

Owen County Board of Commissioners  
Minutes-October 17, 2022

Meeting was called to order by President Gary Burton.

Pledge of Allegiance was said with opening prayer given by Mr. Bryan.

Members Present: Gary Burton, Bob Curry, and Joel Lowe.

Also present, Attorney Jim Bryan and Auditor Sheila Reeves.

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Curry; seconded by Lowe. Carried 3-0.

Mr. Bryan gave a financial overview noting all major funds have positive operating balances.

Copies of Mr. Bryans summaries, Auditor Monthly Financial Report, and Treasurers Monthly Statement attached for permanent record.

A motion to approve Payroll-\$250,179.28 was made by Curry; seconded by Lowe. Carried 3-0.

A motion to approve Regular Claims-\$158,781.68 was made by Curry; seconded by Lowe. Carried 3-0.

A motion to approve Out of Cycle-\$78,674.20/\$720.00 was made by Lowe; seconded by Curry. Carried 3-0.

#### Old Business

##### Blackwood Solutions LLC Rezone Ordinance 2022-20

Representatives Mike Carmin and Rene Llyod for BWS were present to review the current status following the public hearing that was held on October 3<sup>rd</sup> with the IDEM Permits process.

Mr. Bryan reviewed the overall step by step process per codes that has taken place to date. Commissioners agreed that all items previously requested have been met at this time and that they have gone above and beyond points identified. Mr. Burton asked about their Bond and related they needed to provide a copy of it for record, Carmin noted it was in appendix K. Public Barron Barnett related he is concerned that it (prior clean up) has happened before and is it going to happen again?

Mr. Bryan presented and read Ordinance 2022-20 (Copy attached for record). A motion to approve the Ordinance and Rezone from Commercial to Heavy Industrial was made by Curry; seconded by Lowe. Motion Carried 3-0.

Public Pam Rogers had requested to be on the agenda to present/address information. Copies of her letter will be attached for permanent record. She also passed out additional copies of information to the Board only. She was upset that she had asked to be heard and came after the vote had already taken place. Mr. Burton offered her the opportunity to speak and noted that was what the public hearing was for as well. She briefly summarized her comments. The Board again related that BWS have met the criteria for the re-zone and will continue for the IDEM Permit.

#### New Business

CASA-Beth Eaton was added to the agenda to present the Indiana Supreme Court GAL/CASA Grant Application and ask for permission to submit. A motion was made by Lowe; seconded by Curry. Carried 3-0.

Copy Fees-Mr. Bryan will further with individual departments to clarify amounts. No action was taken.

RQAW-Burton had spoken with Scott and proposals are expected by the next meeting.

Sheriff-Jail Project-Sheriff Hobbs and Mr. Zurner gave an overview of the Project for the last several years. It is agreed that the County can't afford a \$28million jail as funding is the issue. Per Statute the Commissioners are responsible to furnish and maintain a facility that meet standards set by the state. Zurner described the POD Style structure that had been presented originally and what options if the cost was reduced to an estimated \$18million. At that costs no core services areas would be included—administrative staff, mental health areas, laundry. Further comments included that our County was not the worst in the State, but in the top five.

Safety for the inmates and employees is Hobbs primary concerns and in a time crunch with thirty-six-year-old dinosaur. Zurner feels his numbers are real as he has done many of these and acknowledges that this is tough

for this community. A review of the current Jail LIT Tax, Public Safety Fund, and Correctional Facilities Fund was given. Public-Mike Sudol gave a review of the numbers given and feels something is not adding up. It was explained that with all these funds, it is still not enough to afford a \$28million project. Overall, it was agreed that with the current financial situation with available funds, the economic downturn and inflation costs it is a challenge. Burton noted it had been placed and scratched on the last Council agenda for funding discussions. EMS-Cris Lunsford had presented Bid Specifications for a new Ambulance to be considered by the Board for their November 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. He also asked related that the Council had voted to move forward with the payoff of his Building Loan and asked how they wanted him to handle it. It was agreed that he should present it in the next claim cycle for approval and a check can be written out-of-cycle the same day.

