
Gibson County Board of Commissioners
Regular Session
February 20, 2024

The Gibson County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on February 20, 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 February 06, 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 \$1,879,649.69 were presented by President Fleetwood. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve claims, seconded by Commissioner Burns. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

Department Reports

The Treasurer’s December and January reports were submitted for Commissioner acknowledgment. The Clerk’s November and December reports were also submitted for Commissioner acknowledgment. Commissioners acknowledged all reports.

Health Administrator Shade told Commissioners the Indiana Health Alert is reporting some counties finding rabies in skunks; she advised the public to report abnormal animal behaviors to DNR. Also, respiratory illness is on the rise; she advised to please stay home if experiencing symptoms to slow/stop the spread.

COMMISSIONERS OLD BUSINESS

ARPA Project Approvals – ARPA Administrator, Debbie Bennett Stearsman was absent; Attorney Spindler presented projects the CORE Group has recommended. The projects they are seeking approval on are:

- 1) 1 new, all-wheel drive vehicle for the Assessor’s Office @ \$50,000
- 2) 2 new 8000-watt heaters for the courthouse basement entryways @ \$5,794
- 3) Labor to install flooring previously purchased for Auditor’s Office @ \$5,000
- 4) Update county elevations to tie into the GIS @ \$43,191.20
- 5) Clean out Pigeon Creek/Hurricane Ditch @ \$30,000 – Commissioner Burns would like to modify this item so each of the three Commissioner’s districts can acquire \$30,000 for ditch cleaning. They will take this back to the ARPA Core Group.

Commissioner Burns motioned to approve the list provided by Attorney Spindler with item #2 being modified to \$5974, seconded by Commissioner Montgomery. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

Bid Opening for North Annex Renovations to move Prosecutor’s Office – Attorney Spindler opened the bids for this project.

Bid 1 J Koberstein Construction, Princeton	\$653,324.75
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Bid 2	Empire, Evansville	\$563,460.00
Bid 3	Danco, Evansville	\$683,700.00
Bid 4	Garmong, Evansville	\$573,300.00

Attorney Spindler recommended the Commissioners take the bid packets under advisement for action at the first meeting in March.

Commissioner Burns made this motion, seconded by Commissioner Montgomery. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

Downtown Princeton, Inc. (DPI) – President of DPI, Hannah Whitehead requested that Commissioners duplicate last year’s \$3500 annual contribution to the non-profit organization. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve the annual contribution, seconded by Commissioner Burns. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

Resolution 2024-01 Changing Polling Locations in Princeton/Patoka Township – Attorney Spindler presented a resolution to reflect the change that was approved at the February 6, 2024 meeting. The resolution changes polling locations of Patoka 1 and 6 from the North Annex to the 4-H Exhibit Building at Gibson County Fairgrounds. It changes polling locations for voters in Patoka 2 and 3 from the Princeton Municipal Building to the Toyota Events Center at Gibson County Fairgrounds. It also changes polling locations of Patoka 12 from White Church Fire Station to the Toyota Events Center at Gibson County Fairgrounds.

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

COMMISSIONERS NEW BUSINESS

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.

Robert Schmits – requested that Commissioner(s) attend the CenterPoint Rate Hike Hearing on Thursday at 2:00 p.m. at the Locust Room of the Old National Events Plaza. He feels the Commissioners should oppose this rate hike for Gibson County citizens. Nick Burns plans to attend. Attorney Spindler asked if anyone else plans to attend to let him know.

Patty Vanoven, Director of Gibson County Chamber of Commerce announced a ribbon cutting on 3/2/24 for the Women’s Addiction Solution Center; it will be held at Studio 516. She also invited all current elected officials and all those running for an office to attend the political forum/Ag Breakfast on March 16, 2024; the breakfast begins at 6 a.m., the forum will begin at 8 a.m. All speakers must register; they will be given a two-minute block of time to speak. To register go online to Gibson County Chamber of Commerce or call the chamber office.

Randy Hall (has Princeton address but lives closer to Francisco). He wanted to make the Commissioners aware of a problem with the Francisco Fire department; he does not feel the department is being manned. He would also like to report concerns about the health department moving into the new EMS building. He does not feel the parking lot is big enough and feels it is a safety concern to combine these departments. He does not feel the Prosecutor Office should move into the north annex; he feels Commissioners should remain in the building.

Kent Martin requested to be on the March 5th agenda as they need more than two minutes to speak.

Shannon lives in Princeton and requests the County put a hold on the solar project until answers with proof are provided. She requested increased setbacks for the project. She feels a project of this

magnitude deserves more time for consideration as it will affect a lot of people now and for many generations. She feels there have been decisions made without transparency, knowledge or understanding that impact human life, wildlife, and climate change. She hopes that after tonight, the Commissioners can prove they will work in the best interest of Gibson County residents. She does not feel the approved drainage plan for the project follows the county ordinance. She would like to know the setback area for wellhead protection. She requests this project be moved away from her parents back yard and into the Commissioner's back yard or into the farmer's backyards that are leasing the ground. She feels you should respect your neighbor; thus, this project deserves respect and due diligence. She again urged Commissioners to stop, delay or move the project out of residential areas. She wonders about the construction timeframe. She also wonders why the County Surveyor was removed from the project.

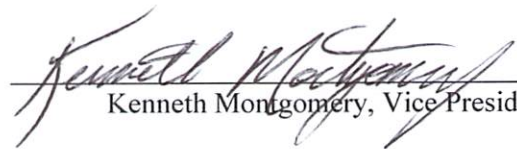
Brad Martin lives at 950 W in Owensville; his parents live at 350 S in Princeton. He has ongoing requests regarding this solar project and asked to be put onto all agendas moving forward. He also requests a larger venue be acquired if the current venue cannot hold everyone and a special meeting outside the regular meeting. He also feels the drainage plan does not meet the county ordinance guidelines and he told Commissioners that a moratorium can be requested by Commissioners to pause the project. He feels other counties are moving setbacks to 500' from property lines; some are even moving them out 1000'. He worries that the first project will be set in stone and set precedents for future projects. He feels the people need to be supported in Gibson County to protect property value.

With no other public commentors coming forward, Commissioner Burns motioned to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Montgomery. The vote to adjourn was 3-0.

Minutes from the February 20, 2024 Meeting.



Warren Fleetwood, President



Kenneth Montgomery, Vice President



Nick Burns, Commissioner



ATTEST: Mike Watkins, Auditor