

**THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CIVIL CITY OF NEW ALBANY, INDIANA,
HELD A REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING IN THE THIRD FLOOR ASSEMBLY
ROOM OF THE CITY/COUNTY BUILDING ON MONDAY, JULY 2, 2018 AT
7:00 P.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Council Members Mr. Coffey, Mr. Caesar, Mr. Phipps, Mr. McLaughlin, Mr. Nash, Mr. Blair, Mr. Aebersold, Mr. Barksdale and President Knable.

ALSO PRESENT: Ms. Stein, Mayor Gahan, Police Officer Applegate, Mr. Hall, Mr. Duggins, Mrs. Moeller, Mr. Gibson, Mr. Staten, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Glotzbach

President Knable called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

INVOCATION: Given by Pastor Steve Burks

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

ROLL CALL:

APPROVAL OR CORRECTION OF THE FOLLOWING MINUTES:

Mr. Coffey moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes for June 21, 2018, Mr. Phipps second, all voted in favor with the exception of Mr. McLaughlin who abstained.

COMMUNICATIONS – COUNCIL:

Dr. Knable stated that he will not be at the Thursday, July 19th meeting.

Mr. Blair read into the minutes a letter that he received from Mr. Ed Needham and a letter that he received from Ms. Heather Faith both opposing G-18-06. Said letters are on file in the city clerk's office.

Mr. Nash entered the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

Mr. Aebersold read a letter from Mr. Dan Emmert opposing G-18-06 into the minutes. Said letter is on file in the city clerk's office.

Dr. Knable read a letter from Floyd County Commissioner Billy Stewart opposing G-18-06 into the minutes. Said letter is on file in the city clerk's office.

COMMUNICATIONS – MAYOR:

Mayor Gahan stated that the he would like to encourage the council to move forward tonight with the plan to renovate the Reisz Building on Main Street by supporting G-18-06 for its third reading. He said that they put together a terrific plan with a rare opportunity to move forward which prepares us for the future and preserves an important part of our city's past as well. He also said that supporting this ordinance is vital for New Albany's continued success and it allows us to say goodbye to throwing money out the window for endless rent payments and puts the citizens of New Albany on a financially responsible path to ownership. He explained that the plan brings economic development to Main Street, adds technology and efficiency to city government, removes blight, saves and repurposes an historical downtown building and puts us in a better position to attract

new investment which is the key to our future prosperity. He also explained that the steps are basic and are ones that competing cities such as Jeffersonville, Clarksville and Corydon have already taken years ago. He stated that best of all, the cost is modest and affordable for New Albany. He said that by giving support to this ordinance, you will make the City of New Albany the best it can be now and for generations to come.

COMMUNICATIONS – OTHER CITY DEPARTMENTS OR CITY OFFICIALS:

REPORTS – COMMITTEES, BOARDS OR OTHER OFFICIALS AS REQUESTED BY A MAJORITY VOTE OF THE COUNCIL:

HORSESHOE BOARD –Mr. Aebersold and Mr. Caesar

Mr. Caesar stated that the Horseshoe Foundation had its spring grants awards given out last Wednesday at the Carnegie Center with \$400,000.00 being given out to the community to widely diverse groups. He also stated that the fall grant applications are open now for anyone that wants to apply.

Dr. Knable stated that is basically a little above last year despite the flooding so that is good news.

PLAN COMMISSION – Mr. Phipps

Mr. Phipps stated that the commission approved an auto and tire service center at State Street and Oak Street as well as two fast food restaurant out-lots in front of the old Kmart on Grant Line Road.

APPROVAL OF CF-1 FORMS:

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES:

READING

COMMUNICATIONS – PUBLIC (AGENDA ITEMS): G-18-06

Ms. Amy Clere, 1701 Depauw Avenue, stated that she and her husband are proud historic preservationists and have for a long time been active in helping the downtown improve. She said that she believes, however, that this money could be better spent investing in our children and the homeless situation.

