

BOARD MINUTES FOR 06/09/08

JUNE 9, 2008

THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, IN AND FOR WASHINGTON COUNTY, MET IN SPECIAL SESSION ON THE ABOVE DATE AT 5:00 P.M. AT THE WASHINGTON COUNTY ANNEX, BOARD MEETING ROOM, 1331 SOUTH BOULEVARD, CHIPLEY, FLORIDA WITH COMMISSIONERS PATE, FINCH, SAPP, STRICKLAND AND HOLMAN PRESENT. ATTORNEY HOLLEY, CLERK LINDA COOK, ADMINISTRATOR HERBERT AND DEPUTY CLERK DIANNE CARTER WERE ALSO IN ATTENDANCE.

CHAIRMAN PATE CALLED THE PUBLIC HEARING ON PHASE I OF THE TOLL ROAD THROUGH WASHINGTON COUNTY TO ORDER.

CHAIRMAN PATE ASKED THE AUDIENCE TO HOLD THEIR COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS DURING FOCUS 2000'S PRESENTATION UNTIL THE QUESTION AND ANSWER PHASE OF THE MEETING AND NOT INTERRUPT ANY SPEAKERS. HE TOLD THEM THEY MUST SIGN IN IF THEY WANTED TO SPEAK OR THEY COULD SUBMIT WRITTEN QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS. EACH SPEAKER FROM THE AUDIENCE SHALL HAVE A MAXIMUM OF THREE MINUTES TO SPEAK. HE ASKED EVERYONE TO KEEP EVERYTHING CIVIL.

COMMISSIONER FINCH, BASED ON WHAT THE SITUATION WAS AT THE LAST MEETING ON THE TOLL ROAD, OFFERED A MOTION TO ALLOW MORE THAN THREE MINUTES. THEY HAD MORE PEOPLE UPSET BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T FEEL LIKE THEY HAD ENOUGH TIME TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES. HE REALIZES THREE MINUTES IS THE STANDARD THE BOARD HAS BEEN USING.

COMMISSIONER HOLMAN SECONDED THE MOTION. COMMISSIONER PATE ASKED HOW MANY MINUTES WERE THE PEOPLE GOING TO BE ALLOWED. COMMISSIONER FINCH ASKED IF THEY WERE GOING TO ALLOW OTHER PEOPLE TO RELINQUISH THEIR TIME WITH PATE SAYING "NO."

COMMISSIONER FINCH SAID TO ALLOW PEOPLE TEN MINUTES TO SPEAK. THE MOTION CARRIED TO ALLOW EACH PERSON ADDRESSING THE BOARD TEN MINUTES TO SPEAK.

ATTORNEY HOLLEY OFFERED PRAYER WITH CHAIRMAN PATE LEADING IN THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG.

EDWARD PRESCOTT ADDRESSED THE BOARD ON THE FOCUS 2000 GROUP BEING HERE TO PRESENT SOME INFORMATION IN REGARD TO A POTENTIAL TOLL FACILITY. HE INTRODUCED LUTHER STRANGE, THE ATTORNEY FOR THE FOCUS 2000 GROUP.

MR. STRANGE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO COME BACK BEFORE THE BOARD TO ADDRESS SOME CONCERNS RAISED AT THEIR LAST MEETING. THEY TOOK TO HEART THE COMMENTS AND THE GOOD DISCUSSION THEY HAD WITH THE CITIZENS OF WASHINGTON COUNTY AND HAVE MADE SOME CHANGES AND HAVE DEVELOPED ADDITIONAL INFORMATION HE HOPES WILL BE HELFUL TO THE BOARD AND THE CITIZENS OF THE COUNTY THIS EVENING.

HE HAD A PROPOSED ROUTE MAP AND UNDERSTANDS THERE WILL BE A BREAK SO EVERY CITIZEN WILL BE ABLE TO TAKE A LOOK AT THE MAP TO SEE WHERE THE TOLL ROUTE GOES. WHEN THEY WERE BEFORE THE BOARD LAST TIME, THEY DID NOT HAVE A ROUTE AND HAD NOT DEFINED WHAT THAT ROUTE WOULD BE. THEY TOOK THE CONCERNS EXPRESSED BY THE COMMISSIONERS ON BEHALF OF THE CITIZENS, TOOK INTO ACCOUNT THE NUMBER OF CITIZENS AFFECTED BY A POSSIBLE ROUTE, THE ROUTE, THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS, ETC. AND WORKED WITH THE BEST PEOPLE THEY COULD FIND TO DEVELOP A ROUTE AT THE FAR WESTERN EDGE OF WASHINGTON COUNTY FROM THE JACKSON COUNTY LINE TO I-10. THAT WAS ONE OF THE SUGGESTIONS FOCUS 2000 TOOK TO HEART; COMMISSIONER SAPP AND OTHERS HAD QUESTIONED PREVIOUSLY WHY FOCUS 2000 DIDN'T JUST LEAN TO NORTH OF I-10.

THEY ASKED COULD FOCUS 2000 DO THAT. DOES THAT HAVE THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AFFECT THE COUNTY IS LOOKING FOR. WILL THAT BRING THE JOBS, THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENT INTO THE COUNTY WITHOUT DISRUPTING THE CITIZENS GOING ANYWHERE HERE, POPULATED AREAS WOULD BE CLOSE ENOUGH TO GET THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. SO YOU HAD EXCHANGES, INTERCHANGES ON I-10 AND WEST OF THE CITY OF CHIPLEY THAT WOULD ALLOW THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TO GROW. THAT IS WHAT FOCUS 2000 TRIED TO DO. THE ROUTE SHOWN IS A LITTLE MORE THAN FIVE MILES AND IT GOES FROM THE JACKSON COUNTY LINE TO I-10 ON THE FAR WESTERN SIDE OF THE COUNTY. IT AFFECTS TWENTY ONE LANDOWNERS AND TWENTY EIGHT PARCELS OF LAND HE THOUGHT. HE SAID HE MAY NOT BE EXACTLY RIGHT ON THIS BECAUSE HE HAS JUST SEEN THIS FOR THE FIRST TIME HIMSELF TODAY. IT IS A LIMITED NUMBER OF LANDOWNERS AND AS HE UNDERSTANDS IT, MANY OF THEM ARE NOT RESIDENTS OF THE COUNTY; BUT, ARE PEOPLE THAT LIVE OUT OF STATE. THEY WENT TO THEM BECAUSE OF THE ISSUES RAISED BY ALL THE CONCERNED CITIZENS OF THE COUNTY AND ISSUES FOCUS 2000 RAISED THEMSELVES ABOUT EMINENT DOMAIN. FOCUS 2000 HAD MADE IT CLEAR THAT IS THE LAST THING THEY WANTED TO DO WAS ASK THE COMMISSION TO EXERCISE THAT RIGHT UNTIL THEY HAVE GONE OUT, AND HAVE SINCE THE LAST MEETING, AND MET WITH THE CITIZENS WHOSE LAND THE PROPOSED ROUTE WOULD CROSS. EVERY CITIZEN THEY HAVE TALKED TO HAS BEEN WILLING TO WORK WITH FOCUS 2000 AND SELL THEIR LAND. THEY HAVE NOT HAD ANY CITIZENS SAY THEY WOULDN'T BE WILLING TO SELL THE LAND. EVERYONE AFFECTED BY THE ROUTE HAS AGREED TO COOPERATE WITH FOCUS 2000; SO, THERE WOULD BE NO EMINENT DOMAIN INVOLVED WITH THE TOLL ROAD PROJECT WHATSOEVER. FOCUS 2000 FEELS GOOD ABOUT THAT. THEY HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE LANDOWNERS AFFECTED; THEY PUT THE ROUTE AS FAR AWAY FROM HOMES, WETLANDS, ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVE AREAS. HE THOUGHT THERE WAS ONE HOME ON THE MAP THAT WAS AFFECTED BY THE PROPOSED ROUTE; THE OWNER OF THAT HOME SAID SHE WOULD BE HAPPY TO SELL FOCUS 2000 HER HOME AND LAND.

