

Shelby County GOP Central Committee Chairman Brad Halbrook proposes solution for county-owned farmland

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Shelbyville, IL – Shelby County Republican Central Committee Chairman Brad Halbrook says the controversy surrounding farmland the County owns is a distraction that continues to divide residents and a solution is needed sooner than later.

“There is no Constitutional authority for the county government to own a for profit enterprise, however the land should be put back into production,” Halbrook said. “I have no stake in the outcome of this debate contrary to the lies and misinformation being spread. My only interest in this issue has been to make sure we as a county are following the law, upholding the Constitution, and protecting taxpayers.”

Halbrook said Shelby County Board Chairman Bryan Coffman should convene a farm committee meeting as soon as possible and adopt an emergency appropriation to move to the full board in as a timely manner possible for adoption and implementation. The basis for the emergency is that if the Board fails to act, valuable farm revenue will be lost for the current fiscal year. County governments are able to amend a previously approved budget in emergency situations.

There is precedent to use the emergency fund request avenue to amend previously approved budgets.

“We need to look no further than Macon County, which was under the legal representation of the current Assistant State's Attorney Jay Scott,” Halbrook said. “We find that routinely an emergency budget amendment was made to be able to spend valuable funds coming into the county. The same logic should be applied to Shelby County in a simple resolution that spells out the justification for an emergency budget amendment, just as Macon County has done for years.”

Halbrook said we can all agree that revenue created from the sale of a crop on county-owned farm ground are valuable funds, but the County Board must act quickly to capture the funds.

“For over 40 years, I have worked with farmers and ranchers in 5 states to find solutions to their problems and I stand ready to offer testimony to the county board on the solution I am presenting to the county’s farmland,” Halbrook said. “I am ready to work with members of the farm committee, the county board, the Farm Bureau and citizens of this county to quickly resolve this matter. Personally, and as the leader of the Shelby County Republicans, our agenda remains the same – follow the law, do right by the people and protect taxpayers. It’s time to put

the personal, petty, political differences aside and get to work. If Chairman Bryan Coffman fails to act and pass an emergency appropriation, the burden is on him and his team. Time is of the essence, and action must be taken immediately.”

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