
Gibson County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
May 21, 2024

The Gibson County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on May 21, 2024, at 4:45 p.m. at the North Annex Meeting Room.

Prayer was led by Vice 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 April 16, 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 that should have been presented on 05/08/2024 were \$2,861,201.44 and on 5/21/2024 were \$2,259,513.03.

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

Clerk/Treasurer Reports were acknowledged by the Commissioners.

Department Reports

The Auditor's office requested a signature on the ARPA report and highway garage report. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve both reports, seconded by Commissioner Burns. The vote was 3-0.

Sheriff Vanoven presented the reports to Commissioners and reported the average daily population of incarcerated inmates is 90. The employment reports show there is one Deputy position open out of nineteen, but it has been filled. Of these nineteen deputies, there are three in the field training, two working investigations, and the Sheriff and Chief Deputy Ballard both work administrative duties, however, have recently been working the roads due to the shortage in the area. This leaves nine out of the nineteen working on the roads. He reminded the Commissioners that these Deputies are always in training, or they could request FMLA, which will create shortages on the roads; they have School Resource Officers and retired officers on a part-time basis to fill openings. In the jail, there are twenty-one budgeted positions, they currently have four openings. In dispatch, they have nine budgeted positions and need three; they are substituting part-time people in this area. Sheriff Vanoven reminded Commissioners they have some vehicles they would like to auction.

Health Department Administrator Shade gave the department reports to Commissions. Administrator Shade has new money from the State to fund new health department initiatives. She has discussed this information with the Council and received their approval. They were originally going to hire a part-time employee and a billing specialist. They have redirected and now have plans to hire one full-time person to work in the front office. She has the money in the budget to cover this expense. The Commissioners are okay with this plan. She has plans to hire a nurse because the nurse recently hired did not work out. She also plans to hire an Educator, as the nurse that planned to take this position now plans to continue in the role as nurse until she retires. She will have to advertise for the Educator and the front office position. Next, she has two old funds that the state is migrating away from, and they both have balances. The State has approved the use of these funds to purchase a new vehicle. The Commissioners are okay with this purchase. They plan to purchase a small SUV type vehicle so they can haul supplies if needed. Attorney Spindler can assist in the vehicle bidding process. Commissioner Burns motioned to approve this purchase, seconded by Commissioner Montgomery. The vote was 3-0.

Animal Shelter Representative Sharon Werne was present to discuss their most recent events. The shelter is still very full, and they encouraged the public to consider fostering animals to make space for other animals. The car show, which is the biggest fund raiser of the year, will be held on June 8th at Lafayette Park.

Park Department report was given by President Michael Stevenson; they recently held a vendor fair that had a good turnout; they intend to do more events in the future, including a fishing tournament.

Michael also gave a report on behalf of SJCA as he has been working with the Highway Department in their absence of an Engineer. He reported that he has been working with the new Superintendent on the Community Crossing Grant; they will work on finalizing bid documents soon. He feels contractors will probably have the paving complete by the end of October. They will aim for July 2, 2024 or sooner to open those bids.

COMMISSIONERS OLD BUSINESS

Update on Jail Project – Owner’s Representative George Ballard told Commissioners the live feed on the jail project will move so people can start getting a better view again. The project is approximately 80% complete; they are still painting, and new air handlers are installed. They will shut down the kitchen around the first part of June so they can finish the new kitchen; this will change the way they do their meals for about 60 days. They will do an open house and tours soon and before it becomes fully operational.

Cumulative Fire Fund for OMTFPD – Jeff Roberts, Billy Ross and Georgia Straw were present from OMTFPD to answer any questions on this new fire fund. OMTFPD must have a resolution from the Commissioners supporting this new fund. The rate for this fund is \$.0333. The Commissioners requested they circulate a petition to see how many people support this new tax. They would like to see a substantial number of people in support before they approve it. Commissioners ask them to return to the meeting as soon as possible with this petition. OMTFPD feels the paperwork must be turned into the state before May 31, 2024. Attorney Spindler recommended this be tabled for the moment and they will return to discuss this subject more.

BCS Annual Contract – Jason Buchanon, BCS Representative was present to review the annual contracts with Commissioners. They maintain the fire alarm for the Courthouse, the security and access control; telephone systems, and audio/visual, panic buttons, and the Probation Office. He is presenting the contracts for all those systems. The fire alarm contract allows monitoring of the Courthouse smoke detectors via cellular, and internet. The smoke detectors alarm an outside company that will dispatch fire to the scene. The first year of monitoring was free, the cost will now go to \$45 per month. The second item is the fire alarm system inspection agreement, which is required by law. If smoke detectors go bad, this agreement provides replacements. The proposal prepared for the Courthouse Monitoring is an annual agreement, not a 60-month agreement. The next agreement covers the CCTV, surveillance, the access control, telephone system, audio/visual for jail, courtrooms, and community corrections, and panic buttons in the Probation Office. The Sheriff and Jail Staff have told Commissioners they have to have this contract. Commissioner Fleetwood feels it is important to move forward on two of these agreements, Attorney Spindler approved their moving forward on annual contracts.

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

Commissioner Fleetwood asked Mr. Buchanon to note that the new Commissioner Building would need some cameras installed and the North Annex is going to transform into the Prosecutor’s Office. Mr. Buchanon told Commissioners about the metal detector conveyor belt in the basement courthouse having an agreement with two options. Commissioner Fleetwood was unable to get any answers to questions because BCS has no knowledge about this equipment.

