

**Gibson County Board of Commissioners**  
**Regular Session**  
**January 21, 2025**

The Gibson County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on January 21, 2025, at 8:00 a.m. at the Southwest Annex.

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

**Commissioners Present:** Nick Burns, Kenneth Montgomery, and Chuck Lewis

**Election of Officers** – Commissioner Montgomery nominated Commissioner Burns as the 2025 President, seconded by Commissioner Lewis. The vote was 2-0. Next Commissioner Lewis nominated Commissioner Montgomery as Vice President, seconded by Commissioner Burns. The vote was 2-0.

**Suspend Regular Meeting to Conduct Financial Meeting**

**Financial Meeting** - Financial Secretary and Treasurer O'Neal presented this report to Commissioners. The financial meeting was closed.

**Commissioners Call Regular Meeting Back to Order**

**Minutes:** The minutes from the December 17, 2024, meeting were approved as presented. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve minutes, seconded by Commissioner Burns. With no further discussion, the motion carried 2-0.

The minutes from the December 23, 2024, meeting was approved as presented. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve minutes, seconded by Commissioner Burns. With no further discussion, the motion carried 2-0.

**Claims:** Total claims presented for the 01/07/2025 cancelled meeting (due to inclement weather) were \$961,987.83; Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve these claims, seconded by Commissioner Burns. The vote was 3-0.

The claims presented on 1/21/2025 totaled \$3,578,307.26. Commissioner Lewis motioned to approve payment of these claims, seconded by Commissioner Montgomery. The vote was 3-0.

The Commissioners acknowledged the Clerk / Treasurer reports.

**Department Reports**

Chief Deputy Ballard gave the report for the Sheriff's Department. He reported that the work release center is closed this week for flooring repairs and some of the work release people have been moved back into the jail until the floor project is complete. The 17<sup>th</sup> federal report has been filed with the federal court; no news is good news. They are training in jail controls and the body scanner. The ACLU and the federal attorney will do a walk through at the new jail project. The sewer line is still waiting for repairs, as the weather is not cooperating. A staffing report was given to the Commissioners. Dispatch has only one open position and they hope by the weekend they will be fully staffed, which is the first time in a long time.

Health Department Administrator Shade gave department reports to Commissioners. She explained that everyone should be able to find a scorecard for the County at the Health First Indiana website ([in.gov/healthfirstindiana](http://in.gov/healthfirstindiana)). She told Commissioners this county's scorecard shows a need for improvement in chronic disease, tobacco cessation, and trauma and injury prevention (includes suicide prevention). The health department must have a disease intervention specialist to assist with STD testing



and lead assessments; they are requesting to partner with Vanderburgh County on these items through a Memorandum of Understanding.

Hopkins Park Board President, Michael Stevenson, reported that Abby Heidenreich has been elected as President for 2025; Michael will be the Vice President. Today, the Park Board is requesting permission to hire three part-time employees to help spread work throughout the year. Commissioner Lewis motioned to allow the hiring of three part-time employees, seconded by Commissioner Burns. The vote was 3-0.

EMS Department Representative, Arica Cole reported that Dr. Gilbert has hired someone to fill an open paramedic position plus a couple of new part-time employees, putting the department in a “fully staffed” mode.

Gibson County Soil/Water District Board Member Dennis Simpson says the GCSWD would like to try and reactivate the County’s Weed Control Board, it disbanded in the early 1990’s. He feels this would assist in getting the county’s noxious weeds under control.

He disbursed information to the Commissioners. Commissioner Lewis wondered, since it takes a license to spray, if the board was reactivated, how the spraying would be taken care of. Mr. Simpson is hopeful that through a working relationship, the highway department, state highway, utility companies, railroads, and private owners can all join in this partnership. He encouraged the Commissioners to look at the ideas presented.

Highway Superintendent Heldt says they have worked a lot of overtime due to the inclement weather. They are restocked on materials and ready to battle the next round of snow/ice.

### **COMMISSIONERS OLD BUSINESS**

**Bid Approval on Sand, Stone, Gravel, Asphalt, Bridge and Culvert Materials** - Commissioner Lewis says annually these materials are bid and historically, all legally submitted bids are approved. This gives the highway department flexibility to fulfill their needs and stay within the bid requirements. Commissioner Burns motioned to approve all legally submitted bids, seconded by Commissioner Montgomery. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

**Contract for Traffic Lights near TMMI** – Attorney Spindler says Mounts Electric is no longer in this business. Mounts Electric has provided great service, but they do not feel it was profitable for them to continue. The county has six traffic lights in the Toyota Manufacturing area that need support. Hummel Electric submitted a one-year contract. Attorney Spindler has requested that Hummel Electric reduce the contract to a three-month period until the county decides how they wish to proceed. Hummel is the only contractor known, at this time, to perform this traffic signal maintenance. Commissioner Lewis motioned to approve this three-month contract, seconded by Commissioner Burns. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

