

Owen County Board of Commissioners
Minutes-August 23, 2023

Meeting was called to order by President Gary Burton with the Pledge of Allegiance and Opening Prayer given. Members Present: Gary Burton, Bob Curry, and Joel Lowe. Also, attorney Dana Kerr and auditor Sheila Reeves. Public Sign in sheet attached for permanent record.

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

A motion to approve Payroll-\$2272,466.12 was made by Lowe; seconded by Curry. Carried 3-0.

A motion to approve Regular Claims-\$720,486.20 was made by Curry; seconded by Lowe. Carried 3-0.

A motion to approve Out of Cycle Claims-38,517.11 was made by Curry; seconded by Lowe. Carried 3-0.

Copies of the Payroll, Absence Balances, Monthly LOW Financial Report, and a Cumulative Docket Summary were provided for review.

Old Business-None

New Business-

A copy of the County Technology Policy 529 with a revision date of August 23, 2023, was presented and approved with a motion made by Curry; seconded by Lowe. Carried 3-0.

County Surveyor-Amy Meier presented a request to advertise for Bids to hire a surveyor to perform-complete eleven corner surveys in several sections/groups with an estimated cost of \$5000 per section. The costs associated with the project will be appropriated from the Perpetuation Fund# 1202-30100.000. The funds request will also be presented to the Council for approval. A motion to approve the request was made by Burton; seconded by Curry. Carried 3-0. Copies of the Project Proposal and Bid Letter to be sent are available for review.

Opioid Plan-Lowe had reached out to several agencies to present "Plans" for consideration. To date he has only received from two departments. He will be reaching out again and be bringing back any new proposals to the next meeting for final consideration. The Annual Survey-Report is due September 15th.

ARPA Funds Review-Burton reviewed the current Fund Balances including the Interest monies that were available for projects. Following discussions, the following Items were approved and will be presented to Council for appropriations:

Motion made be Lowe; seconded by Curry for Reimbursement to Council for the initial payment for the Coroners Van in the amount of \$46406.25. Motion carried 3-0.

A motion was made by Burton; seconded by Curry to appropriate \$18000 to the 2024 Rural Transit Budget that had been requested by Chris Myers. Motion carried 3-0.

A presentation from Bruce Hamlin and Jack White was given regarding the County Tornado Siren Systems. It was agreed that the most important request at this time was the encoder. It was related that the Spencer Town Council has agreed to pay half of the ECS Proposal that was given. A motion was made by Burton; seconded by Curry to appropriate one-half in the amount of \$21332.50. Motion carried 3-0. The Sirens proposal will be discussed at their next meeting with an estimated cost of \$372850.

Burton related that during the budget hearings it was discussed to increase the County portion of employee Life Insurance to \$25000 and Long-term Disability. A motion to improve the increase was made by Curry; seconded by Lowe. Motion carried 3-0.

Attorney Dana Kerr presented two properties for consideration of Tax Deeds as abutting landowners per IC 36-1-11-5.9. As required the Building Administrator will send notice to all adjacent property owners accepting offers to purchase in a sealed bid to be received by September 7th @4pm and will be opened on September 8th @10am in the Building Department. The properties referenced in resolutions are for Forsythe Lane and Wilson Village. Copies available upon request. Motion to approve was made by Curry; seconded by Lowe. Carried 3-0.

Highway Department-Greg Melton presented the following:

Requested to advertise Bid Proposals for Bridge #138 Sutton Road/Fall Creek. He noted that the culvert will be replaced prior to the bridge repair. The estimated cost will be between \$200000-\$230000 and paid from the Cumulative Bridge Fund. A motion to approve was made by Lowe; seconded by Curry. Carried 3-0.

He next presented a request to purchase a Chip Sealer in the amount of \$20000. A motion to approve the purchase and process out of cycle was made by Curry; seconded by Lowe. Carried 3-0.

He related that due to the extreme heat warnings that employees' duties were being adjusted to assure they were being safe. Extra water, coolers and towel wraps were also supplied.

Cold Mix was still be used on road repairs. Melton explained the process, used Bethsedeas Road as an example. They would be out on Kirby Road today pending heat temperatures. Burton agreed the cold mix was a great option and to be patient while the product settles in.

