

DEKALB COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

March 13, 2023

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

Others Present: Auditor Susan Sleeper
 Attorney Andrew Kruse

MATTER OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Dotty began discussing recruitment around the County. Dotty reported the last time the Job Classification sub-committee met they were tasked with the idea of paying PTO out instead of losing the unused time. Dotty had asked her HR network if anyone paid PTO out and none of them do at this point. APEX is expecting Anthem claim values mid-March in order to send out for proposals. At the Department Head meeting, many employees were concerned on what it meant if the County would go self-insured as an employee. APEX and Dotty are working on education materials for our employees. Next, worker's comp was briefly discussed. The next safety committee will be March 17th in the white room of the annex building. Dotty announced that the CPR training was abundantly attended and valued. Dotty had received a call from a Red Cross volunteer and discussed an issue with a township trustee interaction and wanted to make the Commissioners aware. The KnowB4 policy was discussed and Dotty feels that the Commissioners trust her as to how the dominoes will fall and the after effects of putting a policy in place and she had some hesitation of putting the approved policy in the handbook. The discussion was based on the verbiage that included 'State' Employees as the County has already had push back from the courts on taking the KnowB4 training. Attorney Kruse has graciously agreed to speak with one of the judges and see how the need can be met, as the courts push is that they already are taking State training and should not have to take County training. Commissioner Watson has had assurances from one judge that participation will not be a problem. Commissioner Watson and Attorney Kruse will discuss and decide what approach to take. Dotty also wanted to have a little more teeth in the policy for those that are not participating in the training. Commissioner Watson reminded that without the training-taking place the County would not be able to renew the Cyber Security Policy.

MATTER OF SHERIFF ELEVATOR CONTRACT

Sheriff Thomas wanted to take a moment to acknowledge that loss of Master Trooper James Bailey who lost his life about 10 days ago and may he never be forgotten.

Sheriff then discussed recruitment for his department and reported there were 22 applicants in the last round.

Sheriff Thomas next discussed the elevator project that had not been completed prior to him taking office. Sheriff did some research and discovered the modernization was deemed necessary in 2019 and included in the 5-year capital needs budget. The estimated cost has steadily increased since 2019 and the current contract comes in at \$119,438 with a 4-6 week completion. Sheriff Thomas would suggest not having the elevator operator onsite for a reduction of ~\$5,000, as they can only be onsite 4 days a week- 2 meals a day anyways, so other accommodations will be needed three other days of the week and the 3rd meal of the day. Commissioner Sanderson questioned whether there would be a 'kit' that would fix the elevator possibly for a cheaper dollar amount. Attorney Kruse has reviewed the contract is fine with the contract.

Michael Watson made a motion to approve and for the president to sign the OTIS Elevator Modernization Contract for the base bid amount of \$119,438 and removing the onsite operator in the amount of ~\$5,000

and to remove any unnecessary items in the contract such as the inside of the steel doors of the elevator that is not in public view. Todd Sanderson Seconded and all approved.

MATTER OF SENATE BILL 4: Ann Forti & Stephanie Ripple

Ann Forti residing at 5125 County Rd 60, St. Joe: wanted to publicly go on record letting the Commissioners know that there are multitudes of Hoosiers, including many constituents, concerned about how the governor's commission could expand its reach and authority – leading our County to lose autonomy over public health decisions. Ann discussed public trust, FDA-NIH-CDC actions with COVID, congressional hearings, testimony, vaccine injuries and the like all dealing with COVID. She then gave an example of her friend that was injured in a covid vaccine trial. Ann then explained the relation of what she discussed to the governor's health commission, which she noted was established by executive order. She stated the health commission met and made clear they had a plan to implement throughout the state and if the County Commissioners did not agree the plan then the commission would show you why you were misguided and coerce you into doing what they would like. Last month Ann sat in the senate hearing on SB-4 and hear members of the same health commission say they never said that, but they did. All of this is a concern for Ann and others given the make-up of the Governor's Commission and the fact the CDC recently gave our state \$50.6 million and feels the commission will most likely at some point require that all counties follow CDC guidelines in order to receive or keep the funding. Ann understands that everyone's concern is good public health outcomes and SB-4 may offer some of that but somehow it must contain language that give you, the County Commissioners the autonomy to make decisions that are best for DeKalb County.

