mile to the east and one a quarter mile west that are both accessible. I understand it's not always convenient, but there are other alternatives here to use. I'm sure as everybody is aware that the problem has gotten worse in the last few years. As train traffic increases the problems are only going to continue to increase. That's not likely to improve the next few years. I think as the economy grows or as train traffic grows the amount of inconvenience is going to only continue to grow and the problem only gets worse. Under the Indiana Code and the Indiana Administrative Code there are certain criteria for the Commissioners to consider in determining whether a crossing can be or should be closed. I'll just run through those briefly for you. One is whether there is any passenger train service present. That is not the case here. There is no passenger train service that runs through this area. The second criteria availability of other crossings. In addition there is a crossing 150S is a half mile east, there's an additional crossing, you have 100E, I'm sorry, I'm off, that'll be a mile and a quarter east is 150S, we have one half mile west is 100E. There is an accident prediction rate. It's a figure that's published by the United States Department of Transportation. It's represent. It's a possibility that a crash will occur at a given crossing within a year. Under the administrative code they said I would cut off .02. The probability for collision at this crossing is point .01476, so it's below .02 but it is not insignificant. There's a chance anytime you have a crossing, but given the amount of train traffic here, I think that number is likely to increase the probability. Average daily traffic counts under the code

it's 500 or less in rural areas or 1000 or less in urban areas. So this is traffic for the public road. Last average daily, average annual daily traffic count for CR 150E was 300 which was substantially below even though it's required for a rural crossing. The speed limit on a public road should be greater than 10 miles per hour. Here the speed limit on 150E is 30 miles an hour either side of the crossing. The number of train movements and the number it says whether it's below or above 10 a day, we kind of talked about that briefly, was listed on the Department of Transportation costs the inventory that number represents which is twelve which is seven through trains and five switching trains per day but in actuality right now that number is higher because of current train traffic. Advanced warnings, it wants to know what kinds of warnings are given per crossing. Here we have cross bucks, flashers, gates, bells, which overall is good, better than many crossings that just have cross bucks, but there's still a risk given that the gates there, there short gates that you can easily maneuver around them. That's always a risk at every crossing you worry about people taking chances to go around crossings especially when they say I can't see anything coming, which is a greater risk here, I mean because standing cars and the amount of tracks you got, five tracks, that's always a concern. The speed of the train service, we mentioned briefly many of the trains are often thirty to thirty-five miles an hour as they come through there. Any other physical characteristics at the crossing, five tracks across, that's more significant than most crossings where you can have one or two tracks, and then whether the crossing is utilized by trucks carrying hazardous materials or vehicles carrying passengers for hire, school buses or emergency vehicles. Approximately thirty percent of the vehicles at a look at the last study were trucks. It was not disclosed how many of those were hazardous materials ??? significantly high. Typically there are no school buses or emergency vehicles or no vehicles carrying passengers for hire. I think this relevant for one reason Norfolk Southern owns all the land south of the crossing both on the west and east side of 150E all the way down to CR 150S so there's not going to be any need for emergency service on that side of the crossing, everything else that the homes are on the north side of the crossing as are the sheriff, police, fire department, hospital, emergency service to the north and the west so they would still have access to the property owners and the properties north of the crossing if it were to be closed. Accident history, there's one prior reportable accident luckily nothing since 1975. That's the only reportable accident listed in the Department of Transportation crossing inventory. The railroad understands this is an inconvenience it always at every crossing we get that, but this crossing really is different because of all the characteristics here. There are additional safety concerns that we need to consider. Under the administrative code and under statute you find after weighing the criteria that we just ran through that the crossing should be closed, then the only way to keep it open it to find a compelling reason to keep it open. Under the law, compelling is a very high standard. You have legitimate, the bottom being anything that is reasonable still, you have the intermediate state which is important. Again we understand this thing, but being an inconvenience by itself is not a compelling reason to keep a crossing open in spite of the additional safety hazards that are present. Thank you everybody. Any questions"

Attorney Jim McDonald asked "I guess for a point of reference 100 E which you said is now a half a mile from 150 E comes out from Ohio Street. Isn't that in the middle of your yard?"

Mr. Olds "It is. And"

Mr. McDonald "So for argument's sake then that really 100 E is not an access point. You would have to go another mile would you not for another road."

Mr. Olds "100 E is generally not blocked as often as 150 E because of the characteristics. You have more tracks and more storage tracks that are utilized more often on 150 E. I'm not saying Ohio Street is never blocked."

