

**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR SESSION  
August 1, 2022**

The Grant County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on August 1, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. in the Grant County Complex Council Chambers located at 401 South Adams Street, Marion, IN.

In attendance were Commissioners Mike Burton, Steven Wright, and Mark Bardsley. Also present were Auditor Jim McWhirt, County Administrator/HR Director Justin Saathoff, and Financials Deputy Stacey Stevens.

Commissioner Bardsley called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. Commissioner Wright led in prayer. Commissioner Burton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PREAPPROVED CLAIMS**

July 25, 2022:      General: \$139,508.11  
                         Other:    \$95,926.59  
                         Highway: \$56,673.57  
                         **TOTAL: \$292,108.27**

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

**CLAIMS**

August 1, 2022:    General: \$139,345.21  
                         Other:    \$221,996.30  
                         Highway: \$151,701.68  
                         **TOTAL: \$513,043.19**

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

**PAYROLL**

Payroll #15 carried a gross total of \$519,697.11. Formal preapproval was given on July 19, 2022 and paid out on July 22, 2022. Commissioner Wright made a motion to formally ratify preapproved payroll #15 as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Burton; motion carried 3-0.

**MINUTES**

None

**Board Updates**

Commissioner Wright met last month with the ECISWD and stated there was not a quorum, so there was no discussion.

Commissioner Wright also attended the retreat for the Economic Growth Council. Commissioner Wright expressed the four (4) hour meeting was very informative. "The focus today is not necessarily on jobs, it's about creating a quality of life so that people will want to move here." The Economic Growth Council are more in line with how to attract people, not necessarily jobs.

### **Receipt of Monthly Reports**

Commissioner Bardsley expressed they would receive in the monthly report from the Clerk of Courts, month ending 6-30-2022, as presented. Commissioner Burton made a motion to receive. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.

### **IT Report**

1. From a follow up discussion regarding two (2) factor authentication, It Director Marcus Elliott presented 3 quotes. Cisco Duo came in at \$14,080.00 per year. Microsoft quoted \$30,043.00 per year. Okta came in the middle at \$19,000.00. It is locked in for three years and includes training. Director Elliott would like to get this installed this year. An additional appropriation will be requested in the near future. Commissioner Wright made a motion to approve pending Council approval of an additional appropriation. Seconded by Commissioner Burton; motion carried 3-0.
2. Director Elliott presented a quote for Verkada cameras for the exterior of the courthouse and down the main alley in front of the courthouse. The cost for the cameras, maintenance, and support from CWG is \$9,988.42. Commissioner Bardsley stated that he did not want anything attached to the actual building structure as it is a historic building. The board asked Marcus to set up a meeting to explore the request further.

### **Highway Report**

1. Superintendent David White opened the bids for Bridge #789 on 10<sup>th</sup> street in Marion. Superintendent White stated that this is a complete bridge replacement. He is working with the walkway from Van Buren to Marion to make a safe sidewalk for the trail project they are trying to create in downtown Marion. This will be a bit more than other bridges because of the sidewalk. The first bid was from Milestone Contractors from Fort Wayne in the amount of \$677,956.28. The second bid is from R.L. McCoy of Columbia City in the amount of \$684,663.50. Superintendent White will take this information back to the designer, Beam, Longest, & Neff, to make sure they meet all the criteria and have the right numbers. The recommendation will be presented at the next meeting. Superintendent White reminded the county was awarded \$350,000.00 through the Community Crossings grant for this project.
2. County road 600 south has been paved from Upland city limits to the east county line along with Cellers addition and county road 950 east from State Road 26 into Matthews.
3. Work on the bridge deck on 1000 east will be starting this week.
4. The Highway department has been working with Area Plan on removing a building in Van Buren. This should be done by tomorrow at the latest just in time for the Popcorn festival.
5. The sign for Mr. Fowler will be installed soon on the Pennsylvania street bridge.
6. The department is still cleaning storm damage from the weekend storms. The public is permitted to bring downed tree branches into the recycle center until the end of August.

7. The construction on the new storage building will start in September.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

None

### **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Ambulance Bid Opening - Duaine Ashcraft, EMS  
Only one bid was received. The bid was from Penn Care for a total of \$1,042,764.00 with the rebate to be determined. This amount is for four (4) ambulances. The expectation is to have those vehicles on site in approx. 16 months. Commissioner Bardsley stated that the funds for such a purchase do not exist at this time. Director Ashcraft stated that he would apply to the state's bond bank. They will collect bids from eleven (11) financial institutions. Auditor McWhirt expressed that he thought it is a good choice to go through them. Auditor McWhirt explained the process. Commissioner Burton made a motion to authorize Director Ashcraft to move forward with the process. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.
2. Internet Request - Robert Embree, GCSWCD  
Mr. Embree requested an internet hot spot for Grant County Soil and Water Conservation District. The cost is estimated to be \$50 or less a month. Commissioner Wright made a motion approving the GCSWD use of one of the counties hot spots. Seconded by Commissioner Burton; motion carried 3-0.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Herald King of 707 S Sims Street, Swayzee stated that he keeps hearing lately that Grant County does not welcome businesses. Mr. King argued against this sentiment and questions how solar will help the quality of life in the county.

Commissioner Bardsley expressed that the board will not be taking any action until they hear back from the APC. They have a meeting tonight as well as the 15<sup>th</sup>. The board will receive information, but will not be answering any questions regarding the solar ordinance details or development.

Julie Hartman of 2640 E 1050 S, Fairmount, shared her concerns with the board. One concern is the comprehensive plan, which supports preserving farmland and not encroaching upon residents creating a devalue of property. The second concern is to take into consideration the current conditions and character of the uses we have in the district and the importance of this in farming. The third concern is the most desirable use for which the land district is adapted, which is agricultural. Another concern is the conservation of property values throughout the jurisdiction. The fifth concern is responsible development and growth. "I have seen a lot of things that have been irresponsible from these solar companies. Even solar itself, all green energy, it is the least reliable and it takes up our farmland."

Kenny Cates of Swayzee asked for clarification of the ordinance process. The Commissioners clarified the back and forth process to the best of their knowledge.

The next Commissioners meeting is August 15, 2022, at 10:00 a.m.

Commissioner Bardsley recessed the meeting at 11:15 a.m.