Ms. Elizabeth Hopkins, 1683 Woodlawn Drive, thanked Mr. Nash and Mr. Barksdale for speaking with her on several occasions about G-18-06 but she does disagree with both of them. She said that she does not feel that there has been transparency with all of the interactions especially the cost. She also said that she disagrees with the developer selection because just having one bid does not reflect any type of competition. She stated that the time allotment was by the book but 10 days just does not seem right to her. She explained that she thinks there are better locations with buildings in better condition. She also explained that she was told by the director with redevelopment that the building would be owned by the city if it fails.

Mr. Irv Stumler, 1216 Adams Street, passed out a reprint of page 6 of the city council meeting minutes from May 7th as well as some photos from the M. Fine Building that he took yesterday afternoon. He said that in those minutes it was stated by Mr. Brandon Benton that the building would be finished in 45 days and June 22nd was the end of the

that 45 day period and the building is far from being finished. He thinks this is one more issue that should be considered in the vote tonight.

Mr. Greg Sekula, Southern Regional Director for Indiana Landmarks, stated that he appreciates all of the meetings that have taken place on this project because that dialogue is very important. He said that Indiana Landmarks still wishes to show its support for this project and urges the city council to move forward tonight with the third reading in a positive way. He said there has been a lot of discussion about transparency on the project but he cannot speak one way or the other because he was not involved in that process, however, he will say that on August 8, 2017 and again on September 22, 2017, this project was publicly announced and discussed in the newspaper and TV stations. He also said that in those discussions, the arrangements with Denton-Floyd were outlined as well as some of the costs. He stated that it is unfortunate that all of these questions and concerns did not occur earlier in the process because the administration moved forward with the understanding that there was not widespread opposition to this project. He explained that the square footage of the building is not out of line with other city halls in the area and will be about double the square footage that we have now. He pointed out that cost is not going to get cheaper if we delay this and urged the council to support this with positive affirmation on the third reading.

Mr. Danny Emmert, Hedden Park, stated that it is true about how long this has been going on but there has been a whole lot of lying, misinformation and lots of secrecy which he is tired of as many other people are. He asked who gives a \$750,000.00 handout to a contractor with no paperwork being produced as of yet because every time he asks about paperwork, it is not there. He said that this is public money and the council members are elected to look out for the best thing for the people, not for one or two people. He added that no other locations were even considered. He said that he sent every council member an email asking certain questions and bluntly asked if they were one of the people that went to Keeneland that was paid for by Denton-Floyd and the only responses he received were from the members opposing this project. He stated that transparency is not here and it's time for the council to do the right thing.

Mr. Mark Fuchs, 3808 Lola Dell Court, stated that he and his wife have lived in New Albany for 33 years and are proud to say that they crossed party lines to vote for Mayor Gahan, proud of the things that he has accomplished as the mayor and proud to live in New Albany. He said that they respectfully oppose the purchase of the Reisz Building because they feel it is too much money for the hardworking citizens of New Albany to pay for such a long period of time.

Mr. Ron Carter, 7375 Old Vincennes Road, stated he represents the Carter Management Company which owns the rest of the property that attaches to the Reisz Building. He said that just because something is old doesn't mean it can't be salvaged so it can be done and yes it costs money. He said that they took their retirement to invest New Albany and into the west end so his personal money is invested in New Albany and he doesn't even live in New Albany. He said that he has faith in New Albany and has read the Comprehensive Plan for the city and wants the positive things to keep going. He also said this is the future and people are coming from Louisville to New Albany to live and he is for it and it can be done.

Mr. Josh Pavey, 605 E. Main Street, said that he agrees with Mr. Needham's email for the most part and that a professor and mentor once told him that we shouldn't be concerned when a government is moving too slowly but when they are moving too

quickly. He stated that he has had potholes that have taken longer to fill than this project is being pushed through. He also stated that it is being pushed through carelessly and the amount of money plus the lack of net gain for the citizens are his reasons for urging the council to vote against it and possibly put it up for a referendum in the future.

Mr. Robert Dunn, President, Develop New Albany, stated that historic preservation is at the core of their mission and they support this project for that reason and also believe strongly in the investment in this community whether public or private. He also stated that to take what is a blight and dilapidated building in our community and make it a strength for years to come is a real opportunity. He thanked the council for hearing him and said that he hopes the council moves forward with the project.

