

Gibson County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Session  
February 04, 2025

The Gibson County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on February 04, 2025, 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.

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

Commissioner Lewis made a Public Service Announcement regarding a notice they had received from INDOT. They will be reconstructing a bridge approximately .17 miles east of SR 57 beginning in February 2026, lasting through October 2026.

**MINUTES:** The minutes from the January 21, 2025, meeting were approved as presented. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Lewis. The vote was 3-0.

**CLAIMS:** Total claims presented on 02/04/2025 were \$1,316,368.20. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve claims, seconded by Commissioner Lewis. The vote was 3-0.

The Commissioners acknowledged the Clerk / Treasurer reports.

**Department Reports**

Chief Deputy Ballard gave the Sheriff's report. The sewer repairs on the new jail project began yesterday. An open house date will be announced soon. The ACLU and Federal Court Attorney walked through the new jail last week; they seemed very happy with the progress; they were understanding of the sewer delay.

Health Department Administrator Shade says respiratory illness is very high; she warned everyone to be safe and use precautions if sick. The health department requests a change to mobile food permits; they currently charge \$50 per truck and would like to change this to an annual fee of \$75. This fee would align with the neighboring counties. Commissioner Lewis motioned to approve this change, seconded by Commissioner Montgomery. The vote was 3-0. The health department reviewed some changes with the state on septic systems. They feel they need to change the current ordinance and add a holding tank charge. The old ordinance and the new ordinance will be sent to commissioners and acted upon at the next meeting.

Sharon Werne with animal services told commissioners they are still overcrowded, and their furnace was on the blink during cold weather. Attorney Spindler will do some checking on the contract for the new building and if it is signed, he will pass it back to Ms. Werne so she can get it into the correct hands. She told the Commissioners they want to pursue solar panel installation on the new shelter, and she urged them to keep the shelter in mind while negotiating with the solar companies. She reviewed the costs of the new building with Commissioners, based on the revised phase one building plans. They feel they are going to need \$50,000 to move forward with this building project; she is confident they will be able to fundraise this amount. They are also in need of money for the following items: water cost \$34,000; septic cost \$38,000; and the architect's fee of \$56,000 (down from \$70,000 after the donation of services). However, the electric has proven to be difficult to nail down a cost as they initially wanted to pursue three-phase electric, but it is very costly. Commissioner Montgomery feels solid waste & highway are both interested in the three-phase electric. The closest three-phase is one mile away and the estimated



cost to install is approximately \$300,000 per mile. Commissioner Lewis asked if he could meet with their board and the contractor to discuss this issue. The Animal Services Board had been told the electric bills would be cheaper with three-phase electric, but they wonder if the savings will outweigh the initial cost. Animal Services Board Member Stott will get Commissioner Lewis his contact information from CenterPoint. Ms. Werne invited everyone out to a fundraiser/adoption event on Sunday at the VFW in Ft. Branch from 2-4.

EMS - Arica Cole made this report to Commissioners; she presented data to Commissioners regarding their runs. EMS had over 5200 runs in 2024, while only 4880 in 2023, both years show a substantial increase over prior years. They are now fully staffed. She discussed their response times and told Commissioners they feel their morale has increased throughout the department.

Public Defender's Office – Public Defender Moody confirmed with Commissioners that she has been approved for the CHINS Social Worker grant pilot program. She has been provided with a two-year grant agreement. She would like permission from the Commissioner's to hire this county employee. The State will also pay for a part-time person to collect data. She had also applied to be a part of the State's misdemeanor pilot reimbursement; the state wants the County to collect data for this program as well. She can use the same part-time person to do both data collections; it will be 100% reimbursed. Public Defender Moody requests permission to hire a part-time person. Commissioner Lewis motioned to allow Public Defender Moody to proceed with this program, seconded by Commissioner Montgomery. The vote was 3-0.

Commissioner Lewis gave a progress report on the EMS Building; they have been waiting for a break in weather to finish the drywall and start bricklaying. They talked to the Contractor about moving sidewalks closer to the building to incorporate them into the landscaping to save money on concrete and landscaping.

### **COMMISSIONERS NEW BUSINESS**

**Tax Sale Resolution 2025-02** – Attorney Spindler presented Resolution 2025-2 to the Commissioners. This resolution will assign three specific tax sale certificates to the City of Princeton; one certificate to Oakland City; and one certificate to the Town of Haubstadt. Commissioner Montgomery motioned to approve resolution 2025-02, seconded by Commissioner Lewis. The vote was 3-0.


**Amendment to Composition of Subdivision Review Committee** – Attorney Spindler recommended Commissioners approve the amendment, which changes the composition of this committee from five members down to three members. The members would be comprised of the Surveyor, Assessor, and one member, determined annually by Commissioners. This person could be the Health Department's sanitation employee or the County Recorder. Misty, the health department sanitation employee told Commissioner Montgomery she feels that Recorder Schurmeier would be the best fit. Attorney Spindler recommended that Commissioners approve the amendment to the ordinance and name the appointment to the committee. Commissioner Lewis motioned to approve the amendment of the Subdivision Ordinance and appoint Gibson County Recorder, Tim Schurmeier to the Subdivision Review Committee for 2025, seconded by Commissioner Montgomery. The vote was 3-0.

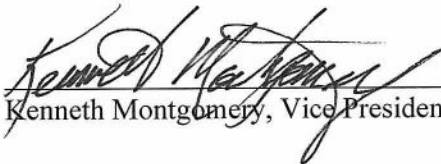
**Medical Leave** – Commissioners reviewed the one medical leave and motioned to approve it. Commissioner Lewis made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Montgomery. The vote was 3-0.


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





  
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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



