

# Randolph County Commissioners/Council

March 13, 2024

The Randolph County Commissioners/Council met in a joint meeting at 6:00PM in the Commissioners and Council Room in the Courthouse with the following members present: Board President Michael Wickersham, Gary Friend and Gary Girton. County Council members present: Board President David Lenkensdofer, Beverly Fields, Missy Williams, Tom Chalfant, Todd Holaday and Mike Stine. Also present was Randolph County Auditor Laura J Martin and County Attorney Meeks Cockerill.

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Pledge of Allegiance

## Opening of Meetings

Mike Wickersham said I will call the Commissioner's joint meeting to order and ask Dave to do the same for the Council.

Dave said I will call the Council meeting to order.

Mike said we've got one printed item on the agenda and I think we have another one to talk about after the Randolph County Superintendents make their presentation regarding RAZ 32 project. Welcome gentlemen.

## Randolph County Superintendents – RAZ 32 Project

Introductions: Adrian Moulton, Superintendent of Monroe Central School Corporation. Aaron Black, Randolph Eastern. Rolland Abraham, Randolph Central.

Aaron said tonight we are here to talk to you about RAZ 32. RAZ stands for Rural Alliance Zone and 32 it's pretty simple, it's the highway that runs east and west between the districts. We're excited to have your time tonight, we do have a presentation but please just stop and asked questions as we go. We don't want to take up your time.

Rolland said in terms of student voice and kind of what is motivating us where kids are concerned. This is one of our students at Winchester Community High School, Zane Culbertson, this student was literally waiting for the day he could drop out of high school. He knew he couldn't do it right away, when he got in as a freshman, so he was literally counting the days to drop out. Failing everything. Then one day he decided to sign up for a welding class and it changed everything for him. Since then he's signed up for every welding class, every precision machining class, Falcon Industries and he's thriving. He's going to go out and make really good money because he's good at what he does. So, that's really what we are trying to do here, we're trying to build connections between our kids and these career pathways that are going to get that kind of response from them. And it's exciting to see that. I've listened to Zane probably, whenever people come to our building, Carla calls on him all the time to talk to people. It's interesting to listen to him talk and his perspective, I'm just really proud of everything he's doing.

Adrian said mission, expanding access to high quality college and career connected learning, we will prepare students to contribute to a thriving regional autonomy and to improved well being for all. So, obviously a goal that we have for school corporations is to conserve our communities and to do that we have to have good programming and I think we've been before both bodies at some point to talk to you about how difficult strong student programming is to offer in rural areas. We struggle with more than anything, just getting staff and keeping staff that can do some of these programs. You can't do it all, each one of us would love to sit here and say, we can carry the burden and offer great programming for kids in Randolph County at Monroe Central, we just simply can't. We can't afford to do that, we can't attract the staff. That's why we have started to try to work together and this is our mission and vision that we have.

Aaron said I've seen a lot, I think I've shared, one of the most frustrating stats that I think we're fighting against is the Ball State study and the goal of stopping our decline in population by 2030. That is one of the most heart-breaking things in Randolph County that you have to hear. This is just as much about talent retention, is there access to some programming in Richmond and Muncie, yeah, but those kids are getting access to Delaware County and Wayne County businesses, their not getting access to our great Randolph County business's. I think that's a big part.

Rolland said and a piece of this, we do have a Muncie Area Career Center and Adrian is closest to it and so his kids use it more than the rest of us. But it is very difficult to get kids on that bus that early in the morning from Winchester and truck them all the way and you can imagine what it's like from Union City and truck them all the way to the career center. There's always been a few kids engaged, I think I have six kids going there this semester. It's just not a viable solution for most of our kids.

Aaron said this is some population that you all know well. Obviously rural communities, 62% of our kids qualify for free and reduced, divide that down and 40%, I think it's actually 36% of our students are first generation college students.

Rolland said this is a Randolph County grant, Duane Lott, do any of you know him by chance. Obviously he works for Boyce Systems, and actually a lot of software for schools is created by them. He's looking for pipeline, I think Boyce, aren't they located in Daleville. So, their working for young minds and curious inquisitive kids that can come from Randolph County. Obviously you can live in Randolph County and work in Daleville, obviously a lot of software engineering is also from home these days. People are working from home. It's another great opportunity for our kids.

Adrian said as far as offerings, obviously each of us has our strengths and we're trying to build on those. But, we're also trying to start some programming from the ground level. As far as what we're trying to collaborate on. I don't know if you guys want to hit each one of your own but I'll just start at Monroe Central some of the programming that we think that we can offer that would benefit a Randolph Eastern student or a Randolph Central student is our early childhood education program. We just want to be able to hang on to our elementary preschool and its going tremendous. We have an outstanding high school teacher that education minded and has

done a fantastic job of getting our kids ready for that and I think it will sell across the county, to get kids certified in early childhood or even excited about becoming an education professional. That's one, IT is one that we are building from the ground level. I'll be honest with you right now, you go look at Monroe Central at the IT, as far as the classes that we offer. We're trying to get these things started up. That would definitely be a startup. And then one that's not on the slide that we've had for a few years now and again I go back to the instructor, this is the precision ag. And that would be the drones, we have all this equipment but we lost our instructor a couple years ago, so we had to get a new instructor certified to be able to teach this. But we're going to offer precision ag as well.

Rolland said I will go next. Ours is precision machine and welding, obviously with precision machine, we house the advanced manufacturing center. We just recently bought another, what is called a BF4, which has a huge capacity in terms of machining aluminum. And then welding and I want to thank Commissioner's and Council for the funding that you've done for the welding in the past and actually the most recent funding that you did, helped us increase our capacity from 13 to 18 to 20 kids. We realize that's not enough, that's just not enough slots. Later on, we'll talk about that.

Aaron Black said we've all made huge investments in agricultural, as we should. It's Randolph County, right, we should continue to develop our ag programs. Now these are just some statistics on employers and job openings in our area, what's called out there, is the number of openings that Reid Health has consistently has posted over 250. And that's everything from drivers of their ambulances to nurses, doctors, that's everything, all of the above. But 250 jobs less than 30 minutes from where we sit just posted constantly.

Rolland Abraham said alright, here, initially we've highlighted, there's other, obviously, there're some additional areas, but these are the ones that we've highlighted. And I'm not going to read all of these to you, but you can see kind of what, in that field, what kind of a low wage or lower wage, a medium wage, and a high wage would be. So, these are all great opportunities for our kids. And we believe in our kids and their ability to get that education beyond even what we do at the secondary level, whether they go on to college or maybe a trade school. So, these will be great investments in every one of our kids in Randolph County.

Aaron Black said sadly, when you look across these, that's probably the lowest paying, but probably one of the highest needs in the state of Indiana and definitely in Randolph County. This is just a rundown of where some funds have come from outside of what we invest in our CTE programs every day. Next Gen grants, a free grant that we all have access to through our service center, a great amount of money from the department of ED. Ivy Tech has stepped up big, and it's important to call out, \$40,000.00 to help offset some of the salary costs of an executive director. Reid Health has been a great partner for us. Welding, can't speak enough about that.

