

SECOND REGULAR MEETING DUBOIS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

FEBRUARY 21, 2023

The second regular meeting of the Dubois County Commissioners was held in the Commissioners/Council Room of the Courthouse Annex in Jasper, Indiana, beginning at 8:00 a.m. (EST) on February 21, 2023. Present were Commissioners Chad A. Blessinger, Nick Hostetter, and Serice Stenftenagel. Also present were County Auditor Sandra L. Morton, County Attorney Gregory Schnarr, Highway Supervisor Steve Berg, and Highway Engineer Brent Wendholt. A quorum was declared present and the meeting was opened for business by President Blessinger.

Minutes of the February 6, 2023 meeting of the Board of Commissioners were approved as presented. Claims against the County were examined and those found to be just, due and owing were allowed and those found to be not due and owing were disallowed, all as more fully set forth in the Claims and Allowance Docket of the County.

RE: HIGHWAY SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

Highway Supervisor Steve Berg presented the following report of Highway projects:

District #3 Boom Mower Operator – Interviews were conducted on Thursday, February 9, 2023. After consideration, Shelby Pieper from Dubois, Indiana was selected as the new boom operator in District #3 to replace Wayne Schmitt.

Storm Cleanup – Clean up continues from the heavy rains received on Thursday, February 16, 2023. The early morning commute was difficult as many areas experienced high water due to culverts being clogged with leaves and tree limbs. Road shoulders were washed out as deep as a foot in many locations.

Petition to Upgrade Gravel Road to Chip Seal - Manda Combs, a resident landowner on Kings Ridge Road, submitted a petition to pave the remaining portion of Kings Ridge Road in Jefferson Township. In 1992, proper dedication and right of way was recorded. The initial paving of 2.1 miles stopped at the last residence at that time. Since then, twelve new homes have been built on the remaining 0.85 miles which terminates at the bridge on Harts Gravel Road. A review of the request was evaluated and scored 95 placing it sixth on the improvement list. The work could begin in 2028. A motion was made to accept the petition and to place the upgrade on the improvement list. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

Road Usage Request – Dave Englert submitted a request for limited use of County Road 100 South and the Old Huntingburg Road between 8:00 a.m.- 9:00 a.m. for the 17th Annual Armed Forces Day 5K Run/Walk being held on Sunday, May 20, 2023. No road closure will take place. A motion was made to approve the road usage request, was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

Road Usage Request – Janet Schitter submitted a request to use certain roads in the Town of Ireland during their annual St. Patrick's Day parade to be held on Sunday, March 19, 2023 beginning at 1:00 p.m. As in the past, the Ireland St. Patrick's day Parade Committee will use county signage during the event. A motion was made to approve the request, was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

Request for Weed Board Expenditure – The County Weed Board has again planned to include mailers in the property tax statements. The cost in 2022 was \$1,755.58. The Weed Board budget will be used; however, additional funds will be needed. Berg requested permission to use Commissioner funds for the remaining balance. A motion was made to approve the request to use miscellaneous operating funds in the Commissioner's budget, was duly seconded and carried unanimously. Consensus was to have Berg budget for the entire amount in the future if the mailings will continue.

RE: HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION QUOTES

The Highway Department has completed removing all damaged materials from the water leak and has made all preparations necessary to proceed with construction. Seven local contractors were contacted to discuss renovations of the offices. The following quotes were received:

Tom Schroering Construction	\$50,494.00
Hasenour Construction	\$83,771.11

The quotes were taken under advisement, will be reviewed, and will be awarded later in the meeting. Berg has also been working with the insurance company.

RE: H.E.L.P. UPDATE

Community Coordinator Rilyn Bawel provided an update on the Hoosier Enduring Legacy Program. The Strategic Improvement Plan is due to OCRA on March 1, 2023. The Core Team has chosen to award the one million dollar CDBG CV grant funding to Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission to implement a Home Rehabilitation Program and to Tri-Cap Head Start to possibly add an additional classroom.

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RE: COURTHOUSE COMPUTER SERVER ROOM AIR CONDITIONING

Custodian Scott Hopf presented a quote to replace the air conditioning unit in the Courthouse computer server room. Pending funding approval by the County Council, a motion was made to approve a quote from Messmer Mechanical for a unit that can operate in cooling mode down to 5 degrees outside at a cost of \$4,575. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

RE: COURTHOUSE COURTROOM CARPET

Custodian Scott Hopf discussed the need to replace the carpet in the second floor courtrooms. Consensus was to proceed.

RE: COURTHOUSE LANDSCAPING

Due to the Downtown Renovation project, Custodian Hopf received quotes to landscape around the Courthouse from the following:

Buschkoetter's Nursery Lawn & Garden Center, Inc.	\$19,136.93
Brescher Landscaping and Lawn Service	\$ 7,010.04
Green Thumb Landscaping, Inc.	\$11,362.65

A motion was made to approve the quote from Brescher Landscaping and Lawn Service pending funding by the County Council, was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

RE: EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY APPRECIATION WEEK

February 19-25, 2023 has been proclaimed Emergency Management Appreciation Week by the State of Indiana. Commissioner Blessinger recognized EMA Director Tammy Humbert and Assistant Director Narissa Zink for their work and dedication to Dubois County.

RE: INDIANA 15 REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Executive Director Nathan Held provided information on the Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission. Director Lisa Gehlhausen has stepped down in December 2022 and will be taking on an advisory role. Held discussed various projects the Commission is currently working on throughout the area.

