

**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION
September 19, 2022**

The Grant County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on September 19, 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, Steve 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 10:02 a.m. Commissioner Wright led in prayer. Commissioner Burton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PREAPPROVED CLAIMS

September 12, 2022: General: \$64,504.66
Other: \$47,401.70
Highway: \$ 21.57
TOTAL: \$111,927.93

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

CLAIMS

September 19, 2022: General: \$143,456.05
Other: \$ 67,420.26
Highway: \$545,785.66
TOTAL: \$756,661.97

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

PAYROLL

Payroll #19 carried a gross total of \$518,548.30. Formal preapproval was given on September 13, 2022 and paid out on September 16, 2022.

Commissioner Burton made a motion to formally ratify preapproved payroll #19 as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.

MINUTES

Commissioner Burton made a motion to approve the minutes from the regular session on March 7, 2022. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 2-1 (Commissioner Wright abstained).

Board Updates

Auditor McWhirt stated that the State Board of Accounts were almost done with their 2021 audit. He also stated that the tax sale took place last Wednesday (September 14).

EMA Director Bob Jackson stated that COVID numbers are improving. He also stated that the radio testing last week went well and will continue through this week. Storm damage data is still being collected from the storm in July with the hope of receiving federal aid money.

IT Report

IT Director Marcus Elliott presented AT&T's backup internet solution. This would add another circuit for the internet and phone systems for the county. The current monthly price for existing usage is \$1,574.00. The proposed redundancy line would add an additional \$467.32 monthly. There have been some discussions with MetroNet, but they do not have fiber ran where it could be utilized by the county. Commissioner Bardsley asked Director Elliott to gather more information on MetroNet and to bring it back to the next meeting.

Highway Report

Highway Superintendent David White requested permission to apply for a recycle center grant through the state. The recycle center building is 22 years old and is needing replaced. The grant allows up to \$100,000. Current pricing to replace the building is approximately \$142,000. Superintendent White stated that he will also take this to the Grant County Council. After some discussion Commissioner Wright made a motion to approve Commissioner Bardsley to sign the financial commitment letter. Seconded by Commissioner Burton; motion carried 3-0.

Superintendent White reported that the bridge deck has been poured on county road 1000 East and the bridge should open in the middle of October. Construction on the new storage building at the Highway Department will be started in the next couple of weeks. The groundwork has already been completed. Commissioner Bardsley asked Superintendent White about an issue at 400 West and the Cardinal Greenway. Superintendent White stated he would call the concerned citizen and explain the situation.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Pretrial Grant Award Update - Melissa Stephenson, Court Services

Court Services Director Melissa Stephenson gave a pre-trial grant update. Earlier in the year there was a possibility of the funding having some cuts. They capped the benefits of the pre-trial services staff at 30%. This grant is for 3 full time employees. The total grant award amount is \$215,518.00. This covers salaries for 3 full time probation officers, a stipend for the coordinator, and \$15,000.00 for the Public Defender. The deficit for the 70% amount is \$59,074.00.

Director Stephenson also gave an update on the Opioid Settlement. These funds are a result of a multi-state litigation. These funds will be allocated into restricted funds. The first disbursement is expected in early fall. Director Stephenson suggested to set up funds immediately since no one knows exactly when it will come. There will be an annual report required to disclose how the money was spent. This settlement funds will be deposited over the next 18 years, with the first disbursement being the largest.

2. Solar Ordinance Proposal - Mark Bardsley, Commissioner

Commissioner Bardsley stated that the board needs to make a decision on the solar ordinance proposals. The Commissioners need to either vote for draft #4 or not vote at all, which will enact draft #7 by default. For historical purposes, Commissioner Bardsley read through the timeline of solar events. Commissioner Burton stated that he supports draft #7 or a moratorium allowing for more time before an official decision is made. Commissioner Wright spoke about the research he has done and the issues that have been raised. Commissioner Wright stated that he supports draft

#4. He stated that, "We have an ordinance in draft #4 that will protect homeowners and farmers with the opportunity to work with solar companies to bring revenue into our community. This ordinance is one of the more restrictive ordinances in the state. Each project, if they still choose to come, will bring in installation jobs for many within our area. They will be paying a premium rental to landowners for the next 30 years or more. I am voting today for the future of Grant County, and all the towns and cities I represent." Commissioner Wright made a motion to adopt draft #4 as ordinance #7-2022. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 2-1. Commissioner Bardsley addressed the suggestion of a moratorium as recommended by the Drainage Board. Commissioner Wright stated that he did not think that a one-year moratorium will change anything. Commissioner Wright made a motion for no moratorium. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 2-1.