Rolland Abraham said yeah, well, and like I said, I think the county has invested \$230,000.00 in the welding program. But, we're going to build another welding lab. There's a building that's attached to our green house, and the northern most bay, my board actually approved the contract last night, and some of the equipment that's going to go in there. So, we're literally going to

build another welding lab. So, our capacity will be 29 kids every two periods. So, what's that, 87 kids total throughout the day. Just because we, even after we expanded to 20, we're still putting kids on a waiting list. You know what I mean? And we've got to get out of that business.

Adrian Moulton said I can speak from experience. Monroe Central kids went over last year to visit, were blown away by the program, but unfortunately, because he was full, not all of them could go. So, they ended up going to the MAC and they're going to be able to still do this, but their first preference was to be able to go to his program. They just couldn't because he didn't have enough capacity for it. So, there is a desire and need there.

Aaron Black said and I'd be remised if I didn't call out the contributions from the city of Union City and helping me do some grant writing for Vision Corner as well. That's going to be roughly a 3 1/2 million-dollar project that is largely grant funded as well. You guys have all seen this slide before. Now, it's nuts and bolts is what you guys really wanted, is to have a conversation of dollars and cents, right? And again, I would encourage you guys to stop and ask questions and we'll just kind of help explain where these numbers came from. Said before that Ivy Tech has committed \$40,000.00 to executive director's salary, seeking another \$32,000 for benefits and things to go onto that salary. The big piece here, transportation, non-profit administrative costs, materials and supplies. A lot of that is startup. There's going to be a lot of investment in figuring out the bussing of kids. Roland was fortunate enough, we got to go down to rural Texas together, and they're bussing kids about an hour away from each of their district. So, I always tell them just, we've got to be able to figure out 15 minutes to 30 minutes. It shouldn't be a barrier to get our kids access to quality programming. Technical assistance, so, the folks that have helping us build this that have other models across the country and power schools, some of those fees were there, and just any other special project and new projects, pathways, as we start to talk about bringing on other schools and developing new pathways. That's where that money would come from, and then, training and sustainability. So, year one, I'm needing about \$242,000 and this is the breakdown as we look at going over through year three, what we're needing to put together to make this happen. This will change. I hope it'll change. The goal of us is this is not an exclusive club. It was, we just work well together and there're three of us sitting here and not five or six schools because we need to get thing to scale and figure out some of the pain points. But the hope is that over time, there're more schools that come on. And Randolph County we say that we see a need for carpentry, hopefully, we have the school step up and say choose us, we'll do the carpentry piece, send your kids to us and we'll send our kids that direction. I know, for example, Northeastern has a high interest in participating in a lot of these programs because they're developing a manufacturing engineering, so, a lot of electrical stuff, they're developing that pathway. And they want to be able to support that, and a lot of that is being driven by Hills down in Richmond. But they want access to students that might be interested in taking their program. So, those numbers could, I think as we spread out, go down, but that's kind of baseline numbers. There's been a lot of conversations between the three of us and our professional partners to kind of drill down and get you all some numbers for this conversation.

Adrian Moulton said we just felt the need to start small and develop from strength, there was, I mean, you've got to imagine, I mean, each one of us obviously, report to a board. So, I've got

five board members, he's got five board members. And to get three boards to agree on this, just this, is, it's, I mean, it's taken a little time. I'd be honest with you. I've had to do a lot of education with my board on why this would benefit Monroe Central kids, and they're in. They are all in right now, but to try to bring on 4 and 5 and 6 other schools to start with, I mean, we've all signed an MOU, the school corporations have. So, we have some principles for guiding us, but again, like Mr. Black said, I would hope that is this thing, if we get it off the ground, it will not only grow from the standpoint of other schools, but certainly from other programming. And not, I would hope, not just CTE programming. I would hope, and some of those hard, hard to fill academic areas as well.

Gary Friend said how does the logistics of transporting children around the county in the days where the school, how much time's lost? Do they lose a period? Do they lose credits? I mean, how's the transportation factor going to work in. And, before you answer that, I mean, there's also a need for HVAC, plumbing and electrical. Anyway, that thought there, but the transportation seems to be quite a prickle.

Rolland Abraham said yeah, well, I mean, one thing, we are going to put WIFI on these buses so kids can work when they're on the bus, okay. So, that's helpful. But in terms of transporting, yeah, it's, the students are going to lose the equivalent of a period. Now, we have a 7-period day. And as long as kids get their credits early, their freshman and sophomore years, then losing a period of class when they're a junior or senior, isn't quite you know, as tough. And we even have a lot of kids that take classes in the summer time. They'll get their PE out of the way, and so, kids will plan ahead for that. But so, I don't anticipate that being a barrier to kids. You know, the important part is to really get the kids engaged. And so, they'll overcome some of those hurdles in terms of time as we get them engaged in a program that they really, that they will want to do. And I want to say also, I want to go back a little bit here and talk about the medical academy. I'm really excited about that, because we tried to solve that problem in Randolph Central three years ago, and we just couldn't come up with the solution. We had our irons in too many fires. And so, I couldn't bring, you know, medical academy. And so, that's pretty exciting opportunity, especially with somebody like Reid Hospital, just really involved in that process.

Adrian Moulton said the other point on transportation I think, you guys can correct me if I'm wrong, because this is where Huston powered. And they, I mean, they plotted this thing out and really, I mean, well we've tried to, in our master schedules, we've tried to chump those courses at the beginning of the day or the end of the day so kids could start the day at Randolph Eastern, get their courses and their day at Monroe Central, and not have to come to Monroe Central during the middle of the day and miss on both ends, I guess is what I'm trying to say.

Gary Friend said would bussing be mandatory for children of driving age, or would you allow?

Aaron Black said yeah, I'll speak for us, we allow students to drive on a waiver or a permission slip if they.

Adrian Moulton said we currently allow our kids to drive to the Muncie Area Career Center and we would.

Aaron Black said I have students that drive to Roland's welding program every morning.

Rolland Abraham said and we would do the same you know. Now if we transport a student, it has to be in a bus. But they can, the older kids can drive, yeah.

Gary Friend said on the funding part of this, with open enrollment allowed, will Randolph County be paying a portion of this or donating in students from the congruent counties around us would come and their counties don't even contribute, what kind of mechanisms could help the contribution of other counties?

Aaron Black said that's a great question. What I would tell you, the benefit, if Northeastern chooses to send students to our healthcare pathway, there needs to be some type of binding, so they'll get \$1,200.00 for every kid for their CTU programming. A portion of that money should certainly go to the other schools if it's outside of our county.

Adrian Moulton said I want to make sure I understand your question right. Is that, is that what you, are you talking about students that currently attend one of our schools that are not Randolph County residents?

Gary Friend said both.

Adrian Moulton said okay. Because, for us, and it's the same for all three of us, but Monroe Central, I have a high percentage of Delaware County students that come to Monroe Central, but when they lay their head down at night, they're laying their head down in Delaware County.

Gary Friend said well and their parents' taxes land in Delaware County?

Adrian Moulton said that's correct, yes.

Aaron Black said yes.

Gary Friend said so, I didn't know if there's any kind of mechanism, like the \$1,200.00 would be a part of this program, is there any way that it can go to the host school right now?