Mr. McDonald "By this picture, whenever this picture was taken, you see that red car, half the cars cross the road."

Mr. Olds "Is this GIS or"

Mr. McDonald "This is GIS. It's blocked that day."

Mr. Olds "Understood so"

Mr. McDonald "So I just you know were talking like I guess you're trying to set your facts, making you're findings here. I guess my one of arguments would be this 100 E is not an access point because it's blocked as well."

Mr. Olds "It faces some of the same concerns. There's no doubt."

Mr. McDonald "Right."

Mr. Olds "Though my belief for 150 E is greater."

Mr. McDonald "Do you have any studies?" I know you had vehicle studies on 158 and when was that vehicle study conducted?"

Mr. Olds "The average annual daily traffic was the last, I don't know. I pulled this information. I'll give you copies of this, from the Department of Transportation crossing inventory. It's a standard inventory. It's available to the public through the Department of Transportation website. They publish it but they do not list"

Mr. McDonald "I just want to get a point of reference as far as a date when that study was conducted."

Mr. Olds "I'm looking and for some reason, here we go. The last study was 2001."

Commissioner Bottoms "Sir you mentioned your concern about safety. Why whenever you're blocking this county road do you not contact the dispatcher and let them know that the road is blocked?"

Mr. Olds "By the dispatcher you mean the county dispatcher for emergency?"

Commissioner Bottoms "Absolutely"

Mr. Olds "Well to be honest as a practical matter we have trains that cross there so many times a day it's, we'd be calling four times an hour to say we have a train running through here and it's going to be blocking for ten minutes as it goes through."

Commissioner Bottoms "Sir, I think you know we're out there quite a bit. I understand that there's an IC Code that talks about how long that the crossing can be blocked. Have you been violating that IC Code?"

Mr. Olds "I will answer this, this way. Does the railroad block the crossing for longer than ten minutes? Absolutely, as railroad operations, there is no way to avoid it. We have legal arguments against the enforcement of the blocked crossing statute, but that doesn't address any of the safety concerns that we brought up tonight if you get that. So, we can go into court and we do have legal arguments that we will put forth on blocked crossing issues. If we win every one of those it doesn't do anything about the issue we still have at the crossing and everything we talked about tonight."

Commissioner Bottoms "Well it's a safety issue to us whenever we go out there. Actually, if you just blocked it ten minutes we wouldn't be here tonight. There's been times, and we've got people here, who live right there at the crossing, that it's been blocked for days. But yet no one called the dispatcher and said hey this road is blocked. And we have, would you read this?"

Mr. McDonald "As soon as he's done."

Commissioner Bottoms "OK I'm sorry."

Mr. McDonald "As soon as he's done, unless you have questions for him."

Commissioner Bottoms "No."

Commissioner Bledsoe "If you're done, then I'd like to speak and then we want to let all the people that came to the meeting, speak."

Mr. McDonald "Are you done with the questions to him?"

Commissioner Bottoms "Yes."

Mr. Olds "Thank you."

Commissioner Bledsoe "The ah, ah I think we're gonna hear from people that live around here, ah how many, we have gave out, the Sheriff's Department has gave out tickets and a lot of these are trains seen as six to eight hours or longer ah and I don't know what the

number is that we're up to but I know that it's somewhere around fifty tickets. These were only given out once a day if ah a certain officer was on duty. The days he was off they were not given out the whole day and a lot of these could've been given another train when that one was pulled there's another one that's blockin it on another track because of all the different tracks there. So ah honestly we could be given two or three tickets a day easily. Ah the, ah we're goin hear from people that ah emergency service is needed at that crossing ah because it is the shortest route ah to Heights Chapel Road. In the farming season ah when grain is coming across we have farmers from all over the southern part of the county that come through that crossing to go to that elevator. Um, the ah fire department you'll hear ah from the chief of the fire department needing that crossing. Ah the EMT Director will speak about needing that crossing. Ah it's a ah very ah important crossing for ah grain to go across ah emergency personnel vehicles ah in my opinion that crossing should not get ah closed. And ah you'll hear from all the other people that live around there feel the same way. Ah and myself I think ah since there is four or five tracks there that it needs to be an overpass built there ah so we can keep that crossing open and ah be able to function the rest of the county especially the southern part coming to that elevator. Ah you wanna start by reading that document we have from the fire chief?"

Attorney McDonald read a letter from the Princeton Fire Territory dated February 16, 2016.