NEW BUSINESS

1. PDC discussion - Andrew Cullen, Public Defender Commission
Andrew Cullen recommended reappointing Joe Lewis to the Public Defender board for another 3-year term. The other 2 members of the board are Rodney McKellar, appointed by the Commissioners, and Mike Cline, appointed by the Judges. The Commissioners can reappoint Rodney McKellar or choose another candidate. The board took the recommendation under advisement.
2. Presentation of Request for Proposal - Jonathan White, Envoy
Mr. White presented the jail feasibility study RFP to the board. Once approved, it will be advertised and distributed to key companies in the state. Once the submissions are received by Envoy, they will be presented to a steering committee for a recommendation. That recommendation will then go to the Commissioners. The Commissioners asked Envoy to continue forward with the process.
3. Resolution Supporting Operation Green Light for Veterans - Brad Hodson, Veteran Affairs
Mr. Hodson introduced Operation Green Light. Operation Green Light brings businesses and individuals together to show support for veterans by displaying a green light in their windows from October 1st through Veterans Day. Commissioner Wright made a motion to pass resolution #3-2022 Operation Green Light. Seconded by Commissioner Burton; motion carried 3-0.
4. Proposal of Fidler Agreements - Kathy Foy, Recorder
Recorder Foy presented (3) agreements from Fidler, the software company used by her office. The first agreement is for digitizing the "meets and bounds" books at a cost of \$14,799.30. The next agreement is for subdivision clean up at a cost of \$2,000.00. The last agreement is for data input to assist in searches at a cost of \$5,000.00. These have all been approved by Kyle. Commissioner Wright made a motion to approve the three (3) agreements. Seconded by Commissioner Burton; motion carried 3-0.
5. Courthouse Discovery Project - Mark Bardsley, Commissioner
Commissioner Bardsley stated that the Commissioners' office has been working with multiple individuals regarding different projects to help alleviate the water infiltration at the courthouse. Dave's Excavating proposed to furnish labor, equipment, and material to perform individual inspections of the downspouts and drains. The quote is for \$10,000.00. Commissioner Wright made a motion to accept the proposal. Seconded by Commissioner Burton; motion carried 3-0.

A quote from Atlas Building Services for \$39,773.00 was presented. This would be to install new metal aluminum flashing along the base of the stone foundation. Commissioner Burton made a motion to approve the quote. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.

A quote from Halstead Architects for engineering work was presented. The quote is not to exceed \$15,000.00. Commissioner Burton made a motion to approve the quote. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.

A quote from Patriot Engineering and Environmental for \$24,200 was presented. This would be to sink four (4) dry wells on the courthouse square so the exact water table level can be known. Commissioner Burton made a motion to approve as recommended. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.

6. Annex Carpeting Proposal - Justin Saathoff, Administrator
Administrator Saathoff presented three bids for carpet on the 3rd floor of the county annex building and recommended the bid from Staggs Carpeting in the amount of \$19,433.81. Commissioner Wright made a motion to accept the bid. Seconded by Commissioner Burton; motion carried 3-0.
7. Request for Cell Phone Allowance – Justin Saathoff, Administrator
Administrator Saathoff requested a phone stipend for two (2) new EMS supervisors. Commissioner Burton made a motion to approve the request. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.
8. Proposal of 2023 Blood Drive Dates - Megan Borgmann, Versiti
Ms. Borgmann reported that Grant County collected 49 units of blood so far in 2022. That is 147 patients that were impacted. Ms. Borgmann proposed the following date to host a blood drive in 2023: January 12, March 29, June 7, August 17, and November 15. Commissioner Burton made a motion to approve the proposed dates for the mobile blood drives in 2023. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Linda Morgan of Upland asked the Commissioners to reconsider the Narcan vending machine proposal from last year. Commissioner Bardsley stated that he would review this with the new Sheriff and see if this is something he would be interested in.

SOLAR

Randy Atkins of 8560 S Wheeling Pike questioned the Commissioners on their role vs. APC's role in the solar ordinance. Mr. Atkins also discussed drainage pertaining to the solar farms and ethanol plants.

Myron Brankle thanked Commissioner Burton for his years of service and for his vote today. Mr. Brankle expressed his opinion on the moratorium and of Commissioners Bardsley and Wright.

Andy Ellis of Fairmount expressed his disappointment with the solar vote. He stated that draft #7 was the peoples' ordinance.

The next Commissioners' meeting is October 3, 2022, at 10:00 a.m.

Commissioner Bardsley recessed the meeting at 11:53 a.m.