Rolland Abraham said well just say, I've lived in this for a little bit because of the welding program, and so, just so you know, in terms of the welding program these guys pay \$2,000.00, which is really cheap. That's about half of what the career center charges. And we've set it there at \$2,000.00, that's for the whole year for a kid to come, because this county is you know, your contribution to that, and I've always felt like we needed to encourage kids to come. But, actually charge Northeastern \$2,400.00.

Gary Friend said the school or the child?

Rolland Abraham said the school, just because their commissioners didn't give us any money.

Dave said didn't you have a schedule showing the transportation in that packet?

Aaron Black said there is, if I can get to it. There it is.

Missy said to get their tuition, if a student comes to you full time, you get their tuition?

Adrian Moulton said correct. And you also get your CTE funding. So, for whatever program they're in, you would get those additional dollars.

Aaron Black said and the other fun part of this conversation, having our guidance counselors at the table, there's certainly going to be a situation where a student goes to precision ag at Monroe Central and they need English 11, but by the time they get back to Randolph Eastern, we don't offer it. But it just so happens he has it fourth period, I think we are all in agreement, that kid has access to take that class there so, they don't take a loss and figure those things out. So, that's, those are things that are going to grow from this, to Adrian's point. I think because of teacher shortages, Spanish, science, math teachers, the more we figure this out, the more we'll be able to lean on each other to have high quality instructors, and not just instructors in front of our kids.

Gary Friend said Economically, it's no secret, education is one of the things that a rural county can offer to draw. A lot of times a lot of things are done that children, parents and their children to school. So, I have another question on the funding. Is this going to be, there's quite a bit of money when it's an obligation, the part I feel is if we were to obligate that in year one, then if Randolph County, if we don't obligate in year five, does the whole thing fall apart? There's no guarantee, there could be all new elected officials up here, and you would hate to say that we got so much funded, that the lack of funding would fall apart and all of a sudden becomes an obligation to us, we have other obligations that come in front of us that are huge.

Aaron Black said so, I think, again, there's a three-year grace period that whoever is sitting in these seats need to be really grinding, finding other partners that are not tied to elective spots, to be honest with you, to help figure this out and making sure that if we're saving money on a science teacher in the future, that that money is shifted towards this type of rural alliance. Those are the type of creative things that is going to take time, and I think there's some honest for you guys to hold us to an expectation of. This thing needs to grow. Like, if there're 25 students this year, may be looking at 35, 40 in the next year, and so on and so forth. To your point, I think that money will come into place once we see the savings that we're not paying for and we start to look for areas internally to take on some of the burden as well.

Gary Friend said yeah, I just don't want it to feel like it's an unfunded mandate.

Mike Wickersham said Texas, that you patterned this off of, how long have they been doing this?

Aaron Black said this is year 5.

Mike Wickersham said are they sustainable, or are they?

Aaron Black said they are, yep. A lot of theirs are from corporate sponsors.

Mike Wickersham said so they're not sustainable? They're getting sponsorship.

Aaron Black said correct, yes.

Mike Wickersham said the school corporation is not sustained, I guess that's what I'm getting at.

Aaron Black said right.

Adrian Moulton said part of the executive director's role, which is not, again, not just, they represent all of us, is to fund raise. I mean that would be part of what this person would be expected to do.

Dave Lenkensdofer said now I remember when you guys were here before, before the county council, you were interested in monies for transportation.

Aaron Black said right.

Dave Lenkensdofer said like \$25,000 a year for three years.

Mike Wickersham said and I guess while we're talking about transportation, at this second sheet, it doesn't look like you're asking for any funding for the return back to home base, if I'm reading the second sheet correctly.

Aaron Black said are you on the one that has the schools listed?

Mike Wickersham said yeah. And the estimated total for the top part of that is \$73,440, and \$16,368, which is the student transportation bus driver, student transportation fuel, that's not totaled. There's a whole bunch of rows down below that 46 and 27 on it, which I don't, I'm not sure what that is.

Aaron Black said can you hold that up?

Mike Wickersham said yeah, it's that one.

Aaron Black said this is next page.

Mike Wickersham said so, that one where you have your arrow right now, that's what you're asking for?

Aaron Black said for transportation.

Mike Wickersham said for transportation and fuel on this sheet.

Aaron Black said right.



Mike Wickersham but the below rows, I'm not sure what those represent. But you're not asking for any funding there.

Adrian Moulton said this right here.

Mike Wickersham said is that something you guys are going to absorb? Or is it? I don't know what it is.

Aaron Black said oh, these are future, I think these are future growth and program if it's coming to and from.

Mike Wickersham said but it says option 2 and option 1.

Aaron Black said right.

Mike Wickersham said so, you're asking for option 1?

Aaron Black said correct.

Mike Wickersham said well I do know when you presented to the commissioners last time, we really didn't talk about funding, although we talked about wiring the busses.

Aaron Black said yeah.

Mike Wickersham said I probably made that offer that we could wire the busses, which is nice to see, that's \$14,280.00 and it drops every year after that. So, I guess, and we also talked, there's not been any mention of the other two school corporations in the county, but this program is open to them as well, I presume? Or is it?

Aaron Black said yeah, so, what, I guess.

Mike Wickersham said from a student's standpoint?

Aaron Black said from a student's standpoint, if Donnie was to call me from Randolph Southern and say hey, I've got a student that would like to come take a healthcare program, would I try to figure that out for him, absolutely.

Mike Wickersham said and probably their expense to get here or would that bus go down there and get them?

Aaron Black said it would be their expense. So, that's the, so, the model works when both sides are giving, to be honest with you. That's one thing we learned in Texas, is you can't just have a school that's just a sending school, that are creating a program that gives access to the other students.

Mike Wickersham said that makes sense.

Aaron Black said yeah. But Donnie's called, I mean, he's had kids come and take KISS Tv in the past.

Rolland Abraham said he's sent kids to come to the welding program as well.

Mike Wickersham said how are the, how is Central's corporation, how are those students getting to the welding program now? Are they home school bussing them? Are they driving?

Rolland Abraham said yeah, some of the, yeah, I mean, you have a mini bus. I think most of them are probably driving, but I know Union City has a bus that comes over. And I think the Randolph Southern kids that have come up, they've also, they've probably all driven.

Mike Wickersham said so if we implement this program, you'll save those, each home school will save those expenses?

Aaron Black said if they drive themselves?

Mike Wickersham said if they drive themselves.

Rolland Abraham said there will always be kids that we have to transport though. So, you know, we can't not let them be in the program because they can't drive yet.

Mike Wickersham said right.

Rolland Abraham said yeah, exactly.

Mike Wickersham said do you have an estimated guestimate of how many students you're going to have running through this program?

Aaron Black said as we work on scheduling here in the next month, I believe the total is 25 to 30 that showed interest, but now it's on our guidance folks on figuring out, starting with logistics, which has begun.

Mike Wickersham and that's what these expenses are based on?

Aaron Black said right.

Mike Wickersham said the 25 or 30?

Aaron Black said yeah.

Tom Chalfant said so that's total students from all three corporations?

Adrian Moulton said that is the total.

Rolland Abraham said and you've got to remember, this is new to kids too, so it's going to take, you know, a year for them to you know, hear about how the program went and you know, by word of mouth on the success of the other programs and that will, it'll start to really take off.

Missy said if you look at, Northeastern goes to Richmond for their programs now. If you tour that, it's antiquated compared to what any of you are talking about here.