**Galea Springs / Reclamation Solar Economic Development Agreement** – Denton’s Law Firm Attorney Kyle Resetarits was present via phone; he represents the Reclamation Solar Project. Bill and Clint, Representatives from Reclamation Solar, were present. Attorney Resetarits stated that last week, the County Council approved the economic development agreement and abatement, but it is contingent upon the approval of the Commissioner’s. The economic development agreement is being presented to Commissioners in lieu of a five-year, 100% tax abatement. The document is a tri-party agreement between the project owner, the County Council and the Board of Commissioners. The economic development agreement states that \$3,300,000 will be paid to the county with a portion of this allocated to Barton Township. There is also an additional \$300,000 to be paid to Barton Township Fire Territory. All the county’s professional fees will be reimbursed up to \$90,000. There were some timing elements of these payments, and they are conditional upon the project being completed, producing and putting the





electricity on the grid. These payments could grow to \$3.75 million or above if they approve an achieved economic development agreement. Attorney Resetarits stressed to the group that they know the importance of fire safety and they have heard some needs from Barton Township Fire Territory. The project owners feel it is very important that the fire territory be prepared. They look forward to continuing to work with them and their needs; the county permit application requires meetings with the territory. Attorney Resetarits requested approval today of the economic development agreement, so they can begin construction later this year. Commissioner Lewis questioned if this is a production project versus a storage project. Attorney Resetarits confirmed the project is for production, not storage. Attorney Spindler recommended that this item be tabled, and the meeting not be adjourned so it can be reconvened on Thursday at 3:30. This adjournment will allow the solar company time to meet with Barton Fire Territory.

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

**EMS Director Positions and Titles** – AJ Alldredge and Arica Cole presented the new director concept positions and titles to the Commissioners. Arica told Commissioners they are awaiting a document from the Teamsters and the county attorney. Until everything is ironed out, the Council has requested that Arica and AJ perform the director's duties (approximately 15 hours each per week) at their overtime rate of pay. Commissioner Lewis clarified that this is an experimental situation; the possibility of overtime is being addressed; he would like to see a motion to approve the leadership/director for the EMS department with the stipulation that in six-months a performance review will be conducted and reevaluate this concept.

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

**EMS Building Update** – Commissioner Lewis is overseeing this project and reported to fellow Commissioners that a progress meeting and walk-through had been conducted with all representatives of the contractors, Arica, AJ, and EMS office staff. They identified a few changes/additions, one of the items identified to correct was the installation and lighting of a flagpole. The projected finish date could be delayed as the generator will not be delivered until May 1<sup>st</sup>, but Commissioners Lewis feels they will be moved in by this time, weather permitting.

### **COMMISSIONERS NEW BUSINESS**

**Redevelopment Commissioner Change Orders for Approval by Commissioners** – Per RDC Attorney, they want all county projects being paid for by the RDC to be acknowledged by Commissioners.

**SJCA presented Community Crossings Grant** – SJCA Representative, Michael Stevenson presented a service agreement to assist with engineering duties. The second order of business deals with the Community Crossings Matching Grant at the highway department. Attorney Spindler has reviewed the documents. Commissioner Lewis motioned to approve both contracts, seconded by Commissioner Burns. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

Mr. Stevenson explained the Community Crossing Grant application submission deadline is January 31<sup>st</sup>. He requests that Commissioners sign the financial commitment letter now so they can make the submission; the draft presented is without a number, but he requests that they approve the letter, and the numbers will be filled-in when they know them. The grant is \$1.5 million with 75% being provided by INDOT and 25% matched by the County. Commissioner Lewis motioned to approve the letter, seconded by Commissioner Montgomery. The vote was 3-0.

**GIS Professional Services with Wessler Engineering** – Surveyor Martin and John Howe with Wessler Engineering presented Commissioners with an on-call services agreement. The county is searching for a GIS employee, and until they find this person, they will request assistance from Wessler





Engineering. Surveyor Martin also told Commissioners the current version of their software is no longer being supported, and they will be updating this software. Attorney Spindler has reviewed the Wessler professional service agreement and Surveyor Martin requested Commissioner approval. Commissioner Lewis confirmed with Surveyor Martin that the county had been without a GIS director for approximately one year. The surveyor has money in his budget to cover this expense. Commissioner Lewis motioned to approve this agreement with Wessler Engineering, seconded by Commissioner Montgomery. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

**2025 Jail Contracts** – Chief Deputy Ballard presented the contract for the jail doctor; Dr. Quentin Emerson has been the doctor for 20 years and Chief Ballard requested that Commissioners approve this contract. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve the contract, seconded by Commissioner Burns. The vote was 3-0. Next, a contract was presented for the jail to use Deaconess Gibson General Hospital to treat patients. Commissioner Lewis motioned to approve this contract, seconded by Commissioner Burns. The vote was 3-0. Nurse Medical Provider with Quality Correctional Care has a current contract to work at the jail for 32 hours per week; but the new contract allows them 40 hours per week. They are also adding a weekend nurse. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve this contract, seconded by Commissioner Burns. The vote was 3-0.

