

**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
**REGULAR SESSION**  
**July 18, 2022**

The Grant County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on July 18, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. in the Grant County Complex Council Chambers located at 401 South Adams Street, Marion, IN.

Commissioner Bardsley, via WebEx, asked Auditor McWhirt to conduct a roll call to ensure quorum. According to the ordinance, 2 of the 3 Commissioners must be physically present in the room to do business on WebEx. Commissioner Bardsley had visual and verbal contact. Commissioners Mike Burton and Steve Wright were physically present. Commissioner Mark Bardsley was present via WebEx. Also physically present were Auditor Jim McWhirt, County Administrator/HR Director Justin Saathoff, and Financials Deputy Stacey Stevens.

Commissioner Bardsley called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Commissioner Burton led in prayer. Commissioner Wright led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PREAPPROVED CLAIMS**

July 11, 2022:      General: \$95,980.87  
                      Other: \$23,344.45  
                      Highway: \$133,367.39  
                      **TOTAL: \$252,692.71**

**PAYROLL**

Payroll #14 carried a gross total of \$530,931.56. Formal preapproval was given on July 5, 2022 and paid out on July 8, 2022.

Commissioner Burton made a motion to formally ratify the preapproved claim dockets and payroll #14 as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.

**CLAIMS**

July 18, 2022:      General: \$112,646.78  
                      Other: \$ 25,123.37  
                      Highway: \$101,932.30  
                      **TOTAL: \$239,702.45**

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

**MINUTES**

None

**Board Updates**

EMA Director Bob Jackson gave a COVID update. There were 288 positive cases over the last two (2) weeks and 324 for the month of July thus far. Hospitalizations are starting to climb once again. Mr. Jackson reminded everyone that tests and vaccinations can still be done at the Health department.

Director Jackson also gave an update on the towers. He stated that he spoke with Pyramid and they are to be on site tomorrow to work on the Upland site. Director Jackson will visit that site today to see if there was any water infiltration from the heavy rains yesterday.

#### **IT Report**

None

#### **Highway Report**

1. Superintendent David White presented an unofficial detour from the state. This is for a project they are doing on State Road 15 north of Marion in 2023. The proposed route is county road 500 North, back to Francis Slocum Trail, then back to 350 North Herald Road, and back to State Road 15. This is just north of the river bridge on State Road 15. Commissioners Burton and Wright signed off on the detour. Commissioner Burton made a motion to accept the detour. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.
2. Superintendent White has the report of final inspection, recommendation, and acceptance for the Pennsylvania Street bridge #254. Superintendent White would like to submit this to the state to say the project was completed and everything was ok. Commissioner Wright made a motion for Superintendent White to send the paperwork to the state. Seconded by Commissioner Burton; motion carried 3-0.
3. Superintendent White gave an update on other projects they are doing. Work is currently being done on 100 east. Paving began today on county road 600 south, east of Upland. The bid openings for bridge #789 are set for August 1 at the Commissioners meeting.
4. Superintendent White would like to get the new building at the Highway department started. Superintendent White is wanting to get a recommendation from the previously presented quotes. Superintendent White expressed concern about putting solar panels on the roof of the new building. The building will be facing east and west. When panels are put on a building, they do not rotate with the sun. Commissioner Wright made a motion to accept the bid received pending Council's approval on the transfer of money. Seconded by Commissioner Burton; motion carried 3-0.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Request for Usage of Courthouse Square - Linda Wilk, Hands of Hope  
October is domestic violence awareness month. Ms. Wilk requested to hold an event on either Adams or Washington street side of the courthouse square in support of the cause. She would also like to look into lighting the courthouse purple and securing a banner for the lawn for the month. Commissioner Wright made a motion to accept Mrs. Wilk's request. Seconded by Commissioner Burton; motion carried 3-0.
2. Community Corrections Advisory Board Appointment - Chris Cunningham, Corrections  
An appointment from the advisory board resigned in June. Mr. Cunningham recommended to appoint Del Garcia to the lay person position. Mr. Garcia will assume the role of Sheriff on

January 1, but this will help to give him a better understanding of this board's functions. Mr. Cunningham will then return with another recommendation for the lay person vacancy. Commissioner Burton made a motion to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.