LUTHER ADDRESSED THE ROUTE HAVING BEEN IDENTIFIED, THE EMINENT DOMAIN ISSUE HAS BEEN ADDRESSED; FOCUS 2000 WOULD NOT ASK THE COMMISSION TO EXERCISE EMINENT DOMAIN ON THE TOLL ROLL PROJECT AT ALL. THE PROJECT IS LIMITED TO NORTH OF I-10.

LUTHER EXPLAINED THE WHOLE EFFORT HERE IS A UNIQUE PUBLIC/ PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP INVOLVING A NUMBER OF COUNTIES ON BOTH THE ALABAMA AND FLORIDA LINE, INVOLVES TWO STATES AND AT LEAST FOUR, POSSIBLY SIX, COUNTIES ON BOTH SIDES OF OUR BORDER. IT IS A PROJECT THAT HAS BEEN A DREAM OF MANY OF THE COMMUNITIES HERE FOR TWENTY FIVE OR THIRTY YEARS. BECAUSE OF DEVELOPMENTS NORTH OF HERE WHERE WE STAND TONIGHT IN DOTHAN, ENTERPRISE AND PLACES IN ALABAMA NORTH AND DEVELOPMENTS IN PANAMA CITY AND AREAS SOUTH, HE DOESN'T THINK THERE IS ANY QUESTION THAT DEVELOPMENT IS COMING TO THIS PART OF THE WORLD. THIS TOLL ROAD WOULD BE A KEY ANCHOR FOR ALL THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THAT WOULD FLOW FROM THAT. IT IS A VERY UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY AND FOCUS 2000 IS VERY PLEASED THEY HAVE BEEN ABLE TO PUT TOGETHER THE KIND OF PROGRAM THEY HAVE.

LUTHER ADDRESSED THERE BEING A COUPLE OF CHANGES MADE TO A RESOLUTION THEY GAVE THE BOARD WHEN THEY WERE HERE LAST TIME TO REFLECT THE BOARD'S CONCERNS AND THE CONCERNS OF THE CITIZENS:

1. THE ROUTE WOULD BE LIMITED TO, COULD NOT BE MOVED MORE THAN, 75' FROM WHAT IS BEING PRESENTED ON THE MAP TONIGHT.
2. THE RESOLUTION IS AMENDED TO SPECIFICALLY SAY THIS ONLY DEALS WITH LAND NORTH OF I-10; THAT IS THE TWENTY ONE LANDOWNERS AND TWENTY EIGHT PARCELS HE MENTIONED EARLIER WHO HAD AGREED TO WORK WITH FOCUS 2000 AND ARE WILLING TO SELL THEIR LAND.

3. PROVISION STATING THE COMMISSIONER WOULD HAVE APPROVAL HIMSELF TO DO CERTAIN THINGS; THE COMMISSION GENERALLY WAS NOT COMFORTABLE WITH THAT. FOCUS 2000 CLARIFIED THE ENTIRE COMMISSION WOULD HAVE TO APPROVE THOSE STEPS AS FOCUS 2000 SAW IT.

LUTHER ADVISED THAT IS THE UPDATE ON THE TOLL FACILITY AND REITERATED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY; THEY ARE MINDFUL OF THE CONCERNS EXPRESSED AT THE LAST MEETING AND HOPES THE UPDATE ADDRESSES SOME OF THOSE AND THE FOLKS WILL HAVE A CHANCE TO LOOK AT THE MAP AND SEE THE ACTUAL MAP AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME. HE THEN OFFERED TO ANSWER THE BOARD'S QUESTIONS.

DUE TO THE AUDIENCE SAYING THEY COULDN'T HEAR WHAT LUTHER HAD SAID, LUTHER UPDATED THEM ON WHAT HE HAD SAID. SINCE THE LAST MEETING WHEN THEY HEARD THE CONCERNS THAT WOULD PACIFY THE COMMISSION AND THE CITIZENS, THEY WENT BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD AND TOOK A LOOK AT THE GENERAL PLAN FOCUS 2000 HAD PROPOSED LAST TIME. BUT, LAST TIME THEY DIDN'T HAVE A ROUTE IDENTIFIED. THEY WANTED TO FIND OUT IF THEY COULD IDENTIFY A ROUTE SO WHAT IS ON THE WALL, WHICH EVERY- ONE WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO LOOK AT, IS THE ROUTE THEY HAVE IDENTIFIED. THERE IS 28 PARCELS AND HE THOUGHT 21 LAND OWNERS BECAUSE SOMEONE MAY OWN MORE THAN ONE PARCEL. THEY TALKED TO EVERY ONE OF THEM AND THEY ALL EXPRESSED THEIR WILLINGNESS AND AGREEMENT TO WORK WITH FOCUS 2000 TO HAVE THE TOLL ROAD CROSS THEIR LAND SO THERE WOULD BE NO NEED FOR EMINENT DOMAIN IN THIS PROCESS AT ALL. IT IS A LIMITED NUMBER OF LAND OWNERS AND A ROUTE THAT IS TOWARD THE WEST EDGE OF THE COUNTY AND A ROUTE IN A GOOD SPOT FROM AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STANDPOINT BECAUSE IT IS FAR ENOUGH WEST OF THE CITY AND IT IS NOT GOING TO INFRINGE ON ANY HOMES, HOMESTEADS, ETC. IT IS CLOSE ENOUGH TO PUT EXCHANGES IN, INDUSTRIAL PARK LOCATION AND THE PEOPLE WILL SEE WHERE IT TIES IN TO I-10. IT IS A LOCATION WHERE THERE ARE PLANS OUTLINED ON THE MAP; THEY WILL SEE THE NATURAL LOCATION FOR A MASSIVE TRUCK STOP INTERCHANGE ON I-10. IT SHOULD BE ONE OF THE LARGEST OF ITS TYPE IN THE COUNTRY IF IT ALL GOES ACCORDING TO PLAN. THE OTHER QUESTION THEY HAD AT THE PREVIOUS MEETING WAS IF THIS TOLL ROAD WAS GOING TO CUT OFF ROADS OR CUT OFF ANYBODY'S ROAD THEY CROSS OVER AND HAVE TO DRIVE TWENTY MILES TO GET AROUND THIS ROAD. THAT WILL NOT BE THE CASE. EVERYONE CAN SEE ON THE MAP WHERE FOCUS 2000 TRIED TO MARK EVERY PLACE ALONG THE ROUTE; THERE IS A LIMITED NUMBER OF LAND OWNERS AND IT SHOULD BE AN AREA THAT WILL HAVE VERY FEW ROADS THAT WOULD CROSS. THEY WILL HAVE FLYOVERS WHERE THERE IS ANY ROAD WHATSOEVER ON THIS ROUTE. THERE WILL BE NOBODY THAT WILL HAVE TO GO THIRTY MILES AROUND TO GO WHERE THEY NEED TO GO.

