



BOISE COUNTY

PRESS RELEASE STATEMENT BY BOISE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

March 6, 2012

The Boise County Board of Commissioners has announced it is formally supporting HB 585 which will allow options for paying the Alamar debt. A clearer understanding was reached on the ability to hold a bond election requiring 2/3 voter approval. Idaho Code does not allow for payments of judgments and warrant indebtedness for the issuance of bonds. Without further court action there is no way to bring a bond to the people.

Boise County has been in a defensive posture throughout the Alamar lawsuit, filing for Chapter 9 Bankruptcy and the settlement negotiations. No insurance coverage for legal defense was available to Boise County nor was the Office of the Prosecutor available for full time defense. Commissioners secured outside legal counsel with the assistance of the Prosecutor's Office and have spent over \$956,000 of tax payer's dollars defending land use decisions, attempting to develop a long term plan to pay the judgment, and protecting the County against a Writ of Execution, which is the right to go to any County bank account and seize cash for the judgment.

Boise County Commissioners have acted diligently to exhaust every legal option based upon the most current information. Sometimes that meant waiting for a legal opinion or a court date or a court decision. This often delayed Commissioner's ability to make decisions. There was plenty of frustration. Still today, with every question and every answer, the picture becomes clearer. Now paying the ongoing debt requires Commission action and persistence to find an acceptable solution for all Boise County residents.

The debt must to be paid. The Commissioners entered into a settlement agreement for the judgment. Boise County has been ordered to make a \$2.25 million dollar down payment (done) and an annual payment of \$811,000 at 5.5% interest until the debt is paid beginning February, 2013.

Every option requires that funds not needed at the end of each fiscal year to be used to pay the judgment. The 3% annual property tax growth allowed in Idaho Code without a vote will be applied to the judgment payment. County Departments will tighten their belts to find dollars to add to the annual payments. By resolving this issue, Commissioners can get back to the business of County government and moving on to find new ways to provide services and save taxpayers' money. Boise County Commissioners are open to and committed to solutions with the least impact to taxpayers.

HB 585 will give the County an option to refinance the Alamar debt at a lower interest rate. A suggested HB 585 amendment cuts in half the maximum levy rate to 0.1% or \$100 per \$100,000 assessed value above the 3% annual property tax growth. Another suggested amendment would end the 3% annual property tax growth rate and return it to pre-judgment level once the debt is paid. Commissioners believe these changes will lessen the tax impact to property owners and will testify Thursday, March 8th supporting House Bill 585.

Boise County Commissioners invite you to attend upcoming meetings and continue the conversation at 6:30 pm in Idaho City at the Courthouse on March 21, in Horseshoe Bend at the Annex on March 22 and in Garden Valley at the Senior Center on March 23.