

Owen County Commissioners  
Minutes-June 21, 2021

Meeting was opened by President Gary Burton.

Pledge of Allegiance was said, Prayer given by Cris Lunsford.

Roll was called; all members were present. Public signed in; sheet attached for permanent record.

Commissioner Burton started with a Thank You to the Highway Department for all their hard work the last few days with the Flood. He also thanked Commissioner Dubois for helping with his own equipment during the flood and donated his time and equipment.

A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Dale Dubois; seconded by Bob Curry.

Motion carried 3-0.

A motion to approve the Claims excluding all highlighted-County General funds that are in the red was made by Gary Burton; seconded by Bob Curry. Motion carried 3-0. Out-of-Cycle Claims were presented for signatures for the Covid Clinic-\$640.00, Covid Clinic \$7249.06, Highway Home Company \$1500.00, Steve's Welder \$175.00, Utilities \$2583.72, Covid \$6515.70, Utilities \$10093.06, Visa-2 \$734.61, Visa-3 \$91.32, Visa-4 \$316.55, and Visa-5 \$448.68.

Old Business-

AT&T Contract-Attorney Bryan had reviewed the contract from the prior meeting and related that it is okay to sign if they so agreed. A motion to sign the contract was made by Bob Curry; seconded by Dale Dubois. Motion carried 3-0.

New Business-

Public Hearing-Commissioner Burton opened the Public Hearing for Economic Development regarding the Comprehensive Plan Application-Grant Resolution that is required to include matching funds in the amount of \$6700. Hearing was closed at 6:15. Attorney Bryan read Resolution 2021-18 regarding the Grant. A motion to approve the Resolution was made by Bob Curry; seconded by Dale Dubois. Motion carried 3-0. In addition, were commitment letters that needed signed by Commissioner Burton as well. Future meetings and public hearings will be held.

Next Matt Sward presented information about a Readiness Initiative Plan and the ROI Uplands Region project that has Five Million available to select projects. Ms. King gave a brief overview of the project. Attorney Bryan read the Readiness Initiative Resolution 2021-19. Public comment from Barron Barnett concerned that this is a form of regionalism. A motion to approve the Resolution was made by Bob Curry; seconded by Gary Burton. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Burton moved RQAW-Eric Weflen & Garmong-Dan Zuerner Representatives up next to give their update on the Owen County Jail Proposal. An overview of the existing facility assessment, Architectural Space, Facility Utilization, Regional Facility, and Feasibility and the impact of housing inmates in another county. Based on the information that has been documented; the conclusion was that the county should build a new jail. Cost estimated for a 120 Bed Facility range from \$18 Million to \$21 Million. A 160 Bed Facility would be at a cost of \$22 million plus. Funding is obviously an issue. The current Correctional LIT Tax Fund is bringing in approximately \$77000 but this would not be enough to fund the project, and a Public Safety Tax would most likely be needed also. Attorney Bryan provided the next step is to hold a Public Hearing per IC 36-1-8-19. A copy of the Schematic Design Report will be attached for permanent record. Sheriff Hobbs emphasized that this is a much-needed project given the liability to the Commissioners, Council and Public.

Building Department-Weatherwax Alleyway was tabled.

Attorney Bryan gave a brief overview for Peter's Municipal Consulting that can provide a Financial Plan for the remainder of 2021 and Budget Year 2022. They will attend the Council Meeting on June 28<sup>th</sup> for Funding consideration and options.

A Healthy Results Program request for county employees to receive incentives to participate was presented by IU Health Plan. Attorney Bryan related that if the commissioners did agree they should be mindful this would be giving employees a 99 percent benefit is of concern. A motion to table was made by Bob Curry; seconded by Dale Dubois to have further discussion with IU Representative Ron Remak. Motion carried 3-0.

911 Director Kathleen Lamb presented a License Agreement with Eastern Heights to provide a portion of their real estate for the purpose of constructing, owning, and operating a radio transmission facility. A motion to approve the agreement was made by Dale Dubois; seconded by Bob Curry. Motion carried 3-0. Ms. Lamb reminded them that she had obtained a grant to pay for the project.

EMS Director Cris Lunsford first thanked Ms. Lamb for the tower project.

Mr. Lunsford requested permission to pursue litigation for unpaid patient accounts. A motion was made by Dale Dubois; seconded by Gary Burton. Motion carried 2-0, 1-nay Bob Curry.

