

**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
**REGULAR SESSION**  
**MONDAY APRIL 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2021**

The Grant County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. in the Grant County Complex Council Chambers at 401 South Adams Street, Marion, Indiana.

In attendance were Commissioner Mark Bardsley, Commissioner Ron Mowery, Commissioner Mike Burton, County Administrator/HR Director Justin Saathoff, and Auditor Jim McWhirt. Commissioner Bardsley called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Commissioner Mowery led the prayer and Commissioner Burton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Claims**

**4/12/2021** preapproval – general \$55,680.75, other \$89,223.42, and highway \$4,172.06 = \$149,076.23. Commissioner Burton made a motion to ratify the preapproved claims. Seconded with support by Commissioner Mowery; motion carried.

**4/19/2021** – general \$57,094.48, other \$35,854.05, and highway \$40,826.26 = \$133,774.79. Commissioner Mowery made a motion to approve the claims as presented. Seconded with support by Commissioner Burton; motion carried.

**Payroll**

Payroll #8 was preapproved on 4/13/21 and paid out on 4/16/21 in the gross amount of \$553,636.80. Commissioner Mowery made a motion to ratify payroll #8. Seconded with support by Commissioner Burton; motion carried.

**Minutes**

The minutes dated 12/7/2020, 12/21/2020, 1/4/2021, and 3/22/2021 have gone through the editorial process and are ready to be received. Commissioner Burton made a motion to receive the minutes as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Mowery; motion carried.

**Receipt of Monthly Report, Weights and Measure**

Reports dated 1/16/2021 to 2/15/2021 and also 2/16/2021 to 3/15/2021 were presented. Commissioner Burton made a motion to receive the reports as presented. Seconded with support by Commissioner Mowery; motion carried.

**Communications & Board Updates (Elected Officials, Boards, special Committees)**

Auditor McWhirt announced that the fall tax sale has been scheduled for Monday, September 13, 2021 with the help of SRI.

Health Director Dr. Moore gave an update on the current COVID pandemic. Per the governor at that beginning of the month, Indiana went from mandatory to strongly recommended mask wearing while allowing local counties to come up with their own recommendations. Government offices will continue to be under the mask mandate. Commissioner Bardsley, stated that “as a group, we reviewed and made the choice to follow the governor’s recommendation that the schools and universities continue mask mandates throughout the remainder of the school year. We did look at numbers to see if numbers were climbing at an unacceptable level and there has been an uptick at the state level. I believe that the mask wearing has benefited Grant County. This is a droplet spread virus. If you prevent the droplet spread, it will contain the spread of the virus. The trend of which the county is moving will decide the advisory

level.” Commissioner Bardsley asked Dr. Moore if the county was still under a state of emergency until April 30<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Moore agreed. Commissioner Bardsley stated, “The county is taking the opinion that we strongly recommend everyone continue to use the health mitigation strategy while in large groups, populations areas, and anywhere there is potential for spread, we continue to mask, hand wash, utilize physical distancing, and overall good hygiene of ourselves and work area.”

Commissioner Bardsley asked, “Are there any problems or concerns going from appointment only to opening to the public?” Dr. Moore stated, “I would not be opposed to regular foot traffic but if anyone has been in commercial buildings, you know that there are droplet barriers. We should keep the barriers up so that there is protection for our employees. We do ask if you are sick, please do not come into the building”. The state is mandating mask for state buildings not the whole community.

Commissioner Bardsley asked about concerns of breakthrough viruses after an individual has been fully vaccinated or has actually had the virus. Dr. Moore stated that “yes, there are concerns about that. At one point there was only one strain, but viruses start to change and mutate. The one from the UK is more infectious and is at least 50% more infectious and probably more deadly. It could possibly get to a point to where if it mutates enough, it can get around the vaccine. There is a level of antibodies to prevent someone to picking up that virus.” Getting the vaccine does three things: 1. Protects the individual 2. Moves towards a herd immunity so that we can’t have asymptomatic spread through the community 3. It reduces the likelihood of the virus developing. Getting the vaccine is the most effective way to containing the virus and it is highly recommended that everyone receive the vaccine. The recommendation of the Commissioners is to continue the mask mandate for employees when away from their workstations and that anyone coming into the building will be required to have a mask on. The building is to be opened to the public starting on 4/20/2021.

