
Gibson County Board of Commissioners
Regular Session
May 3, 2023

The Gibson County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on May 3, 2023, at 6:00 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 Kenneth Montgomery, Vice-President, Nick Burns and Commissioner Warren Fleetwood

MINUTES: The minutes from the April 18, 2023, meeting were approved as presented. Commissioner Burns motioned to approve minutes, seconded by Commissioner Fleetwood. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

CLAIMS: Total Claims Presented on 5/03/2023 were \$1,580,206.85. Commissioner Fleetwood motioned to approve claims, except the GIS Director’s payroll, as the new hire has not been approved by the Commissioners as an appointment, seconded by Commissioner Montgomery. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

Clerk/Treasurer Reports were acknowledged by the Commissioners.

Department Reports

Health Department - Administrator Shade gave the department reports to Commissions. There are new COVID vaccination guidelines. On May 18, 2023, the Health Department will be at the OC Library where they will talk about Narcan administration. The Governor’s Health Commissioner has been passed, but there are stipulations, and she would like to discuss this plan with Commissioners before they sign the agreement.

Sheriff Department – Sheriff Vanoven gave Commissioners the April reports and told them the average daily population is coming in at 86. Sheriff Vanoven discussed their statistics and calls they have been working. He said 911 year to date calls are over 5,000. They have 190 active warrants. Yesterday, they traveled to Indianapolis to pick up 10 new vehicles; 8 of these were paid for through the ARPA Grant. Sheriff Vanoven thanked everyone involved for this purchase.

Animal Services – Sharon Weme told everyone they found a foster home that might adopt a dog in need from the last meeting. George Pickersgill received a phone call from a local Veteran about a dog the Veteran had left at home while on a bike ride. The Veteran was involved in a bike wreck and ended up being admitted to the hospital; Animal Service has been going to the Veteran’s house to take care of the dog. May 20, 2023, at 1:00 p.m., Princeton Vet Clinic will help sponsor a clinic for low/fixed income citizens where they will do a check of the animal and give them their vaccinations for \$20. She advised those interested to call the shelter and register so the veterinarians are prepared and know how much medicine to get out of the refrigerator. They recently had sewage backup at the building; so, they were closed to the public for those repairs.

COMMISSIONERS OLD BUSINESS

Update on Jail Project – Owner’s Representative George Ballard told Commissioners they are still working on the solar project. They will start pouring a concrete pad on Site B next week.

INDOT Contract R-39768 (Des # 1593061) – Engineer Holden presented the contract in the amount of \$147,568.50; INDOT will pay the County for damages on this detour route and then the County can make the necessary repairs. Commissioner Fleetwood asked if he was 100% sure everything had been taken care of.

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

COMMISSIONERS NEW BUSINESS

New Hire – Purdue Extension Agency requests permission to replace a resigned employee.

Commissioner Fleetwood asked if he could set in on the interviews.

Commissioner Fleetwood motioned to approve replacing this resigned employee, seconded by Commissioner Burns. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

Temporary Credit Card Increase – Auditor Watkins requested that Commissioners allow him to make a temporary limit increase on the credit card for Magistrate Ricker. Magistrate Ricker would like an increase of up to \$25,000. This purchase will be paid from ARPA funds, if the credit card limit increase is approved. Commissioner Fleetwood motioned to approve the limit increase, seconded by Commissioner Burns. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

Approval of EREP/RDA – Jenna Richardt, Chief Regional Economic Development Officer thanked Commissioners for their prior commitments. She requested that Tim Hollander be reappointed to their board. Commissioner Burns motioned to approve this appointment, seconded by Commissioner Fleetwood. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

Fireworks Sponsorship – Hannah Whitehead, Director of DPI was present to request that Commissioners provide sponsorship for the July 4th Fireworks Display. Princeton City donates \$1,000 per year and the remainder comes from businesses. They charge \$2 for parking, which gets them started on next year's show. Some businesses also solicit donations for this show. They have used the same firework vendor for the past 3 years and have no plans to change this, as the vendor helped them out when they did not have the money to put on the show. They need the donations before July 4th. Commissioner Fleetwood motioned to table this donation request, seconded by Commissioner Burns until Administrative Assistant Adams can find the money in the budget.

Building Committee – Commissioner Burns requested a new Committee be formed to help with all the projects moving forward within the County; He would like to see 6-7 people on the committee and include all commissioners, a representative from Council, and Prosecutor Cochran. He would like to get this Committee formed as soon as possible so they can have their first meeting on Thursday, May 11 at 4 p.m. Commissioner Fleetwood, motioned to form the committee with three Commissioners, an ex-officio member of Prosecutor Cochran, and a nonvoting member such as a person aware of the project. He feels this person might change when new projects are added, seconded by Commissioner Montgomery. Attorney Spindler recommended if the committee is an even number to make one of the members ex-officio, nonvoting member. The vote was 3-0.

Battle of Badges Blood Drive - Sheriff Vanoven told everyone this upcoming blood drive will be held on May 23, 2023.

Proclamation for National Corrections Officers Week – May 7-13, 2023, is National Corrections Officers Week. Sheriff Vanoven presented this proclamation to Commissioners. Commissioner Burns motioned to approve this proclamation, seconded by Commissioner Fleetwood. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

Proclamation for Law Enforcement Week - May 14-20, 2023, is National Police Week and May 15, 2023, is Peace Officer Memorial Day. A proclamation was presented to Commissioners. Commissioner Burns motioned to approve this proclamation, seconded by Commissioner Fleetwood. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0. A moment of silence was observed for all fallen officers.

