

**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION
February 5, 2024**

The Grant County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on February 5, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. in the Grant County Complex Council Chambers located at 401 South Adams Street, Marion, IN.

In attendance were Commissioners Ron Stewart, Mark Bardsley, and Steve Wright. Also, present were Auditor Angela Jarvis, County Administrator/HR Director Justin Saathoff, and Financials Deputy Stacey Stevens.

Commissioner Stewart called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Commissioner Bardsley led in prayer. Commissioner Wright led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PREAPPROVED CLAIMS

January 22, 2024: General: \$ 79,214.41
Other: \$ 200,406.05
Highway: \$ 58,039.83
TOTAL: \$337,660.29

January 29, 2024: General: \$162,742.08
Other: \$184,209.99
Highway: \$ 1,269.41
TOTAL: \$348,221.48

PREAPPROVED SINGLE CLAIMS

David Payne \$1,933.75
Preapproval was given on January 29, 2024.

Commissioner Bardsley made a motion to ratify the preapproved claim dockets as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.

February 5, 2024: General: \$162,111.99
Other: \$ 82,448.56
Highway: \$ 1,663.17
TOTAL: \$ 246,223.72

Commissioner Bardsley made a motion to approve the claim docket as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.

PAYROLL

Payroll #2 carried a gross total of \$624,813.34. Formal preapproval was given on January 17, 2024, and paid out on January 19, 2024. Payroll #3 carried a gross total of \$623,196.77. Formal preapproval was given on January 31, 2024, and paid out on February 2, 2024. Commissioner Wright made a motion to formally ratify preapproved payroll #2 and #3 as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 3-0.

Minutes

Commissioner Wright made a motion to approve the minutes from the regular session on November 6, 2023, and November 20, 2023, as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 3-0.

Receipt of Monthly Reports

Commissioner Bardsley made a motion to receive the Clerk of Courts report month ending 12-31-2023 report and the Treasurer's report ending 12-31-2023. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.

Board Updates

EMA Director Bob Jackson stated that the monthly EMA briefing was held this morning. No health issues to report currently. State Road 9 will be closed on the 12th for 270 days, with an expected reopen date in November. The taskforce for the eclipse met. The Sheriff, EMS, and fire departments meet regularly to make sure things go well. A major increase in traffic is expected. All local schools will be on an e-learning day. Commissioner Wright questioned closing the county offices for that day. All state parks, hotel rooms and campsites are booked for this event.

Sheriff Garcia updated the Board of Commissioners. In January 2023, the Sheriff's Office had 19 jailer vacancies. The staff was at 52% strength. The Sheriff's Office currently has 4 jailer vacancies, with several in the hiring queue and process. Sheriff Garcia reported a new partnership with the Grant Regional Career Center. They are starting a program that will get an individual certified as a jailer through the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy. This program will allow the individual to work part time with the county while earning school credits. It will be a paid internship. The state will reimburse the county half. Sheriff Garcia also stated our Jean Team Drug Taskforce this weekend was able to take large amounts of meth, fentanyl, and several other hard drugs off the streets.

IT Report

None

Highway Report

Superintendent David White stated he had reviewed the stone and fuel bids from the last meeting and recommended Rock Creek and IMI for stone and Dawson Oil for fuel. Commissioner Bardsley motioned to approve as recommended. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.

Superintendent White updated the board on bridge #712 on Branson Street. Grant County did not get an invitation to apply for the federal aid program. BF&S (Butler, Fairman & Seufert) are seeking other types of grants at the federal level.

Superintendent White stated he applied for the Community Crossing Grant for Bridge #84 (over 38th street) and 2 paving projects (Wheeling Pike from the south side of the county to State Road 26 and on Frances Slocum Trail from 200 north to 500 north). The 3 projects together were almost 3 million dollars. Notification of acceptance/denial is normally sent out the first of April.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Social Media Fund - Del Garcia, Sheriff

Lieutenant Matt Ogden presented the Social Media Fund Ordinance designating funds to be used for advertisement and hiring purposes for the Sheriff's Office. Commissioner Wright moved to approve ordinance #2-2024 as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 3-0.

2. Boiler/Chiller Project Addendum - Ron Stewart, Commissioner

Commissioner Stewart presented the addendum. The approval of this addendum allows Ameresco to proceed with the project as outlined in the original agreement from November. It also details the specific scope of work. The total purposed project cost is \$1,282,336.00. Commissioner Bardsley moved to approve the first addendum to public private agreement and approval of project development proposal to Grant County BOT. Second by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.

NEW BUSINESS

1. EMS Director Appointment - Ron Stewart, Commissioner

Commissioner Stewart recommended Dawn Harness to be moved from interim Director to full time Director of EMS. Commissioner Wright made a motion to approve Dawn Harness as full time EMS Director. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 3-0.

2. Public Library Appointment, Upland - Ron Stewart, Commissioner

Commissioner Stewart presented a recommendation from Aubrey Wickham, the Upland Library Director, for Shawn Denny to his library board appointment. This will be Mr. Denny's second 4-year term. Commissioner Wright moved to approve as recommended. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 3-0.

3. Tax Certificate Sale Agreement and Resolution - Ron Stewart, Commissioner

Administrator Saathoff presented the addendum to the agreement with SRI. The tax certificate sale is set for April 5th. The sale will be on an online platform. All minimum bids are set at \$300.00. Required deposits are still being discussed. Commissioner Bardsley motioned to approve the addendum as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.