Mike Wickersham said Union kids go to New Castle.

Aaron Black said and this is, I will put our healthcare program when it's done, against anything that you'll find. And I would say the same thing about this welding program. That's why Northeastern kids, they could go to Richmond, but they found better instructors and better equipment at Randolph Central.

Rolland Abraham said and they've been sending us kids to precision machining as well.

Mike Wickersham said what are the field trips? Just extra expense of the buses that?

Aaron Black said yeah, so those are just career expiration field trips.

Mike Wickersham said you do those now?

Aaron Black said uh huh. Yep.

Rolland Abraham said yeah, so these courses, like the healthcare course, the RAZ 32 group will need to do those trips together, you know, as a group. So, that's a little different than what we're currently doing.

Mike Wickersham said so, if my son or daughter participate in this for, is it just for juniors and seniors, or is it for freshmen and sophomores, juniors and seniors?

Aaron Black said just for juniors and seniors.

Mike Wickersham said so if my junior and senior participates in that, what do I end up with at the end of the day?

Aaron Black said so, if you are attending the healthcare program, you would walk away with a CCMA certificate, which is a tier two certificate in the state of Indiana, possibly a CNA certificate, and they cast, so that would be a healthcare experience in one of our healthcare partners.

Mike Wickersham said so, if I wanted to go on to get an RN?

Aaron Black said stackable right into an RN. Yep. All those courses stack.

Mike Wickersham said would cover how many, two years, would it cover the two years for an RN?

Aaron Black said right about a year and a half.

Mike Wickersham said okay.

Aaron Black said now if your daughter is also taking any other college core classes where they're getting math, English, science, very easily walk in with more than two years.

Mike Wickersham said okay.

Rolland Abraham said and welding and precision machining, they'd walk away with an Ivy Tech certificate, at least 18 credit hours. And then in welding, they'd walk away with the AWSD11 certification, and then precision machining, they're still working out because the state just put out a whole new list of certifications. So, all of us will be focusing on those certifications in the next coming years. So, those industry certifications will be key to what these kids experience, and what they walk away with.

Mike Wickersham said do you need a 5-year commitment today?

Aaron Black said do we need a 5-year commitment? I don't know that we need a 5-year commitment. I'm confident enough that this program is going to, we will come back and you won't be able to tell us no.

Gary Friend said your statement was open ended, we'll be able to say no to needing more money.

Aaron Black said it's a good program. I think again, that this is not, it's not a handout, it's an investment. And to your point, Gary, if you want to recruit families to this county, and we want to stop that population decline, again yes, I'm a school superintendent, maybe I shouldn't say this, but, it's got to be in your schools. If we don't have more access to programs with our schools.

Mike Wickersham said that's the most important spoke of the wheel is education, so it is an investment.

Rolland Abraham said and this really is an investment. If you look at this, you know, the next three-year, what we're asking for, in terms of personnel, that executive director, finding that right person. We've got some great news that we can't talk about tonight, but things are going in a great direction there. And even the technical assistance fees. Now I, at this point, I've received less technical assistance from empower schools than anybody, because our programs are already established, you know. But we've got to have that organization in these first three years behind the scenes, really kind of blazing the trails for us, because we're on the tip of the sword here. This hasn't been done in Indiana. And so, we need that kind of technical assistance early in this

process. That's going to pave huge dividends in year 4, 5, 6, 10, you know. So, that's one reason why we really need your help.

Tom Chalfant said have you had much interaction with the state legislators about these?

Aaron Black said there was a presentation that I've missed with, that the superintendent association, but also, they gave this presentation to the Indiana something of Commerce back in January. But, yes, the legislators are hot on this. I know they're doing a lot of diploma work as far as high school redesign that is modeled around this type of work. I can tell you pretty concretely. So, yeah, our legislators are well aware of this, and are watching this very, very closely.

Tom Chalfant said well they need to be more, they need to be paying for it.

Rolland Abraham said and I've already asked, to be honest with you. I don't mess around when we talk about kids. I guess, I already talked to Scott Alexander about the transportation fees. When a child in Texas gets on a bus to be transported to a CTE program, it was like a buck forty. They pay a dollar and forty cents per mile for that kid being on that bus. The state of Texas does. So, you know, those are the types of things that we need. And even empower schools, I mean, they're good at the lobbying side of that. So, those are the kind of acts we need to get out there.

Gary Friend said is there any avenue to get any funding from anyone else? Is that the county's burden of that portion that's left, such as Winchester, Union City town council? Have you reached out beyond just governmental funding? And the reason I'm a little concerned about how much, it's not that I'm against any of it. We're going to have to give up the possible need of doing something of Randolph County, because we no where to go to get funding from.

Aaron Black said sure.

Gary Friend said so, a sacrifice like this, is sacrificing something that could happen to Randolph County infrastructure base, and we won't have the money because of that committed, which we need to make some commitment. But, of that amount up there, if we were to say half of that was committable from Randolph County, can you get the other half with a campaign drive, can you go out and get it? It's got to be more like it's not a funded mandate against us, it's more like an investment in the future. But, not one that binds us to something that we can't overcome down the road when our funding goes low.

Aaron Black said so, there are conversations that are scheduled to happen, no matter how this conversation goes. Don Wood Foundation up in northeast Indiana, is watching this because they are very tied to Whitco County. And Whitco wants to do this but they want us to figure it out. Don Woods very interested, the Reid Foundation is very interested and support. And those conversations are, to your point, Gary, are being scheduled to happen in the coming months. So, I guess, short answer is not yes. I think there is some responsibility and when we get an executive director in place, that's a conversation they're having all the time, when they're not talking to kids.

Gary Friend said and I'm asking these questions so we can look at it in the future and not cut this thing off, because there's a funding shortage right now.

Todd said these budgets blend in with the school's budgets, using a lot of the school's resources to bus, several busses, electricity. Are these budgets separated, or is it all blended together in some way? How's that work?

Rolland Abraham said well every school will be paying, like my welding instructors, I pay for the welding instructors. That's not a RAZ 32 expense. You know, equipment and things that we, you know, this build out, the second welding lab, we're paying for that, Randolph Central is paying for that. Well actually, we doing, we're asking for welding machines from the READI 2.0. We'll see if that plan pans out. So, you know, there's, in terms of creating the programs, that's done at the school level. That's why you have to have, everybody has to be a contributor, you know, because those programs have to be sustained locally.

Adrian Moulton said I don't think we separate it out. I mean, I don't think you're going to track and only pay fuel and transfer, I mean your bus driver from money from RAZ. I mean, it's going to be in your transportation line of your operations budget. So, I just see these funds supporting what we currently already have in our education and operation funds. And I may be out of line there, but that's the way I see it at Monroe Central.

Todd said so, each school manages the expenses of each of the programs they offer, but the transportation somehow, divide it up and the money that comes in from the outside, how do you determine which school, I mean, the State Board of Accounts has to look at these things and figure out how it works, and they'll probably challenge a little bit, I would think. When you've got sources of, you know, unusual sources of income and expenses.

Rolland Abraham said now on this transportation side of it, and this I asked, and this is the way I understood it guys, so correct me if I'm wrong, but RAZ 32 is going to pay for the transportation between these schools. That will be separate. Now, they're not going to pay for a bus. I'm going to say hey, here's a bus, you know.