Mr. Chris Fitzgerald, 523 Navajo Drive, stated that he is present to support the preservation, revitalization and the activation of the Reisz Building. He said that as someone who has been involved with land use issues and urbanism throughout the past decade and currently works for the city of Louisville doing lot and vacant structure repurposing, reclaiming vacant spaces and putting them back to productive use is a passion of his. He thinks that preservation of the Reisz Building is important to New Albany as a physical link to our city's early decades and it is important to protect our history. He said that we have many parking lots and vacant lots where amazing structures once stood and an increase of unused land is not what our city needs or wants. He said that he feels the Reisz Building has passed the point of private investment but does not feel that it has reached the point where it would be fiscally imprudent for the city to intercede. He said that he trusts this body along with the administration to protect our past and provide us with the tools today that will allow us to build upon the New Albany renaissance for years to come.

Ms. Laura Renwick, 1604 Shelby Place, stated that she has been before the council before as administrator on behalf of the Historic Preservation Commission to tell the board that the commission sees this as a tremendous opportunity to save an important historic building downtown. She said that today she is present as a citizen and a taxpayer and she is in support of the project and thinks this is a very important building to be preserved. She also said that even if the decision is made to go elsewhere, she hopes that this building is protected. She stated that one thing that has not really been mentioned is the fact that in this case the developer is taking on a lot of uncertainties and feels that is critical because with the skyrocketing costs of various construction materials, costs are only going to go up if construction is pushed further down the road. She said she feels that a civic building really says something about who we are as a community and who we strive to be. She added that we may be able to find cheaper space at an abandoned strip mall or on the upper floor of one of the bank buildings but she feels it is important that we strive for more and be more as a community than simply taking the cheapest option. She also added that she feels it would be an important catalyst for the revitalization of downtown.

Mr. John L. Smith, 1017 E. Spring Street, thanked Mr. Phipps for taking time to meet with him yesterday as well as Dr. Knable who did the same. He said that he has been on the fence on this but knows that the city does need a new city hall. He also said that he is in agreement that the Reisz Building needs to be rehabbed, however, he doesn't know the history of that building and it just looks like a straight four wall building to him. He stated that he is a fiscal conservative and has a problem with the cost. He then asked if this is going to be the highest and best use for this property. He said that the council

members have to vote their conscience and only time will tell who made the right decision.

Mr. Randy Smith, 2229 E. Elm Street, stated that he is present to ask the council to reject this and vote no. He said that Ms. Laura Renwick spoke of all of the risks that the developer is taking on and he will take it and hire a developer. He stated that there are very few businessmen in this town that wouldn't take this deal because the risks and obligations are all on the city. He asked that the council commit to not using any public money to defend any criminal charges when this thing falls apart. He then stated that Mr. Barksdale should not vote on this issue because it is a conflict for him because he is involved with the Historic Preservation Commission.

Mr. Steve Burks, 1111 Lafayette Drive, asked that the council to vote against this project tonight. He stated that he has heard that a new city hall would draw more people to the downtown area and he may be simple minded but he thinks businesses draw people downtown. He then said that with a project like this, you have to ask yourself if you would spend your own money that way and he heard one council member say that we have to do this no matter the cost and he would never operate like this at his house. He stated that there is a commercial banker on the council who has done big projects like this and his numbers make sense so he asked that council to step back and vote against it.

Mr. David White, 325 Haze Drive, stated that he is not sure if he would vote his conscience tonight but would vote the facts. He said that there is not a single one here tonight that understands the difference between creating the check and then cashing it. He is not against prosperity, history or preservation but for financial responsibility of people's money who entrusted it to you. He thinks there is a better plan because if you get business people together in a room and have critical application processes in place, they will come up with a better plan. He said that he doesn't think that the citizens want a Rolex facility and that they are weary and tired of deception, dishonesty and bullying in this debt. He said he worked for the Honorable Mayor James Garner and they had a \$16M budget and then Mayor Doug England had an \$18M budget and while the council may balance the budget one time a year which is \$33M and growing, if they were to put the budget literally to paper like it is done in the private sector, they would be close to bankruptcy.