Highway Greg Melton began with relating that he feels they are at their breaking point and had lost two more employees. He is submitting a proposal for a \$2.43 an hour raise for and be able to fund with a cut of two staff. He feels he is still under budget with the staff reduction and 2023 proposed raises to afford the proposals. A motion to go to the Council with the request was made by Curry; seconded by Lowe. Carried 3-0. Ms. Reeves offered that it could possibly be presented at the upcoming October 27<sup>th</sup> meeting. A copy of the proposal will be attached for permanent record.

ARPA Highway proposals were reviewed for Combs Road, Orchard Heights, Farmers Road, and Hillcrest for a total of \$500,000. Burton noted that the Council had failed to give raises to the courthouse staff and therefore their request is null and voided. They still have no plans, and the money is sitting in the accounts and until this is resolved we continue to pay Barnes & Thornburg administrative fees of \$2500. A motion to approve the proposal and present to the Council was made by Lowe; seconded by Curry. Carried 3-0.

Annual Highway Bid Packets were provided for review for Aggregates, Bituminous Mixtures, Culverts, Guardrail, Gasoline/Diesel, and Motor Oils/Lubricants. Following discussion, a motion was made by Lowe; seconded by Curry to advertise the Solicitation for Bids. Carried 3-0.

Hauser Road if it stays on track is expected to be done this week.

Sandhill Road Bridge#127 Bid Packets were presented for discussion. The Bridge project is to be funded by the ARPA monies that was approved from the first tranche in the amount of \$1.6million. A motion to advertise the Packet was made by Curry; seconded by Lowe. Carried 3-0. A copy was signed and will be distributed upon request by both the highway and auditor's office.

Franklin Road and Wasatch Lake Road will each be approximately three months long.

Melton noted he would be out on Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday for a heart procedure and that Rachel Whittinger will be in charge.

Landfill Letter of Credit-Ms. Reeves had received two letters for Irrevocable Letter of Credit in regard to notifications that had been sent per IC5-22-9. Peoples State Bank and Owen County State Bank had submitted letters in the amount of \$5225 each. Nothing had been received from National Bank-Cloverdale of Crane.

Burton noted that they had received two letters increasing our rates in the last two months. A motion was made by Curry; seconded by Lowe to have Mr. Bryan contact each of them and give an update. Carried 3-0.

ARPA Broadband Request-James Tanneberger who is the President and CEO of South Central Indiana REMC provided a presentation of maps and coverage areas for Broadband-high speed internet services and where they are currently working. His goal is to have all of Owen County served with fiber by the end of 2023. His specific request for all of the \$250000 that has been previously earmarked for water/sewer/fiber of ARPA Funds that had been received. Several members from the public commented in favor of the fiber. Burton commented that they were the first company who had given them a proposal and feels that others will make requests as well and that a decision wouldn't be made at this time. The gentleman was very disgruntled and left the meeting throwing a fit.

Elected Officials-

911 Director Kathleen Lamb presented a contract with J&K Communications, Inc for Radio Equipment. Mr.

Bryan summarized the 67 items on the list. A motion to approve the Contract and have Ms. Lamb sign and provide a copy to the Auditor was made by Curry; seconded by Lowe. Carried 3-0. She also related she was doing interviews and will be working rotations due to one employee out for one year military leave and two others had left.

Public Comment-

Barron Barnett related that he feels that the Comprehensive Plan is still Regionalism. Mr. Bryan again explained that it is a guide and not a law, but that IC 36-7 series does require the County to have a Plan. He reminded them that there is a public hearing on October 18<sup>th</sup> at the School.

Victor Villette asked about the re-writing of the Zoning Plan. Recommends sitting down and going over a proposed plan with a committee, more specifically not an outside company. Burton and Lowe agreed that these issues need to go to the Plan Commission.

Attorney Comments-nothing further

Auditor Comments-nothing further

Commissioners Comments-nothing further

A motion to adjourn was made by Burton; seconded by Curry. Carried 3-0.