

## County Urged to Keep Bridge Open

(KNZA)--Brown County Commissioners have been urged keep a historic bridge open.

A group of county residents met with the Commission Monday, asking that the bridge southeast of Fairview on Coyote Road over the Delaware River, not be closed, saying it's used regularly.

Commission Chairman Warren Ploeger said at an estimated price tag of \$500,000 its hard to justify replacement of the narrow truss bridge built in 1913, which can't legally be crossed by anything greater than a pickup truck.

He said the county will receive an additional \$40,000 from the state by closing the bridge through a one-time special funding program for the replacement of small truss bridges. In addition, Ploeger said the bridge must undergo an expensive inspection every two years costing the county 35-hundred dollars, with a less complex inspection in alternating years at a cost of \$500.

The concerned residents said they aren't looking for replacement of the bridge, but instead only want keep what they have.

The bridge was listed on the National Historic Register in 2004. Because of that fact, it can't be torn down. If a new bridge were built, it would have to built to the side of the existing bridge and road moved.

Following discussion, the Commission agreed not to close the bridge for another 30 days. In the meantime, Ploeger said he will talk to engineer Tom Bennett to see if the county can substitute another bridge, located near 175th and Bittersweet Roads, for the 1913 bridge, and still receive the state money. Adding that he couldn't make any promises, Ploeger said he was planning to replace the alternate bridge with a tube next year.

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