

**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION
January 16, 2024**

The Grant County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on January 16, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. in the Grant County Complex Council Chambers located at 401 South Adams Street, Marion, IN.

In attendance were Commissioners Ron Stewart, Mark Bardsley, and Steve Wright. Also, present were Auditor Angela Jarvis, County Administrator/HR Director Justin Saathoff, and Financials Deputy Stacey Stevens.

Commissioner Stewart called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Pastor Chris Williams of Lakeview Wesleyan Church led in prayer. Commissioner Wright led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PREAPPROVED CLAIMS

January 8, 2024: General: \$398,635.52
Other: \$27,892.01
Highway: \$3,533.17
TOTAL: \$430,060.70

January 16, 2024: General: \$249,424.16
Other: \$237,892.35
Highway: \$3,005.00
TOTAL: \$490,321.51

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

PAYROLL

Payroll #1 carried a gross total of \$585,176.97. Formal preapproval was given on January 3, 2024, and paid out on January 5, 2024. Commissioner Bardsley made a motion to formally ratify preapproved payroll #1 as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.

Minutes

Commissioner Bardsley made a motion to approve the minutes from the regular Session on October 16, 2023, as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.

Board Updates

None

IT Report

None

Highway Report

Superintendent David White opened the fuel and stone bids for 2024. Rock Creek Stone, out of Bluffton, was the first bid; #53 stone at \$745.00 per ton and #73 stone at \$795.00 per ton. IMI was the second bid; #53 stone and #73 stone at \$425.00 per ton. The bids were taken for review. A recommendation will be presented at the next meeting. There were not any fuel bids to present.

Superintendent White presented the 2023 annual report for the Recycle Center. He stated that the Recycle Center had 16,229 customers throughout the year. The report gives a breakdown of all the material taken in. The report will be submitted to the Solid Waste District, and they send it to the state.

Superintendent White requested to purchase a parcel for right of way purposes for County Road Bridge #84 on 38th street. The cost is \$525.00. Commissioner Bardsley made a motion to approve the purchase for \$525.00 as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.

Superintendent White presented a Community Crossing Grant letter for Bridge #84. Commissioner Wright made a motion to approve the letter. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 3-0.

Superintendent White presented a contract agreement with USI for work on Bridge #791 on 14th street for \$237,970.00. The project has a lot of moving parts including gas, fiber optics, water, sewage, phone lines, etc. There will be a lot of people involved. Commissioner Wright made a motion to give authority to move forward with the project in the amount of \$237,970.00 with the understanding of applying for Community Crossing funds in 2025. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 3-0.

Superintendent White stated that the Highway Department was out this weekend dealing with fallen trees and snow.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Presentation of Capital Asset Ordinance Amendment - Angie Jarvis, Auditor

Administrator Saathoff explained the ordinance basically outlines responsibilities of department heads, particularly the Auditor's office and Commissioners, when capital assets are involved. The Auditor has worked closely with the county attorney to draft this policy. One last suggestion was to raise the considered capital asset minimum from \$1,000.00 to \$5,000.00. Commissioner Bardsley made a motion approve the amendment with the suggested raised minimum. Seconded by Commissioner Wright; motion carried 3-0.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Proposal of New Fund - Del Garcia, Sheriff

Sheriff Garcia requested to create a new fund for their Facebook page. Lieutenant Matt Ogden explained Facebook has recently been used for recruitment and informational purposes for the Sheriff's Office. The heavy traffic has triggered Meta to issue payments to Grant County through their performance bonus program. This gives creators a chance to earn money on their Facebook posts for views, reactions, likes, and shares. Last year, 4.5 million accounts were reached globally. This includes 266,000 likes, 98,000 minutes of video views, and gains of over 4,000 followers. The Sheriff's Office requested these payments to be set aside in a special fund to be used for advertising, continued growth, and engagement with the community. The State Board of Accounts advised for the Commissioners to create a home rule ordinance, outlining allowable uses of the fund. Commissioner Bardsley suggested forwarding the request to the county attorney so the ordinance could be drafted.