COMMISSIONER PATE INFORMED THOSE PRESENT THE BOARD HAD JUST GOTTEN THE LAST DRAFT ON WHAT THEY WERE TRYING TO NEGOTIATE SO THERE WILL NOT BE A VOTE TONIGHT UNTIL THE BOARD GETS A CHANCE TO GO OVER THE DRAFT, LOOK AT IT THEMSELVES AND THE LAWYER AGREES WITH IT AND DETERMINES IF IT IS ACCEPTABLE TO ALL OF THEM. THE VOTE WILL PROBABLY TAKE PLACE ON JUNE 19TH AT THE BOARD'S REGULAR MEETING.

MR. PRESCOTT TOLD THE BOARD HE THOUGHT THE INFORMATION PRESENTED BY FOCUS 2000 IS THE INFORMATION THE CITIZENS ASK THEM, ALONG WITH THE COUNTY COMMISSION, TO COME BACK AND PRESENT SOME INFORMATION. THEY FEEL LIKE THEY HAVE DONE THAT AND IT IS AN OPPORTUNITY NOW TO HEAR FROM THE CITIZENS OF THE COUNTY. OF COURSE, THEY PUT ALL OF THIS IN THE HANDS OF THE COUNTY COMMISSION TO MAKE WHATEVER IS THE BEST DECISION FOR THE CITIZENS OF WASHINGTON COUNTY.

JAY FELSBURG, WASHINGTON COUNTY NEWS, ADDRESSED AT THE PREVIOUS MEETING FOCUS 2000 HAD NOTED THERE WAS AN ORGANIZATION THAT WAS GOING TO BE SET UP IN FLORIDA SIMILAR TO FOCUS 2000 OF THE WIREGRASS. HE ASKED IF THEY COULD DESCRIBE HOW THIS ORGANIZATION WILL BE SET UP, WHO WILL BE MEMBERS OF IT, ETC.

LUTHER EXPLAINED IT WAS SET UP SIMILAR TO THE ONE SET UP ON THE ALABAMA SIDE OF THE BORDER. IT IS A NON-PROFIT CORPORATION; IT WILL HAVE A BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMPOSED OF REPRESENTATIVES OF WASHINGTON COUNTY. THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNTY WILL GIVE US A RECOMMENDED LIST OF NAMES AND THE OTHER AFFECTED COUNTIES WILL HAVE THEIR NOMINEES TO THE BOARD AND THERE WILL BE A COUPLE OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE FOCUS 2000 GROUP. THIS ONE IS NOT LIKE THE TYPICAL PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP IN THAT THIS ONE IS A NON-PROFIT CORPORATION THAT WILL DESIGN, BUILD, FINANCE, OPERATE THE ROAD UNTIL SUCH TIME IT IS PAID OFF WITH A TAX FREE BOND. AT THAT POINT, THE ROAD WILL REVERT BACK TO THE COUNTIES AND HE THINKS THAT, AT THIS STAGE, IS A THIRTY YEAR PERIOD OF TIME.

CHAIRMAN PATE CALLED FOR A RECESS TO GIVE EVERYONE THE OPPORTUNITY TO LOOK AT THE MAP PROVIDED BY FOCUS 2000.

PURSUANT TO A RECESS, LUTHER ASKED HE BE ALLOWED TO CORRECT THE RECORD ON SOMETHING HE SAID. HIS UNDERSTANDING IS THERE ARE THREE PEOPLE IN THE HICKS FAMILY THAT HAVE NOT BEEN TALKED TO YET ABOUT THE TOLL ROAD ROUTE. THERE IS THREE PEOPLE OUT OF THE TWENTY SEVEN OR TWENTY EIGHT HE MENTIONED THAT HAVE NOT BEEN TALKED TO. HE WANTED TO MAKE CLEAR THE AGREEMENT REQUIRES EVERYONE TO BE AGREEABLE. HE IS ASSUMING THESE THREE PEOPLE WILL BE AGREEABLE; IF NOT, THE TOLL ROAD WON'T BE GOING ANYWHERE. EVERYONE HAS TO BE AGREEABLE WITHOUT EMINENT DOMAIN. HE WANTED TO CORRECT THAT AT THIS TIME BEFORE IT WENT ANY FURTHER.

COMMISSIONER PATE ASKED LUTHER TO EXPLAIN TO THE AUDIENCE WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF THE TOLL ROAD IS APPROVED. PATE ADDRESSED MOST OF THE QUESTIONS THE AUDIENCE IS ASKING HAS TO BE TAKEN CARE OF WITH THE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT AND HE ASKED LUTHER TO EXPLAIN IT TO THE PEOPLE NOW.

LUTHER EXPLAINED IF THE TOLL ROAD IS APPROVED, IT IS THE VERY FIRST START OF A LONG PROCESS. IN ORDER TO GET FINANCING, GET THE DESIGN TO BUILD, DO THE STUDIES THAT DOES SHOW THE ROAD IS JUSTIFIED AND THE TRAFFIC IS THERE, JUSTIFY THE SALE OF THE BONDS TO PAY FOR THE ROAD. ONE OF THE PIECES OF HAVING A PLATITUDE WOULD BE A SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION BETWEEN THIS COMMISSION AND THE OTHER COUNTIES THAT ARE AFFECTED IS AN INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WHERE COMMISSIONERS IN EACH COUNTY WOULD SIT DOWN AND AGREE AMONG THEMSELVES WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO THE ROAD AT THE END OF TIME WHEN IT IS PAID FOR AND IT CAME BACK TO THE COUNTIES. DO THE COUNTIES WANT TO CONTINUE TO HAVE IT AND OPERATE IT OR DO THE COUNTIES WANT TO TURN IT OVER TO THE STATE TO MAINTAIN. ALL OF THOSE ARE ISSUES THAT ARE VERY IMPORTANT ISSUES AND ARE BODY INDEBTED; OF COURSE, THEY ARE GOING TO ADDRESS THIS. YET, THEY WOULD HAVE TO BE SUBJECT TO A NEGOTIATED AGREEMENT AMONG THE AFFECTED COMMISSIONS WITH INPUT FROM THE PUBLIC.