**Commissioner's 2025 Appointments** – Commissioner Montgomery will take the Southwest Work Force Board; Commissioner Burns will take the E-Rep Board; Commissioner Lewis will take the former Commissioner Fleetwood's boards; Commissioner Lewis appointed Chris Shade to RDC board and Greg Harpenau to the jail building corporation board; Commissioner Montgomery appointed Larry Michel to the RDC Board; Commissioner Burns' appointment to the RDC is George Ballard. Attorney Spindler recommended that Commissioners approve the list with the above-mentioned changes and once Administrative Assistant Adams gets the list compiled, Commissioners will review and approve them in a public meeting. Commissioner Lewis made this motion, seconded by Commissioner Burns. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

**EMA Office Space** – EMA Director McKinney gave a yearend review. Commissioner Burns asked if she was able to attain a grant for the EMS generator. She was not asked to apply for a generator, but she did ask if she could apply for a grant for the EMS project. However, she was declined by the previous administration. She thanked all departments for their help during the recent inclement weather. Director McKinney proposed moving her office to the Ft. Branch Fire Second Station due to her current location having connectivity and space issues. The rental fee is the same as what the Commissioners currently pay, which is \$400 per month and includes utilities; she feels she will have more room in the new rental space. Attorney Spindler has reviewed the current contract, and he does not feel there will be penalties for breaking the rental contract. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve this new rental space for EMA, seconded by Commissioner Lewis. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

**Credit Card for EMS** – Auditor Watkins explained to Commissioners that EMS needs a credit card. Commissioners would like a credit card because all their crew supplies are ordered from Walmart online, as Walmart does not allow them to go into store and charge these items. Commissioners feel this card should be in Arica's name. Commissioner Lewis motioned to approve a credit card for EMS Director of Administrations, Arica Cole, seconded by Commissioner Montgomery. With no further discussion, the motion carried 3-0.

**Citizen Comments** – Director Vanoven from Gibson County Chamber of Commerce presented the GO GIBSON Directory to Commissioners. If anyone would like a copy, they can pick one up at the chamber office.

With no further discussions, Commissioner Lewis motioned to suspend the meeting and reconvene on Thursday at 3:30, seconded by Commissioner Montgomery. The vote to adjourn was 3-0.





**Reconvened Meeting on January 23, 2025, at 3:30 p.m.**

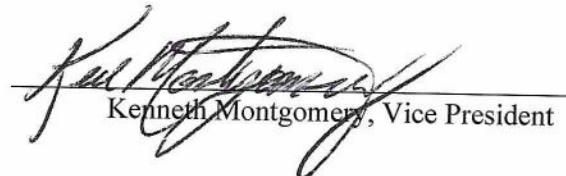
**Commissioners Present:** Nick Burns, Kenneth Montgomery, and Chuck Lewis

**Galea Springs / Reclamation Solar Economic Development Agreement** – Attorney Spindler says Reclamation Solar Representatives and Kyle Resetarits from Denton's Law Firm are all present via telephone. Attorney Spindler says since Tuesday's suspended meeting, they have been refining the economic development agreement details. The major terms of the EDA are that the solar project will pay the County \$4,000,000 over a 10-year period. This includes \$600,000 that will be paid to Barton Township Fire Territory. They will receive \$600,000 the first 2 years with one-half disbursed each year. Attorney Resetarits extended his appreciation for everyone's contributions. They then offered to answer questions. There were no questions, thus Attorney Spindler asked for a motion. Commissioner Lewis motioned to approve the economic development agreement in the amount of \$4,000,000 with \$600,000 going to Barton Township Fire Territory along with continued cooperation and training from the solar farm to the fire territory, seconded by Commissioner Burns. The vote was 3-0. Council Member Robert Schleter says the Council agreed to the EDA, upon the Commissioners approving, but he wonders if it must go back to Council for approval since the EDA changed. Neither attorney feels it should go back to council. Everyone feels this was contingent upon Commissioner approval only. The resolution that was in front of the council authorized the president to approve any modifications or additions to the EDA which takes place after the date of the resolution. Larry Michel wonders why the fire territory's amount did not increase. Commissioner Montgomery feels the territory agreed to this original \$600,000, but the project owner will always listen to their needs. Larry wonders where the balance of the extra money is going. The money from this fund will go into a new fund, in which Baker Tilley will help establish. Commissioner Lewis explained this money would be used in that area.

Commissioner Lewis recommended a motion to adjourn, Commissioner Burns motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Montgomery. The vote was 3-0.

Minutes from the January 21, 2025, meeting.

  
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Nick Burns, President

  
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Kenneth Montgomery, Vice President

  
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Chuck Lewis, Commissioner

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ATTEST: Mike Watkins, Auditor

Commissioner's Meeting January 21, 2025

