

BLACKFORD COUNTY COUNCIL MINUTES OF

February 7, 2024 Regular Meeting

The Blackford County Council met at 6:00 p.m. in the Commissioner/Council Room of the Blackford County Courthouse located at 110 W Washington Street, Hartford City, Indiana for the Regular meeting on Wednesday, February 7, 2024. The meeting was also available on Zoom.

President Jack Beckley called the Regular Meeting to order and called roll. The members answering roll were Kyle Lechien, Ryan Goodspeed, Patrick Cale, Jack Beckley, and Karen Mealy. Also present in person, Tyler Hunt, Warren Brown, Cheri Brown, Paul Schriver, Kelly Schriver, Amanda Leas, Dana Turner, Laura Coons, Casey Dick, Dennis Layman, Jim Heflin, and John Pluimer. **Attending on Zoom:** Sue Kochanek and Mary Beal.

The minutes of the January 3, 2024, Regular Council meeting were approved as Presented on a motion by Kyle Lechien and 2nd by Patrick Cale. The vote was 3/0. Beckley and Mealy were absent January 3.

Surety Bond Ordinance 2024-04 was presented for approval. Discussion on the amount of the Deputy Treasurer and the amount of Blanket Bonds resulted in \$50,000 for the Deputy Treasurer and \$15,000 for the Blanket Bond. Kyle Lechien moved to approve Ordinance 2024-04 with \$50,000 for Deputy Treasurer bond and \$15,000 for Blanket Bonds. Ryan Goodspeed seconded, and the vote was 5/0.

Unsafe Building Board appointments – no names were presented. P&Z Director is asked to put an application on the website and social media.

Jason Semler from Baker Tilly asked if the county wants them to prepare a Comprehensive Financial Plan for the county. After discussion, the council is interested in a plan for the expected EDA money and possibly the county funds, depending on cost of the plan.

Committee Reports

Community Corrections – Kyle Lechien – The next grant is being prepared.

Solid Waste District – Karen Mealy - no report

Economic Development – Ryan Goodspeed – see Warren Brown below

Blackford Development – Patrick Cale – no report

LEPC – Ryan Goodspeed – no report.

Warren Brown – (1) is asking for letters of support for Broadband services in the county. **(2)** Brown is encouraging residents to conduct internet speed tests at various times of the day/night and submit them. This will show the need for faster internet. **(3)** The lake near the Hartford City Industrial Park is set to begin about June 1.

Highway Superintendent John Pluimer (1) reported he is applying for the next Community Crossings Grant for work on Cummins Road between CR 500 E and CR 600 E. The county match will be \$75,000 and the total grant is \$302,000. **Karen Mealy moved to approve the grant application and Ryan Goodspeed seconded. The vote was 5/0. (2)** The Highway annual report has been submitted to LTAP. The commissioners approved the report at the February 5th meeting. **(3)** Pluimer is looking at CHARTS, a software program that tracks expenses by project. The cost is \$8,000 to set up and \$2,100 per year for support and updates. The department will need three new computers as theirs are outdated (\$4,858). He will pay for the software and computers from the Cum Cap Development Fund. **Karen Mealy moved to approve the software and computer purchases and Patrick Cale seconded. The vote was 3/2 with Beckley and Lechien voting Nay. (4)** The Small Structure inspection by SJCA found few problems. Pluimer is working on fixing the deficiencies. **(5)** Pluimer informed the council that the Transfer Stations SW Disposal Non-reverting Capital fund (4801) will have large expenses in 2025. The budget will need to be reviewed.

Commissioner Laura Coons presented a Blackford County Annex Structural Review from DLZ's Eric Ratts. The report finds several problems with the Annex. A more detailed inspection is needed to determine necessary repairs. The council asked Coons to have several engineers inspect the Annex soon and report to them.

Sheriff Jim Heflin reported that the Sheriff Deputy raises in pay brought 13 applicants for the two deputy openings. The issue now is the cost of dependent health insurance coverage. One deputy has been offered a position and Heflin and Chief Deputy Bell are deciding on the other position.

Financial Reports for COUNTY GENERAL

Ending Cash Balance as of January 31, 2024	\$ 1,610,042.23
Total Expenditures for January 2024	\$ 521,011.56
Total Revenue for January 2024	\$ 58,819.52

Additional Appropriations: none

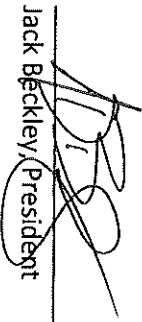
Transfers: None

Mary Beal asked if the tower on SR 3 is finished. Warren Brown responded "no".

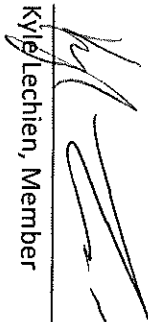
Auditor Hartley is working with Sheriff Heflin and Matron Deb Perry on the new LIT Public Safety and LIT PSAP (Dispatch) funds to take some of the expense burden from County General to the LIT funds. Sheriff Heflin has some projects for the funds to be considered.

There being no further comment Vice President Goodspeed **adjourned the meeting at 7:00p.m.** on a motion by Kyle Lechien.

Approved this 6th day of March, 2024.

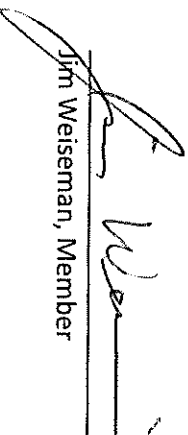


Jack Beckley, President

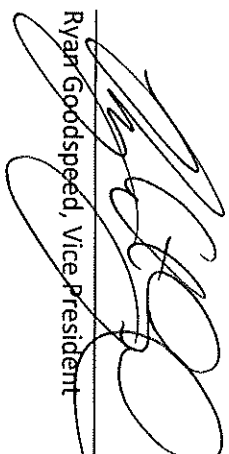


Kyle Lechien, Member

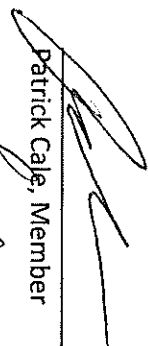
Karen Mealy, Member



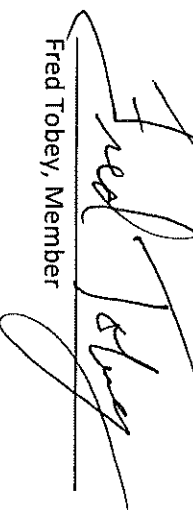
Jim Weiseman, Member



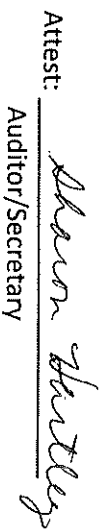
Ryan Goodspeed, Vice President



Patrick Cale, Member



Fred Tobey, Member

Attest: 

Sharon Hartley
Auditor/Secretary