Mr. Roger Baylor, 1117 E. Spring Street, stated that he would like to contest what the mayor said about moving city hall three blocks to a different location with the same number of workers is somehow going to be economic development. He said the workers are not going to spend anymore money than they did before and we are not going to add any more jobs he certainly hopes so this is something that needs to be nipped in the bud because it is not economic growth. He stated that Mr. Barksdale provided the best reason for us to contest all of these statements because he said that private money has invested \$60M in downtown in the past 10-12 years and the government did next to nothing to leverage that. He then asked why government has to spend \$10M to somehow validate what private investors and independent small businesspeople have already done. He said that it doesn't make sense and government should be getting the basics and infrastructure right. He stated that there is an opportunity cost attached to this money because you are going to spend an extra \$300,000.00+ per year for 15 years and that could be used for something else. He also stated that money could be used far more expeditiously to impel economic development than merely restoring one building among many that is somehow going to draw tour busses off the interstate which he said it will not do. He said that he wants to differ with what Mr. Greg Sekula said about transparency of this project. He

said that it may have been somewhat transparent since August 8, 2017, but the entire process leading up to that point was not transparent to any of us and was worked out in the backrooms. He then listed several corporations attached this project and said they collectively donated \$8,500.00 into Mayor Gahan's campaign account last year.

Mr. Wendall Lane, 2140 Pickwick Drive, stated that he has been a resident of this county for more than 70 years and a taxpayer and property owner for over 60 years. He said that he is concerned and is present to urge the council to reject this proposal. He stated that he doesn't know much about the Reisz Building but was in it about 40 years ago and it did not appear to be too substantial. He also stated that if he is not mistaken, it has gone through three floods so that doesn't encourage him to think that it is proper for the city to spend taxpayer's money on it. He said that if it can be preserved, he is in favor of that by a private investor but not taxpayers. He thinks that the city needs to look into other options and possibly build on property that the city already owns before we take on this financial fiasco.

Mr. Todd Harritt, Floyds Knobs, stated that he lives in Floyd Knobs and loves raising his family there. He also stated that he has worked in downtown New Albany for 10 years and his father has had a business here for many years and has invested in the city in historic preservation which is expensive. He said that he has a lot of experience in doing real estate business around the state of Kentucky and in looking at this building, it is not that uncommon to see buildings like the Reisz Building in large cities that have city and public funds all over it. He added that it is because most of these buildings don't pencil out in a private investors office. He stated that it is important to have good partners in business and life and you have a developer here that has a resume and has active projects in the city and is doing business in a professional manner. He said that to him, this has come from opportunistic thinking for a common problem which is that you need a new city hall and there is an old blighted building available and a developer has come forth with a solution. He also said that this building is something that you see every time you cross the bridge and he is for it.

Mr. Todd Triplett stated that he is a father and a veteran and has properties around the Reisz Building. He said that he has been in New Albany for only 10 years but feels this city has saved his life. He also said he spent a long time in the military and brought the number one tactical law enforcement training company in the country to New Albany and employs many New Albany residents through different businesses. He said that he is for the city hall move.

Dr. Knable stated that Mr. Nash entered the meeting shortly after 7:00 p.m. and noted that he was declared absent but is now present so all council members are present tonight.

Mr. Blair stated he would like to see a show of hands of people that are opposed to the project and show of hands of people that are for the project.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS – PETITIONERS IN FAVOR

G-18-06	Authorizing the Entry by the City of New Albany into A BOT Lease Agreement and Related Documents, Pledging Certain Repayment Sources Thereto and Taking Certain Other Actions Related Thereto; and Further Authorizing the Removal of a Local Income Tax (Formerly	Barksdale 3
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**Known as Economic Development Income Tax)
Pledge to Certain Sewage Works Bonds of the City
of New Albany**

Mr. Barksdale introduced G-18-06 and moved to approve the third reading, Mr. Phipps second, Mr. Caesar, Mr. Phipps, Mr. McLaughlin, Mr. Nash and Mr. Barksdale voted yes and Mr. Coffey, Mr. Blair, Mr. Aebersold and Dr. Knable voted no. Bill G-18-06 becomes Ordinance G-18-10.