It stated "Gibson County Commissioners, I would like to give notice that the Princeton Fire Territory is not in favor of closing the railroad crossing on CR 150 E south of highway 64. This would have the potential for causing delays in response times and could cause potential loss of life and property. I would also ask that the crossing be kept clear of parked trains for extended periods of time as it is now periodically. Mike Pflug Fire Chief Princeton Fire Territory."

Commissioner Bledsoe "OK we're gonna ask ah EMT Director if he wants to come first and ah speak about the ambulance service."

EMT Director Jim Allen "I'll have to agree with the fire territory."

Commissioner Bledsoe "If you will come up to the podium and ah the reason that we want you to come to the podium is that INDOT can overrule what judgement is made here this evening ah at Indianapolis. So we'll have a hearing at Indianapolis if it goes that far which it probably will and ah we want to have documentation of everybody that spoke tonight ah. So we will ask you to print your name on this sheet of paper. And then if you brought anything ah that we can use at Indianapolis we'd like to make a copy of it. Ah about ah bus drivers if you brought anything that's in writing we would like to make a copy ah so that we can have that documentation to take to Indianapolis with us. Go ahead."

EMS Director Jim Allen "My name is Jim Allen current director of the ambulance service here in the county and I'd have to agree with the assessment of Princeton Fire

Territory. We make responses out there to the residences that live close to your yard and to shut that crossing down would increase our response times and actually almost cost lives. We really don't think it's a good idea. You were talking about ah calling our dispatch center whenever you do block the road and you kind of made the comment that you don't think it's necessary to call several times a day. We do. Because every time dispatch is called they notify us, the sheriff's department, and the fire department. If we don't know that's closed we'll be out there and all of a sudden we have to go back around and that could have cost us five or six minutes or more. So if you're going to block it you need to let us know."

Commissioner Bledsoe "Thank you. Did you sign?"

Jim Allen "Yes I did."

Commissioner Bledsoe "Thank you. OK. Ah Mr. Tate I think you've been active. We'd like for you to go next."

County resident Jim Tate "I couldn't remember all of this so I wrote it down. Ah a little bit of history. I've lived right close to that track probably more years than you are old. So I know what's going on out there. I've been out there, I was raised there my childhood and I live in my own house I can see that railroad track from my house. I go up there multiple times a day see what's goin on. I have a notebook hours and hours and hours and hours and hours of those tracks blocked. Ah when I lived up there as a kid there was one track and if the train was goin be there they would break it. And they'd put it back together and move on on their way. And that's not happening and you talked about said something that ah breaking trains. That's not happening. Not happening at all. But anyhow for the record my name is Jim Tate. A short bit of history about me as a child. I grew up my entire childhood just on the north side of the railroad track on 150. In 1976 I built a new house on CR175 E about a mile and a half south of the railroad crossing. I can see the trains setting on the tracks from my present house. When I lived north of the railroad crossing there was only one track at that time now there are five. So it is needless to say that I know a lot about the area and how Norfolk Southern operates. Norfolk Southern has announced that they want to close CR 150 E to traffic for their convenience. For years they have been notorious for blocking this road with trains sitting across from a few hours to one time five continuous days. And I know so because I was deer hunting back there, the train set there for five days. He had the road blocked for five days. Ah the law states ten minutes so that's, that's a whole nother subject. Closing CR150 E will drastically affect the lives of many residents on the southeast side of Princeton. For me personally I own several rental properties in the town of Princeton. As you can imagine there're always a lot of repairs to be done. F&M Hardware Store on Highway 64 E is where I get all my supplies as I do most of the repairs myself. If CR150 E is blocked I have to go back ah to Heights Chapel Road and around it's an extra 4.5 miles out of my way and if Heights Chapel Road's blocked then I have to go all the way into town up North Main up Main and then back out 64 E to get to the hardware store. This is an additional 1.5 miles. And this is just my case. I have a neighbor that lives south of me and he works on the East Broadway. Ah his typical route to go would be to go up 150 hit 64