Mike Clayton, 911 Director, updated the Commissioner that Central Dispatch is officially fully staffed as of April 5<sup>th</sup>. It took 10 months to get fully staffed.

#### IT

None

#### **HIGHWAY - David White, Superintendent**

The recommendations for the liquid and hot asphalt bids for 2021 are Asphalt Materials for the liquid asphalt at \$1.46 gallon and Brooks Construction Company for the hot asphalt. Commissioner Mowery made a motion to accept the 2 bids. Seconded by Commissioner Burton; motion carried.

Mr. White requested a change speed limit ordinance from 1000 E (covered bridge in Matthews) to County Road 1000 S. He requested to change to a maximum of 45 mph. Currently, it is not posted. There is an individual who bought property there and is wanting to build a new house and due to site distance regulation, the traffic needs to be slowed down a bit. The owner did do his best to put the driveway as far away from the hill as possible. County Attorney Kyle Persinger wrote the ordinance for this. This will be ordinance 5-2021. Commissioner Mowery made a motion to adopt Ordinance 5-2021 as presented, Seconded by Commissioner Burton; motion carried.

An unofficial detour from I-69 and State Road 26 to State Road 13 was presented. Some of the work will begin yet this year. They are changing the bridge structure between County Road 450 E and 350 E on State road 26. Mr. White recommended using CR 350 E to 950 S and back up 450 E for an unofficial detour. Commissioner Mowery made a motion to approve the unofficial detour. Seconded by Commissioner Burton; motion carried. This does require one signature, which Commissioner Bardsley provided acting on behalf of the Board of Commissioners.

The Community Crossing Grant bids were completed last week and have been submitted to INDOT. The paperwork for Washington Street Bridge was reviewed and has been accepted. Brooks Construction bid for the 600 East project. Two separate routes were considered. One that went north of State Road of 18 and one that went south of State Road 18. The budget was higher than anticipated, so only the one that goes north of 18 will be worked on. The paperwork was all submitted for the 600 East project. INDOT did remark that both projects were required to be done. Mr. White explained to them that the letter stated that Grant County was awarded \$399,000.00 and did not specify which project(s) had to be completed. The state will respond at a later time concerning the matter. Bridge bids will be on May 5<sup>th</sup>. Mr. White requested the approved minutes of that May 5<sup>th</sup> meeting as they are required. Also required is an electronic signature from Commissioner Bardsley.

In working with Area Plan, two structures have been torn down in Jonesboro. Meetings are set with Area Plan regarding the next round of structures to be demolished.

The west side of the parking lot is complete out at the new EMS building (a container has to be moved in order to start on the east side).

County wide bridge inspections are coming soon. Mr. White is working with the state on needed requests prior to commencement of the actual inspections.

The right of way issue on 1000 east is still being worked on. The law states the county has the right to use the right of way, although we cannot enforce things to be moved off the right of way. This information is coming from Kyle Persinger, the county attorney. While researching the old ordinance books, it was noticed that an abundance of ordinances regarding right of ways were passed in the 50's. The Recorder's office is going to look and see if there is something in those ordinances that will help pursue getting those items removed, not only for that roadway but any roadway.

Lastly, a big structure culver pipe on 400 East north of 350 needs to be lowered. A drainage ditch was cleaned out and the pipe needs lowered due to a new house in the area.

### **Old Business**

None

### **New Business**

1. Request for Permission to Hold Blood Drive - Megan Borgmann, Versiti Blood Center of Indiana  
The county has held two blood drives with Versiti and they both did very well. Over 50 units of blood were collected. That is helping over 150 patients. Ms. Borgmann requested 2 more drives to be held on August 3<sup>rd</sup> and October 5<sup>th</sup> from 8 am to 1:30 pm. The blood mobile can be parked in the Star Financial parking lot. The Commissioners agreed by common consent to accept those dates for the blood drives.
2. Application for Development Standard Variance - Ryan Malott, Area Plan  
Matt and Kristina Thorne of 10390 E. 500 S., Upland, Indiana 46989 are the petitioners. Mr. Malott requested to allow an accessory building to be 12 foot from the west property line instead of the required 24 foot. A recommendation from the Commissioners is needed. This structure will serve as a garage. With the setup of the property, this is the only practical place to place the structure. Commissioner Mowery moved for a favorable recommendation. Seconded by Commissioner Burton; motion carried.