Attorney was to prepare paperwork to vacate Davis Drive.

Melton read for the record per INDOT, all Roads that have had mileage added/reduced for record. Copies of all Roads presented are available upon request.

Copies of Letters for Detours had been received from INDOT for the pending closure of State Highway 43.

A motion to sign the Letter-State Ferry Road to Felton Rd was made by Burton; seconded by Curry. Carried 3-0.

The second Letter-Little Flock was approved with a motion made by Curry; seconded by Lowe. Carried 3-0.

The acceptance of these Letters allows Melton to file for reimbursement from the State for any local expenses incurred due to their project.

No Elected Officials/Department comments were made.

Public Comments-

Jeff Marks commented regarding the recent conversation about "Loggers/Logging". Burton-nothing has been adopted, only general conversation to come up with a process to protect county roads. Kerr related consideration of permits, approved routes, driveway permits, and licensed/bonded. Steve Fox was present and wanted to offer his opposition. Again, the Board assured them this was all still in discussion stage only.

Bruce Hamlin wanted to add to the Siren issue his sincere thanks to Kathleen Lamb, Jack White, and Suzanne Simmerman for all their hard work and dedication on the project that had been presented.

Auditor Comments-Reeves noted that Open Enrollment dates had been set for October 25th & 26th for all county employees. Online enrollment will be open through November 9th.

Attorney Comments

A letter of request had been received from Pam Rogers regarding Kelley Farm Place, Kelley Farm Lane, and Kelley Farm Drive for determination of the roads; County or Private. A motion was made by Curry; seconded by Lowe relating that the determination was they are Private Roads and allowing for Commissioner Burton to sign the Letter. Carried 3-0.

Copies of ADA Resolutions and Plans were presented, reviewed, and read by Kerr. A motion to approve Resolution 2023-009 adopting an ADA Transition Plan was made by Curry; seconded by Lowe. Carried 3-0.

A motion to approve Resolution 2023-010 adopting a Title VI Implementation Plan was made by Curry;

seconded by Lowe. Carried 3-0. Continued work, updates, and training will be given for compliance.

Following advertising, copies will be provided to all departments and a meeting will be held to review the plans.

Copies of all Plans are available upon request.

Commissioner Comments-

Burton related there has been conversation regarding Solar Farms with Hoosier Energy, Duke and Marce King. Further discussion, possible options will be explored and presented later.

Next was discussion regarding of a new-proposed Jail Facility. Burton related that he, Sheriff White, and others had toured the Fulton County Facility and was encouraged with the Building Structure and potential options that could accommodate several departments all under one roof. Council members Polly Chesser and Steve Carrell were to go on Friday to tour it also. Sheriff White related that the necessity for space was needed for many aspects of operations. He presented an example of the recent incident in the county and having multiple agencies in a room that was overloaded, and storage space to allow the purchasing of Bulk Items for cost savings. Lowe wanted it noted that this was not a reflection on the past sheriff, agreed that expenditures are outrageous, and continued Band-Aid fixes aren't helping. He added he was embarrassed for families coming to see their loved ones in a garage. Also noted was the need for property to accommodate the size of the facility would need to be 4 ½ to 5 acres, with a possible site just west of town owned by Verl Keith. Public-Sam Hobbs wanted it known that this has been going on for twelve years and not one time has it ever been proposed to house "all"; only build a jail. The cost wasn't affordable at \$20 million and now we're at \$30-35 million. Reminded them that a Tax had been implemented and nothing is being saved toward it and needs to be addressed as well. Polly Chesser asked for better communication to keep everyone in the loop and determine affordability. Burton offered a Joint Work Session with Commissioners, Council, Sheriff, Zeurner, RQAW, and Jeff Peters to be scheduled on September 19th @6pm. Reeves will publish the notice for a work session.

Due to circumstances, it was agreed to change the September 5th meeting date to September 11th @9am.

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

**All Copies of Items-Ordinances, Resolutions, Policies, Documents that were submitted for review/consideration/approval are available upon written request per Public Records Request.