LINDA CAIN, MAYOR OF CHIPLEY, ASKED A LETTER FROM THE CITY OF CHIPLEY ON THE TOLL ROAD BE READ INTO THE RECORD. ADMINISTRATOR HERBERT READ THE LETTER FROM THE CITY OF CHIPLEY DATED JUNE 6, 2008:

THIS LETTER IS TO INFORM THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, STATE OF FLORIDA, THAT THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHIPLEY, STRONGLY OPPOSE THE CONCEPT OF A TOLL ROAD COMING THROUGH WASHINGTON COUNTY. WE ARE CONCERNED FOR LAND OWNERS, LOSS OF REVENUE FOR MERCHANTS AND ALSO THE LOSS OF PROPERTY TAX REVENUE FOR THE COUNTY. WE

RESPECTIVELY REQUEST THAT THIS LETTER BE READ PUBLICLY IN YOUR MEETING ON JUNE 9TH AT 5:00 P.M.

ALL COUNCIL MEMBERS HAVE BLESSED THIS LETTER IN EXCEPTION TO CHERYL McCALL WHO CANNOT PUBLICLY TAKE A STAND OR VOTE ON THIS MATTER DUE TO HER TIES WITH THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.

MAYOR CAIN ASKED THE BOARD TO VOTE NO ON THE TOLL ROAD COMING THROUGH WASHINGTON COUNTY. IF IT IS NOT GOOD FOR THE SOUTH END OF THE COUNTY, IT IS NOT GOOD FOR THE NORTH END OF THE COUNTY. IF IT GOES TO I-10, CHIPLEY WILL BE LEFT BEHIND; THEY WILL BE DRIED UP AND WILL NOT HAVE ANY BUSINESSES DOWNTOWN. SHE ASKED THE BOARD TO THINK ABOUT THIS WHEN THEY VOTE ON THE TOLL ROAD.

COMMISSIONER PATE ASKED A REPRESENTATIVE FROM FOCUS 2000 TO EXPLAIN WHY THE TOLL ROAD IS STOPPING AT I-10 WITH THIS PHASE.

COMMISSIONER PATE SAID AT THE LAST MEETING ONE OF THE LAST COMMENTS COMMISSIONER SAPP MADE WAS TO ASK FOCUS 2000 IF THEY COULD LOOK AT THIS ROUTE AND BRING IT TO I-10 TO PROVE THEY COULD DO THIS. THIS IS FOCUS 2000'S RESPONSE TO BRING IT DOWN TO I-10. THEY PLAN TO GO AHEAD; BUT, IT GIVES THEM TIME TO NEGOTIATE JUST LIKE THEY HAVE DOWN HERE. THAT IS WHAT HE WAS REFERRING TO.

LUTHER EXPLAINED FOCUS 2000 WAS TRYING TO RESPOND TO THE CONCERNS OF THE CITIZENS IN THE COUNTY AND ALSO BUILD A ROAD IN THE RIGHT PLACE WHERE IT SHOULD BE. THEY WENT BACK AND LOOKED AT THEIR FIRST PHASE PROPOSAL THAT WOULD ACCOMPLISH THE TWENTY FIVE-THIRTY YEAR GOALS THAT HAVE BEEN A DREAM OF MANY OF THE COMMUNITIES ALONG THIS POTENTIAL ROUTE NORTH OF DOTHAN, ALABAMA TO I-10. IN THE LAST YEAR OR SO, THERE HAS BEEN GREAT, GREAT INTEREST IN PANAMA CITY AND FURTHER NORTH OF DOTHAN IN A ROAD THAT GETS TRAFFIC OFF OF TWO LANES AND GOES STRAIGHT THROUGH AND ALLOWS FOR CREATION OF INDUSTRIAL PARKS, CREATION OF JOBS AND THINGS YOU ARE SEEING ALL AROUND THE SURROUNDING AREAS. THAT WAS FOCUS 2000'S IDEA TO MAKE IT SO IT WAS THE LEAST IMPACT TO ACCOMPLISH THE GOAL OF GETTING TO I-10. IF SOMETHING HAPPENS SOUTH OF I-10 OR NORTH OF DOTHAN SOMEDAY, THAT IS A SUBJECT FOR ANOTHER DAY AND WILL BE A WHOLE OTHER ISSUE. THE COMMISSION WILL HAVE TO GO LOOK AND EVERY COMMISSION ALONG THE WAY AT EVERY ROUTE AND IF SOMEONE DOESN'T AGREE, IT IS NOT AGREEABLE, OF COURSE IT WOULDN'T PROCEED. THE GROUP DOESN'T HAVE AUTHORITY TO DO ANYTHING; THAT IS WHY THEY ARE HERE TO ASK THE BOARD FOR PERMISSION TO DO WHAT THEY PROPOSE HERE ON THE WALL.

T. J. MCDONALD, CHIPLEY CITY COUNCILMEMBER, THANKED MAYOR CAIN FOR ADDRESSING EXACTLY WHAT THE CITY OF CHIPLEY THINKS ABOUT THIS PROJECT. THEY HAVE HAD THE DOWNTOWN MERCHANTS PROTEST AND HE ASKED THE BOARD TO THINK ABOUT ALL THESE PEOPLE WHO HAVE BUSINESSES DOWNTOWN WHO HAVE ALREADY BEEN PAYING TAXES FOR A GREAT NUMBER OF YEARS AND HOW THIS ROAD IS GOING TO AFFECT THEM. THOSE ARE THE PEOPLE WHO ARE ALREADY COMMITTED TO OUR COMMUNITY, WHO ARE ALREADY HERE EVERY DAY AND HAVE BEEN PAYING THOSE TAXES AND YOU ARE GOING TO PUT THEM OUT OF BUSINESS WITH THIS ROAD. IF IT IS NOT GOOD FOR THE SOUTH PART OF THE COUNTY, IT IS NOT GOOD FOR THE NORTH PART. HE ASKED THE BOARD TO GO AHEAD AND STOP THE TOLL ROAD NOW. IF JACKSON COUNTY WANTS IT, LET THEM HAVE IT. HE ASKED THE BOARD TO KEEP THIS IN CONSIDERATION IF THEY VOTE TODAY.