Mike Wickersham said there's no new bus included in this?

Rolland Abraham said no.

Meeks said I think Todd's questions, who do we write the check to? If we say we're going to give you \$50,000 bucks, I mean, is it RAZ 32? It's not a, is that stand-alone entity? Or are you sending it to three different school corporations?

Aaron Black said that's a great question.

Mike Wickersham said or does your memorandum of understanding dictate those terms?

Meeks said I mean I guess, I think, is that kind of your question?

Todd said yeah, I'm trying to figure out the organizational structure.

Meeks said well I'm thinking when I write this thing.

Todd said there's got to be an accountable entity.

Rolland Abraham said RAZ 32 will be its own entity. If you're going to write this check, if you are going to fund this, that check will be written to RAZ 32, which is just the three of us.

Mike Wickersham said and your board.

Rolland Abraham said and our board, yes.

Meeks said so, it's a separate legal entity?

Rolland Abraham said yes.

Aaron Black said and that's the establishment again, some of those costs administratively setting up that entity. The Community Foundation has been gracious to kind of allow us to work through them to get started. But RAZ 32 will be its own entity.

Mike Wickersham said and the accounting, audit, finance and all that stuff will be done by RAZ 32, but through the school corporation staff or the executive director going to be responsible for part of that duty?

Aaron Black said there's calls for audits, external audits.

Mike Wickersham said I see that in there. I just didn't know how it was going to be done.

Aaron Black said it's going to be overseen by the executive director, but the board also would just like you would, would review that.

Gary Friend said what if these three boards get in conflict with another board? Is there going to be protection for the schools if they begin to disagree?

Adrian Moulton said we built that into the MOU.

Gary Friend said okay.

Aaron Black said it's a pretty lengthy process, that one, kind of wears people down.

Mike Wickersham said I think, just for the county's benefit, it might appropriate if we do go forward with some sort of funding for RAZ 32, that Meeks get a copy of your memorandum of understanding and review it and make sure that we're going about it the right way.

Gary Friend said I think honestly right now, just to be honest with you, have trouble going forward myself with anymore than half of each year, and then putting the onus on finding the other half, because you're only covering really three schools in the county. That's probably 70% of the county students. But, it's going to be an unfunded mandate, I don't want to be sitting here and saying you know, if we don't help you get it on its own, either we put the money up or it gets closed, would be one of my concerns.

Aaron Black said sure. I would just encourage you guys, is you'd look at this and consider this to really elevate that year one and two, because that is the jumpstart.

Mike Wickersham said that's what I was going to say. I would commit to your one and two, and then that ought to be enough time for you to be so successful that you could settle three if you needed to coming back.

Rolland Abraham said you could go a 100%, 75%, 50%.

Aaron Black said he's good with numbers, this guy right here.

Mike Wickersham said well my number is about \$475,000.00 for year one and two. That's \$471,660 for year one and two is the ask. That gets one going and that gives your executive director three years to raise \$209,000.00. I guess that's where I be coming down on this. And I would propose that we do that out of Windfarm funds, or alternative energy funds. We've got \$3,000,000.00 unappropriated balance right now. Losantville was successful in their sewage grant, so they're going to pay us back \$750,000.00.

Dave Lenkensdofer said so, Modoc should follow suit.

Laura said I heard that we were getting both is what I heard.

Meeks said I was at those meetings. It's going to close, I think they close in March or April.

Laura said March 14<sup>th</sup>.

Meeks said yeah, I think so, next week.

Laura said so, that's tomorrow.

Gary Friend said I would go with what Mike's proposing, but I don't want you guys to come back and like somebody shame us because we didn't go all in. I'm all in on education. It is one of the things that we actually can do to help this county. We are not going to have the population, it's not going to happen, but we are going to be in a decline until we stop it and one of the ways to stop it is helping education. And I want to propose something to you guys to think about that I've been thinking about and we won't decide it today, but there's got to be a way to, we want to get kids in this county, the kids in Delaware County, kids to come all in, why can't we come up with a plan to get these kids in their school events for free, Randolph County kids, for free? There's nothing wrong with packing the gym so much that you can't get them all



in, but get them off the street. And, if we're going to go all in, we've got to go all in with the children too, all the way down to, if there's a basketball game and you go to this school or a county school, maybe you guys can figure out what that would cost for us to maybe consider down the road.

Aaron Black said more than happy. We do that quite often anyway. But I would say, the only thing I won't do is well, kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> graders in for free.

Gary Friend said well somebody would say do you just want to give them an all sports pass. No, that's not what I'm talking about. I'm getting off the beaten path. I'll get off of it right here. An all sports pass just pays for what might not happen. It's on who showed up.

Aaron Black said sure. Yep.

Gary Friend said so, you know, we've got to get this thing going with the children

Missy said you've done, you've already made a lot, I mean, Rolland, you've built a green house out there, and you built on two, at least two welding, you've switched the old auto mechanic, that's what I knew it at. You've made a bunch of investments. You've had too many kids coming from Delaware County which you've increased enrollment. Did I figure it right, 131 kids in the last four years, or am I off? I just looked at your state numbers.

Rolland Abraham said yeah, we're at least that from Delaware County.

Aaron Black said can I ask from you all, from your perspective, what would you like to see as we report back and track this? I mean, would you like to see us quarterly or, our executive director report to you quarterly, give you updates, because this is a big investment. And to Gary's point, so nobody is shamed, right? I think ongoing, it would be expected. I'm just curious of what.

Mike Wickersham said you're going to kick it off this fall?

Aaron Black said correct.

Mike Wickersham said I wouldn't see any reason to report prior to the kickoff. I'm curious to know how many participants you have and I guess see it work for 30 or 60 days and then, beyond that, it doesn't, I won't be sitting here to promote that so.

Meeks said Mike, are you thinking, are you guys thinking like doing it, like an interlocal agreement with us for the funding? Like an MOU, like we do for the Economic development, like a contract, something like that? If you did that, then you'd put, you could build in, build in the, you know, annual reporting. The issue is, and you said it three times now, you're not going to be here in January.

Mike Wickersham said well somebody else will be.

Meeks said so, with a contract that's binding, then it would go to the next commissioner. They can't, you know, terminate it on January 1, 2025. And there are some rules about county council has to, their annual appropriations, so, if the county council is also in that binding contract, that's probably, if you're going to go past one year. If you're going to go past one year. I mean, one year, it doesn't matter. We could give you money and then, whatever, but year two and three, you're going to commit that. You're going to want something.

Mike Wickersham said right. And I guess I, we've not heard from everybody, so I don't know how you feel about it, Gary?

Gary Girton said well I'm in favor of it. I'm just a little interested in exactly how you're going to do your marketing, and what kind of plan you have to do that. I think that's, I know you guys have worked on this, trying to fine tune it a little bit over the last two or three years. But, to get a program of this size, is going to take, as to me anyways, a good amount of marketing. And all the schools need to be accessible, rather than just a few of them or part of them, or something. I don't think we want to start limiting how we market through one school and do it differently in another, from the standpoint of how many students and certain things, I think we need to open it to the students.

