

DEKALB COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

August 9, 2021

Commissioners Present: President William L. Hartman
Vice President Michael Watson
Vice President Todd Sanderson

Others Present: Auditor Jan Bauman
Attorney James P McCanna

MATTER OF CLAIMS

Michael Watson made a motion to approve General Claims consisting of warrant #132201 through 132275 in the amount of \$64,313.82, and wire transfer #18592 through 18688 in the amount of \$812,546.24 as presented. Todd Sanderson seconded, and all approved.

MATTER OF HUMAN RESOURCES

We have had a moratorium on adding new AFLAC policies for employees at open enrollment time for several years due to the severity of problems we had with the invoicing. It took a couple of years to work through those billing issues. In July, we tried again to allow AFLAC to offer policies to employees at open enrollment time because the billing has been running smoothly for three years. Unfortunately, after all of the new policies and changes to policies were updated with AFLAC and the first billing was sent to us, the invoice had many errors, and the customer service to help us get it corrected was very poor. Furthermore, at least one employee has had a very difficult time getting their policy. The AFLAC representative seems to have an apathetic attitude about the situation.

Anthem will be explaining their employer portal this week to HR and payroll. Also, we had a \$5,000 credit on our August Anthem invoice with the intention for it to be used for wellness events. As a comparison, when we had PHP insurance, PHP had coordinated with Parkview to hold health risk assessment events for our employees, and that has historically cost \$2,500.

Other HR topics briefly discussed: reasons for the increase in cost of background checks; open positions; there is a department head that doesn't want employees to be able to use PTO for COVID-related time off, but all agreed this goes against what PTO is meant to be used for.

MATTER OF PAYROLL

Todd Sanderson made a motion to approve payroll for the period July 18-31, 2021. Michael Watson seconded, and all approved.

MATTER OF TRAVEL REQUESTS FOR JASON MEEK

Homeland Security Director Jason Meek explained that the State of Indiana has adopted the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Emergency Management Professional Program. The three levels are:

- National Emergency Management Basic Academy – 5 classes
- National Emergency Management Advanced Academy – 4 classes
- National Emergency Management Executive Academy – 4 classes

The five classes under the Basic Academy Certification are:

Foundations of Emergency Management
Science of Disaster
Planning: Emergency Operations
Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program
Public Information and Warning

This program is now all 50 states. He has to complete one level before he can move on to another certification. The requests he has submitted today are for 3 of the 5 classes for the Basic Academy. The State covers the hotel and training costs. He is asking the Commissioners to cover meals.

August 16-20:	Hendricks County, \$160 (\$32 x 5 days)
August 31-Sept 2:	Pulaski County, \$96 (\$32 x 3 days)
Oct 4-6:	Elkhart County, \$0 (no overnight stay – meals not eligible)

Michael Watson made a motion to cover the meals for the training classes for Jason Meek. Todd Sanderson seconded, and all approved.

MATTER OF MINUTES

Michael Watson made the motion to approve the minutes from August 2, 2021, as presented. Todd Sanderson seconded, and all approved.

MATTER OF TRAVEL REQUESTS

There was a discussion about travel and concern about how some of them can possibly turn into vacations. Auditor Bauman explained that is why previous Commissioners started requiring that they pre-approve travel due to the abuse of it by some departments several years ago. Michael Watson made a motion to approve travel as presented.

- 1) Prior travel request for Stephanie Hamilton (Family Restoration Ct) to go to National Harbor, MD – \$60 added for baggage for flights there and back; new grand total of \$2,444.34.
- 2) Prior travel request for Erik Weber (Veterans Court) to go to National Harbor, MD – \$60 added for baggage for flights there and back; new grand total of \$2,444.34.
- 3) Prior travel request for Ryan Hull (Alcohol & Drug Prog) to go to National Harbor, MD – \$70 added for baggage for flights there and back; new grand total of \$2,422.84.
- 4) Prior travel request for Kay Landwehr (Family Restoration Ct) to go to National Harbor, MD – driving instead of flying; mileage amount of \$498.08 reduces overall total to \$2,319.92.
- 5) Cheryl Lynch (Health Dept) to travel to Fort Wayne on August 20 for the District 3 LHD Meeting. No expenses to be claimed.

Todd Sanderson seconded, and all approved.