COMMISSIONER PATE ADDED HE WAS ONE OF THOSE LONG TIME TAXPAYERS HERE IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON COUNTY AND THEY OWN A BUSINESS HERE TOO. IF THE TOLL ROAD PUTS THEM OUT OF BUSINESS, IF IT PASSES, HE WILL BE RIGHT ALONG WITH THE OTHER MERCHANTS.

JAMES USSERY SAID HE GUESSED HE DIDN'T REALLY HAVE ANY OBJECTION IF EVERYBODY AGREED TO SELL THEIR PROPERTY; THAT IS THEIR CHOICE AND HE DON'T HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THAT IF EVERYTHING IS LIKE MR. STRANGE SAID. HE WAS IN THE LAST MEETING AND HEARD A LOT THAT WAS SAID AND HE FELT LIKE MR. STRANGE DID CLEAR SOME OF IT UP; BUT, THEN HE SAID NOBODY'S LAND WOULD BE TAKEN. THAT WAS HIS CONCERN AS HE DIDN'T WANT TO HAVE TO GIVE UP HIS LAND HE HAD WORKED AND PAID FOR AND HE DIDN'T WANT TO SEE ANY OF HIS NEIGHBORS HAVE TO GIVE UP THEIRS. HE DIDN'T WANT THE ROAD COMING THROUGH CUTTING HIM OFF FROM HIS MOTHER. HE HAS AN ELDERLY MOTHER ON THE OTHER END OF THE ROAD AND HE DIDN'T WANT TO HAVE TO DRIVE ALL THE WAY AROUND TO GET TO HER. HE SAID HE WOULD SAY IT LIKE MR. OWENS SAID IT; THE BOARD IS ELECTED TO TAKE CARE OF THE CITIZENS OF THE COUNTY'S BUSINESS AND AS LONG AS THEY WILL DO THAT, HE WON'T HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THEM.

BILL WILLIAMS SAID AT THE LAST MEETING HE WOULDN'T REALLY EXPECTING ANYMORE THAN WE HAVE TONIGHT; THEY HAVE THREE MAPS POSTED ON THE WALL WITH NO REFERENCE POINTS. THE AVERAGE LAY PERSON CAN'T READ THESE MAPS. IF HE WANTED TO COME IN AND PRESENT INFORMATION HE WOULD COME IN AND GIVE A POWER POINT PRESENTATION AND EXPLAIN WHAT THESE MAPS MEAN. THIS IS RIDICULOUS IN THE AGE OF TECHNOLOGY WE LIVE TO COME IN AND STICK SOMETHING ON THE WALL AND HAVE THIS MANY PEOPLE TRY TO COME BY AND LOOK AT IT. HE SUGGESTED THE BOARD IN THE FUTURE WHEN THEY HAVE THIS MANY PEOPLE IN A MEETING OF THIS MAGNITUDE THEY HAVE A BIGGER FACILITY, SUCH AS THE FARM CENTER, ETC. THAT WOULD ACCOMMODATE THE CITIZENS OF WASHINGTON COUNTY.

BILL ADDRESSED HIS CONCERN WAS IF THE TOLL ROAD COMES TO I-10, AND THEY TALK ABOUT A TRUCK STOP; HE DOESN'T THINK THE CITY OF CHIPLEY NEEDS A TRUCK STOP BECAUSE THEY JUST SHUT ONE DOWN IN JACKSON COUNTY BECAUSE OF DRUGS AND PROSTITUTION. IF THEY THINK THAT IS GOING TO HELP US, HE FEELS THEY ARE SADLY MISTAKEN. THAT IS THE LAST THING HE WANTS TO SEE IN WASHINGTON COUNTY. HE ASKED WHAT WAS THE COUNTY GOING TO GET OUT OF A TRUCK STOP.

BILL ASKED IF ONE OF THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COULD TELL HIM ONE BENEFIT TO WASHINGTON COUNTY FROM THIS TOLL ROAD. HE ASKED THEM TO GIVE HIM ONE BENEFIT THEY THOUGHT HE WOULD GET OUT OF IT. NONE OF THE BOARD RESPONDED. BILL ASKED THIS TOLL ROAD BE LAID TO REST TONIGHT; HE WANTS TO SEE IT PUT TO A VOTE BECAUSE IF THIS IS ALLOWED TO COME TO I-10, THERE ARE MORE PLANS TO THIS THAN JUST COMING TO I-10 AND STOPPING. THE BOARD IS GOING TO BE SITTING HERE FACING THE DECISION TO VOTE FOR EMINENT DOMAIN WHEN FOCUS 2000 SAYS THEY WANT TO RUN IT ON DOWN TO THE SOUTH PART OF THE COUNTY. THEY WILL BE FACED WITH TAKING PERSONAL PROPERTY FROM PEOPLE AND GIVING IT TO A PRIVATE ORGANIZATION FOR THEIR PROFIT AND THAT IS ETHICALLY WRONG. THE BOARD SHOULDN'T BE PUT IN THAT POSITION. HE REITERATED HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE TOLL ROAD PUT TO A VOTE TONIGHT AND WOULD LIKE TO SEE IT PUT TO AN END.

COMMISSIONER STRICKLAND ADDRESSED HIM TALKING TO THE FOCUS 2000 REPRESENTATIVES TODAY AND HIS CONCERN WAS AMBULANCE PROTECTION, FIRE DEPARTMENT AND LAW ENFORCEMENT. AS YOU ALL KNOW NOW, THE COUNTY DOESN'T HAVE ENOUGH AMBULANCES TO SERVE THE COUNTY AND THE FIRE DEPARTMENTS IS THE SAME WAY AND THE LAW ENFORCEMENT WITH THE BUDGET LIKE IT IS NOW, WHO IS GOING TO PATROL THE TOLL ROAD. HE IS WITH THE AUDIENCE. HE DOESN'T THINK THE TOLL ROAD IS GOING TO HELP THE COUNTY ONE BIT. STRICKLAND SAID IF JACKSON COUNTY WOULD LIKE TO DO THE TOLL ROAD, HE OFFERED A MOTION TO

DO AWAY WITH THE TOLL ROAD AND LET JACKSON COUNTY DO IT. COMMISSIONER FINCH SECONDED THE MOTION FOR DISCUSSION.

COMMISSIONER PATE SAID PART OF THE DISCUSSION IS TO GET ALL THE INPUT HERE BECAUSE THAT IS THE REASON THIS MEETING WAS CALLED FOR WAS PEOPLE TO GET INFORMATION, NOT TO KILL OR VOTE IT UP OR DOWN.

