

Owen County Commissioners  
Minutes-April 4, 2022

Meeting was called to order by President Gary Burton.

Pledge of Allegiance was said, and opening prayer was given by Sam Hobbs.

It was noted that the Camera was not working, only volume for YouTube Audience.

Present: Gary Burton, Bob Curry, Dale Dubois, Attorney Jim Bryan, and Auditor Sheila Reeves.

Public Sign in sheet attached for permanent record.

A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Dale Dubois; seconded by Bob Curry. Carried 3-0.

A financial overview of the current fund balances was given by Jim Bryan. Copies of the receipts, expenditures and revenue balances for all major funds, and grants were provided for review and attached for permanent record. It is expected to keep a positive balance in the general fund through settlement that is due to be processed on May 19<sup>th</sup>.

A brief update on the Jail Project included the amount of \$15million for renovation with a payment of \$750,000 a year. Hypothetical loan amounts, interest rates, annual payments and total costs were given. (Sheet attached for permanent record). Mr. Bryan related that the amount of cash in Fund#1233 was insufficient to pay the entire annual payment, so the remainder would need to be funded by Fund#1000-General Fund, Fund#112 Lit Edit or Fund #1170 Lit Public Safety.

Lastly he related the importance of having good solid balances in all funds, especially the Highway on June 30<sup>th</sup> as this is the date used by DLGF for the basis of funding approvals/appropriations for 2023 Budgets.

A motion to approve the Payroll Docket in the amount of \$229,391.11 was made by Bob Curry; seconded by Dale Dubois. Motion carried 3-0.

A motion to approve the Regular Claims Docket in the amount of \$310,208.85 was made by Bob Curry; seconded by Dale Dubois. Motion carried 3-0.

A motion to approve the Out of Cycle Claims for a total of \$239,700.80 was made by Bob Curry; seconded by Dale Dubois. Motion carried 3-0.

#### Old Business

BWS Real Estate Holdings representative were present to give an update on the Application with IDEM and work that has been done so far. Clarification on the area and type of product to be used. Mr. Bryan reviewed the procedures and Mr. Burton suggested a freeze be put on the project. Pending Storm Water Sampling was also needed. The Health Department had not received any copies of updates and/or tests results at this time. Mr. Bryan-step one was to review that all statutory steps has been done with legal notices, adjacent owners notified (2<sup>nd</sup> time) Ms. Simmerman confirmed all processes have been done as required. Posting a sign at this time would be sufficient to move forward. He further read IC that 36-7-4-608 starts a ninety-day clock to make a decision; a decision would be granted automatically. They can request further information today, but he suggests stopping the clock at this time as additional information is needed. It was related that if no county zoning was approved; IDEM will not approve the permit. A letter from IDEM saying that the process is okay would be sufficient in moving forward. A freeze is being implemented at this time. Mr. Burton and Mr. Curry both agreed on the freeze and the clock will restart when they come back with the information needed.

Mr. Burton also asked that all reports be given to the Health Department and Commissioners, agreed.

Mr. Bryan confirmed with BWS Representatives that they were okay with the ninety-day clock stop, they all confirmed yes. He reminded them that they would need a ten-day prior notice before being placed back on an agenda.

## New Business

A proposal for an update to the County Planning & Zoning Subdivision Ordinance was to be given. The representative K.K. Gerhart-Fritz was unavailable to attend. It was tabled at this time.

Commonwealth Engineers presented an update on the projects for the McCormick's Creek Application for River Road. A brief explanation on the wastewater process, road excavation, resurfacing, and short-term road closure was discussed. A motion was made by Gary Burton to approve the Application; however, the \$11901 fee was not waived. The motion was seconded by Bob Curry. Motion carried 3-0.

Highway Superintendent Greg Melton, Rachel Whiting, and Dakota Gibbs were present to discuss various issues/projects. Mr. Melton first began relating that all Highway machines will be brought in nightly due to more vandalism of the equipment. It was discussed again about getting trail cams to monitor the locations. Mr. Burton asked that a cost of having to move the equipment daily be presented at the net meeting. Mr. Melton related that he had several employees, and himself extremely upset regarding the assault on social media and may lose two seasonal operators before the day is over and feels it is politically motivated at this time. He asked if the Commissioners and/or Attorney would provide some kind of response to the public. His hands are tied with funds on repair of the roads. He's in dire need of support and his greatest asset is his employees and moral is at an all-time low. He has been accused of not responding and having the balls to do so and the community needs to be advised where funds go. Mr. Burton said he would respond anyway he could and has done so since he has started. He feels that social media is a cancer to society with no facts or truths. He further added that the financial situation was created by the previous auditor and that with no access to the financial records for department heads. They are not out of the woods yet so to say and support from the community with the tax base has brought them a long way in three and a half years. Mr. Curry stated that he supports Greg and all the employees out there but that about ten idiots, assholes run it in the ground. He will not respond to their kind and that he's sorry they are reading this and taking it personal, and they are better than them. He offered to go out to the highway to talk with them. Mr. Gibbs added that they can only take so much. Mr. Dubois added that they've come a long way, and that the roads are better now than ever, Mr. Burton agreed. Ms. Chesser (Council President) added that they are behind him 100% and Greg has done a wonderful job and they all need to band together.

