

BLACKFORD COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S

MEETING September 21, 2020

The Blackford County Commissioners met in regular session at 8:30 a.m. on September 21, 2020 in the Commissioner's office 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 with the Pledge of Allegiance and Auditor Sharon Hartley called roll with Commissioners John Oxley, John Lancaster and Nick Rhodes present **Others in attendance in person** were Bruce Edgington, Anne Owen, Jeff Sones, Sam Swenson, Tim Stanley, Warren Brown, Judge Nick Barry, Cheri Brown, Tyler Hunt, Bill Smith, Dana Turner, Laura Coons and Larry Pluimer. **Attending on Zoom** were Mary Beal, Sue Kochanek and Karen Mealy.

The minutes of the September 8, 2020 Regular meeting were approved as presented by a 3/0 vote after a motion by Nick Rhodes and a 2nd by John Oxley.

Highway Supervisor Bruce Edgington reported: 1.) The Container Collection Site brought in \$224 on September 12th. 2.) The main building at the Highway Garage is ¾ painted. 3.) they are moving the reclaimed asphalt from the Montpelier Speedway where it has been stored to the Container Collection Site.

Sheriff Jeff Sones gave the jail inmate count as 43 males, 13 females for a total of 56 inmates.

Courthouse Custodian Tim Stanley 1. reported the 3rd floor restroom leak has been repaired. 2. The elevator project is waiting for the state inspection. The phone line has been determined to be operational. All contractors will be here when the state does the inspection to address any issues that might arise.

Clerk Laura Coons reported early voting begins on October 6 through November 2 at noon. This includes two Saturday's, October 24th and October 31st. Both will be available at the Courthouse and Montpelier Civic Center.

EMA Director Bill Smith noted 1.) Large animal rescue training will take place at McCammon Trucking on January 16, 2021. The cost is \$128 and is for ages 16 and older. The 4H will sell lunch. Scholarships may be available. 2.) An Emergency Event Plan is in the works. 3.) CERT Team class is still being looked in to. 4.) The church safety plan is being reviewed and will be available soon.

Judge Nick Barry has a jury trial beginning on September 29 and will have a 12-person jury. For safety purposes he is asking for the south side of the courthouse to be closed for that day so that all prospective jurors will enter the north side and social distancing markers will be used. Temperatures will be taken and only one person at a time will be using the elevator. A firm from Marion has been contacted to sanitize/clean the courtroom and common areas every day of the trial at a cost of approximately \$154 per day. Commissioners said they will pay for that cost of professional cleaning on a motion by Nick Rhodes and 2nd by John Oxley with a 3/0 vote. A motion was made by John Oxley and 2nd by Nick Rhodes to close the south doors of the courthouse on Tuesday, September 29 and the vote was 3/0.

BCEDC Director Warren Brown reported 1.) The Gilman Home Store project is working out some snags. 2.) The CARES Act grant funds awarded to the county may be used to erect three towers for broadband and cell phone service in areas that have no service now. Brown is working with a company to make this happen before the end of the year. The Commissioners may need to hold a Special Meeting to pass an Ordinance(s). The meeting will be open to the public.

Purdue Extensions Cheri Brown reported the Housing Study is moving forward with over 260 responses. They are looking for more people to fill out the survey.

John Oxley made a motion to approve using the same COVID-19 plan that Blackford County Schools follow as provided by the Blackford County Health Department and to follow the CDC guidelines. Nick Rhodes 2nd and the vote was 3/0.

At the August 17, 2020 meeting, it was voted to assign several tax sale certificates to BDC. After review, the list of was revised. Resolution 2020-R6, Blackford County Commissioners Resolution Memorializing the Assignment of Blackford County Tax Sale Certificates was approved on a motion by Nick Rhodes and 2nd by John Oxley and vote of 3/0. John Lancaster commented that he doesn't like BDC holding so many properties and not selling many.

Johnson Melloh had proposed a solar field project at a cost of \$1.2 million. The County Council voted to stop the project funding at this time. **The Commissioners agree with Council to stop talks on the solar project.**

John Lancaster met with Montpelier Mayor Kathy Bantz concerning the railroad wanting to close three road crossings. Montpelier wants to annex two of the crossings and the 3rd would remain in the county. Nick Rhodes moved to take the matter under advisement and John Oxley 2nd. The vote was 3/0.

The agreement with BCEDC will be addressed at the next meeting.

A resident contacted the Auditor's office inquiring about purchasing a 12' strip of land off the south side of a parcel the county owns in front of the former Transfer Station. The Commissioners will check with their attorney.

Accounts Payable Claims: Claims were approved in the amount of \$280,087.51 on a motion by John Oxley and 2nd by Nick Rhodes. The vote was 3/0.

Payroll Claims:

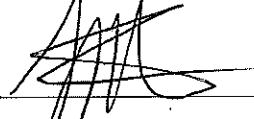
PPE 9/4/2020 Claims of \$117,351.15 were approved on a motion by Nick Rhodes and 2nd by John Oxley. The vote was 3/0

Public Comment: Local farmer Larry Pluimer commented on the railroad crossing closure that that the city will do what they want.

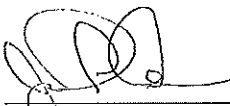
There being no further public comment, Nick Rhodes made a motion to adjourn. **The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 a.m.**

Approved this 5th day of October, 2020.

The Blackford County Board of Commissioners



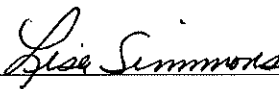
John Lancaster, President



John Oxley, Vice President



Nick Rhodes, Member

Attest:  Dep. Auditor
Auditor Sharon Hartley