

BLACKFORD COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S

MEETING April 3, 2023

The Blackford County Commissioners met in regular session at 8:34 a.m. on April 3, 2023, in the Commissioner's room on the first floor of the Blackford County Courthouse, Hartford City IN. The meeting was available on Zoom as well.

President John Lancaster called the meeting to order, and Auditor Sharon Hartley called roll with Commissioners John Lancaster, John Oxley and Laura Coons present. Also, present were Anne Owen, Sam Swenson, John Pluimer, Jon Creek, Tyler Hunt, Ron Duleston, Dan Eckstein, Bill Smith, Eric Ratts, Shelby Evans, Mary Beal, Bill Weisman, Jim Hefflin, Greg Martz, Andy Coffee, Dana Whatley, Bill Aspy, Kim Pitts, Kevin Basey, Heidi Hobbs, Kelli Schriver, Meagan Westfall, Dan Borgenheimer, Judge Nick Barry and Aubrey Crist. Attending on Zoom were Lisa Simmons, Rhonda Williams, Steven Holman, Daria Turner, Paul Schriver, Jon Jinks, Franny Mays, Dale Carr, and Amy Lathem.

Minutes of March 20, 2023, Regular Meeting were approved as Presented on a motion by John Oxley and 2nd by Laura Coons. The vote was 3/0.

Minutes of March 29, 2023, Special Meeting were approved as Presented on a motion by Laura Coons and 2nd by John Oxley. The vote was 3/0.

DLZ, Bowman Construction and GM Development gave a presentation on repairs needed to the courthouse. Repairs needed include: new courthouse roof (\$2,100,000), all windows replaced (\$1,625,000), Masonry (\$525,000), General Conditions (\$400,000), Clock Tower repairs (\$350,000), an elevator for the Annex (\$350,000), contingency (\$500,000) all totaling \$5,850,000. A plan to move/renovate the Superior Court spaces (\$750,000) brings the total of all projects to \$6,600,000. The presentation will be made to the Council on Wednesday night.

Local resident **Andy Coffee** discussed a bridge on his property that leads to an old cemetery. The county put up barricades for safety reasons and Mr. Coffee can't maintain the portion of his property on the other side of the bridge. Commissioners requested John Pluimer and Mr. Coffee meet to find a solution to the issue.

Rich Hill with C.O.M.E. – Christian Outdoor Ministries Experience – presented a certificate of insurance. The group has used the grounds at the former Transfer Station to teach kids 11 – 17 years old how to fish and hunt. So far, they have had 490 kids use the program. **Laura Coons moved to grant permission for the group to use the property in 2023.** John Oxley 2nd and the vote was 3/0. The DNR and Conservation officers want to erect two duck boxes on the property. **John Oxley moved to allow the duck boxes and Laura Coons 2nd.** The vote was 3/0.

Bereavement Leave – John Oxley moved to continue with the current policy. Laura Coons 2nd and the vote was 3/0.

Animal Shelter contract. The commissioners are waiting for changes from Pam Bonham.

Recorder Kelli Schriver presented a Bulk User Contract. **Laura Coons moved to continue with DoxPop and John Oxley 2nd.** The vote was 3/0. *Ordinances will be addressed at the next meeting.

EMA Director Bill Smith – (1) roads are open after the storm over the weekend. Twenty-one utility poles were across SR 18 east of SR 3. Smith thanked the Highway Department, Sheriff's Department and Montpelier for their assistance. Hartford City Mayor, Dan Eckstein sent workers to Sweetser to help after a tornado there. (2) the tornado sirens will be tested in the county soon. (3) a fire drill and tornado drill will be conducted in the courthouse next month.

Deputy Prosecutor Kevin Basey – requested permission for Child Support Deputy Heidi Hobbs and himself to attend a Child Support Conference in Savannah, GA May 22 – 26. IV-D funds will pay the \$4,000 - \$5,000 cost. **Laura Coons moved to allow the request and John Oxley 2nd.** The vote was 3/0.

Highway Superintendent John Pluimer (1) reported on the small structure on CR 800 E between CR 100 N and CR 200 N. (2) Pluimer asked that his department go to four, ten hour days, Monday through Thursday. On weeks with a Monday holiday, the department will work four, eight hour days. PTO will be used at the rate of ten hours a day for the ten hour a day weeks. This schedule will run through November. **John Oxley moved to approve the 10 hour a day schedule as proposed and Laura Coons 2nd.** The vote was 3/0.

Health Department Rhonda Williams and Health Officer Dr. Lori Skidmore will meet with Laura Coons so to discuss financial changes per the state.

Facilities Manager Meagan Westfall (1) reported the old Purdue Extension office has been cleaned after the move to a new office. (2) The new Purdue Extension office is near completion. Open House will be held on April 19th from 8:30 am- 10 am. (3) Reconstruction of the 2nd floor bathroom in the Annex begins soon. (4) The courthouse clock is running now. The east clock face is not working but is scheduled for service soon. (5) A quote for a new door on the cooling tower room and moving the north store room door from the west side of the room to the east side and installing a new door was received from J.P. Doorways. The quote is \$1,650. **Laura Coons moved to approve the quote and John Oxley 2nd. The vote was 3/0.** (6) A memorial marker on the east side of the courthouse references a tree but there is no tree. Westfall was advised to contact the Licking Township Trustee. (7) Two bushes on the east side of the courthouse are blocking the cleanout for the drains. They need removed so the cleanout can be capped. **Laura Coons made a motion to remove the bushes and cap the cleanout. John Oxley 2nd and the vote was 3/0.** (7) Top Notch Lawn Care, the courthouse lawn care company, proposed getting the lawn back in good condition at a cost of \$2,500. The Commissioner's advised waiting until after the proposed construction which will further damage the lawn. (8) The courthouse elevator has passed inspection after shutting down from a power outage.

Sheriff Jim Heflin (1) gave the inmate count as 56. (2) the weekend storm caused the well system to quit. Montpelier Fire Department brought water to the jail. The storm also blew the shed over. It will be replaced soon. (3) Heflin will have a meeting with all emergency response units to work on communications. (4) the lagoon and irrigation system need repaired.

P&Z Director Anne Owen (1) The April BZA meeting will be held at Montpelier City Hall. A special meeting to visit the property under discussion will be held. (2) Shroyer will be done with the demo and cleanup of 110 E Washington Street this week. Someone will need to cover the openings left in the adjacent building. The structural engineer will inspect the site this week.

Regular Claims were approved in the amount of \$273,336.63 on a motion by John Oxley, 2nd by Laura Coons and 3/0 vote.

Payroll Claims were approved in the amount of \$79,133.02 on a motion by motion by Laura Coons, 2nd by John Oxley and 3/0 vote.

Payroll (PPE 3/17/23) was approved in the amount of \$143,998.02 on a motion by motion by John Oxley, 2nd by Laura Coons and 3/0 vote. Commissioner thanked the Highway Department and the cities for helping with the recent storm clean up.

There being no further public comment, Laura Coons made a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 a.m.

Approved this 17 th day of April, 2023.

The Blackford County Board of Commissioners

John Lancaster, President

John Oxley, Vice President

Attest: Sharon Hartley

Laura Coons, Member

Auditor Sharon Hartley