East TIF Road Paving Bid Opening – Attorney Spindler and a Representative from Three I Engineering opened two bids.

E&B Paving	\$1,204,032.00
JH Rudolph	\$1,233,260.67

Attorney Spindler told Commissioners they can take bid under advisement until the next meeting, or award the bid to the lowest, most responsible and responsive bidder contingent upon engineering and legal approval. Commissioner Fleetwood would like to see Commissioners award this to the lowest bidder, contingent upon engineering and legal approval. Commissioner Burns motioned to approve the low bid, seconded by Commissioner Montgomery. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

Ride Solution Agreement – Becky Guthrie of Ride Solutions was present with more information for Commissioners to try and get 2025 funding. INDOT wanted her to stress that this is a county-wide transportation system, not a city. The 5311 Grant is for county funding; thus, the county must commit to this funding to be eligible for the grant. They currently have over 200 individuals using Ride Solutions and some daily. The County had provided Ride Solutions with a letter saying they would not commit to any funding in 2025. She wants to make clear how important this service is for the residents of Gibson County. Attorney Spindler feels the Commissioners can approve the resolution as presented. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Burns. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0. Commissioner Fleetwood feels the Commissioners are giving Ride Solutions their full support, but requests that going forward, they try to include other communities and stakeholders as they do wish to continue this service in the County and hope that others will feel the service is important enough to contribute. Ms. Guthrie explained that the state and federal funding is based on the county's contribution. The Health Department feels they might be able to assist with this funding as they recognize the importance of this transportation.

Commissioner Burns exited the meeting at 5:44 p.m.

COMMISSIONERS NEW BUSINESS

Gibson County Bridge #74 Inspection Agreement – United Engineering Representatives Marc and Brian, were on hand to discuss this agreement. The project is nearing its final steps before the bidding process begins. INDOT has approved the agreement and awaits Commissioners signatures. This process started back in 2019 and will finally go under construction in 2025; these federal bridge projects are 6-year projects. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve the agreement, seconded by Commissioner Fleetwood. With no further discussion, the motion carried 2-0.

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.

Janet Heitz, a resident of Princeton, was present to support Ride Solutions. She uses this transportation often, because she cannot drive, nor does she have family to help her. Commissioners reiterated their support of the program.

Randy Hall, resident of Princeton, wonders if anyone is checking on fiber optics installations. He is concerned that the boxes are in the ditches and in farmers' fields. Commissioner Fleetwood has made phone calls to get the boxes moved and they were cooperative. He gave Commissioner Fleetwood another location of a pole and a box in a ditch. Commissioner Fleetwood will call and tell them to relocate them. He will share the contact information with Mr. Hall. Mr. Hall thanked Commissioner's for hiring Jerry Heldt as Highway Superintendent.

Larry Michel, resident of Gibson County, said he has dealt with the installers of fiber optic, and they were very cooperative with him.

Gibson County Chamber of Commerce Director Patty Vanoven reiterated the importance of fiber optics in the County. The CEO tradeshow, which showcases entrepreneurship of high school students, is happening now at

the Princeton Theatre and she invited everyone to support the young adults participating in this tradeshow. They will have a double ribbon cutting on May 28th at 10:00 at Oakland City for Wag Your Teal Boutique and Three Birds of a Feather.

A driver for Ride Solutions appreciates the Commissioners support but wonders if Commissioners could provide a listing of places, they should request support. Commissioner Fleetwood suggested they turn to the County's website for the city/town's phone numbers and addresses. Commissioners feel they have provided the funding for 2024; in 2025, Ride Solutions would like to know as soon as possible how much the county will contribute. In 2026, Ride Solutions needs to try to get others to contribute aside from just the County.

The Commissioners called the OMTFPD back to the podium. Attorney Spindler explained that Commissioners do want a petition signed by state voters in the community showing support for this tax. He does not feel this will push them past their deadline.

Melissa Walden, Representative from ARC Southwest Indiana, came before the Commissioners to clear up some issues regarding Ride Solutions. Ms. Walden explained that ARC removed the funding from Ride Solutions because they were not eligible to receive the money. ARC receives money from the Developmental Disabilities levy, which Ride Solutions does not qualify.

Grace Luttrell, Resident of Gibson County, representing CWM Women's Center, which is a 501c3 organization located west of Walmart in Princeton. They provide free one-on-one peer counseling for women in Gibson County and surrounding areas.

Tom White, life-long resident of Gibson County, came to speak about CR 100 W J-turn. He feels this is going to be detrimental to all county residents that live south and west of this area. He feels this will cause more deadly accidents in the county. Also, he feels it will hinder the farm community in moving equipment. Mr. White asked the Commissioners if they supported this. Commissioner Montgomery did not feel the State requested his opinion. Commissioner Fleetwood says the Commissioners have attended meetings regarding this project and they are concerned about this change; they feel this intersection should be considered an industrial intersection. Larry Michel received a call today from INDOT and he shared the phone number (815-252-6235).

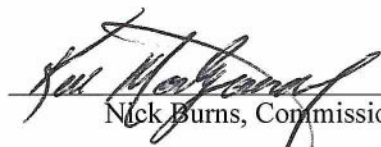
With no further discussions, Commissioner Montgomery motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Fleetwood. The vote to adjourn is 2-0.

Minutes from the May 21, 2024, Meeting.



Warren Fleetwood, President

Kenneth Montgomery, Vice President



Nick Burns, Commissioner



ATTEST: Mike Watkins, Auditor