3. Ameresco Project Development Agreement - Mark Bardsley, Commissioner  
The county entered into an agreement with Ameresco in the meeting. There is a water infiltration issue in the courthouse that has also been worked on in the past. Ameresco will inspect the building and do all of the fact finding to see where the problem is at. If the county chooses not to use them for the repairs, the cost is \$20,000.00. This company has done quick site inspections for the county in the past and given the county recommendations on county buildings. If the county uses Ameresco as the contractor, the \$20,000.00 will be absorbed into the overall cost of the work that is completed. The contract gives an estimated start time of May. The agreement was reviewed and approved by the county attorney. Commissioner Mowery made a motion to approve the agreement and stated that he was confident in moving forward with Ameresco. Seconded by Commissioner Burton; motion carried.
4. County Annex Building Restriction Update - Mark Bardsley, Commissioner  
The building will open up to regular foot traffic starting 4/20/2021. The county will continue to mirror the state's lead, informing employees in the building that if they are away from their workstation, they must wear a mask. All public coming into the building are required to have a mask on at least until the end of the month.
5. Courthouse Parking Permission - Mark Bardsley, Commissioner  
Pappies requested permission to set up on Wednesdays on the courthouse square from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. They would start on 4/21/2021 if approved. Commissioner Burton made a motion to approve the request presented. Seconded by Commissioner Mowery; motion carried.
6. Corrections/Additions to Emergency Shutdown Pay - Mark Bardsley, Commissioner  
There were oversights for the shutdown pay that was issued. Administrator Saathoff stated that the sheriff is requesting for a handful of additional employees to be paid the hazard pay. There were 5 employees listed for this request. If approved, the list will be presented to the council to request an amendment to the salary ordinance. All individuals were required to work during the shutdown and were interacting with the public and jail inmates per Sheriff Reggie Nevels. The Sheriff stated that the individuals were all at risk. Commissioner Burton made a motion to approve the request presented. Seconded with support by Commissioner Mowery; motion carried. Commissioner Bardsley recognized the others who were not paid the .5 (additional half time) due to either oversight or human error: 2 employees from EMA, 1 from Central Dispatch, 1 from Veteran's Service office, 1 from the Prosecutor's office, 1 from Probation, and 1 from Area Plan. Commissioner Burton made a motion to approve the additional supplement pay during the shutdown. Seconded with support by Commissioner Mowery; motion carried. This approval will also be presented to the council for action.
7. Juvenile Detention Center Discussion - Mark Bardsley, Commissioner  
How to make financial sense of the Detention Center has been an ongoing discussion. It was recently discovered that the HVAC system now needs replaced. The estimated cost of the project is \$1 million. Commissioner Bardsley stated that "to replace the HVAC system and do it efficiently, we are moving towards a shutdown at some point in the very near future. In recent discussions, the date May 1, 2021 has come up as a target date. We need to move the population out so that the work can go on." The issue of depleted manpower in the jail may benefit from transferring current Detention workers during the shutdown. "After we looked at this emergency situation it just makes sense that we get our population of Grant County juveniles out of the cell block area and get them probably to Howard County where we can house them for an extended period of time as we need as we do the reconstruction. This is the recommendation from the Grant County Commissioners." Sheriff Nevels addressed the Board of Commissioners. He stated that he has concerns not only for the juveniles but also staff. "The state is coming in May to inspect the building and we are all aware of what the outcome is going

