

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION
Monday, February 7, 2022

The Grant County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, February 7, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. in the Grant County Complex Council Chambers located at 401 South Adams Street, Marion, Indiana.

In attendance were Commissioner Mark Bardsley, County Administrator/HR Director Justin Saathoff, and Auditor Jim McWhirt. Commissioner Mike Burton attended via WebEx as allowed under the Governor's State of Emergency declaration. Commissioner Bardsley called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m. Commissioner Bardsley led the prayer and Administrator Justin Saathoff led the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Ron Mowery was not in attendance.

Claims

Single preapproved claims:

1/20/2022: Visa \$25.00

1/21/2022: CenterPoint Energy \$191.03 and Indiana Michigan Power \$2,012.18

1/26/2022: Card Membership Services \$565.28

1/28/2022 Family Service Society Inc. \$1,775.81

1/24/2022: General \$148,002.61, Other \$11,136.46, Highway \$69,663.05 = \$228,802.12

1/31/2022: General \$56,836.55, Other \$23,721.98, Highway \$3,700.84 = \$84,259.37

Commissioner Burton made a motion to ratify all preapprovals as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 2-0.

2/7/2022 claims: general \$175,190.48, other \$33,099.23, Highway \$2,097.40 = \$210,387.11

Commissioner Burton made a motion to ratify all preapprovals as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 2-0.

Payroll

Formal Approval of Payroll #2 - Preapproval was given on 1/18/22 in the amount of \$553,138.48.

Formal Approval of Payroll #3 - Preapproval was given on 2/1/22 in the amount of \$550,996.93.

Commissioner Burton made a motion to ratify all preapprovals as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 2-0.

Minutes

None

Receipt of the Monthly Report, Clerk of the Circuit Court - Month Ending 12/31/2021

Receipt of the Monthly Report, Weights and Measures - 12/16/2021-1/15/2022

Both reports were received by Commissioner Burton and Commissioner Bardsley by common consent.

Communications & Board Updates (Elected Officials, Boards, Special Committees)

None

IT – Marcus Elliott

Two bids were received for the data center refresh project. Mr. Elliott will take the bids under review and he will make a recommendation to the board at the 2/22/2021 Commissioners' meeting. The bids were DNS for \$334,586.00 and Presidio for \$455,308.14.

HIGHWAY – Tony Smith

1. Bridge #39 on 1000 East has been closed for approximately two years. Two bids were received for the project. Hoosier Pride Excavating was the lowest bid at \$607,768.25 and was the recommendation to the board. This is a Community Crossing matching grant that obligates the county to pay half. This will require a signature from the commissioners accepting that allows us to hire the contractor. Commissioner Burton made a motion to execute the contract as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 2-0.
2. The Highway department has been working hard on snow removal. They worked 10 hours on Thursday, 12 hours on Friday, and 6 hours on Sunday.
3. Mr. Smith stated that Superintendent David White did go before the council to request raises for the Highway department employees.
4. United Consulting will be presenting their bridge inspection reports at the next Commissioners' meeting.
5. Options were presented for clearing the snow from county building parking lots. Mr. Smith suggested to work on Saturday or during the week after 4 PM. Commissioner Bardsley preferred the evening hours.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Updated Medical Director Agreement - Kevin Hicks, 911
As requested from the last meeting, an expiration date was added to the contract. The Marion Health Emergency Department Medical Director added a clause at the end of it as well. The county attorney has reviewed and approved the document. Commissioner Bardsley and Commissioner Burton agreed by common consent to move to complete the agreement.
2. Courthouse Repair Proposal - Brad Driver, Ameresco
Mr. Driver stated that he presented the courthouse repair proposal at the last council meeting and was met with a lot of questions and concern. The size of pipe being used was questioned. Mr. Driver presented a drawing showing the different sized pipes that would be used. Not using fillable flow was also questioned. Ameresco met with their structural engineer and found that fillable flow will not achieve what is needed for the courthouse and the courthouse square. Mr. Driver suggested a meeting with a Commissioner Bardsley, President Middlesworth, and Councilman Poling. Ameresco expressed their desire to present at a joint meeting with the Council and Board of Commissioners in the near future.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Pretrial Grant Award and Update - Melissa Stephenson, Correctional Services
Ms. Stephenson updated the board stating that the Indiana Court Services has put a cap of 30% on fringe benefits, while preserving staff salaries. The cap creates a deficiency of \$52,865.00. Benefits typically come from the general fund. Ms. Stephenson did discuss the situation with Chief Deputy Auditor Angie Jarvis, Auditor McWhirt, and Administrator Saathoff so that everyone is aware.
2. Food Service Proposal - Reggie Nevels, Sheriff
The Sheriff's department has been working on outsourcing the jail's kitchen services for more than three years now. The decrease in employees has expedited the need. There are currently 5 employees in the kitchen. Two employees are retiring soon and another two have submitted their resignation letter. The jail feeds around 300 inmates three meals a day which equals out to 900 meals a day or 6,300 a week. Sheriff Nevels recommended the outsourcing to Tiger Correctional Food Services. The Sheriff's department already contracts with Tiger to manage the commissary in the jail. This will be a win for the Sheriff's department and for the County. Their estimated