RE: LOCAL ASSISTANCE TRIBAL CONSISTENCY FUNDS (LATCF)

Commissioner Blessinger provided information on the Local Assistance Tribal Consistency Fund federal monies received. The County received \$50,000 in 2022 and will receive an additional \$50,000 in 2023. The funds are similar to the American Rescue Plan Act funds and can be used for any county purpose.

RE: CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Commissioner Blessinger opened discussion on the possibility of creating a Climate Action Plan for Dubois County. No action was taken due to the lack of a commissioner willing to lead the project.

RE: LEADERSHIP TRAINING

The NACo High Performance Leadership Academy is a 12-week online training program for frontline county professionals. The Commissioners agreed to allow Commissioner Blessinger permission to choose an employee to participate in the program which will begin in April 2023.

RE: HIGHWAY ENGINEER'S REPORT

Highway Engineer Brent Wendholt presented the following report of Highway projects:

Duff Solar Park Road Use Agreement – A draft agreement has been received. County Attorney Schnarr and Wendholt are reviewing. A second Solar Park is also being considered in Huntingburg and had an introductory meeting with Superintendent Berg. More information will be obtained and reported in the future.

Safe Streets for All (Action Plan) – Nothing to report. There will be a webinar in the near future to help explain the process.

Distressed Road 2023 – Nothing to report. Wendholt will appear before the County Council on February 27, 2023.

Bridge #14 Replacement (Division Road) – The project is still moving slowly, nothing new to report.

RE: SIGNAGE ON STATE ROAD 164

As a follow-up to a complaint about the massive number of road signs recently added to State Road 164, Commissioner Blessinger provided information from INDOT. A federal grant was received by

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the State to place thousands of signs in five counties. The State decided the additional signage would provide safer notifications of curves on State Road 164.

RE: COUNTY WEBSITE REFRESH

Commissioner Blessinger provided an update on the County Website which will be refreshed and updated soon. Revize is working to migrate the current data from the old site. Training will be provided when the website is ready.

RE: SECOND AMENDMENT (2A) SANCTUARY COUNTY

Resident Eric Jochim appeared to discuss the recent ban on handgun pistol braces by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. He requested Dubois County reconsider his previous request to become a Second Amendment Sanctuary County. Commissioner Blessinger commented that the County already upholds the constitution and did not find it necessary to pass a resolution stating as such previously. Commissioner Hostetter commented on his support of the request. A motion was made to designate Dubois County as a Second Amendment (2A) Sanctuary County. The motion was duly seconded. A discussion was held on the definition of becoming a sanctuary County. The motion carried 2-1 with Blessinger being the dissenting vote.

RE: TAX INCREMENT FINANCING RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

Commissioner Blessinger discussed the current legislation Senate Bill 300 and House Bill 1081 being considered on Tax Increment Financing of Residential Districts. The Association of County Commissioners is requesting support to include providing counties with an approval mechanism before a district is created. Consensus was to draft a letter of support.

RE: SHERIFF NEW DEPUTY REQUEST

Sheriff Tom Kleinhelter appeared again to request the creation of nine new deputies for the Sheriff Department. He discussed the positive input from the public information forum held on February 13, 2023. Possible funding options were discussed. Wage increases to attract better candidates was also discussed to fill the needs of the department. The possibility of passing a Local Income Tax for Public Safety was discussed. Consensus was to have County Attorney Schnarr research the LIT-PS tax. No action was taken on the request to create nine officers.

RE: VETERAN SERVICES OFFICE

Commissioner Blessinger discussed a request to close the Veteran Services Office to the public from March 20-24, 2023 due to the high volume of claims received by the office and the need to train the new assistant Rebecca Henry. Following discussion, a motion was made to close the office to the public to work on claims and for training from March 20- 24, 2023, was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

RE: JASPER PLANNING COMMISSION APPOINTMENT

A discussion was held on a person to appoint to the Jasper Planning Commission due to the vacancy left by Randy Mehringer. The appointment was tabled until the next meeting.

RE: OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUNDS

Commissioner Blessinger presented information on a request to use OPIOID Settlement Funding as matches for State and Federal grant applications due soon. Consultant Lena Hackett with Community Solutions is working on several grants to assist Community Corrections, the Sheriff, Dove Recovery House, and JRAC. Discussion was to move forward with grant applications with no expectations for the County to fund the programs after the grant period expires. A motion was made to support the Opioid State and Federal grant requests using up to \$100,000 as matching funds, was seconded and carried unanimously.

RE: SURPLUS ITEMS

Auditor Morton presented the following items to be declared surplus:

- 3 - blue conference chairs which are unsafe and could be a tipping hazard.
- 1 - conference table from the Prosecutor's office.

A motion was made to approve the request and have Custodian Hopf discard the items, was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

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RE: ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Auditor Morton presented the Annual Financial Report for 2022. The report will be advertised in The Herald and Ferdinand News and be submitted to the State Gateway this week.

RE: HIGHWAY RENOVATION QUOTES

The quotes received earlier in the meeting were reviewed. The following quotes were recommended for approval for the Highway Department renovation project:

Tom Schroering Construction:	\$50,494.00
Gasser Electric	\$12,700.00
Carpet Warehouse	\$ 4,123.35
Jasper Equipment and Supply	\$ 3,345.00

A motion was made to approve the recommendations and to allow Berg the ability to negotiate up to 5% for unforeseen items during construction. Insurance will cover some of the items in the quotes. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

RE: TREASURER/AUDITOR OFFICE RENOVATIONS

Auditor Morton reported on the Treasurer/Auditor Office renovations which should be completed by the end of the week.

RE: FUTURE MEETING

The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, March 6, 2023, at 8:00 a.m. in the Commissioners/Council Room of the Courthouse Annex.