Rolland Abraham said yeah. Well that happened this year. So, kids put out a survey of initial interest and then we literally took the kids to each one of those programs so they could see it. So, that happened this year, and that's one reason why we need an executive director to kind of help organize that and help be the mouthpiece of these kids, you know, throughout the school year, not just during one event. And that's what we saw a really good example of that down in Texas, where the kids really knew that executive director. They were, there was constant interactions. And the job there is to sell everybody's program you know, equally. And so, that's, you know, I think we've done a good job this year without the executive director, but I expect that to kind of really take off in the future.

Aaron Black said and because when our high school principals or guidance counsellors, maybe talking about Randolph Central's program, they're probably not talking about it as passionately as they are ours, right, just naturally. But when you have someone that's just representing an entity, I think, to your point, Gary, that's how you make sure it's consistently shared amongst all students and all students have access to that same story.

Gary Girton said and the other thing too is in this, is getting the students actually to see these programs. And I think, in my perspective, and my background, I think you need to do this like in 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> grade, somewhere along in there, where you're exposing these students to the actual on sight, which having what's potentially, what's your plans for the future two or three years, and then let these kids build their own programs around that.

Aaron Black said agree 100%.

Mike Wickersham said well you like half of one year, one, two and three, or do you like all of one and all of two, or do you like all of one, two and three?

Gary Girton said I'm reading one, two and half of three.

Mike Wickersham said one, two and half of three.

Rolland Abraham said I like him.

Gary Girton said for that, I think, you know, you've done a lot of work on this program so far, but there's still a lot of ways to go.

Aaron Black said yes there is.

Gary Girton said and you don't know what some of the pitfalls are going to be coming along, and that's to me, that's alleviating you getting down the road in 10, 12 months or 14 months and say oh, my gosh, look what we got here.

Mike Wickersham said Todd, you ask questions, do you mind me calling on council, Dave?

Dave Lenkensdofer said no, go right ahead.

Mike Wickersham said Todd, you've asked a couple of questions. Do you have anything else you want to share?

Todd said no just, well yes. So, I can see the area that I live in, Union Township, the school probably not being real receptive to maybe communication in the school. And you know, what I'd like to see is that the program director and you know, you all as a group, make the opportunities visible to homes, not just reaching out to the schools. Over the last several years you know, I don't know if you guys have seen it where you live, but we get fliers from Hagerstown, four or five different places, very aggressive, because that corner is easily bus able from several different school districts. So, it's just a little war zone down there for fighting over a few kids. I don't know what it'll be like in 10 years or 20 years, but for now, I feel like if we're going to reach the south side of the county, the school's fine to try to present to children, and these are young adults, but to reach the homes is where you have the biggest impact, I think. It doesn't take much; fliers and, I don't want to tell you how to do things. I'm just telling you from living down there, I know what the community is like, and there's a real detachment from the central belt of the county. Athletics, you don't have the same kind of relationships that we once had. It's become very silent. But there are a lot of kids there, you know, that I think are very interested in skilled trades. The New Castle program has always gone really well, attended by the people from Union Township. And I always felt bad that we didn't have something closer than that. I'm excited to see what's going on. I hope that we find some programs that are real winners like you have with the welding and the healthcare, and rather than getting too diverse, I just felt that you like, what works, you know, specialize on it, because the more it gets fragmented, with the number of kids we have, really, I'm not sure it's worth having 20 different opportunities for 50 kids versus focus like you have. And I see what you're, I'll stop, but I see what, where you're trying to go with the three programs, the three program, three programs. But if IT seems to be no one's interested, it's not possible to find somebody to teach it, you're not

able to get a certificate, and it's competitive with our neighbor, why pursue something just to try to get the pie bigger?

Aaron Black said Todd, can I ask a clarifying question, because it really doesn't impact me. When you say go to homes, are you speaking to the recruitment of those students to attend other districts?

Todd said yeah.

Aaron Black said okay. Because, I mean, that doesn't make, but for Adrian, using RAZ 32 as a leverage tool.

Todd said I'm not talking about, you know, maybe they do decide this is where I want to go to school, but most of the kids at that age, the juniors and seniors, spend very little time at the actual high school. Most of their time is spent at the career center. So, you know, I don't know, I would guess, I'm just talking about making them aware of the different programs you offer, the transportation that you're offering along with 32. And they'll be some homes for sure, that would be interested in that. Might not hear about it at Union, I don't know about Randolph Southern.

Mike Wickersham said okay. Mike.

Mike Stine said I like the idea of it, but kind of think year one and two, is kind of my thought.

Mike Wickersham said anything more, Gary?

Gary Friend said yeah, I mean, I am okay with one and two and put the onus on them to come back to us in year three to start another MOU and tell us why you couldn't get anywhere. And it could be 100% legit why. But I think we have to put a little bit of pressure on you guys, not but, everybody's got to get all in with us too.

Mike Wickersham said it could reduce that number.

Gary Friend said it could reduce it.

Mike Wickersham said you'd hope it would reduce that number, because you're going to have an opportunity to all that your savings, you're going to have an opportunity for your executive director to raise funds. And that 209 could become 175 or 100.

Gary Friend said or you need all of the year three. So, if you do an MOU for two years, then we can revisit this for skin in the game obviously.

Mike Wickersham said Dave?

Dave Lenkensdofer said just wanted clarification, Mike. When you said a little earlier, something about Meeks looking at the MOU, will we make a decision before he reviews that or after?

Meeks said I would like to see if you're going to make a motion to, you know, here's what we're thinking, but we have to get the final documents.

Mike Wickersham said it would be subject to the MOU.

Meeks said to, and the final documents are going to need signed.

Mike Wickersham said yeah, it would be subject to that. And I think it would be nice, for me, I think it would be nice to move ahead to get that process started if we're in agreement to fund this tonight, and we've not decided that yet. But, I mean, we could wait and do the final deal in April.

Meeks said it would be nice for me to know what you guys are thinking so I can write that MOU.

Dave Lenkensdofer said well, now that I understand we're going to get some money back from Modoc and Losantville, what was that, 1.25?

Mike Wickersham said 1.25.

Meeks said they're going to ask for, they're going to ask for some help down there. I know that for a fact because they both told me that.

Mike Wickersham said they're coming Monday. Losantville is coming Monday and they've got I think, they're on the agenda.

Meeks said yeah, I think basically, Modoc's ask isn't that much. They're just going to ask for some help. That's all.

Gary Friend said well Losantville is going to ask for help to hook up to the mains.

Dave Lenkensdofer said okay. I'm okay with 1 and 2. The numbers are a little different than what I heard originally from you guys, was actually quite a bit different.

Aaron Black said there's been a lot of work put into this this week. I think we may have thrown a number a little pre-emptively the first time we met. But trust me, there's been a lot of conversations between then and now to try to really give you guys.

Dave Lenkensdofer said Monday I'm getting ready to present to county commissioners the financial picture of the county. We have huge challenges ahead of us also. I mean, some major concerns of mine from a financial side, roads and bridges and drainage. The infrastructure, we need to maintain to keep those kids going on those roads and bridges to school, so. That's where I'm coming from.

Mike Wickersham said Tom?

Tom Chalfant said well that's a great idea, a great concept. But I just have a hard time understanding how, how it's in county government's wheelhouse. I mean, you're a taxing unit, we're a taxing unit. You know, you're in charge of education, we're, what are we charged with?