he's at work. But when that's blocked which is about ninety percent of the time this man has to go into town and all the way out to the east side of town to get to work. This is 3.6 miles out of his way. Multiply this times two times a day at to and from work that's 7.2 miles a day for one person. Multiply this, times six days a week that he works this is 43.2 miles a week this man has to go out of his way cause the track's blocked and if he works a full 52 weeks a year that's 2,246.4 miles a year that this man has to go out of his way if that road's blocked or closed. I was him I'd be furious. There are seven residences on the north side of the railroad track. I did some research and found out that three of these people living in these houses work at Toyota Gibson County's largest employer. The logical way for them to go to work is just a short trip down CR 150 E then continue on south to Toyota. When the crossing is blocked or Norfolk Southern wants to do close the road means a very long detour out of their way. Their only option is to go north to highway 64 in town down south main hit highway 41 on out to Toyota. There other option is to go to 64 go east to 350 and then go south and then they can go across to Toyota. That's a very very long way out of their way every day. As you in the last statement you heard me say they all wanted to go south but the only way they can go is north east or west and it's just ridiculous. Another thing this road is notorious for in the winter time drifting shut but the there's some very steep banks on that road and a when I lived out there there were days we couldn't get out. There have been many times people living on this road can only go south to get out because of the severity of snow. So how are they going to get out if this road's closed and it's brought up whalago the problem with farm equipment there's several farmers on the south side of the track that farm ground on the north side there only option is go out to highway 64 or to go in through town and then back around. But the size of today's farm equipment that's not a good idea that's not safe at all. Ah I also talked to the fire chief and a there's a substation out a on outer south main and he said should there be a fire on this road at one of these seven houses and they would need back up very like the very likely route for that truck to get to those houses would be CR150 otherwise they have to go into town all the way back out and then back down. As of now there's no appropriate place to turn around when the crossing is blocked and talking to some of the residents on the north side of the track they told me a case of the semi trucks being blocked and in trying to turn around they're tearing up yards and driveways. One truck backed off in a ditch and the wrecker needed to set up on the south side of him to pull him out. There was a train blocking the crossing and it was not possible till they got the train moved. Norfolk Southern needs to find a safe place to turn around now regardless of the outcome of closing this road. And just one of my neighbors right there just told me that they saw one instance of a semi backin all the way from that railroad track back north to 64. He must have been a good driver. And it's a very hilly road to that in itself was very dangerous. I talked to my local mail carrier he also delivers mail on 150 E he told me it's an extra 4.3 miles everyday that that crossing is blocked. He has to go around 64 come back up. In the last year I've been working with the County Commissioners and Gibson County Sheriff Department 'bout crossing about the crossing being blocked hours and even as many as five days when the legal time is ten minutes. Norfolk Southern has been very inconsiderate and non obliging with the situation. The fact is they are breaking the law every day. In consideration of all these facts I would ask the Gibson County Commissioners not to approve this Norfolk Southern request to close CR150 E and to enforce the ten minute law even more

stringently than they are now. But if this proposal does go through what's Norfolk Southern goin' to give back to Gibson County in return. Any possibility of someone mentioned an overpass I don't think that's probably logical at that location because of the terrain. Ah just I've got a notebook we can talk about this sometime. I've got pictures I've got times I've got dates. Today there was a train, sit there all day you could see the end of it two cars beyond the crossing not far enough to raise the gates. The gates are down all day. The train sat there all day. My question is why they will not break the trains. When I lived out there as a kid and that was the shop they changed crews there. If they were goin' be sittin' there they would break the train and when they got ready to leave they'd put it back together and leave. This is not happening at all. So if at some time when you talk about your state there were some a cables out there this fall. Someone did a study on the count and that can no way be accurate."

Commissioner Bottoms " Mr. Tate did you not bring a picture last at one of the last meetings that showed I think it was two or three cars sitting across these"

Mr. Tate "There were nine cars to the west. I could sit there and see'em. I could look to the east and see the engine. From the engine on up to Heights Chapel Road is a quarter of a mile."

Commissioner Bottoms "Yes here is that picture. In other words all the train people had to do was pull the train up three cars and it would have been open but yet for some reason they didn't do it."

Mr. Tate "We're not even getting any kind of cooperation out of Norfolk Southern. I called the number on the cross guards myself many times and I called the a sheriff non- emergency number a lot times to report it. Ah it's just it's not right."

Commissioner Bottoms "Mr. Tate did you talk to the school bus drivers?"

Mr. Tate "No, I'm not aware of any school buses that go through there."

Commissioner Bottoms "OK I had OK alright my misunderstanding. We need to check on that."

Commissioner Bledsoe "Anybody else would like to speak? Yes if you will come up and a please a yes."

