
Gibson County Board of Commissioners
Regular Session
February 06, 2024

The Gibson County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on February 06, 2024, at 4:45 p.m. at the North Annex Meeting Room.

Prayer was led by President Montgomery followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Members Present: President Warren Fleetwood, Vice-President, Kenneth Montgomery, and Commissioner Nick Burns.

MINUTES: The minutes from the January 23, 2024, meeting were approved as presented. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve minutes, seconded by Commissioner Burns. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

CLAIMS: Total claims in the amount of \$1,713,823.75 were presented. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve claims, seconded by Commissioner Burns. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

Department Reports

Sheriff Vanoven reported that the average jail population was running around 86. Sheriff Vanoven also gave an employee report and told Commissioners they have four open Dispatch positions; two part time dispatchers have been hired to help with the shortage; there are six jail openings; one opening in Field Officer, and Facility Officer; and two open Deputy positions. Sheriff Vanoven gave a report of “We Do Great Things” where a dangerous person was removed off the street without anyone getting hurt.

Health Administrator Shade gave reports to Commissioners on her December and January Statistics. She requested permission to hire a new nurse as the current nurse is moving into a new position of Educator/Counselor. Commissioner Montgomery made the motion to approve this new hire, seconded by Commissioner Burns. The vote was 3-0.

January was suicide awareness month; Administrator Shade reminded everyone that if in need of a resource, there is a 988 number you can text or call. Gibson County is ranked #72 out of 92 counties in the state for suicide, which leaves only 20 counties with a higher rate of suicide.

Highway Department – Superintendent Johnson reported that he and Michael Stevenson from SJCA did a quarterly report with INDOT in which they found a glitch on a prior Community Crossing Matching Grant closeout; they feel this situation has been rectified. They hope in March, they will be awarded this grant. If not granted in March, there will be another chance in July, 2024.

COMMISSIONERS OLD BUSINESS

Update on Jail Project – Owner’s Representative George Ballard told Commissioners the glass was installed for the office area; this will allow for temporary heat in the building and the ability to hang and finish drywall. The overhead doors have been installed on the sally port. The floor slabs will be poured next week, which will allow for the jail cells to be moved in March. They are working overtime on this project since they have better weather.

Update for the Well of Gibson County – Emilee Brown gave this update to Commissioners. She gave Commissioners an updated budget report and told them they have reached some monumental goals. They have established some OCU internships. They hope to establish some childcare for them as well. They have quite a few churches that are supporting the program. They are planning to partner with Safe Havens from Wabash County, IL as they want to open the need to those outside the county. They always need support; they have applied for grants and are hopeful for those to process.

Commissioner Appointment Ex-Officio School Board Member to the Redevelopment

Commission – North Gibson School Board is requesting an appointment to this Board. This position is a non-voting member of the Gibson County Redevelopment Board. David Lewis of the South Gibson School Board is resigning, Joe Williams, a member of the North Gibson School Board, will replace him. Commissioner Fleetwood motioned to appoint Joe Williams, seconded by Commissioner Burns. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

Amendment of 2024 Holiday Schedule – Attorney Spindler feels this can be removed from the agenda.

COMMISSIONERS NEW BUSINESS

Property Tax Overpayments – Auditor Watkins requested that Commissioners draft an ordinance/resolution to address property tax overpayments. He explained that currently, when someone overpays their property tax, it falls into a surplus fund and the owner is notified by mail. The surplus must be claimed by the property owner within three years by returning the signed letter. If the owner does not claim this money after three years, the County can receive this overpayment amount into their General Fund. Auditor Watkins requested this be changed so the overpayment is applied to the parcel in which the overpayment was made, thereby staying with property taxes, and not moved into the general fund. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve adopting a resolution to apply this surplus to the parcel in which the credit was derived, if it is not claimed within three years, seconded by Commissioner Burns. Attorney Spindler will draft a resolution for this.

Southwest Indiana Workforce Board Local Elected Officials Agreement – Sara Worstell, representative from the Workforce Development requested Commissioners approve and sign this renewal agreement; historically, Mayor Wright has served on this board, and he would be happy to continue in this capacity.

Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve this agreement, seconded by Commissioner Burns. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

These meetings are on the 4th Friday of each month. Commissioner Burns told fellow commissioners he could be the representative on this board.

A Gibson County Jobapalooza was a large job fair which hosted employers and resource organizations for people to use for help in seeking jobs. Workforce One is now located at Hub 127. They have recently had 16 job placements. Attorney Spindler asked if the county makes contributions to this organization; they do not receive county money; only federal, state, and philanthropic monies.

Change of Polling Locations for Princeton/Patoka Township – Clerk Sherri Smith told

Commissioners they want to change polling locations in the city of Princeton for a couple of reasons. The Commissioner's office plans to move out of the north annex, so they will no longer be able to access this polling location; the city of Princeton has requested they move from the Princeton City Building. Since they are moving these two polling locations, they have decided to move all Patoka Township polling locations at the same time. Thus, they also wish to also move the White Church polling location due to

parking constraints. They would like to move all Princeton/Patoka Township polling locations to the fairgrounds Toyota Events Center and 4-H Center. If approved by Commissioners, they will start publishing this change, so everyone is aware of the polling location changes. Both fairground facilities have plenty of parking. They will soon be making site visits to create their emergency action plans for the polling locations.

Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve the new polling locations, seconded by Commissioner Burns. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

Citizen Comments – Commissioner Fleetwood reminded everyone of the 2-minute time limit to voice concerns and a clock that will keep track of this time limit. All commentors must approach the podium, state their name and address.

Patti Vanoven with Gibson County Chamber of Commerce invited all elected officials and those running for office to a political forum on March 16, 2024 to speak about their campaigns. She requested that reservations to speak be made by calling the office to schedule their time.

Attorney Spindler circulated a list of changes Commissioners are considering regarding the solar ordinance. One of the proposed changes would be a change to the 25' setback from any non-participating landowner; he proposes moving that setback to a distance provided by the Commissioners.

Kent Martin, residing at 9295 W 450 S, Owensville requests to know the number of solar panels that will be placed; Attorney Spindler responded that he knew the acreage was approximately 1200 acres, but a definitive number of panels could not be answered.

Mr. Martin asked if the solar companies would be providing product data sheets or MSDS sheets on the panels that are being installed. Attorney Spindler has not seen this information.

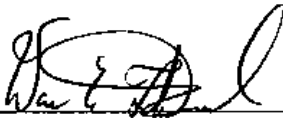
Mr. Martin asked what precautions would be taken to protect well water. Attorney Spindler does not know how/if the panels will impact well water.

Mr. Martin feels it is factual that the two-mile radius in Princeton was protected from the solar panels; he does not understand why those outside the two-mile radius did not receive the same protection.

Mr. Martin wonders if setbacks will be increased, which he now sees how this might be changing after seeing the proposed changes to setbacks circulated earlier by Attorney Spindler.

With no further discussions, Commissioner Montgomery motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Burns. The vote to adjourn was 3-0.

Minutes from the February 06, 2024 Meeting.



Warren Fleetwood, President



Kenneth Montgomery, Vice President



Nick Burns, Commissioner



ATTEST: Mike Watkins, Auditor
Kristy York, First Deputy