

from article by David Beard about the DP editorial board meeting with Hawkins and Arnett in Sunday, November 1 DP

New Longview Power plant and PILOT

In April, the state Public Service Commission approved construction of two new Longview Power plants: one gas fired, one solar.

Arnett said the expansion beyond the existing coal-fired plant could be an advantage to

SEE SEATS, B-4

SEATS

FROM PAGE B-1

Mon County in terms of jobs and revenue. "I am all in favor of cleaner burning fossil fuels for power production and less impact on our environment."

The details of this PILOT agreement haven't been made public yet, but Arnett said that in general, PILOT agreements — where a series of flat payments are made over the course of several years (30 in this case) in lieu of property taxes — and TIF districts have advantages and disadvantages.

It's important to weigh any loss of tax revenue against the benefits of jobs and development expected to ensue, he said.

Hawkins said because the PILOT agreement remains confidential at this point, he couldn't discuss it, though the PSC-

approved term sheet is public.

(As previously reported, the term sheet indicates proposed PILOT would provide the county with about \$58.2 million across 30 years. Annual county revenue from the proposed PILOT is projected at \$2.5 million up front, then gradually escalating from \$1.58 million per year for the first five years up to \$2.47 million in year 30.)

Hawkins said the land for the proposed plants currently brings in \$6,000 per year. The commission is now working with the county Board of Education to form a joint board for various service projects connected with the PILOT and has set aside \$250,000 for those projects.

Hawkins said the commission is looking forward to an announcement soon about the PILOT. "The agreements that we've been working on, I think, most people are going to find have been very beneficial."

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