Highway Superintendent Greg Melton began with an update regarding the Flood Event that began around 10:30 Friday evening with 7.1 to 11 inches of rain. He has had somebody continually working since it started. Things are bad; they are Catastrophic for our County including Eight Townships, Four Bridges, 29 Culverts out, and multiple roads with five destroyed totally. He thanked the Commissioners, Jack White, Sheriff Department, Dispatch and Allan McBride, Nick Robertson, and the citizens of the County that have rallied. He thanked Mr. Dubois as well. Bridge Inspections are due tomorrow. He has reached out to Walt Wilson from Clay County to help assist with the situation and has knowledge with FEMA Processes and Jack White's work with FEMA. He has been contacted by Doris Scully with US Department of Agriculture and Mr. Jose Peno-Civil Engineer and possible financial assistance that would include a 75/25 match, but it would include labor. A motion to put a hold on all projects while assessing this situation other than community crossings grant was made by Bob Curry; seconded by Dale Dubois. Motion carried 3-0. Ms. Reeves asked how to proceed with the financial situation and lack of funds at the highway department and county. Attorney Bryan reviewed funds available and offered that only \$250000 might be available; reality is no other monies are available at this time. Mr. Burton is going to reach out to the Governors Office.

Resident-Phil Eckart just wants to say thank you to Mr. Melton and has done a great job! Mr. Burton related that his road is on the community crossing grant this time around.

Resident-Tim Christian from Lake Hollybrook has been working with Mr. Melton and he definitely understands the current situation. His concern is the condition of the causeway. Commissioner Burton instructed him to take millings to Lake Hollybrook and assist as much as possible. He also presented photos and a report with concern over the watershed at the lake. He asked for the commissioner to consider applying for a 319 Block grant to assist with the problem. Resident-Bill Oalden commented that the roads need fixed at the root of the problem with FEMA monies.

At this time, the Commissioners decided that the Local Emergency Declaration needs to be renewed.

A Special Meeting was called for Friday-June 25<sup>th</sup> @10am.

A motion was also made by the Commissioner's to declare an emergency to authorize Mr. Melton per IC 36-1-12-9 to obtain two quotes for the roads, culverts, and bridges. Motion made by Dale Dubois; seconded by Bob Curry. Carried 3-0.

A surplus ordinance had been presented for consideration; withdrawn.

Internal Controls Resolution being considered was reviewed by Attorney Bryan. They can consider a committee of 3 or 5 members and would have to follow all open-door laws. Mr. Burton related that Councilwoman-Polly Chesser, Recorder-Loretta Foster and Commissioner Burton will be the committee members. Mr. Burton had the Attorney read what duties and responsibilities the board would have. Statute allows for them to request, review any and all documents upon request.

A copy of a Comp Time Policy Section 506 was presented for review. Attorney Bryan read the policy. Further discussion offered that the way it was written still had some concerns and may not apply to all employees. A motion to table the Policy was made by Dale Dubois; seconded by Bob Curry. Motion carried 3-0. Attorney Bryan related that comp time is a debt against the budget. Sheriff Hobbs added that the policy presented does not pertain to public safety and emergency employees.

A contract was presented for Quadiant Postage-Sourcewell to continue services with the current company for postage. The contract offered a cost saving if funded for a five-year agreement. A motion to table the approval for further review by the Attorney. Motion made by Gary Burton; seconded by Dale Dubois. Carried 3-0.

#### Elected Officials-

Ms. Lamb just wanted to acknowledge that she actually had four employees that worked the entire flood emergency Mariah, Lei, Dorothy and Allan. Call volume with only two people on twelve hour shifts that fielded 224 calls Friday night and 420 on Saturday. Emphasized that everything goes through dispatch. Mr. Burton thanked her and her team for their hard work.

No Public Comment was made.

Attorney Bryan related that Daniel Melton had resigned from the Plan Commission. Commissioner Curry had asked resident Beth Wood to sit on the board. A motion to appoint her was made by Bob Curry; seconded by Gary Burton. Motion carried 3-0. She was to be sworn in by the Clerk.

Commissioner Burton related that a vacancy will be opening at the end of May on the Library Board. A motion to appoint Tony Voelker was made by Dale Dubois; seconded by Gary Burton. Motion carried 3-0.

Ms. Reeves had contacted Adobe for a quote for additional licenses. IT suggested to add licenses to help with the situation. Three additional licenses will be purchased, and it will be paid from the IT budget. Mr. Burton will have Forthphase handle the request.

Ms. Reeves verified the Smithville Contract included the Health, EMA, Probation and Veterans Office was to be paid from the funds that were paying the previous On-Board Program. Ms. Reeves will take it to the council for a \$1500 fee for the contract.

A form for the ARP Funds is required to be signed by Mr. Burton. He will register and sign the form.

She related that the Visa Cards had been made available to EMS, Sheriff and Highway. A \$2000 limit is all that is available for each department. Mr. Burton confirmed that the Amazon Accounts were closed, and Visa Cards only will be used to make any purchases. Mr. Dubois commented about purchasing on Ebay, it is allowed, and departments can share cards if needed for an emergency.

Commissioner Curry asked what the status of the Coroner's Building was in regard to Ninja Construction. No one has been able to make contact with them. They will reach out again.

A motion to adjourn was made by Dale Dubois; seconded by Bob Curry. Motion carried 3-0.