Mike Wickersham said roads and bridges.

Tom Chalfant said well that's a big part of it. The commissioners used to be called road commissioners.

Mike Wickersham said if that was all that we dealt with, it would be easier. But we're also charged with, I sense a charge the quality of life. I sense a charge of population growth.

Tom Chalfant said okay. Well now, you sense that, but where is the mandate from our, you know, what we swear to the constitute, I'm more of an originalist, but I just, somehow, I don't understand how all this comes under county government's bailiwick, I guess.

Mike Wickersham said well I guess I'll go back. When I ran for commissioner, I talked a lot about economic development and I talked a lot about quality of life. I talked a lot about kids coming back.

Tom Chalfant said and I think this is economic development. And I think economic development tax is made for such as this.

Mike Wickersham said and I think economic development did the welding program, did the agricultural center and we've helped KISS TV I believe. That's been all economic development. This is a little bigger project. It combines three schools and a lot of kids are going to benefit from this I believe. And I just think it's a worthwhile investment is the way I look at it. I think it is in our wheelhouse, but we differ on that. Is that it?

Tom Chalfant said that's it.

Mike Wickersham said Bev.

Bev said this is exciting. I am really impressed with what you have done so far and what the plan is. My granddaughter is at Winchester High School, the welding program this past year. We've saw a change in her over the year. I mean, she just matured so, and she's got direction. She knows she's going to Ivy Tech for two years when she gets out of here as a goal. And I think it's great because she was one of the kids that I haven't heard her talk about college, haven't heard her talk about, you know, what's she going to do. And didn't want to pressure her, but this happened and I was totally amazed that she made it to school, got there at 10 minutes to 7 every morning to catch the bus. And I said what do you do on the bus, and she said study. I think I am in favor of the 2-year plan at this point. We look at it in year three. I commend you for your work.

Mike Wickersham said Missy.

Missy said well Bev and I have talked about this before and she shared her granddaughter's story and Rolland, as you know, Bert, you've known him, and there's a kid who wasn't going to graduate from high school, no way. But he flourished in that. He was suddenly, his self-esteem, he just bought a brand-new truck in case you don't know, because he has a great job now. So, I've seen, when I was still teaching, kids who started that program, it makes a giant difference. I saw kids who went through KISS TV and felt like they were the voice, it was a voice on the radio or on the tv. It makes a big difference to kids like that. By the way, I apologize, it was 154 increase, sorry about that. 154, 161 if you go, I guess it's gone up each year. It's 183 now. So, you've obviously pulled a lot of kids in out of Delaware County, and they come for programming, and it may be athletics. But if you want to invest in your kids and their education, we can have all the bridges, and we need them. I drove those roads to get around that bridge that's out and they're horrible. But we've got to make kids to where, maybe they won't be welders, but maybe they'll want to go work CDL for our county highway barn and repair those bridges and roads for us. So, I am in favor of year one and two.

Mike Wickersham said you got anything?

Gary Friend said no sir.

Mike Wickersham said well I guess I would, from a commissioner's standpoint, I'd entertain a motion to support RAZ 32 with a memorandum of agreement to fund their program in year one in the amount of \$242,530.00, and in year two in the amount of \$229,130.00.

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Gary Girton seconded the motion. All aye votes.

Mike Wickersham said all opposed, same sign, and I guess.

Meeks said that would be the draft, the documents.

Mike Wickersham said your motion would be drawing from Windfarm?

Gary Friend said yeah.

Meeks said that's the draft, the documents to get started, pending final approval of the documents.

Mike Wickersham said yeah, that's what we discussed. So, we're going to prepare a memorandum of understanding with those amounts in it and you'll agree to it and sign it, if the council agrees to it as well.

Dave Lenkensdofer said run through ours. Okay, entertain a motion on the same thing Mike presented with the year one and two.

Meeks said pending final approval of the MOU.

Dave Lenkensdofer pending final approval of the MOU. Entertain that motion.

Missy made motion to approve. Mike Stine seconded the motion. All aye votes.

Dave Lenkensdofer said and come from the Windfarm funds.

Meeks said so, which of you three should I contact, or all three of you at the same time? You need to name a contact person.

Rolland Abraham said either one of us.

Meeks said okay.

Rolland Abraham said you can copy all three of us on it.

Meeks said I don't have all of your emails. So, maybe I'll send you an email and you can send me a list of contacts.

Rolland Abraham said you've got it.

Mike Wickersham said thank you gentlemen. Thank you for your service to the county.

Meeks said I think there's going to be, once it gets together, I think all three of your boards are going to have to approve that. It's going to be a lengthy approval process.

Rolland said I want to thank you for all you do for the roads, I'm a backup bus route driver. I drove bus all last week. I just appreciate all you do, I really do. Thank you.

**Tom Chalfant – New Road to US Aggregate**

Mike Wickersham said we have an addition to our agenda. Councilman, Tom Chalfant has presented, did everyone get one of these?

Tom Chalfant said has everybody had a chance to read it or any questions?

Mike Wickersham said I've read it.

Tom Chalfant said I drafted this with the help of Joe Copeland, and we went out and looked at the site in the middle of winter, with US Aggregates. Anyway, this is pretty much, explains an issue that's going to be coming down the road sometime. Now, originally, the fellow gave when we, I think Ed Thornburg and I had it surveyed, we were with him touring the Ridgeville stone quarry, and he told me there was a couple years left in that quarry before they ran out of stone. I think that's changed because he was able to get a bigger easement from the county on a drainage. So, I think he's got a few more years left before, they are opening up the Fairview quarry this spring, and I think transitioning. And I don't know their plan. But anyway, eventually that will



be transitioned to the Fairview quarry in Ridgeville. They're pretty well land locked I think, where they're at. So, yeah, this is what, like I said, Joe helped me prepare this.

Mike Wickersham said so US Aggregate is going to put a stone quarry at this location?

Tom Chalfant said well there is one. It's already there. It's been closed.

Mike Wickersham said yeah, open it though.

Tom Chalfant said yeah, they're going to open it. It's been closed for probably close to 10 years. Just directing traffic to Ridgeville, but they're going to reopen it, and that'll be the only stone quarry in the county. And it's almost impossible to open a new stone quarry with so many regulations. It's almost, you'd have to have probably 2 or 3 square miles before you could be able to open up a new quarry somewhere. So, it's very hard to do.

Gary Friend said did you have a study?

Tom Chalfant said yeah, the study was \$48,400.00 for the study that SJCA did.

Gary Friend said it has more benefit than that also, because there's a huge portion of boughten DNR land that's unless you're in good health it's hard to get back there.

Tom Chalfant said and to make a disclaimer, I own the land between the stone quarry and highway 28 where this road would go. So, I would need, I would be negotiating with US Aggregates trading land or doing something to make this, probably about 3/8s to half of mile the road would be needed to get up to highway 28 straight north of the stone quarry, so that the trucks could come straight into 28 and down to the quarry and out going both directions that are very curvy roads. So, yeah, I need to make that known that I would be working with US Aggregates to try to figure out some way for them to put the road in there.

Gary Friend said that's a county right-of-way, to get access to the DNR land there.

Tom Chalfant said right.

Gary Friend said actually are you going to be, want to correct that because if that was dead center, you'd have to give an access to DNR.