COMMISSIONER STRICKLAND ASKED PATE TO REPEAT WHAT HE HAD SAID. COMMISSIONER PATE REFERRED TO COMMISSIONER FINCH SECONDED THE MOTION ON THE FLOOR FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION. PATE SAID HE MOVED INTO LETTING THE PEOPLE GET THEIR DISCUSSIONS OUT OF THE WAY.

PAUL GORDY SAID WHAT WAS REALLY NEEDED HERE IS A PARLIAMEN- TARIAN. HE SAID HE WOULD SPEAK THE THINGS HE WANTS TO SPEAK; BUT, ASKED IF THE BOARD WANTED TO TAKE CARE OF THE MOTION ON THE FLOOR RIGHT NOW.

COMMISSIONER PATE ASKED THE COMMISSIONERS IF THEY HAD ANY DISCUSSION.

COMMISSIONER FINCH SAID THEY HAVE BEEN IN DISCUSSION WITH THE FOCUS 2000 PEOPLE AND HE THINKS THEY CAME IN THINKING, HE IS ASSUM- ING THEY DID, THAT WASHINGTON COUNTY WOULD BE EASY TO DEAL WITH AND THEY WERE JUST GOING TO SELECT THE ROUTE AND MOVE FORWARD. THE BOARD DID POSE SOME QUESTIONS AT THE LAST MEETING AND FOCUS 2000 HAS ABSOLUTELY MADE A POINT OF TRYING TO STOP AT I-10 AT THIS TIME. BUT, OBVIOUSLY, THE ROAD IS GOING TO CONTINUE TO BAY COUNTY AND THAT IS WHAT THE FULL INTENT IS AND FOCUS 2000 TOLD THE BOARD THAT THE LAST TIME. HE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT FOCUS 2000 WANTED OR DIDN'T WANT; BUT, HE HAS BEEN BOMBARDED WITH CALLS AND HAS NOT HAD THE FIRST ONE TO SAY THEY WANTED THE ROAD. AGAIN, ALL THE BOARD CAN DO IS DO WHAT THE PEOPLE, THE PROPERTY OWNERS WANT; THEY ELECTED THE COMMISSIONERS AND ASKED THE COMMISSIONERS TO REPRESENT THEM. HE SAID FOCUS 2000 CAN PUT THEMSELVES WHERE THE BOARD IS AT; HE DIDN'T KNOW, THE TOLL ROAD MAY BE A BIG ECONOMIC BOOM FOR THE COUNTY TO HAVE. BUT, HE DOESN'T SEE IT YET. MAYBE FOCUS 2000 CAN COME BACK WITH SOME INFORMATION TO PROVE THAT. HE DOESN'T LIKE THE IDEA OF FOCUS 2000 COMING IN TO THE COUNTY AND BEING ABLE TO JUST COME UP HERE AND SAY YOU HAVE A ROUTE PICKED OUT AND THEN COMING BACK AND SAYING ACTUALLY THEY DON'T HAVE THE PROPERTY NAILED DOWN. THAT WAS SUPPOSE TO HAVE BEEN A DONE DEAL AND HE HASN'T TALKED TO ANYBODY THAT HAS BEEN DISCUSSING THEIR PROPERTY WITH FOCUS 2000 TO ALLOW THEM TO COME ACROSS. HE WOULD CERTAINLY LIKE TO SEE ALL OF THAT BEFORE THEY START FIGURING OUT WHAT ROAD IT IS. THERE IS NOBODY IN HERE THAT IS INTERESTED IN IT. IF THERE IS, HE WOULD CERTAINLY LIKE TO SEE THEM. THEY HAVE PEOPLE FROM VERNON THAT PROTESTED, BUSINESSES, THE CITY COUNCIL OF CHIPLEY IS PROTESTING IT AND EVERY PROPERTY OWNER HE HAS TALKED TO IS JUST AGAINST IT. THERE SHOULD BE MORE INFORMATION AND FOCUS 2000 HASN'T EVEN TALKED TO THE COUNTY ENGINEER, FLORIDA DOT HAS NOT HAD A REAL CLOSE RELATIONSHIP IN LOOKING AT WHAT FOCUS 2000 IS TALKING ABOUT COMING THROUGH AND THEY ARE JUST GOING TO GIVE THE ROAD BACK TO THE STATE. FINCH SAID HE UNDERSTANDS THAT IS JUST NOT AN AUTOMATIC THING; THE STATE HAS TO ACCEPT THE ROADS. ALL HE CAN DO AT THIS POINT IS TO LET FOCUS 2000 COME BACK, GET WITH JACKSON COUNTY OR HOLMES COUNTY OR PROVIDE WASHINGTON COUNTY WITH SOMETHING THAT WOULD MAKE IT MORE OPINIONATIVE TO WASHINGTON COUNTY. HE WOULD BE AGAINST IT AT THIS TIME.

CLAYTON OWENS ASKED CHAIRMAN PATE TO RISE TO THE POINT OF ORDER AND CALL FOR THE VOTE; THEY HAVE A MOTION AND SECOND ON THE FLOOR. COMMISSIONER PATE ADVISED OWENS THE BOARD WAS IN THE DISCUSSION PHASE AND THEY CAN'T VOTE IF THEY DON'T GET THEIR SPILL IN.

COMMISSIONER HOLMAN ADDRESSED HIM HAVING LOOKED OVER SOME INFORMATION HE HAD LOOKED UP FOR HIM; ONE OF THE CONCERNS ON THIS NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION IS THE POWERS AND OPERATIONS OF FOCUS 2000. HE READ: A NON PROFIT CORPORATION MAY HAVE BROAD POWERS TO UNDERTAKE ACTIVITIES RELATED TO ITS PURPOSE, INCLUDING (1) THE POWER TO SUE AND BE SUED. (2) TO TAKE AND HOLD BY LEASE, GIFT, PURCHASE OR GRANT ANY REAL OR PERSONAL PROPERTY NECESSARY OR DESIRABLE FOR CARRYING OUT THE PURPOSES OF THE CORPORATION AND TO PURCHASE LEASE OR OTHERWISE ACQUIRE, OWN, USE AND OTHERWISE DEAL IN REAL OR PERSONAL PROPERTY (3) TO SELL, MORTGAGE, CREATE A SECURITY INTEREST IN, LEASE, EXCHANGE, TRANSFER AND OTHERWISE DISPOSE OF ITS PROPERTY AND ASSETS. IN NUMBER 6 IT SAYS, HAVE AND EXERCISE ALL OTHER POWERS NECESSARY TO CONVENIENT TO EFFECT ANY OF THE PURPOSES FOR WHICH THE CORPORATION IS ORGANIZED.

