

# TANEY COUNTY COMMISSION RECORD



**JUNE 20, 2007 THE 31<sup>ST</sup> DAY OF  
THE APRIL ADJOURN TERM**

The Taney County Commission met in the Commission Office at 9:00 a.m. pursuant to adjourn with Chuck Pennel, Presiding, Ron Herschend, Western District, and Danny Strahan, Eastern District, present. The following proceedings were had and made a matter of record.

## **INTERVIEW REGARDING ILLEGAL IMIGRANTS BOB SCHANTZ**

Commissioner Pennel presented a concern to the commission regarding a statement that was made by Bob Schantz during an interview. Commissioner Pennel stated that he was concerned that the public would think that the commission has the same viewpoint.

Commissioner Herschend told the commission that the Federal Law says the Local Government can seize and detain illegal immigrants if the State has a Statute that gives them the power to do this. Commissioner Herschend said that Missouri doesn't have this statute so the local authorities are not allowed to seize or detain without cause.

Jimmy Russell, Taney County Sheriff, stated that if a crime has been committed then his department is allowed to detain illegal immigrants just like they would anyone else.

Commissioner Strahan stated that he would like the schools to be contacted to see if they had any concerns with children coming in without the proper vaccinations.

Commissioner Herschend had a concern with an increase with the crime rate and if there were a major crime, what would that look like for Branson and Taney County. Commissioner Herschend added that he would like the commission to be pro-active about the issue and not having to react to a situation, but without a Missouri statute the County is unable to do anything.

Commissioner Strahan expressed his concerned with the health issues and if there would be an infectious disease outbreak how would that affect the economy of the county. Commissioner Strahan suggested that the commission speak with the Health Department and the Schools about this concern.

Sheriff Russell agreed that without a statute the commission's best plan would be to consider the health issues.

Commissioner Herschend also thought the school districts might be having a hardship due to having to hire interpreters for non-English speaking children.

Sheriff Russell thought the hiring practices of the businesses would need to be looked at and if there were repeat offenders; then the businesses could be brought up on charges.

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Commissioner Herschend stated that he thought that a fine could be placed on businesses that hired illegal immigrants just like it is for other offenses.

Sheriff Russell encouraged the commission to speak with the state legislators about this issue.

Commissioner Pennel asked how the commission was to go forward with this issue and if they should go forward as a commission or do it on a personal level.

Commissioner Herschend stated that he would like to approach this personally, but that he did not want the commission to vote “no” on this issue until it received more information.

Commissioner Pennel stated that he was concerned about how the commission was being perceived by the public.

Sheriff Russell suggested that the commission should step back from the issue so it would not be associated with any bad publicity that the interview would generate. Sheriff Russell explained to the commission that it was not just one ethnic group that they need to consider.

Commissioner Pennel asked Commissioner Herschend to go to the INS and have a one-on-one before they bring in the schools and municipalities. Commissioner Pennel stated that he doesn't want anyone to think that the commission is picking on anyone.

Sheriff Russell stated that the commission could ask the INS to coordinate a meeting with educating the public about this issue being the focus.

Commissioner Herschend stated that he would like to find what was out there that could cause harm to the community and be pro-active about the issue and not have to wait until something happens and then have to react to an issue.

Commissioner Pennel closed the meeting by commending Commissioner Herschend on his comments at the interview.