Mr. Blair stated that he took a petition mainly around his district and realized quickly that people didn't have a lot of information regarding this project so he spent a lot of time in lengthy conversations with many residents which he felt was very good. He said that he spoke with about 18-20 families and there was only one person in favor of it and the vast majority was against it. He also said that he thinks that as people receive more information, they will see how bad of a project this is and what a bad deal it will be for the city. He then stated that he is accountable for the spending of the city and his constituents look to him as someone that is going to take care of their money and he was told many times by people to spend their tax dollars wisely. He said that people have a lot of issues around the process that was used for the bids as far as lack of transparency and asked how we can give \$750,000.00 to a developer. He said that the conservative number that he came up with for cost was \$8.35M for the total project. He stated that people also asked him why they can't have a referendum which he tends to agree with because of this size of this project. He said that people feel there is better use for our spend rate and explained that we are spending over \$500,000.00 of additional costs per year every year over a 15 year period for office space. He said that is a lot of money and we can do a lot of things with that money such as social programs, infrastructure improvements, storm water improvements, etc. He stated that he didn't find anyone opposed to the city government maybe providing financial assistance or subsidy to entice a developer which we have never done before. He understands that if the council votes this down tonight, the property comes back to the city and then it is going to cost a little less than \$400,000.00 to bring it back to a structurally safe building so he asked why we don't offer a developer the property for \$400,000.00 and ask them what the best and highest use of the building is. He said that would be a much cheaper way to restore the building than \$8.35M that the city is proposing. He then pointed out that they are elected officials and they had to read about the project in the newspaper and they should have been involved in it and weren't brought into the process until they had to do a pledge in EDIT Funds and he felt that wasn't fair. He added that this project was decided by only several people in the administration that wanted to railroad it through. He then mentioned that we are taking money out of our operating expenses which is our EDIT Fund and using them for capital expenses and the danger is that we will encumber that for 15 years as a fixed expense. He pointed out that if we need additional operating expenses, they won't be there so we will have to do another bond and raise taxes if we need to do another storm water project or something like that. He stated that we have been underfunding our streets about \$1.5M-\$2M per year for the last 7-8 years and that will eventually catch up with us so we are either going to have really poor streets or do a bond which means more tax increases. He also stated that they are getting ready to look at a new zoning code and there are pieces in there that are going to increase our expenses such as more zoning positions that need to be funded and asked where that money is going to come from. He added that if we default on our bond, the bond payers get paid first and the employees get paid last. He then said that a space study was never done to find out what kind of floor space we need for city employees so that we don't overpay for space that we don't need. He also said that we didn't do a feasibility study for the Reisz

Building to determine what the best and highest use for the building is so we really don't know what the best use is. He said that he believes there is a better alternative such as putting the Reisz Building up for bid and offer it as an RFP and see what kind of projects developers will bring back and by not doing that, we have limited ourselves to one developer. He stated that he agrees that we need a new city hall and one of the most practical things to do is just remodel this floor and possibly move the assembly room to another location to create a little more space. He also stated that the one thing he has heard citizens say is that they would like to keep all government offices centralized so that when they have business to take care of, they only have to come to one building. He then pointed out that the people that spoke for it were either developers, had real estate downtown or were historians so as far as just the general public, he feels they would like to see us do something different and not spend all of this money for this project.

Mr. Coffey stated that we do not rent this building, we only pay expenses and those expenses are going to follow us to the Reisz Building. He pointed out that we will still have to rent the police station space. He then said he gets upset when someone tells him if you balance the square footage with that building, it works out if you take out the restrooms and the hallways so he asked a builder if square footage included restrooms and hallways and was told yes. He said that he knows there has been a lot of deception here and that everyone has a way they want to do things but they never look at how it affects others by pooling all the money into one pot. He also said that when he was out walking like Mr. Blair did, he explained the Reisz Building project and people do not want a new city hall; they talked about their roads, streets, sidewalks, flooding and safety. He said that not one person said they want the administration to have a building three times the size they need. He was disappointed in the process because back in 2014 or 2015, it was brought up to him that we could have the Reisz Building for what we pay here yearly and he told them that was a no brainer because that's a wash. He said that he then looked into it and we don't pay rent, we pay utilities, insurance and whatever it takes. He said that figure for the Reisz Building then jumped up to \$300,000.00 per year, then up to \$500,000.00 per year but he says it is going to be over \$800,000.00 per year. He then explained that we pay our 911 Dispatch out of EDIT which is \$800,000.00-\$900,000.00 per year and when we buy police cars or firetrucks, we have to pull it out of Rainy Day, Riverboat or EDIT and these are all safety issues. He then stated that the historical groups have turned into lobbyists. He said that this process has been kept from the people so they didn't know what was going on. He told Mr. Barksdale to forget the project and look at the process and asked how he could have any integrity and vote for this because we still have information that was requested that wasn't given to us. He said that Mr. Blair asked three times at the last meeting for the breakdown of the \$750,000.00 and was told he could ask for it which means to him that they are not going to provide it.

