

Gibson County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
December 17, 2024

The Gibson County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on December 17, 2024, at 4:45 p.m. at the Southwest Annex.

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 (absent)

Minutes: The minutes from the December 4, 2024, meeting were approved as presented. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve minutes, seconded by Commissioner Fleetwood. With no further discussion, the motion carried 2-0.

Claims: Total claims presented on 12/17/2024 were \$33,229,754.26. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve claims, seconded by Commissioner Fleetwood. With no further discussion, the motion carried 2-0.

Treasurer Reports was acknowledged by the Commissioners.

Department Reports

Health Department Administrator Shade gave the department reports for November; Commissioners questioned the birth and death certificate numbers and Administrator Shade explained this is the number of certificates they provide to people, not the actual births or deaths within the county.

Sheriff Vanoven did not have a report.

EMS Director Pond told Commissioners they are installing the garage doors on the new EMS building and they will begin bricking in January, ductwork is almost complete.

COMMISSIONERS OLD BUSINESS

Update on Jail Project – Owner’s Representative George Ballard told Commissioners they are still working on the new building. The dispatch area will be up and running mid-January. They are putting a numbering system on the rooms. All cameras for the jail (160) have been reviewed and approved. Wiring is still going on as there are miles and miles of cables and wires. No date has been set to open because they have a sewer issue to resolve first.

The Well, She is Strong – Emilee Brown provided Commissioners with an update. They are going into their third year and recently received the Not-For-Profit / Volunteer of the Year award from the Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Brown reported that they are having success with their program to give women the tools they need to thrive. Tulip tree recently partnered with them to help with mental health issues. They are looking for a private location instead of using community space, as they need some privacy. On February 1st there will be a space available, in Princeton, at \$850 per month and includes water and gas; she is requesting the County provide this rent for The Well. Commissioner Fleetwood asked what makes a young woman a candidate for this program. Ms. Brown explained that any mother wanting to break cycles in their life and needing support can take part in this program, if they are 18 years or older. The Commissioners feel that the County has opioid money, and it is wondered if this money could provide the \$10,200 for rent. The Well would like to know if this can be provided by mid-January. Commissioner Fleetwood entertained a motion to table to look at funding and they will readdress at the December 23rd meeting. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to table, seconded by Commissioner Fleetwood. With no further discussion, the motion carried 2-0.

Approval to Hire Neikirk for INDOT Requirement on the Probation Parking Lot – Tiffany Lehman, of Neikirk has been working with Larry Donovan on the Probation Parking Lot. She requests permission to move forward on this project.

Commissioner Fleetwood entertained a motion to approve this request. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve, seconded by Commissioner Fleetwood. With no further discussion, the motion carried 2-0.

Animal Shelter Update – Sharon Werne introduced the Architect and Contractor of the proposed new animal shelter building; they are on hand to answer any questions. All parties are in attendance to try and get a contract approved and signed by Commissioners to avoid a cost increase in 2025. K&M came in with the low bid at \$2.1 million plus options of an additional \$300,000. They have slimmed down Phase I of the project and the bid has been revised to \$1,595,000, which is a bare bone building, without utilities. They will be constructing a metal building on a concrete slab. They currently have secured \$1,539,000 million, and she is optimistic they will get to their goal. She wants the public to know, this is private money except for the \$800,000 ARPA portion, plus an additional ARPA award amount of approximately \$4,000. VPS architects are all animal people, and they will be donating their personal services, which amounts to approximately \$14,000. They had two goals when this project started; they wanted more kennel space with a quality location. George of VPS says the building will have three mechanical systems; one for the people, one for sick animals, and one for healthy animals, which will keep the systems from mixing. The building will also have sprinkler systems. They competitively bid on this project and received four bids, but all bids came in over budget and they have worked since that time to try and get the price down as low as they could. They are applying for the ready grant. Attorney Spindler proposed that they secure a grant writer to apply for the READY Grant; Debbie Bennett Stearsman has offered to help with this service. Attorney Spindler asked Commissioners to consider her services; a number will be presented at the December 23rd meeting. Ms. Werne feels the secured money is good enough to start. She requested that Commissioners sign the contract for the bare minimum building, functional facility, minus utilities. Commissioner Montgomery prefers to wait until the next meeting; Commissioners understand the price increases. Patty Vanoven, an animal shelter board member, feels this project is needed due to the poor building conditions the staff must endure and it is dire for the animals. Mark Fehrenbacher asked if the bare bones building could be occupied without utilities; it will not be occupied until they have utilities. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to table this request until the last meeting of the year, seconded by Commissioner Fleetwood. The vote was 2-0.

COMMISSIONERS NEW BUSINESS

Bid Opening – Sand, Gravel, Stone, Bridge, Pipe, Culverts & Fuel – Attorney Spindler opened the bids.

Civilcon, Inc. provided a large book with itemized prices for all their items.

Midwest Municipal Supply, Owensville provided a bid list.

Mulzer provided a bid on various sizes of gravel.

Mulzer provided a bid for various types of stone.

Asphalt Materials, Rockville, IN provided a bid for various items.

E3 Bridge provided a bid book.

Metal Culverts, Inc., Jefferson City, MO submitted a bid with an itemized lists of their products.

These price lists will be available immediately after the meeting for review and thereafter, they will be stored in the Auditor's Office for review.

Wabash Valley bid fuel; they were the only bidder of this item.

Commissioner Montgomery motioned to accept the fuel bid, seconded by Commissioner Fleetwood. The vote was 2-0.

Change Order on EMS Building – David Pond presented this change order to Commissioners; this project is being paid for with TIF funds through the Redevelopment Commission. The changes include

an antenna, truck bay water hydrants, outdoor lighting, concrete installation for fuel tanks, plus the labor to install the keycard readers. The amount of the change order is \$18,544.95. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve the change order, seconded by Commissioner Fleetwood. The vote was 2-0.

Approval of 2025 Holidays and Meetings – A listing was provided to Commissioners. Commissioner Fleetwood entertained a motion to approve the meetings and holidays for 2025. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve both, seconded by Commissioner Fleetwood. The motion carried 2-0.

Major Medical Leave(s) Commissioner Fleetwood entertained a motion to approve the medical leave. Commissioner Montgomery made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Fleetwood. The vote was 2-0.

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

Mark Fehrenbacher, Ft. Branch, wants to bring to everyone's attention the benefits of First Tix, which provides first responders with free/discounted tickets to approximately 100 different events. Mr. Fehrenbacher uses US Veteran's Affairs event tickets, named Vet Tix, which is a sister organization. The system works like a lottery system and can sometimes even include super bowl tickets. You apply and if you win, there is a \$15 handling fee. He encouraged the first responders to take advantage of this system.

Patty Vanoven with Gibson County Chamber of Commerce invited everyone to the New Years Eve celebration with the Evansville hockey team, The Thunderbolts; tickets can be purchased through the Chamber Office. She also gave a quick update on the soon to be released guide to Gibson County; she told everyone to be on the lookout for the 74-page brochure.

Luke Thorbecke, lives in the middle of the solar farm. He would like the Commissioners to know the rain caused the roads and ditches to flood. Commissioner Fleetwood asked him to not comment further if he is in any sort of agreement with the solar company. He is not advising him as an attorney but making him aware that it might not be a good idea to continue to talk about this matter on a public platform.

The Drainage Board meeting is set for January 7th at 4p.m.

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 December 17, 2024, Meeting.

Warren Fleetwood, President

Kenneth Montgomery, Vice President

Nick Burns, Commissioner

ATTEST: Mike Watkins, Auditor