



State of New Mexico
County of Otero

PRESS RELEASE – May 28th, 2010

The Board of Otero County Commissioners will hold a special meeting on Thursday, June 3rd, 2010 at 3pm, in room 123 of the County Administration building at 1101 New York Avenue. The purpose of the special meeting will be to conduct the canvass of the 2010 primary election and to consider approval of a resolution to purchase property located at 1104 White Sands Boulevard.

The property to be considered for purchase approval at this meeting, also known as the old Firestone building, has been discussed in County Commission meetings during 2009 and 2010 for the purpose of housing the offices of County Clerk, County Treasurer, County Assessor and Probate Judge.

During the County Commission meeting held May 20th, 2010, an agenda item was approved regarding the consideration of a resolution to make budget adjustments to complete the purchase of property located at 1104 White Sands Boulevard. The total budget adjustment discussed was \$930,000.00. The final cost of the building purchase to be considered on June 3rd, including funding in escrow and tax, totals \$1,445,742.56, approximately \$122.00 per square foot.

For many years, Otero County has been in the process of finding a location to move county offices from the Courthouse to provide space for the District Court and District Attorney's offices. Until 2009, several functions of the District Attorney's office have been housed outside of the Courthouse at an annual rental cost of \$13,200. In anticipation of the addition of another District Court Judge and the expanding space needs of both the Courts and District Attorney, Otero County Commissioners considered many options to meet the mandated requirement to provide space for these functions.

During the process of searching for property to meet these requirements, the County Commissioners considered the costs of acquiring property and building a new facility, building a new facility on existing County property such as the old hospital land on 10th Street, and renovating an existing vacant building. When the U.S. Forest Service prepared to vacate the Federal Building on New York Avenue, Otero County sought acquisition of the building to relocate County Administration from the Courthouse due to its proximity to the Courthouse and a lower cost option compared to building a new facility. The County Commission then approved an agreement to acquire the 11,000 square foot Federal Building, gifted to the County by the Federal Government, to house the majority of its operations. In 2008, the County made repairs to the Federal building and in 2009, moved many of the County operations from the Courthouse. The County then moved the DA operations into the Courthouse and relieved the budget of some rental costs.

During this process, the County also sold the old hospital property located on 10th Street for \$1,104,000 to Otero Federal Credit Union, providing funding within the County budget to consider additional options to house the remaining County offices and provide additional space in the Courthouse for the District Attorney and Courts. During 2009, Otero County acquired two lots adjacent to the Federal Building for the purpose of parking and other space needs, for which previously, the County had paid rent.

The County Commissioners continued to consider the costs to build, or purchase renovated buildings for the purpose of moving the remaining County operations from the Courthouse. In 2009, the County began considering the availability of the old Firestone building from the owner, The Tommie & Josette Trust, c/o Tommie & Josette Herrell. This building was considered for its ideal location near the current County Administration building and acquired parking lots. Due to the location, the total of 11,928 square feet of office space, and the cost considerations of purchasing a renovated office building versus new land and building costs, the County Commission began the process to acquire the renovated office building in a letter of intent with The Tommie & Josette Trust. In 2009, the County Commission worked with other elected officials to ensure the building would accommodate their office space requirements, and discussed the purchase and budget requirements during Commission meetings and budget meetings through 2010. In a County Commission meeting on November 19th, 2009, it was announced that an agreement for the purchase of the property at 1104 White Sands Boulevard, the old Firestone building, had been negotiated with the new owner, White Sands Construction.

Otero County Commissioners will consider the final approval of the purchase of the Property at its meeting on June 3rd, 2010 at 3pm.