County resident James R Hall "I work for Ryder Trucking. I live on Fairview Church Road. Now I've been around a long time and a the thing I see is Toyota traffic is a big problem too. You know I mean that's they use every route they can use to get to Toyota. Norfolk's the other day this has happened about every day 350 they block it. OK one train sits there and it's backed up all the way on 64. You can't get around you can't do nothing. Then so you go on down Heights Chapel's blocked next one's blocked all them roads are blocked all the way to Princeton. So the only way I can go is all the way to 64 into in town then go across the bridge and go into work that way. Now then and coming back same thing and I'll sit there with half the engines half the cars sit and block all them roads down through there because and wait for another train to come through and sit there and wait and then they're are blocking traffic again on highway 64 they'll sit there and they'll block all them down through there again waitin' for all these trains for

another train then he'll sit there maybe twenty thirty minutes and then that other train starts comin' then they'll sit there again until the they get going through there again so you might set there twenty thirty minutes all through all them crossings all the way down through there all the way to Princeton . Now then another thing is is that a safety issue absolutely. 64, someone come flyin' down there they could hit a car just like somebody you know there you go. Then another issue is that's not gonna solve the problem. Even if you close the road, that will not solve the problem. There gonna want more. It's just the way it is. Because of our growth. And the train traffic will grow and bigger. It's like down there in Ft Branch they had one engine sit there and had the road blocked and I even had three days and it just had half the railroad car blocking the road. I mean just, just enough you couldn't get around it just half of it. And I said good gosh I couldn't put up with this and the only way around is to go to the bottom if it's flooded there's no way out. You have to call and wait. And when you call em they say how do you know it's our train. That's the response you get from em. But beside the point the 150 that's a very vital thing and if they wanna do some'in I feel like that we've give enough to everbody and I feel like if they want to let em build an overpass if they want to. Let them pay for it. Why should our county taxpayers pay for the thing when if they want it closed then by gosh they can do something for us and just put an overpass over it and that's it. That's basically how I think about it I mean but you figure that his studies is way off I know Toyota traffic has run that for years and they just take like I said they take and if they do that farmers they ain't goin' be able to get over it their grain trucks ain't goin' to be able to get over it cause I've sat there in a grain truck and I had to back up 'cause the train tracks were blocked that's the only way I could instead of going through and gettin' involved in the Toyota traffic that's the way you have to go and I work help out McConnell farms a little bit that's the way we can go that's the way we have to go so we can keep the equipment out of the way from Toyota. We try to do the best we can and these people don't care I don't think they have a clue of what significant that road is. So that's that.

Commissioner Bledsoe "Thank you. Anybody else? Yes."

County resident Fred Breiten "My name's Fred Breiten I live just north of the tracks there. And I can pretty much confirm everything that Jim has to say. It's blocked continuously sometimes and for days and there was a coal train there it was five days and they came to my house to investigate the leakage in a coal car. And the coal car sat there with a leak so long that it left a big pile of coal. And the guy that was investigating he said I can't believe that they'd block this crossing that long and that was a railroad detective that told me that. As far as the safety fact part about of it ah if you have to go around the other way say you're comin' you're headed north and you wanna go up 150 to come to my house 'cause I've left Evansville and I go out there on 64 you talk about a dangerous place to pull out because there's cars comin' up that hill and curve on 64 there and if you talk about a safety hazard that's probably the worst place I won't even go that way because of the safety factor that way. Several years my mother-in-law was still alive we had to call the EMT's. There was a major wreck somewhere else and they had to dispatch the EMT's out of ah Ft Branch. They went the long way around figuring that it would be blocked. It wasn't at the time and she didn't survive the time element of that situation and before that when my father-in-law was in the hospital and they called the family in they thought he was going to pass and then we had a storm come through and there was power lines down on the north side of 150E and we couldn't get out 'cause there was a train blockin' on the south and power lines out and luckily the power company came and got her and escorted her through the hazard of it and

got her out. But, just the little things that the railroad doesn't think about the average guy and how easily he expects everyone's lives to unload you know and I'm sayin' wait they wanna build an overpass let 'em build an overpass. I'm not for turnin' it, we have a problem to with you know when you close a road you're in the middle of a dead end road the county neglects to maintain it. You know 'cause it's not easy if you had to go back down with a snow plow right now if that's what they the county goes to the other side they'd go the other way around it's the second day before they even get to me at all before they make a pass down it because it's a dead end road. So pretty much Jim's got it all down, he's got all the information. His facts are right. Thank you."