MATTER OF POSTAGE METER RENTAL AGREEMENT WITH QUADIENT LEASING

Michael Watson motioned to approve the lease on the postage machine with Quadient Leasing. Todd Sanderson seconded, and all approved. This is a 63-month lease of meter model IX7AI, machine model IX7DSWP30. It will cost \$312.82 per month but be billed on a quarterly basis. The new machine will have the new Endicia that the post office will require soon. The lease will cover upgrades and rate changes, and the rate changes are automatically downloaded and installed. IMPAC will remove the old machine and install the new one. IMPAC will also train users.

MATTER OF PROPERTY AT 5193 COUNTY ROAD 19

Code Compliance Officer Paul White thought he was going to have to take further action against a property that is in violation of Public Nuisance Ordinance 2021-R-1. However, the situation may have resolved itself. Rudi Eidam confirmed that Auburn Renewables has purchased the property. A dumpster is being delivered today. The front of the property will be cleaned up in the next two weeks. The family is looking for a new residence in another state. They have an option to stay in the space for 6 six months. Once they have vacated the premises, their home will be torn down.

Jim McCanna commended Paul White for his detailed and professional report on this property. If further action would have had to be taken on this property, the County would have been on solid footing as far as documentation, pictures, and a timeline of inspections and communication.

Mr. White said there are 3 more properties he is looking into:

- CR 54 - an agreement has been worked out so far. August 22nd is next deadline.
- US 6 – needs to make visual inspections and possibly send 3rd notice. Tires by ordinance are a public nuisance.
- Close to county line on CR 427 – going to be sending first notice

Chris Gaumer reminded everyone that this is all complaint driven.

MATTER OF HIGHWAY

Regarding Bridge #46 on County Road 15 – Plans are complete and Ben Parker can move forward with bidding the project. The City of Garrett is planning on doing construction on County Road 15 next spring, so the road will be closed during construction. Ben Parker would like to get the bridge done before the road construction begins. There was consensus among the Commissioners for Mr. Parker to start working on the bid plans.

Per Commissioner Sanderson's request last week, Mr. Parker composed a letter to Butler City Mayor Mike Hartman regarding the chip and seal of County Road 32 between County Road 65 and Butler City Limits. The letter read: "The DeKalb County Board of Commissioners are committed to chip and sealing CR 32 from the Butler City Limits to CR 65 in 2022. The Highway Department has already started the process by applying calcium chloride on the entire roadway. DeKalb County plans to have this project completed by September 30, 2022 unless the County encounters unforeseen circumstances that could push this project out to the following construction year." Michael Watson made a motion to sign the letter to the Butler City Mayor. Todd Sanderson seconded, and all approved.

Mr. Parker had a final walk-through with the DHPA of the covered bridge project. They said that DeKalb County was good to work with and they encouraged him to apply for a grant for the next repair to the covered bridge which is the roof replacement.

Mr. Parker was just informed of a housing addition being planned for behind Thomas Funeral Home on the south side of Garrett. They want the south entrance to open onto County Road 56. Mr. Parker wishes he would have known about the plans for this entrance earlier because of how it is going to affect the upcoming County Road 56 project. He is going to have to recommend that a traffic impact study be done by the developers. He is concerned that a turn lane may be needed which will most likely result in the need for them to obtain more right-of-way for the turn lanes. Once the County's work is done on County Road 56 (which won't happen until 2024), traffic is going to really pick up.

The Kraffts want direction as to what they need to do with their mound of dirt that is in the County's right-of-way. There was disagreement amongst the Commissioners. Should he remove it completely? Is that too drastic? Should an exception be made for him? If an exception is made, what example will that set for others? After substantial discussion, Michael Watson made a motion that Mr. Ben Krafft move the berm and any other debris 40 feet from the center line of County Road 60, and for the ditch to be reshaped/reestablished in a manner that is acceptable to County approval. Todd Sanderson seconded, and all approved. He also needs a permit for the new pond.

MATTER OF OTHER DISCUSSION

Other discussion topics included: corn crib at County Farm that will need to be torn down due to extreme wind; Environmental Restrictive Covenant for property at 303 East Ensley, Auburn; attending meetings by means of electronic communication; Gibson, Knox, Shelby, and Jay County solar abatement ordinances; CR 61 closing will be happening soon; Auburn Sports Park; meeting with court judges; and one quote received for Annex windows for \$47,513 and waiting for a second quote.

William L. Hartman – President

Michael Watson – Vice President

Todd Sanderson – Vice President

Attest:

Jan Bauman, Auditor