Tom Chalfant said right. Yeah.

Gary Friend said do we want to do that?

Tom Chalfant said I think so. And again, I would probably.

Gary Friend said could go off to one side, it would automatically go.

Tom Chalfant said yeah, they could go, most of it is to the east. They actually could go to the west now because they have a 40-foot easement on the other side of my property.

Gary Friend said but it's a half mile long.

Tom Chalfant said yeah, it's a long way. They could drive back there, but it would make much more sense to make an accessible, well you could but.

Mike Wickersham said how often do you drive back there?

Tom Chalfant said not very often. Well, yeah, I hope to have it all be able to be worked out. And there should be hopefully, money from the state for, because of the mentioned select historic bridge on highway 1. So, there's, Perry thinks there's a lot of funding opportunities available to do something this. But hopefully, US Aggregates would participate because it would be a big benefit to their business to have trucks coming in this distance, rather than having to going the other routes, the safety issues.

Mike Wickersham said do you think they'll participate in that? Have you talked to them about it?

Tom Chalfant said no, not yet. I was hoping to get approval because they said they weren't interested in participating unless the county was interested in this project. And so, if I can get the county to at least say we're interested in the project, then I would go to them and tell them the county wants to see this happen, do you want to come along. And that was the land man who Perry knows and Joe Copeland knows, I think would be a lot more agreeable to bringing that to the corporate people if he knows a county is very interested in this.

Todd said is the road just connected to the back of the property or does it come into a county road that is actually might be people in the county.

Tom Chalfant said yeah, the, right now, road 1000 goes right up to the quarry and then it tees and goes west. And then so the road would just go through the quarry across the river and then up to 28 would be how they would, I assume the study would prove it out, to build how they would build it.

Todd said so, it would be a public?

Tom Chalfant said yeah, it would be a public, they would have to give access too, to some of their property so that the public could go up through the road there.

Mike Wickersham said there's a bridge involved too.

Tom Chalfant said right, with the bridge and the road, and their property and mine.

Mike Wickersham said connection to highway 28.

Tom Chalfant said uh huh.

Mike Wickersham said well they, and I've told Tom this, and they've just made the point, we've got a lot of bridges and roads in the county that need a lot of repair, and we're talking about building a new one.

Tom Chalfant said right, yeah.

Mike Wickersham said that's, but we don't know what we don't know. And I guess the question is, can we invest \$24,200.00 to find out if this is feasible, and what it costs.

Todd said it comes to wear and tear on that road. It's going to tear up other stuff. I'm sure the opportunity, cost, whatever, of that bridge that has to be built would be more than outweighed by the how many hundreds, thousands of tons would be hauled across every road that's really not meant for that county.

Gary Friend said and the entrance off of 800 to highway 1, if you're going north, is a highway. I mean it's, if you come over that hill at a full 55, you may not get stopped for a slow-moving dump truck.

Todd said the quarry reopening is to provide some income to the county as well.

Gary Friend said well convenience too. Because they're bound by the Missinewa River.

Tom Chalfant said yeah, the next one is Barrett's, down along the Ohio line, just north of Richmond.

Mike Wickersham said it's a little higher some income tax-wise. And it might save the county in transportation of stone.

Gary Friend said well I think \$24,200 is not very much money for specs. It does have economic development, so, mainly for me, you know, being a hunter type of person, the DNR study goes from 600 West to Highway 1, across the river. And then it heads up in behind the Redtail Conservative. It goes almost to Fairview I think. But you can't get there unless the easement off of 28 or the Highway 1. That's a long, long haul back there. So, it doesn't get utilized like it should.

Missy said what is US Aggregates, what is their put into this?

Mike Wickersham said according to the letter, he's put a request in to pay half of it. If not, I'm not sure where.

Tom Chalfant said it's just, yeah, it would be a much better access for their business to have, to be up close to a highway.

Mike Wickersham said and it would be safer.

Missy said so, did Jay County vote against allowing them to mine.

Tom Chalfant said well they've got one or two quarries. I mean, they've got Lynn Grove and the Portland and yeah, I'm not sure where all they, they've got it pretty well around the state. That used to be Meshberger. Ridgeville is the only, and Fairview, the only ones at Randolph. But, yeah, they have Portland and maybe another one in Jay County. I'm not sure but those are all up and running.

Missy said that's quite an operation up there.

Mike Wickersham said I presume you're talking about this coming out of Windfarm?

Tom Chalfant said yeah, I guess, if it's going to come out of EDIT, it'll come out of Windfarm, so.

Mike Wickersham said are you making a motion to council to pay it out of Windfarm?

Tom Chalfant said I don't know if it would proper for me to make a motion or not.

Bev said I'll make a motion we take it out of Windfarm, we take the \$24,200 out of Windfarm.

Tom Chalfant said so, it's about a mile and a half west of Fairview, or east of Fairview, 1000. 1000 goes straight up the river and stops.

Dave Lenkensdofer said I have a motion from the county council to approve the \$24,200 from Windfarm.

Mike Stine said I'll second it.

Dave Lenkensdofer said it's been moved and a second, we approve the comprehensive study for \$24,200. All in favor? 5 aye votes. 1 abstention (Tom Chalfant). Motion carried.

Mike Wickersham said entertain a motion from the commissioners to authorize the payment of \$24,200.00 for this comprehensive study to evaluate the

Gary Girton made motion to approve. Gary Friend seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Mike Wickersham said anything else to come before the joint group tonight?

Gary Friend said one thing we're going to be discussing, the possibility for allowing some of the Windfarm funding that we give to Modoc and Losantville to go to help people get hooked up to the new septic.

Mike Wickersham said yeah, that'll be Monday.

Gary Friend said and then one thought, everybody can think about that I have. I think it's something appropriate for homestead properties. I'm not so sure it's appropriate for people who are renting properties out.

Mike Wickersham said well that is, they're coming Monday, but they won't be in front of you guys until April. Anything else?

Missy said is any of that money at the foundation that EDP put in for, to help pay bills, they can't use now, that can be used for that?

Mike Wickersham said I think that's for Modoc.

Meeks said Missy, that's Modoc and they're, and they are using it to offset the increase.

Missy said good.

Meeks said I think, because they don't have connections, right? So, they had to increase their bills. And they have a program to help offset the, at least that's what they talked about the last meeting, unless things changed.

Mike Wickersham said anything else?

Dave Lenkensdofer said real quick. Tom Kerns couldn't be here tonight. He has a broken tibia.

### **Citizen Comments (3 minutes)**

Mike Wickersham said any citizen comments tonight? No, okay. I'd entertain a motion to adjourn the commissioners' meeting.

### **Adjournment**

Gary Friend made motion to adjourn. Gary Friend seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Dave Lenkensdofer said I'd entertain a motion to adjourn the county council meeting.

Tom Chalfant made motion to adjourn. Mike Stine seconded the motion. All votes. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned.

Reviewed and signed this 6 day of May, 2024.

RANDOLPH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

M. D. White

M. L. ...

Craig Carter

Reviewed and accepted this 8 day of May, 2024.

RANDOLPH COUNTY COUNCIL

David Benkenslofer

Tom Chaffort

Beverly ...

...

Bill Hoby

...

...

ATTEST: Laura J Martin  
Laura J Martin, Auditor of Randolph County