Mr. Caesar stated that the new city hall is not a new idea that just came up and that it was talked about when the Horseshoe wanted to put the YMCA here and possibly house city offices so there was talk from that time forward. He said that the library was looked at and for different reasons, that didn't work out. He said that there was a plan that a lot of money got spent on by a private developer in the 2010-2011 range for a whole new government office building put in New Albany but those plans fell through. He also said that redevelopment works and you can tell just by looking at downtown Louisville where they are redoing all of the old buildings and storefronts because the new arena is there but it also works here in New Albany. He explained that the impetus for New Albany's come back was when we did the White House in the 1990s which is now in private hands and is a building to be really proud of and helped the revitalization of the Spring/Pearl Street corridor. He said that he feels absolutely certain that when this building gets built, you

will see a tremendous amount of revitalization on Main Street which means more people working and more tax dollars coming in. He feels it is a wonderful opportunity to save the building and this will work for everyone.

Mr. Blair stated that private investment and redevelopment do work but the YUM Center in Louisville was government funded and it had a bond default and is in financial difficulty. He added that when government gets involved, a lot of times it doesn't work.

Dr. Knable stated that the soccer stadium in Louisville points out what Mr. Coffey was saying because the day after they broke ground the price went from \$45M to \$65M which was announced last week. He said that he has had more phone calls on this than on anything else since he has been in office and the vast majority of those have been in opposition to it. He said that he would really like to see the extra money that we are committing to this per year to go for infrastructure of the roads and sidewalks, affordable housing initiatives, the arts, some green spaces, etc. because he has had so many come to him to ask for those things but never to ask for a bigger city hall. He stated that he doesn't know how he could hold true to what he ran as which is a fiscal conservative and a good steward of people's money if he voted for this at this time. He also stated that as a concession to the people who want to preserve history, this building that we are in now is eligible to be listed on the National Registry of Historic Places based on its age which is 57+ years old. He pointed out that it won an architectural award in 1963 for its design concept. He said that if we put 1-2 years of this extra money into this building, he thinks we could do that and still execute Mr. Blair's plan to shore up the Reisz Building because no one wants that building to go down. He stated that he would be in favor of hunkering down here and working with the county in restoring this back to the pride it was in the 1960s and saving the Reisz Building as well.

Mr. Coffey stated that he forgot the bulk of the petitions that he has received but will submit them to the city clerk's office for the record. He added that there over 400 signatures and they made sure that they did petitions in each district to be fair. He then brought up how they used to have council meetings at the different schools in different areas each month so that people could get to them more easily. He stated that we are not limited to space in this building only for meetings.

Mr. Aebersold stated that he has looked through all the information for the last three weeks and for him it comes down to the cost of the project and how it went about. He said that he doesn't think that anyone in New Albany is against trying to do something with the Reisz Building. He has done some projects with developers but he has never done a project where a developer comes in and says they will do it for x number of dollars and get it done in 6 months with no cost overruns. He added that he has never done a project that didn't have cost overruns. He stated that once you get into a project like restoring an old building, you don't really know what you are going to get into because there are a lot of unknowns especially with a building that old. He said that he is looking out for taxpayers' money and they expect him to make smart decisions with it and he doesn't feel this project is a smart decision. He added that he would've gone to seven or eight developers in the community to ask for proposals for a new city hall to see what they would come up with. He said that we have only one developer and one idea here and he just doesn't feel that is a fair way to go about it and thinks we can do better.

