

BLACKFORD COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S

MEETING February 5, 2024

The Blackford County Commissioners met in regular session at 8:30 a.m. on February 5, 2024, in the Commissioner/Council 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, Laura Coons, and Dan Borgenheimer present. Also, present were Tyler Hunt, Anne Owen, John Pluimer, Warren Brown, Meagan Westfall, Bill Smith, Cheri Brown, Jim Heflin, Dan Eckstein, Derk Hagan, Dennis Layman, Jacob Blackburn, Dr. Tom Lee, Judy Smith, Ashley Laurence, Monika Smith, Madison Pimental, Max Tarter, Bill Aspy, Sheila Hyer, Jim Weiseman, Kim Pitts, and Jim Forcum. Attending on Zoom was Lisa Simmons, Paul Schriver, Diann Wellman, Frances Mays, Elizabeth Witt, Steven Holman, Shelby Maddox, Amy Lathem, Sam Swenson and Mary Beal.

Minutes of the January 16, 2024, Regular Meeting were approved as presented on a **motion by Laura Coons and 2nd by Dan Borgenheimer**. The vote was **3/0**.

Minutes of the February 1, 2024, Special Meeting were approved as presented on a **motion by Laura Coons and 2nd by Dan Borgenheimer**. The vote was **3/0**.

Heritage Days – Dr. Tom Lee requested assistance for Heritage Days, May 8 – 11. With the courthouse renovations, the event will be held on side streets and parking lots. **Laura Coons moved to assist with \$1,000 and Dan Borgenheimer 2nd. The vote was 3/0.**

Hartford City Chamber of Commerce – Ashley Laurence, Monika Smith and Madison Pimental gave an overview of chamber activities. They are requesting \$7,000 in assistance. **The Commissioners took the request under advisement until the next meeting.**

The 2024 BCEDC Agreement was presented. Nothing has changed from last year with the amount staying at \$150,000 which is paid from the EDIT fund. **Dan Borgenheimer moved to approve the agreement and Laura Coons seconded. The vote was 3/0.**

Warren Brown requested letters of support for the broadband project from the commissioners. The letters help show the need in Blackford County.

The **2023 Payroll Report** was presented to the Commissioner. No action need to be taken.

State vs Daniel Melton – Attorney Jim Forcum explained that Melton did not accept the state's offer for a right of way on his property. The county has nothing in the action but us notified as the property is in Blackford County.

Baker Tilly sent an agreement for bond reporting. Auditor Hartley supports professional assistance with detailed reports. **Laura Coons made a motion to approve the agreement and Dan Borgenheimer seconded. The cost is based on time and material. The vote was 3/0.**

Smith Insurance submitted health insurance premium rates effective April 1, 2024. The original increase for employee only coverage was 15%. Smith was able to get the increase down to 5%. The rates for spouse, child(ren) and family is quite high. Commissioners hope to find a way to help employees with the cost. This will be discussed further at a future meeting.

A revised **Veteran's Burial and Grave Marker Setting Allowance Ordinance 2024-03** was passed on a **motion by Laura Coons and second by Dan Borgenheimer**. The vote was **3/0**.

Assessor Sheila Hyer presented an agreement with Worrell to process the Form 11's for the county. The cost is \$5,930.84. **Dan Borgenheimer moved to approve the agreement and Laura Coons seconded the motion. The vote was 3/0.**

Bids for Bridge #18 were opened: Hoosier Pride bid \$292,293.94; E&B Paving, Inc bid \$520,575; Milestone Contractors LP bid \$247,983.16. Laura Coons moved to take the bids under advisement until the next meeting. Dan Borgenheimer seconded and the vote was **3/0**.

Planning & Zoning Director Anne Owen reported will be going to court to remove a camper from a property. She is asking permission to hire a towing company to remove the camper. The question of where the camper will be stored and who will pay the towing and storage bills. **This will be taken under advisement.**

Sheriff Jim Hefflin (1) gave the inmate count as 69 inmates (2) is choosing one of two vehicles to donate the Montpelier Fire Department. Dan Borgenheimer moved to allow Sheriff Hefflin to choose which vehicle to donate and John Lancaster seconded. The vote was 2/0/1 with Laura Coons abstaining. (3) Hefflin updated the Sheriff's app with information about a pursuit in the county.

Derek Hagan, Courthouse renovation project manager gave an update on the work on the courthouse. Scaffolding is up on the east side of the courthouse. The roofers will start work this week. They will take sections of the roof off and install an ice and water shield before the new copper roof is installed. The masons are working on the east side of the courthouse. Overhead protection covers will be installed on the north and west sides of the building.

Purdue Extensions Cheri Brown asked that people continue to do the internet speed. Doing the speed tests at various times of the day gives a good picture of the service available.

EMA Director Bill Smith will be attending the District 6 conference. Smith continues to work on the Eclipse Plan.

John Pluimer, Highway Superintendent (1) asked permission to send two employees to Illinois for training. Laura Coons moved to approve the request and Dan Borgenheimer seconded. The vote was 3/0. (2) Charter Communication requested permission to work in the right-of-way on CR 600 E north of SR 18. Dan Borgenheimer moved to approve the request and Laura Coons seconded. The vote was 3/0. (3) The 2023 Highway Annual Report was presented. Dan Borgenheimer moved to accept the report and Laura Coons seconded. The vote was 3/0.

John Lancaster received a request for the county to pay for repairs at the County Farm. Johnny S. Eicher will repair the barn for \$5,900. Chad McCain and Brad Hile want to repair/replace three sections of fencing. Dan Borgenheimer moved to approve the repairs to the barn at \$5,900 and the 640' of the east fence at \$3,450. Laura Coons seconded and the vote was 3/0.

Regular Claims were approved in the amount of \$453,902.98 on a motion by Laura Coons and 2nd by Dan Borgenheimer. The vote was 3/0.

Miscellaneous claims were approved in the amount of \$302,822.20 on a motion by Laura Coons and 2nd by Dan Borgenheimer. The vote was 3/0.

Payroll Claims were approved in the amount of \$122,771.59 on a motion by Laura Coons and 2nd by Dan Borgenheimer. The vote was 3/0.

PPE 1/19/2024 Regular Payroll approved in the amount of \$153,043.54 on a motion by Laura Coons and 2nd by Dan Borgenheimer. The vote was 3/0.

There being no further public comment, Laura Coons made a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 9:29 a.m.

Approved this 20th day of February 2024.

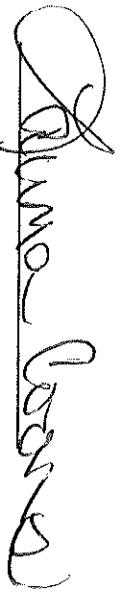
The Blackford County Board of Commissioners

John Lancaster, President



Dan Borgenheimer, Vice President

Laura Coons, Member



Attest: Sharon Hartley

Auditor Sharon Hartley