

John C. Ackerman

Tazewell County Board

Continuing a Family Tradition of Community Service

September 29th, 2010

***** Press Release *****

Statement to the Media Concerning the Obvious Lack of Progress of the Tazewell County Vehicle Policy

On February 15th of this year, I released a Position Update concerning the need for Tazewell County to adopt a Vehicle Policy similar to what the majority of the other counties already have in place, including our neighboring McLean and Peoria Counties. I cited sections of the current McLean County Vehicle Policy that needed to be adopted in this much needed Tazewell County Vehicle Policy. I stated that the end result of implementing this new policy would be greater accountability to the taxpayers concerning the County Vehicle fleet and would also allow the County Board to implement much needed Supervision and Risk Management of what can and has been a very costly expense. The policy was brought up at the Human Resources Committee meeting a month later and tabled for more review, agreeing with the need but wanting more information. That was in February.

On April 25th of this year, I released a Press Release stating that the Tazewell County Board needed to pass a Vehicle Policy to ensure the taxpayers that the County Fleet of vehicles were being used for County Business only and not miss-used for personal use. Again, I quoted sections of the current McLean County Vehicle Policy that need to be adopted into this much needed new Tazewell County Vehicle Policy. Again a month later the Human Resources Committee reviewed the need and tabled it for more review, once again agreeing with the need and this time directing the County Administrator to work on this policy. That was April.

In August of this past year, it finally came up for a vote before the Human Resources Committee. The new Tazewell County Vehicle Policy contained all of the sections of the current McLean County Vehicle Policy that I had mentioned months before. As a matter of fact, all of the sections of the new proposed policy came from already existing policies in McLean County, Peoria County, IDOT and several other existing vehicle policies. The four page policy contained nothing that is not already policy in most parts of this state.

I have placed this new four page Tazewell County Vehicle Policy on my website (www.JohnCAckerman.com) for your review along with my past statements on this issue, the full current McLean County Vehicle Policy, and other useful information.

At this meeting of the Human Resources Committee in August, the committee voted in support of this new proposed policy and it moved forward to the full County Board. Unfortunately, it was pulled at the last second at the County Board Meeting due to the fact the States Attorney stated that he needed more time to review it. The committee reversed its decision and moved it back to the committee for further review.

I fail to understand why it takes so long to review a four page document which could be called a “cookie cutter”, the contents of which are already in effect in most other parts of this state. I also fail to understand why the County Leadership is failing to address such a highly needed policy which would reduce a very high and expensive risk. It is far past time for this issue to come before the County Board as a whole for an up-or-down vote.

My reason for bringing this up at this time in this manner is to bring to the forefront just how inefficient government can get and how something so necessary can be so easily stalled by those who would rather it fade off into the sunset without ever seeing the light of day, instead of “stand up” and passing this small, simple, ordinary, much utilized policy.

I may be criticized for taking this action, but I believe it is my obligation to the taxpayers of Tazewell County to bring this and similar issues up whenever I see the necessity to do so. Of course, it is much easier to set back and do nothing and/or deny the need to make things better. And, I personally criticize those officials who would do so.

To the county board I now say the time has come to put an end to the political stall tactics and evading the issue and put this on the October 27th Tazewell County Board Agenda and vote it up or down, as your conscience deems.

As always, I consider it an honor and a privilege to serve you on the Tazewell County Board and if I can be of any assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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