Major Medical Leave (3) was approved by the Commissioners with a motion from Commissioner Fleetwood seconded by Commissioner Burns. The vote was 3-0.

Agreement on the Federal Lawsuit – Attorney Spindler requested Commissioners approve the agreement regarding a federal lawsuit dating back some years, over the County procedurally issuing citations incorrectly. The lawsuit has been negotiated between the parties involved. The settlement agreement does not acknowledge wrongdoing by the County. Commissioner Fleetwood motioned to approve the agreement, seconded by Commissioner Burns. The vote was 3-0.

GIS Payroll – Auditor Watkins brought back the motion to not pay the new GIS Director from the beginning of the meeting. He explained that payroll had already been released and he wonders how Commissioners would like that handled. Attorney Spindler feels the newly hired GIS Director worked and should be paid. Auditor Watkins then asked who will notify this person that he has not officially been hired. Commissioner Fleetwood feels that Surveyor Martin is aware this item must come before the Commissioners for approval. Auditor Watkins wonders if this position is an appointment, as for two years, this position was not on the appointment listing. Commissioner Fleetwood feels this was a typo and he feels certain this is an appointment. Auditor Watkins reviewed a timeline in which emails were sent apprising Commissioners of the resignation of the GIS Director and the need to fill the position and how a committee was being formed to interview and an invite extended to the Commissioners to help in this process. Commissioner Fleetwood feels the bottom line is this is an appointment, and he feels this should be re-advertised and new interviews should be held. Commissioner Burns is unsure how to move forward. Attorney Spindler will tell the GIS Director that he will be paid for his work, but Commissioners have not approved him to be hired; thus, he is on an interim basis. Commissioner Fleetwood feels like there was only one candidate, but it was never approved by Commissioners. Commissioner Burns feels Surveyor Martin needs to be notified how this process should be done; but also feels the newly hired GIS Director should keep his job as he has the qualifications. Commissioner Fleetwood feels this is the Commissioner's interview and appointment and this should be advertised locally, and he hopes Gibson County citizens apply for the job. Commissioner Burns wonders about the proper way to handle this situation; he feels the position might be difficult to fill because he does not know anyone with a GIS background. Commissioner Fleetwood feels another factor to consider is that neither Posey nor Pike has a GIS Director. He feels this needs to be considered, as he wonders if this could be outsourced to an engineering firm. He thinks they need time to think about these things. Commissioner Montgomery would like the newly hired GIS Director to know he will be a part of the interview process. Commissioner Burns wonders about the process timeframe. Attorney Spindler feels the Commissioners have three options. The first would be to stay with current actions. Option two would table the discussion and reconvene in executive session or a special meeting for this purpose only. Option three is to ratify and approve what has been done thus far. Attorney Spindler requested clear instruction on what he should tell this employee. Commissioner Fleetwood wants to know who interviewed and contacted the GIS Director that was hired. He feels these people need to notify the GIS Director. He does not feel it is up to the Commissioners to notify him. Commissioner Burns feels something needs to be done fast and the right procedures should be used moving forward. Commissioner Fleetwood feels the parties involved should tell him he is a candidate; the department head should decide if this person be allowed to continue as an interim employee. Commissioner Burns does not feel it is right to leave this person hanging on whether he has employment or not. Commissioner Montgomery feels he should be kept where he is. Commissioner Fleetwood feels if they permit this, they are allowing other people to play the executive role. He feels the employment should have been vetted through the Commissioners and he feels there is strong legal support for this. Commissioner Montgomery explained that Commissioners do not have any say over EMS hires or other departments, and he feels the GIS Director

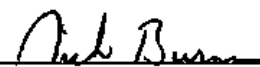
works for the Surveyor and Assessor. Commissioner Fleetwood says GIS has a separate budget and Commissioners should vet this appointment. Commissioner Burns asked if Commissioners get involved in the Sheriff Department hiring; the answer was no; nor do Commissioners get involved in Health Department hiring. Commissioner Fleetwood stated that there was only one candidate, and he felt the interview was held before the advertisement, he does not like the look of this. He feels Commissioners owe this to the Gibson County Taxpayers. He feels the job should be open to Gibson County residents; he has had someone contact him with interest in the position. He says he is not against anyone but wants this done the correct way. Commissioner Fleetwood will present the rest of his timeline if they want to move forward with approving the interim GIS Director. If other Commissioners agree to Commissioner Fleetwood's stance, he will not go into the timeline. Commissioner Fleetwood and the Commissioner's Administrative Assistant will create a job description, as he also feels there was a problem with the job description. He feels the GIS Director used to help with the Commissioner's meeting videos and that description was not listed in the job description advertised. Commissioner Montgomery feels it needs to be advertised and Commissioners need to move forward quickly. Commissioner Montgomery told Auditor Watkins to tell this interim person that he should stay in touch as he has the qualifications for the job. The Chamber of Commerce offered to post the job advertisement on facebook and the chamber website.

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

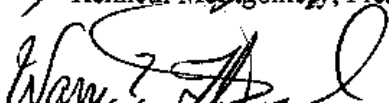
Minutes from the May 3, 2023 Meeting.



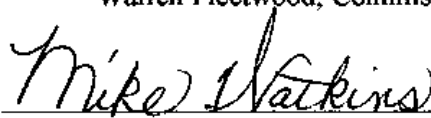
Kenneth Montgomery, President



Nick Burns, Vice President



Warren Fleetwood, Commissioner



ATTEST: Mike Watkins, Auditor