

BLACKFORD COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S

MEETING January 16, 2024

The Blackford County Commissioners met in regular session at 8:30 a.m. on January 16, 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 Borgenhimer present. Also, present were Tyler Hunt, Anne Owen, John Pluimer, Warren Brown, Meagan Westfall, Bill Smith, Cheri Brown, Jim Heflin, Dan Eckstein, Rob Ellinger, Linda Batten, Derek Hagan, Greg Delagrange, Dana Turner, Amanda Leas, Dennis Layman, Brad Neff, and Troy Kaufman. Attending on Zoom was Lisa Simmons, Paul Schriver, Dianne Wellman, Frances Mays, Elizabeth Witt, Angela Smith, Erin Foreman and Mary Beal.

The regular meeting was recessed for a Board of Finance Meeting.

Treasurer Dana Turner asked for the Election of 2024 Officers. John Lancaster nominated **Laura Coons for President and Dan Borgenhimer for Vice President**. Nominations were closed and the vote was 3/0 in favor of Coons as President and Borgenhimer as Vice President.

Treasurer Turner listed the outstanding 2-year-old warrants totaling \$220.49 and requested permission to receipt the money back into the fund the warrants were drawn on. **John Lancaster moved to approve the request and Dan Borgenhimer 2nd. The vote was 3/0.**

Treasurer Turner contacted local banks for interest rates. Citizens State Bank offered 3.4% and the Indiana Bond Bank offered 5%. Citizens State Bank came back with 4.5%. **Dan Borgenhimer made a motion to have Truner return to CSB to see if they will match the Bond Bank. John Lancaster 2nd and the vote was 3/0. The board would like to keep the bank local.**

With no further business, John Lancaster moved to adjourn the Board of Finance meeting. **Dan Borgenhimer 2nd and the vote was 3/0.**

The regular meeting resumed.

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

With new copiers in several offices, commissioners were asked to move or donate five of the old copiers. **Laura Coons moved to move copiers to the Veteran's Affairs office and Coroner's office and donate copiers to the 4H Building, Animal Shelter and Senior Citizens Center. Dan Borgenhimer 2nd and the vote was 3/0.**

Property and Liability Insurance renewal: Rob Ellinger, Linda Batten and Angela Smith (on Zoom) reviewed the 2024 renewal rates for the county. To receive a lower premium, Ellinger and Smith suggested raising the deductibles. Seeing the cost savings, **Dan Borgenhimer moved to raise the deductibles on Commercial Property and Commercial Auto. Laura Coons 2nd and the vote was 3/0.**

County Comprehensive Plan: Warren Brown presented the completed County Comprehensive Plan. Planning and Zoning Director Anne Owen presented a letter stating "the APR gave Favorable Recommendation to the plan by a unanimous vote" on January 9, 2024. **Dan Borgenhimer moved to approve the plan as presented and Laura Coons 2nd. The vote was 3/0.**

EMA Director Bill Smith: (1) received a request for the old EMA trailer from the Montpelier Fire Department. **Dan Borgenhimer moved to approve the donation and John Lancaster 2nd.** The vote was 2/0/1. **Laura Coons abstained because her son is the Assistant Chief of the Montpelier Fire Department.** (2) presented the April 8, 2024 Solar Eclipse Plan for review. **Laura Coons moved to approve the plan and Dan Borgenhimer 2nd.** The vote was 3/0. **The vote was 3/0.**

John Pluimer, Highway Superintendent (1) Butler Fairman and Seufert has completed Phase 3 of the small structure inspections and found five bridges that need work. (2) He is asking to applying for Community Crossings Grant 2021-1 to help with costs for Cummins Road from CR 500 E to CR 600 E. **Dan Borgenhimer moved to approve the grant application and Laura Coons 2nd.** The vote was 3/0. (3) presented a commitment letter for the grant stating the county match as \$75,619. **Laura Coons moved to approve the match and letter and Dan Borgenhimer 2nd.** The vote was 3/0. (4) Presented the Butler Fairman and Seufert contract in the amount of \$54,100 for the Community Crossings Grant. **Dan Borgenhimer moved to approve the contract and Laura Coons 2nd.** The vote was 3/0. (5) presented a

contract with SJCA for \$21,200 for work on CR 700 E north of Trenton. Dan Borgenheimer moved to approve the contract and Laura Coons 2nd. The vote was 3/0.

Warren Brown reported the broadband project is moving ahead slowly. He is gathering information for READI Grant funding. Brown also told the board the weeds will need to be mowed or sprayed within the fences around the towers. Commissioners will look into spraying the weeds.

Purdue Extensions Cheri Brown reported they are working with IU Health to install a "Tele-Health Visits" equipment site at the Senior Citizens Center so seniors can hold online visits with medical providers.

Sheriff Jim Heflin (1) gave the inmate count as 67 inmates, 60 males and 7 females. (2) he wants to modify the berms on the shooting range. He also wants to allow other agencies to use the range. (3) Heflin wants to build a pole barn for storage and training space. (4) Montpelier Fire Department is requesting one of the old sheriff vehicles be donated to them. He will bring information on a specific vehicle at a future meeting. (5) the heaters in the Administration Side of the jail stopped working over the weekend. Havel refused to come and try to fix the units until later in the week. The county is a priority client and calls will be made to Havel to rectify the situation.

Veteran's Affairs Officer Troy Kaufman thanked the commission for allowing him to serve the veterans of the county.

Derek Hagan, Courthouse renovation project manager, gave an update on the work on the courthouse. The rain and then frigid temperatures forced work to stop on the project for this week. Work continued on the clock tower and fourth floor. Warmer weather next week will see scaffolding erected on the east side of the courthouse.

Planning & Zoning Director Anne Owen reported two properties she will be taking to court for non-compliance with zoning ordinances. She is also working with attorney Jim Forcum on properties to BDC from the Tax Certificate Sale list.

Facilities Manager Meagan Westfall – (1) Havel can't work on the heaters in several offices until Thursday. (2) the sink in the Clerk's office leaks. If the pipe cannot be repaired, the sink will be moved. (3) some electrical work is being done including outlets that need to be grounded and a lighted Exit sign is being installed on the north side of the building. (4) a structural engineer looked at the Annex and will be back for a closer look at the building.

Miscellaneous claims were approved in the amount of \$664,049.89 on a motion by Laura Coons and 2nd by Dan Borgenheimer. The vote was 3/0.

Payroll Claims were approved in the amount of \$78,533.33 on a motion by Laura Coons and 2nd by Dan Borgenheimer. The vote was 3/0.

PPE 12/2/2023 Regular Payroll approved in the amount of \$136,420.12 on a motion by Laura Coons and 2nd by Dan Borgenheimer. The vote was 3/0.

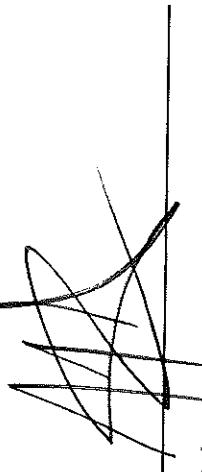
PPE 1/5/2024 Regular Payroll approved in the amount of \$143,384.15 on a motion by Laura Coons and 2nd by Dan Borgenheimer. The vote was 3/0.

OPO Payroll approved in the amount of \$143,384.15 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 9:33 a.m.

Approved this 5th 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