3. Employee Request for Cell Phone Allowance - Justin Saathoff, Administrator  
Administrator Saathoff requested for Commissioner Wright be put on the cell phone stipend for \$55.00 per month. Commissioner Burton made a motion to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 2-1 (abstention by Commissioner Wright).
4. Malcon Cost Allocation Plan Agreement- Jim McWhirt, Auditor  
Auditor McWhirt requested a renewal of the contract with Malcon to do the annual cost allocation plan for a 3-year period of 2022-2024. It would be paid for by the incentive fund, which is part of the Title IV-D program. The fee is 5,500.00 each year. This is an increase from 3 years ago, which was 5,000.00. Commissioner Burton made a motion to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Commissioner Bardsley stated that individuals will be allowed 2 minutes each to talk about anything solar for a total of 10 minutes.

Randy Atkins of 8560 S Wheeling Pike complimented Commissioners Wright's approach of publicly speaking his thoughts on solar and expressing the desire to meet with residents, businesses, institutions, and farmers to seek a better understanding of everyone's concerns and needs. Mr. Atkins also called for a moratorium on solar to allow for a complete analysis of this important matter

Andy Ellis of 8320 E Jefferson Place, Fairmount I have been looking at draft #4, I know the statement was made in the findings at the last meeting that draft #4 was 90% complete, it just needed some finishing touches on it for it to be resolved. Coming out of the solar summit, working with the solar companies and what would you like to see to enable them to come in and attack our communities. One thing it lacked was community involvement. I have been to several of the Area Plan Commissioner meetings and through that we came up with draft #4, draft #5, draft #6 and ultimately the APC approved draft #7 which is what was submitted. When we look at that we are trying our best to see what the concerns of the community are, the property holders, what kind of life do they have, as well as what it is going to do to our farm ground. Those are key concerns of ours. Also know there was no real intent on anybody's part to exclude things like academia, IWU and Taylor have been a little bit stumbled here. I think there is opportunities that we can manage that. WE have also talked about our manufacturers and what it means to them. General Motors has been mentioned and General Motors very much wants to be a community member. It's important we find common ground here. There is opportunity to do that, but I don't know how we can do that in a hurry. There are opportunities to look at our manufacturing base as well as IWU and Taylor, academia and have a good approach that we can all live with. They don't have to be mutually exclusive; we don't have to destroy our farm ground and people's lives to go green. I would ask that you take a step back and review what we are doing, because as we have always said it effects generations, it's not just us.

Kyle Grendell of 8132 Strawtown Pike, Jonesboro stated that he is a small farmer and that if solar is allowed, he will not be able to continue farming because he doesn't have the capital that some of the

larger farmers have. He asked the Commissioner to consider people like him instead of listening to the solar companies that promise everything possible.

Harold King of Swayzee expressed concerns that the setbacks are not far enough away from property lines and structures.

Ed Hartman approached the podium to speak and Commissioner Bardsley expressed that time had expired for public comment. Mr. Hartman expressed the need to speak to everyone. Commissioner Bardsley asked Commissioner Burton and Commissioner Wright if they would like to close public comment or allow Mr. Hartman to speak. Commissioner Wright stated that he would like to hear what Mr. Hartman has to say.

Ed Hartman of 2640 E 1050 S, Fairmount questioned the desire to have solar in the county. He pointed to the property tax amount as a possible reason and stated that taxing an economy does not make it get any better. Mr. Hartman also questioned the benefit of having solar in the county.

Commissioner Bardsley recessed the meeting at 10:58 a.m. The next scheduled meeting will be held on Monday, August 1, 2022, at 10:00 a.m.