HOLMAN SAID IF THE BOARD APPROVES THE RESOLUTION FOCUS 2000 HAS, THEN, AT THAT TIME, THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, IN WHAT HE IS READING, WILL NOT HAVE ANY OTHER SAYSO ON WHAT FOCUS 2000 DOES, HOW THEY DO IT, ETC. EVERYTHING AS HE UNDERSTANDS IT TO THE WEST OF CHIPLEY, HE THINKS THE COMMENT OR WHATEVER WAS A 200 ACRE INDUSTRIAL PARK IN THAT AREA. HE THOUGHT CSX WOULD BE INVOLVED IN ANYTHING OF THAT NATURE TAKING PLACE. ALSO GREENVILLE CONNECTOR UP NORTH IS IN FINANCIAL TROUBLE; THEY HAVE ASKED FOR A SURVEY BE DONE ON THE TRAFFIC COUNT AND REVENUE. THE CONNECTOR HAS A TOTAL LOSS FOR THE YEAR OF \$20,000,000 ALREADY. THERE IS POCHAHONTAS TURNPIKE THAT IS IN FINANCIAL TROUBLE AND A TURNPIKE IN SOUTH FLORIDA THAT IS IN FINANCIAL TROUBLE. HE QUESTIONED THE ECONOMIC IMPACT THE TOLL ROAD WOULD HAVE ON WASHINGTON COUNTY, WHAT WOULD THE TRAFFIC COUNT ON HIGHWAY 77 AND 79 BE AND HWY 231. IF HE IS LIVING IN BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA AND HE WANTS TO GO TO PANAMA CITY FOR A WEEK, FIRST OF ALL HE IS GOING TO LOOK AT THE ROUTE HE WANTS TO TAKE. IF HE COMES DOWN HIGHWAY 77, 79 OR 231, IF IT TAKES HIM SIX HOURS TO COME THAT WAY AND HE LOOKS AND HERE IS THIS TURNPIKE HE CAN GET ON AND BE IN PANAMA IN THREE HOURS, HE IS GOING TO TAKE THE TURNPIKE. ALL THESE OTHER PEOPLE UP NORTH HE IS SURE IS THINKING THE SAME THING; THE QUICKEST ROUTE AND THE QUICKEST WAY TO GET TO A DESTINATION. THEY ARE NOT GOING TO BE THINKING ABOUT STOPPING AT ANY OF THESE EXITS IN CHIPLEY, VERNON OR ANYWHERE ELSE IN WASHINGTON COUNTY. HE THINKS A COMMENT WAS MADE IN THE PAPER ALSO THAT SOME OF THE COMMISSIONERS, THIS WAS A POLITICAL PLAY; THEY WERE PLAYING POLITICS. HE STATED HE WAS NOT PLAYING POLITICS. HE IS CONCERNED FOR THE CITIZENS OF WASHINGTON COUNTY. HE WAS VOTED IN FOR THE CITIZENS OF WASHINGTON COUNTY. HIS CONCERN IS FOR WHAT IS BEST FOR WASHINGTON COUNTY. HE HAS A DAUGHTER THAT IS 23 YEARS OLD AND HE HAS TWO GRANDCHILDREN. THEIR FUTURE WILL BE HERE WHEN HE IS NOT AND HE IS CONCERNED WITH THEIR WELFARE AND WANTS TO SEE WHAT IS BEST FOR THEM. WHEN THE BOARD VOTES ON IT, HE WILL LET THEM KNOW HIS DECISION.

COMMISSIONER SAPP ADDRESSED ATTORNEY HOLLEY WOULD HAVE TO GIVE THE BOARD ANY INPUT ON THE RESOLUTION OR THE IMPACT OF THE OTHER CORPORATIONS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN IN TROUBLE WITH THE RAILROAD, ETC. CONCERNS WITH WHAT COMMISSIONER HOLMAN WAS TALKING ABOUT. HE HAS NO INFORMATION ON THAT. THE GROUP HERE TONIGHT IS FOR THE RESOLUTION TO DIE TONIGHT. IF IT DOES DIE TONIGHT BY VOTE, THE TOLL ROAD WON'T HAPPEN IN WASHINGTON COUNTY. THAT IS WELL AND GOOD AND THEY WILL HAVE WHAT THE GROUP HERE WOULD WANT TONIGHT IF THAT IS THE CASE. AS HE LOOKS AT IT FROM A BUSINESS STANDPOINT THERE COULD BE QUITE A BIT OF OPPORTUNITY TO THE COUNTY FROM THIS ROAD TO TAKE PLACE. WHEN FOCUS 2000 WAS BEFORE THE BOARD PREVIOUSLY, ONE OF THE GREATEST CONCERNS PRESENTED HERE WAS THE USE OF

EMINENT DOMAIN. HE SUGGESTED AFTER ALL THE DISCUSSION WAS OVER WITH AND AT THE END OF THE MEETING, FOCUS 2000 SHOULD COME BACK AND DESIGN AND INTERCONNECT JUST TO I-10. IF THEY HAVE DONE SO, HE CAN LOOK FAVORABLY TOWARD THAT BECAUSE THE PROBLEM BEING SOUTH OF I-10 HE COULD SEE WITH DIFFERENT THINGS; BUT, ALSO, THIS INTERCONNECT ENDING IN WASHINGTON COUNTY AT THE INTERSTATE WOULD DUMP EXTRA TRAFFIC INTO OUR CITY AND COUNTY THAN EVER BEFORE. SHOULD THE TOLL ROAD CONTINUE ON DOWN, COMMISSIONER HOLMAN IS CORRECT. PEOPLE WOULD PROBABLY GET ON THE TOLL ROAD AND GO TO WHERE THEIR END DESTINATION WAS. IF THE TOLL ROAD WOULD END AT I-10, A LOT OF TRAFFIC WOULD ENTER THE COUNTY. SOME PEOPLE HERE TONIGHT HAD PROS AND CONS ABOUT A TRUCK STOP AS THEY HEARD EARLIER, GOOD AND BAD. THE BENEFITS OF THE TRUCK STOP WOULD BE THE GAS TAXES FROM ALL THE FUEL SOLD HERE. A PORTION OF IT WOULD GO INTO WASHINGTON COUNTY TO HELP MAINTAIN, BUILD AND REBUILD THE COUNTY ROADS. IT WOULD NOT ONLY BE A TRUCK STOP; BUT, THERE WOULD BE OTHER RESTAURANTS. HE DOESN'T SEE IT DEPLETING CHIPLEY AT ALL; BUT, ENHANCING CHIPLEY IF IT STOPS AT I-10. IF IT WENT SOUTH OF I-10, HE COULD CONCUR WITH WHAT COMMISSIONER HOLMAN SAID. THIS IS HIS VIEW ON THE TOLL ROAD. HE ASKED ATTORNEY HOLLEY IF HE WANTED TO ADDRESS THE CONCERNS ABOUT THE LOSSES ON THE RAILROAD.