4. SBS Portals Proposal - Pam Harris, Clerk

Clerk Harris presented an ARPA request to digitize records and documents. A representative from SBS Portals shared the proposal with a cost of \$1,105,802.10 with an estimated 2-year timeframe for completion. The Commissioners stated they would take this under advisement.

5. Comprehensive Plan Resolution - Ryan Malott, Area Plan

Area Plan Director Malott (via WebEx) presented a resolution for the local match commitment of \$7,500.00 for the OCRA grant that will be used for the cost of the creation of the county's comprehensive plan. A public hearing will be held tonight at the APC meeting. The grant application is due February 14th and notification of the results will be sent out on March 15th. Commissioner Wright motioned to approve Resolution #2024-3. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 3-0.

6. ARPA Spending Plan Discussion - Ron Stewart, Commissioner

Commissioner Stewart presented Conner Sullivan, as the attorney that has been hired to help the county navigate through the legalities of the ARPA funds and spend. Councilmen Mark Leming, Mike Conner, and Mike Scott joined the Commissioners. Mr. Sullivan spoke on some of the guidelines and his suggestions. He warned of the December 31, 2024 deadline. Commissioner Stewart stated \$8,709,857.00 is still unappropriated and presented a list of possibilities.

UNAPPROPRIATED BALANCE 8,709,857.00

ITEM	ESTIMATED COST	UNAPPROPRIATED BALANCE	
AMBULANCE PURCHASE (4)	\$1,200,000.00	\$7,509,857.00	
ANNEX ELEVATORS (DUAL)	\$650,000.00	\$6,859,857.00	
SWAYZEE DEMO	\$35,000.00	\$6,824,857.00	
RECYCLE CENTER COVER	\$200,000.00	\$6,624,857.00	
SEAL/REPAIR ANNEX EXT.	\$900,000.00	\$5,724,857.00	
COURTHOUSE REPAIRS	\$100,000.00	\$5,624,857.00	INCLUDES EXT. CLEANING/SEAL AND CONCRETE REPAIR TO SIDEWALKS/PATIOS
JAIL DESIGN	\$4,500,000.00	\$1,124,857.00	
HIGHWAY EQUIPMENT	\$1,075,000.00	\$49,857.00	INCLUDES (2) 9 TIRE ROLLERS, OIL DISTRIBUTOR TRUCK, CHIPPER BOX, AND SMALL PAVER
SHERIFF EQUIPMENT	\$49,857.00	\$0.00	INCLUDES NON LETHAL WEAPONRY, OFF ROAD VEHICLE
ITEMS TO CONSIDER			
BROADBAND	\$2,500,000.00		POSSIBILITY OF NO COST IF IDZ
SALIN BANK EXTERIOR	\$1,000,000.00		INCLUDES NEW ROOF, TUCKPOINTING, HVAC
TOURISM/FESTIVALS	\$40,000.00		INCLUDES \$10,000 TO FAIRMOUNT, MATTHEWS, VAN BUREN, AND JONESBORO
D-HOME CLEANING	\$50,000.00		
HIGHWAY EQUIPMENT	\$2,385,000.00		*SEE HIGHWAY EQUIPMENT LIST
TOWNSHIP FIRE RADIOS	\$390,000.00		\$30,000 FOR EACH TOWNSHIP (13)
DIGITIZING CLERK'S RECORDS	\$1,105,802.10		
CARDINAL GREENWAY	\$1,000,000.00		
KING'S ACADEMY DEMO	\$500,000.00		
THOMPSON-RAY HOUSE	\$90,000.00		REPAIRS TO DRIVE, PORCH, GUTTERS
QUILTERS HALL OF FAME	\$25,000.00		FLOOR REPAIR

*ADMIN FEES FOR BONDING

Discussion ensued. Sheriff Garcia commented on the status of the jail and offered some suggestions. Dale Davis from Envoy (via WebEx) spoke about the jail design cost. The Councilmen and the Commissioners assigned Commissioner Wright as a point of contact for questions or concerns pertaining to the spending plan.

Commissioner Stewart proposed a 6-month solar moratorium. This would allow time for additional review of ordinances from Madison and Delaware counties. Commissioner Wright spoke about setbacks. Commissioner Wright made a motion to approve the 6-month moratorium on solar. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Myron Brankle of 5450 E 550 N Van Buren asked Commissioner Bardsley about taking solar money for his campaign. Commissioner Bardsley directly stated that he has not asked for or received direct funds from any solar companies. The Commissioner also commented that it is not appropriate to ask about election matters during a Commissioners’ regular session. Commissioner Stewart asked this be the last time a campaign is referred to during a Commissioners’ meeting. “This is a county meeting to discuss county business. It is not a question-and-answer session for political candidates. Mr. Brankle asked about a meeting with taxpayers. Commissioner Stewart stated they are working on a venue, time, and date.

Eric Wright of 81 E 1050 S, Fairmount thanked the Commissioners for the 6-month moratorium on solar farms and spoke about capping land usage for solar projects.

Kale Grindle expressed his gratitude for the moratorium. Mr. Grindle questioned Commissioner Wright on a recent meeting with a congresswoman and previous comments regarding land purchase. Mr. Grindle gave his opinion on paying for a new jail.

Jackie Sheets questioned the 4.5 million for the jail design.

Mike Spaulding thanked the Commissioners for the moratorium and asked about a platform for questions concerning solar. Mr. Spaulding also spoke about the ARPA money for fire township radios.

The next scheduled meeting will be February 20, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

Commissioner Stewart recessed the meeting at 12:32 p.m.

A complete video record can be found at www.grantcounty.net under the GC YouTube Page, Quick Links.