Mr. Phipps stated that he does agree with Mr. Caesar that this will be a great economic development tool. He said that there were naysayers when we invested in the YMCA which was years before he even considered running for council but he would sit in the

audience and listen to the complaints but he knew then that it would help downtown. He also said that there were naysayers with the two-way traffic conversion and now a year out it is very efficient and most people are very happy with it. He thinks this will be a catalyst for Main Street and we are saving an historic building and historic preservation is expensive. He said that Colonial Manor was suggested as a site which desperately needs renovation but city hall needs to be downtown in the urban core and not out in the suburbs. He said that another suggestion was to rent space in a bank building or the Elsbey Building but a city hall has to be a stand-alone facility and asked what that would look like to someone who wants to come in and we just have a suite of offices wedged in an office building. He explained that in terms of renovating this building, we had some county officials a couple of meetings ago saying that they desperately need this space for more judicial and courts. He then said that it will be much easier for people to park at the new building than it is coming to this building and it will be handicapped accessible. He also said that it is going to have new utility systems which will make it more efficient. He then responded to the letter that was read into the minutes from County Commissioner Billy Stewart and said that he said that we still owe the county money. He asked really? He then asked what about the money they owe us from the parks or the money that is owed for the animal shelter. He also asked what about the sale of the hospital and the money we were to have from that and where was the transparency in that particular deal. He stated that the county is hypocritical when they are telling the city that we are going to owe them money. He said he is for this project and has been from the get go and he hopes his colleagues vote yes with him tonight.

Dr. Knable stated that he was the messenger of that email but siad it does remind him that a house divided will not long stand. He added that the city and the county have got to learn to work together and if we don't reach out and begin that process, we are doomed.

Mr. McLaughlin stated that is true with good business partners but in this case, the partner in question has not been. He added that the citizens of New Albany and Floyd County will have to bear the burden of doing without the amount of money that we could've had as far as tax revenue from the hospital by them not going with an entity that would be paying property taxes.

Mr. Barksdale stated that he wanted to concur with Mr. Caesar and Mr. Phipps. He said that there will be better access to the building and over 200 parking spots will be available. He also stated that if you have been on the third floor during a working day, it almost looks inhumane the way people are in the cubicles, especially in redevelopment where they barely have room to stretch their arms in their work areas. He said that they need more space and he doesn't feel this is an excessive amount of space but will fit their needs nicely. He added that after 15 years, the citizens of New Albany will own that structure. He said that there have been other buildings that have been looked at in the downtown area such as the Coyle property as well as the Baptist Tabernacle so there have been other buildings considered. He stated that he agrees with Mr. Phipps that city hall needs to be located in your center urban core. He added that as he has said in the past months, he is very much in support of the project.

Mr. Coffey stated that the council could alleviate the problem of space for the county in this building by annexing the county government center into the city and move some of the county offices out there and free up space for city offices. He added that realistically it would be the right thing to do to work with the county. He said that he would be willing to work with someone on that and have it on the next agenda to annex that in.

Mr. Blair stated that he agrees with a lot of what Mr. Phipps, Mr. Caesar and Barksdale are saying but feels that objective can be accomplished at a lot less cost. He thinks that what Mr. Coffey is proposing is one solution and putting the Reisz Building in the hands of the right developer with some financial assistance from the city and then build a freestanding building on our blighted lot right next to Big 4 Burgers is another solution. He said he can't imagine us not being able to do with about half the space that we are proposing with the Reisz Building. He also said that the other advantages of doing that is that you have not only taken two blighted properties on Main Street and converted them into usable buildings but you have also attracted more people into downtown for economic development. He stated that you will gain a lot more for half the cost of what we are talking about here.

Dr. Knable thanked the council for their time put in on this matter over the last several weeks as well as members of the administration for answering questions. He also thanked everyone for showing up at all the meetings as well as on social media and phone calls.

Mr. Coffey stated that he has a real problem with the way the process was done on this project and is going to ask the prosecuting attorney to maybe hand this over to the state police to see if there was anything done improperly.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS:

BOARD APPOINTMENTS:

COMMUNICATIONS – PUBLIC (NON-AGENDA ITEMS):

Mr. Roger Baylor stated that he is not surprised but disappointed and can't wait until the elections next year.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Al Knable, President

Vicki Glotzbach, City Clerk