to be, so we need to at least try and address it. Once we correct the problems one by one, then we can open the building back up.” Commissioner Bardsley stated that “By taking action first, we are taking control of the situation instead of the state coming in stating that you have this deficiency that needs attention and fixed. This is the county being proactive and being a step ahead.” Sheriff Nevels stated that he has communicated with the Robert J. Kinsey Center in Howard County. The Sheriff’s department has an agreement in place to house Grant County juveniles during the HVAC renovations. The rates are subject to change, but Kinsey officials have estimated the charge for Grant County will be \$120.00 to \$137.00 per day per juvenile housed there. This does include Kinsey staff transporting juveniles to and from Grant County court. Commissioner Mowery asked what the current population of juveniles were at the detention center at this time. Sheriff Nevels responded stating that there were five at the current time. Commissioner Bardsley asked how many of the 5 belonged to Grant County. Sheriff Nevels responded stating that three of them were from this county. Commissioner Mowery stated that he is a proponent of keeping juveniles in the county if possible, but he does have concerns that the Detention Home officers have nothing to do with such a low average number of juveniles being detained. Sheriff Nevels said that officers are being cross-trained to work at the jail during the shutdown. Judge Mark Spitzer asked if the HVAC system problems extend to the area where the probation is located, noting that would require the whole building to shut down and employees placed elsewhere temporarily to keep them safe as well. Commissioner Bardsley stated that there are three HVAC systems in the building. One services the cell block area and the other two service the remainder of the building. “It’s not as if the whole building needs to be shut down. It is only the portion of the building over the cell blocks.” Judge Spitzer questioned if the other HVAC systems have been inspected and if there are any problems there. Commissioner Bardsley responded that as far as he is aware, the entire building was assessed but the only area in need of replacement was the cell block where juveniles are housed. Judge Spitzer then asked “What is the end game?” He also asked “Why not go ahead and make this a dual use facility when we have the opportunity? It doesn’t make a lot of sense to just fix the HVAC system and then come back and be in the same place we were before. This has been discussed for years.” Commissioner Bardsley stated that his opinion and goal right now is to fix the HVAC system issues, then remedy the manpower issues, and finally bring the juveniles back to the center. Throughout that process, additional discussions need to continue about the future use of the building. Shane Middlesworth, Grant County Council President spoke next. “Today’s decision is not if we want to house the juveniles here or out of county. The immediate problem is the safety of the juveniles. The council is in support of the recommendation to move them out of county. The council will do their part as far as the budget goes and using the Sheriff’s fund to put the line item in to offset the cost of what Kinsey will be charging. The deeper conversations would be in committee levels to discuss long term future of the D-Home. Today’s discussion is addressing the needs of the HVAC system and the other issues that are going on.” Auditor McWhirt spoke next. “In essence, the very act of investing in repair of the HVAC system shows an intention that the juveniles or adult female inmates will be housed in the building at some point.” Middlesworth stated that “no matter what happens to that building, the juveniles have to go out of county for that remaining duration and repair of the HVAC. At that point committees will decide later what the plan of action is. It will not be decided today.” Commissioner Bardsley argued that whether juveniles or females were housed there, if the county used the Detention Center for something else or if the building was sold, the county still needs to maintain the building. It is in the county’s best interest to fix the HVAC system now. Commissioner Mowery made a motion to move the juveniles out of Grant County with a short term intention being as of May 1, 2021 and that we make up a correctional task force for the

future of the Jail and Detention Center. Seconded with support by Commissioner Burton; motion carried.

8. Payment Request Review - Justin Saathoff, County Administrator/HR Director

Two invoices from pyramid were presented: 1) \$4,125.28 for public safety communications, contractual services 2) \$38,650.00 for public safety communications, tower shelters. There are two fund sources to reimburse from: one is \$4,125.28 and is a 911 fund and the other is \$38,650.00. \$4,000.00 of the \$38,650.00 amount will come out of the 911 fund. The remaining balance will be paid from the Cares Act Fund of the general fund disbursement. Commissioner Burton made a motion to approve the request for payments as presented. Seconded with support by Commissioner Mowery; motion carried.

**PUBLIC**

None

This regular session was brought to recess by Commissioner Bardsley at 11:32 a.m. The next scheduled meeting will be held on Monday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.