Mr. Melton next presented information for a Quincy Road location and drainage issue. Sewer pipes were plugged up over the years and a motion was made by Gary Burton; seconded by Bob Curry to allow a 120foot section to be repaired. Motion carried 3-0.

Mr. Bryan presented copies of Bid Packet Information for Bridge #44 and Bridge#116. A motion to advertise for both Bridges was made by Bob Curry; seconded by Dale Dubois to go out for bids. Motion carried 3-0. Copies were signed by the Commissioners. Advertisement will be made on 04/27 and 05/04 and packages can be picked up on/after April 27<sup>th</sup>.

Next, he related two concrete culverts needed replaced on Klass Road and Otterbein Church Road.

A bid packet will be presented at the next meeting for Hardscrabble Road, project starting in August, and this is part of the ARPA Funds.

A cost for a repair of the deck on Beech Church Road will be presented at the next meeting.

The Braysville Road Speed Limit Ordinance was tabled until the next meeting.

Mr. Bryan presented information on a letter that had been received from Steve Mader regarding North Cataract Road. There are some questions on the code that Mr. Mader cited, if it was DNR, State or County and work on the access road that goes to the recreation area. INDOT shall take maintenance responsibility at the request of DNR. The expenditures are out of the State MVH distribution, not the County. Mr. Pursell related

that he thought that the State had done the repairs and turned it back over to the County. Further information will be reviewed/gathered and reported back.

EMS Director Cris Lunsford related that the Lights and Sirens for the new Tahoe were on back order. He also informed them of National EMS Week and a Banquet was to be held on May 18<sup>th</sup> of 19<sup>th</sup> and to save the date.

911 Dispatch Director Kathleen Lamb related that it was National Telecommunication week from April 10<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup>. An update on the radio and that it was completed and monitoring the system and the CAD server was moved. Mr. Burton asked how the employee status was doing with the pay increase. She replied that she is having continuous interviews as employee turnover continues but that the pay increase is helping.

Sheriff Sam Hobbs related that National Police Week was the week of May 15<sup>th</sup> and that a ceremony would be held for fallen officers. He also related that he has lost five jail staff and two road officers.

Elected Officials-

EMA Director Jack White presented quotes from Commercial Radio Service for a Kenwood VM-5000 remote mount mobile radio and kit for an existing NX-700VHF radio remote for a total of \$3489. A second quote was from Commercial Radio Service to provide and install warning lights on the new EMA Chevy Truck in the amount of \$3735. It was also related that the Highway Department would get the old EMA truck. Sheriff Hobbs did say that he would need to get the radio unit from the truck. He was to work with Mr. Melton on it.

Attorney-Nothing further

Auditor-Cyber Security update. Mr. Burton is to follow up with IT Jim Doering.

Commissioners-

Mr. Curry responded to an email about an employee falling in the parking lot and getting hurt and status of their payroll. A motion was made by Mr. Curry to pay the employee the three hours in questions. It was seconded by Dale Dubois. Motion carried 3-0.

An update on the sale of the Armory is still pending Appraisal Reviews. Mr. Bryan is searching with the State if it can be sold. Mr. Burton once again stated that it was an expense to the County and that it is being looked into of the overhead costs and it is a debt to the county. If it is decided that it can't be sold; it will be donated.

Mr. Burton related that they have hired a Maintenance Superintendent-Joseph Gray (goes by Stephen) and will start on April 11<sup>th</sup>. He asked for Ms. Reeves to send out an email to departments and submit work orders but do give him a few days to get familiar with his surroundings.

Next Mr. Burton said that they do try really hard to do the right thing for Owen County and it really disappoints him that people won't come to the meetings and sit in this room and voice their opinions; but yet they do it on social media and it upsets him. He said thank you to the public that was present.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Burton.