2. Presentation of Early Diversion Grant - Melissa Stephenson, Court Services

Court Services Director Melissa Stephenson stated alongside efforts from Radiant Health, there have been two grant awards that provide a plan to implement a mental health court in Grant County. Radiant Health was awarded a 5-year federal grant through Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSA). A portion of this project includes funding for salary and benefits for a certified Probation Officer

to serve as a mental health court coordinator. Grant County Court Services applied for and received a problem-solving court grant for 2024 through the Indiana Office of Court Services to fund the remaining portion of salary and benefits for the rate of pay. This grant also provides funding for a small stipend for a Probation Office Case Manager to compensate for financial grant management and responsibilities. Operational expenses were provided by both grant awards. Director Stephenson presented an agreement between Radiant Health and Court Services, which was in consultation with the county attorney. If approved, it will go before the council to request a salary ordinance amendment. Greg Maynard from Radiant Health answered a few questions. Discussion ensued concerning what benefits come from this position. Commissioner Wright made a motion to approve the MOU. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 3-0.

3. Economic Development Commission Appointment - Ron Stewart, Commissioner
Commissioner Wright nominated Adrienne Hammond to replace Eric Waltz as the Commissioners' appointment to the Grant County Economic Development Commission. Commissioner Wright made a motion to appoint Adrienne Hammond to the EDC. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 3-0.

4. Area Plan Technical Advisory Committee Appointment - Ryan Malott, Area Plan
Area Plan Director Ryan Malott (via WebEx) explained the appointment. This committee has been in the ordinance for 20 plus years and have never met. There are several issues that this committee could tackle such as subdivision plat approval, subdivision plat amendments, confined feeding, animal feeding operations, and any commercial wind or solar development. Director Malott requested for one Commissioner to serve on the committee. Commissioner Wright made a motion to appoint Commissioner Stewart to the Area Plan Technical Advisory Committee. Seconded by Commissioner Bardsley; motion carried 3-0.

EMA Director Bob Jackson spoke about the weekend weather. Grant County is still listed under an advisory yellow on the map. This weekend there were a few trees down and a few minor power outages. The winter weather advisory will stay on for a little longer.

Administrator Saathoff stated presented the annual 100R report alongside the financial report. This is a yearly report on the county salaries. it must be advertised and posted. The reports were received by common consent of the Board of Commissioners.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Randy Atkins of 8560 S. Wheeling Pike, Fairmount, commented on the social media usage of the Sheriff's Office.

Jackie Sheets, southern Grant County, asked the Commissioners if they will be putting a moratorium on the solar ordinance? Commissioner Stewart stated he would discuss this with his colleagues.

Kale Grindle of Jonesboro read Jeremiah 2:7 to Commissioner Bardsley. Mr. Grindle spoke to Commissioner Wright about revenue comments made at the December 18th Commissioners' meeting. Commissioner Wright expressed he had met with several concerned citizens at Cracker Barrel for 3 hours last night and that he has committed to these citizens to go look at what they are up against. Mr. Grindle expressed to Commissioner Stewart to call for a moratorium and to place it on the next agenda.

Mike Spaulding of 7895 W 00 S, Swayzee, spoke about the solar ordinance and expressed his neighbors are not happy about the solar ordinance and do not support draft #4.

Harold King of 707 S Sims, Swayzee, spoke about solar and draft #4, and what other surrounding counties have as setbacks.

Myron Brankle of 5450 E 550 N, Van Buren, asked Commissioner Bardsley about taking funding from the solar companies and if the Commissioners were going to call a public meeting for discussion.

Ted Otis of Grant County asked Commissioner Wright about his statements concerning citizens not buying more farm ground. Commissioner Wright questioned why a multigenerational farm wouldn't try to acquire more land as opposed to being dependent on other landowners. Jackie sheets and Randy Atkins lended their comments to the topic.

Commissioner Wright read aloud facts and reporting from a state agriculture book including acreage, cash crop receipts, net income, and government subsidiaries.

Commissioner Stewart stated there is a Board of Finance meeting right after this regular session.

The next scheduled meeting will be February 5, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

Commissioner Stewart recessed the meeting at 11:41 a.m.

A complete video record can be found at www.grantcounty.net under the GC YouTube Page, Quick Links.