savings is over \$72,000.00. The Commissioners are required to sign off on the proposal. It will then be presented to the council. Once approved, the funds will be transferred from the personnel fund to the contractual fund to redistribute the money being funneled into the jail kitchen. Commissioner Burton made a motion to approve the proposal pending attorney review. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 2-0.

3. UMR Administrative Service Agreement - Justin Saathoff, Administrator
The service agreement was presented to the board. This is something that the Commissioners have already agreed and consented to executing. The county is currently under this UMR agreement. Commissioner Bardsley officially signed the agreement.
4. Payment Request Packet #11 - Todd Durnil, Pyramid
Payment Request Packet #11 contained the following: MPX Solutions (trade package 35TM) application 8-RET in the amount of \$13,552.40 and Pyramid Architecture/Engineering (professional services) application 1910405-24 in the amount of \$1,258.29. Commissioner Burton made a motion to approve the request as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 2-0.

Commissioner Bardsley stated that the county has seen a decrease in positive COVID-19 cases. Dr. Moore believes that that information is due to the sequestering of citizens due to the bad weather. Grant County government will continue to have a mandate for county employees and those entering the building. The county will encourage that process until Grant County is out of the emergency red status.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. Randy Atkins, 8560 S Wheeling Pike, Fairmount – Mr. Atkins asked the board if they envisioned solar applications going before the BZA as a special exception. Commissioner Bardsley stated that they were meeting with the county attorney in the afternoon and would have more answers after that. Mr. Atkins asked the board how information in said meeting will be shared with the public. Commissioner Bardsley responded that the received information would be shared during public meetings. Mr. Atkins also shared his concern on how solar farms would affect property values and that he did not agree with short setbacks.
2. Eric Wright, 81 E 1050 S, Fairmount – Mr. Wright urged the board to route solar applications to the BZA and to approve the ordinance amendments.
3. Jackie Sheets, 9409 E 1200 S, Gaston – Ms. Sheets questioned the board on what decisions they will be making on the ordinance. Commissioner Bardsley explained that the ordinance is in the hands of Area Plan. They are the ones that propose the ordinance, but the Commissioners will be the individuals to ultimately altar and enact the ordinance.
4. Linda Morgan, 10975 E 500 S, Upland – Ms. Morgan questioned the board on tax abatements with solar projects. Commissioner Bardsley explained that all tax abatements are the decision of the county council.
5. Jason White, 8997 E 750 S, Upland – Mr. White expressed his concerns with solar farms from a farmer’s perspective. His concerns were regarding the crops and land usage in the county. He urged the board to take their time with the ordinance and to exam it on every level.
6. Dan Cates, 10151 S Strawtown Pike, Fairmount – Mr. Cates had several general questions regarding solar farms. He was directed to several websites for more information including the Solar Summit and other workshops.
7. Eric Wright – Mr. Wright again addressed the board. He stated that he wanted to warn the board about possible misinformation regarding the USDA’s Conservation Reserve Program that the solar companies have been known to spread.

8. Randy Atkins – Mr. Atkins addressed the board once more questioning the legislative and judicial branches with regard to the BZA, Area Plan, and the Commissioners. Commissioner Bardsley answered his questions and added just how important it was for the county to have something in place before wind and solar pass through the state government. If the state passes a statute or ordinance before the county does, the state will govern the county in these matters. It is suspected that the state's version will be much less restrictive than what is being proposed for Grant County.
9. Linda Morgan – Ms. Morgan again addressed the board. She urged them to keep the slave labor clause in the ordinance.
10. Danny Morgan, 9871 S 700 E, Fairmount – Mr. Morgan shared his concern of solar farm placement, chemical run off, and property values.

Commissioner Bardsley concluded the discussion by stating that each individual case and the ordinance must take into consideration the environment and the protection of all residents.

This regular session was brought to recess by Commissioner Bardsley at 11:34 a.m. The next scheduled meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 22, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.