ATTORNEY HOLLEY SAID ON THE RAILROAD ISSUE, THERE HAS BEEN SOME REMARKS THIS MORNING, THERE WOULD BE AN INDUSTRIAL PARK WITH RAIL PROVIDED. HE THINKS THE ISSUE THERE IS CSX IS PROBABLY NOT WILLING TO DO ANOTHER SPUR THAT CLOSE TO OUR SPUR HERE IN CHIPLEY. IT WOULD NOT BE RAIL SERVICED.

COMMISSIONER PATE SAID HE HAD TRIED TO SERVE THE PEOPLE OF WASHINGTON COUNTY BY LETTING THIS COME OUT. EVERYBODY SAYS WHY ARE THEY HURRYING UP. HE GUESSES HE IS THE REASON FOCUS 2000 IS HURRYING UP BECAUSE OF THE QUESTION THAT WAS MADE HERE ON BRINGING BACK INFORMATION. THEY BROUGHT IT BACK; THEY HAVE INFORMATION HERE. NOBODY SEEMS TO BE FOR THE TOLL ROAD. HE HAS BEEN IN PD&E FOR ABOUT 9.5 YEARS AND HE DOESN'T KNOW OF VERY MANY PLACES WHERE THEY DIDN'T BENEFIT OUT OF IT. THERE IS ABOUT THREE OR FOUR THINGS ON THE RESOLUTION THAT WAS SENT BACK TO FOCUS 2000 RENEGOTIATED AND THEY HAVE TO LOOK OVER IT IF THEY GO AHEAD; HOWEVER, THERE IS A MOTION ON THE FLOOR AND A SECOND TO DO AWAY WITH THE TOLL ROAD AND IF JACKSON OR HOLMES COUNTY WANTS IT, LET THEM HAVE IT.

MR. STRANGE ADDRESSED THE BOARD SAYING HE WAS AWARE THIS WAS A VERY DIFFICULT POSITION FOR THEM AND HE APPRECIATES EVERYONE COMING OUT TONIGHT. FOCUS 2000 TOOK A LOOK AT THIS PROJECT EARLY ON AND SAW A NEED FOR THIS ROAD. IT HAS BEEN SOMETHING, PERHAPS NOT HERE IN WASHINGTON COUNTY, BUT IN SURROUNDING COUNTIES NORTH AND SOUTH IT IS WANTED VERY MUCH. THEY REALLY HAD TO BE CREATIVE BECAUSE THERE IS NO STATE MONEY. THERE WILL BE NO MORE ROADS, NO LIMITED ACCESS ROADS SO HE LOOKS AT IT AS AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PERSON. THAT HAS BEEN HIS WHOLE CAREER IS TO TRY AND CREATE JOBS. THE ROAD, AS HE SEES IT, WAS JUST A WAY TO GET TO AND FROM SOMEWHERE; BUT, IT IS REALLY A MAGNET FOR FACTORIES, DISTRIBUTION CENTERS, PEOPLE WHO WANT TO COME LIVE SOMEWHERE. THAT HAS BEEN HIS EXPERIENCE EVERYWHERE HE HAS BEEN INVOLVED WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. THEY LISTENED TO THE CONCERNS OF THE COMMUNITY. THEY KNEW THERE WERE SERIOUS CONCERNS ABOUT EMINENT DOMAIN, THE SAME CONCERNS ALL OF US WOULD HAVE AND THEY KNEW THEY HAD TO BE CREATIVE AND TO RESPOND TO EVERYONES CONCERNS. THEY WENT BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD AND THIS IS READY RIGHT OFF THE PRESS; THEY DIDN'T COME WITH SOME SWEAT PRESENTATION, ETC. TRYING TO SELL THE BOARD ON ANYTHING. THEY WERE JUST TRYING TO ADDRESS THE

CONCERNS. CLEARLY, HE SEES THE BENEFITS IN SAFETY, JOBS, CONVENIENCE, SO MANY THINGS. JUST THE BUILDING OF THE ROAD ITSELF. WHEN YOU GO AT HOME TONIGHT AND TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT IT MEANS TO BUILD A MULTIMILLION DOLLAR ROAD IN TERMS OF JOBS AND TAX REVENUE TO THE COUNTY, THAT IS JUST PUBLIC INFORMATION. THEY DON'T HAVE TO TAKE HIS WORD FOR IT. HAVING SAID ALL THAT, THEY TRIED TO BE CREATIVE, COME BACK AND MAKE IT AS LITTLE AS IMPACT AS POSSIBLE, AFFECT AS FEW PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE WITH A COMMITMENT THEY WOULD NOT INVOKE EMINENT DOMAIN OR DO ANYTHING THAT WOULD PUT ANYONE IN AN UNCOMFORTABLE POSITION. HE THINKS IT IS PRETTY CLEAR TONIGHT THE COUNTY COMMISSION DOES NOT SEE THE BENEFIT OF THE ROAD. AS HE SAID THE FIRST TIME FOCUS 2000 CAME HERE, THEY ARE NOT IN THE BUSINESS OF CRAMMING ANYTHING DOWN ANYBODY'S THROATS. THEY SAW A NEED AND TRIED TO ANSWER EVERYTHING THE PEOPLE BROUGHT TO THEM. YOU CAN GO LOOK IN THE NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER PLACES FOCUS 2000 HAS BEEN WHERE THEY WERE GOING THROUGH THIS VERY SAME PROCESS, THEY HAVE BEEN WELCOMED AND IT HAS BEEN ISSUED OR IT DOESN'T GO ANYWHERE. THERE IS ALWAYS A PROCESS AND THAT IS WHAT THEY WERE DOING HERE. HE THANKED THE BOARD FOR THEIR TIME. HE STATED FOCUS 2000 WAS NOT ASKING FOR A VOTE ON THE TOLL ROAD. IT WAS UP TO THE BOARD ENTIRELY; BUT, THEY WOULD REACH OUT TO SOME OTHER COMMUNITY AND COMMISSION ON THIS ROAD.

ON A ROLL CALL VOTE, COMMISSIONER FINCH, STRICKLAND AND HOLMAN VOTED YES TO DO AWAY WITH THE TOLL ROAD AND COMMISSIONER SAPP VOTED NO. COMMISSIONER PATE STATED HE SEES A BENEFIT WITH THE TOLL ROAD; BUT, HE IS SORRY THE PEOPLE DISAGREE WITH HIM AND HAVE TALKED TO HIM THE WAY THEY HAVE TONIGHT AND SAID HE VOTED NO. THE MOTION TO DO AWAY WITH THE TOLL ROAD CARRIED WITH PATE AND SAPP OPPOSED.

COMMISSIONER FINCH OFFERED A MOTION, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER STRICKLAND AND CARRIED TO ADJOURN. ATTEST: _____

CLERK
END OF MINUTES FOR 06/09/08

CHAIRMAN