Commissioner Bledsoe "Thank you. Tim"

Sheriff Tim Bottoms "I'm just basically going to say what the fire department and the EMS had to say. You know when you got a medical emergency you got a fire, when you got a somebody's trying to break in your house, or whatever's going on, you got a family fight our people need to get to these locations as soon as possible. My guys are going to take the shortest roads/cut they can. Everybody's talking about going in from the north side. Well if my guys are on the south side out on Heights Chapel Road and need to get to 64. How ya gonna get to 64 through there when you've got a train sittin' there all the time? It's very ridiculous. People's lives could be at stake. One gentleman said his mother, mother-in-law somebody died because they couldn't get through. Well it's gonna happen again and currently they've been asked to move the trains. They're not moving the trains. And I'm gonna continue writing them tickets until as long as it takes. We're not gonna put up with it. 'til we get something resolved. I've been asked to do that and we're gonna continue. And if they don't have no more respect for the people of this county than that then there's a bigger problem. Thank you."

Commissioner Bledsoe "Thank you Tim. Anybody else? John?"

County Highway Engineer John Umpleby "I don't have anything to say but I agree with what everyone else has said and I'd like to put my name on there as opposed to as well. It probably needs a bridge somewhere."

Commissioner Bledsoe "Thank you. Yes."

Gibson County resident Paul Lynch "Ah my name's Paul Lynch and I don't a I haven't ran into problems that most of the others have. Ah the fellow with the grey hair over there in the white shirt he explained about anything I could say. I live right around the corner from the road we're talking about. Ah we do have some options to go to Princeton. We can go down Heights Chapel Road to the west or we can go down 100 we can go 150. Most of the time when I try to go to church I have to go out and around and this is not something I want to complain about. It's two and a half minutes if I go down 150. If I go around one way it's eight minutes if I go the other way its twelve minutes. Now those minutes are what you drive your car and you use your gas. I'm not really complaining about the distance I have to drive, it's you can't see the railroad track, you can't see the lights flashing from either end of 150 because it's hilly and there's two humps there like a camel's back and then you come over and then you see the railroad track. If they would even mark have a light flashing on the roads as you pull in to turn in to that road if they

had a light flashing you could stay away from it. I'm strictly against closing the road because I don't think the railroad track should have that opportunity to close the track just because they want to put more cars there and park them as convenience for them and the train but maybe 150 people are inconvenienced and I don't think that's right. Nothing against the railroad track, just in this case it isn't right. My wife will not even Sunday mornings when she goes to church, she says I'm not going down that road. She says there's probably two hundred cars parked there and you're not going to get across either track and either crossing on Heights Chapel Road or 150 so she just goes on through Princeton. She says I'm not going to fool with it. She says she drove by the other day she said there was four tracks with trains parked on it the other track that was open was probably they used to be able to fix a track really nice but that's the worst I mean that's over two rails you're climbing the rails. If you're gonna have the fifth track. at least you should take care of it. But it's an inconvenience not only for people in business, truck drivers, bus drivers, vehicles like Tim at the Sheriff's Department, Ambulance Service, just regular people that pay taxes drive those roads and it's an inconvenience for us people."

Commissioner Bledsoe "Thank you. Anybody else? Okay we want to thank everybody. Mr. Tate we would like to make copies of what you have. It don't have to be tonight but we'll probably get back with you, "cause I'm just afraid this will end up in Indianapolis."

Commissioner Bottoms "Mr. Chairman I make a motion that due to the safety concerns that have been brought forth by the County Sheriff, by the EMS Director, by the Fire Territory Chief, I make a motion that we do NOT close this crossing on 150 E."

Commissioner Bledsoe "I'll second that. And I just want to give the assurance to the people here that the Commissioners will do everything that we can to stop this and to push for a overpass. How this will end up I have no idea. But all we can do is try that's right. I'll second it. All in favor of the motion indicate by saying aye."

Commissioner Bottoms "Aye"

Commissioner Bledsoe "Opposed. Aye's has it. 2-0. Okay I want to thank you for coming."

The meeting was not officially adjourned.

New Business: None was discussed.

Minutes from the February 16th, 2016 Meeting.

Gerald Bledsoe, President

Stephen E. Bottoms, Vice-President

ATTEST: Sherri Smith, Auditor

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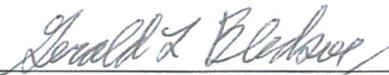
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The meeting was not officially adjourned.

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Minutes from the February 16th, 2016 Meeting.



Gerald Bledsoe, President



Stephen E. Bottoms, Vice-President



ATTEST: Sherri Smith, Auditor