"You know better than we do the influence you have and the lawful parameters you have jurisdiction over, we are asking that you consider using whatever power and influence you have to keep the County free from ever-encroaching state control- which is ultimately federal control, leaving us with no options for choice". ~Ann Forti

Stephanie Ripple residing at 7910 Casa Grande Ct, Fort Wayne | began with a quote from an article in National Geographic concerning a 44-year old woman that chose to get the Johnson & Johnson vaccine single shot instead of a two-dose vaccine, but one week after receiving the vaccine her breathing became increasingly difficult which lead into having to lay down to breath and then a CT scan that showed a pulmonary embolism. She gave an FDA and HHS quote as well. Stephanie knows that correlation does not mean causation, but let's use this date for the intended purpose- to pick up safety signals and let us remember that each of these reports represents many other that will never reported. Stephanie gave statistics including: 169 Hoosier deaths to VAERS, 947 reports of adverse events in Hoosier children, 34,576 deaths over the U.S., 4,941 miscarriages, 63,862 permanently disabled, and 26,541 cases of myo and pericarditis—Can we really call them safe? She then read examples of patrons and the types of reactions/issues that resulted from receiving a COVID vaccine.

"Please, I urge you, to do everything in your power to retain autonomy to protect the lives of you constituents." ~Stephanie Ripple

Commissioner Sanderson stated he is not fully understanding SB-4 yet, and does not like any of his health being controlled by the Federal Government and feels we were all lied to by Dr. Fauci. Commissioner Watson responded that the IACC and the AIC has been following this bill very closely and how this would affect home rule practices at the County level. Ann asked a question in regards to 'home rule': can they basically say the County doesn't have to opt into this but later down the road have to offer services in order to get certain funding? Commissioner Hartman said 'Big Government' has a track record and it has brought us to this point now and it has morphed down to the State and now the Counties. Commissioner Sanderson reiterated that anything that starts at the Federal level is bad. Ann asked Commissioner Watson if he does not feel the ~\$50 million that was given to the State will not do anything to the local level. Commissioner Sanderson asked what the biggest push on the bill is; Commissioner Watson

explained the idea was to push the money to the health departments so they can afford to do some things that they have not been able to perform due to funding. Commissioner Watson has been in contact with Dr. Souder, Cheryl Lynch and will be meeting with Dr. Box this week on this topic and would be happy to take any questions with him for clarification. Ann feels everyone's goal is public health, but believes the language talks about being prepared for the next pandemic and would bet that Dr. Box does not know half of what Ann knows about vaccine injury and what has occurred. The qualified people that Watson is talking about are the 276 Commissioners that are watching the bill and what is being pushed for the local level.

MATTER OF 2023 CCMG HIGHWAY ROAD RESURFACING PROJECT BIDS

The 2023 Road Resurfacing Joint Project with the City of Auburn Bids were opened March 6th at 10:30 a.m. The following bids were received and Ben Parker took them under advisement as motioned by the DeKalb County Commissioners last meeting.

	API Construction	Brooks Construction
Project #1-6 are relative to DeKalb County portion		
Project 1	\$69,715.40	\$66,121.15
Project 2	\$140,722.69	\$135,020.21
Project 3	\$362,393.73	\$347,869.62
Project 4	\$76,340.08	\$74,651.07
Project 5	\$41,190.56	\$37,845.24
Project 6	\$603,778.00	\$604,206.82
Total 1-6	\$1,294,140.46	\$1,265,714.11
Project #7-10 are relative to the City of Auburn portion		
Project 7	\$44,342.44	\$44,280.56
Project 8	\$143,372.14	\$149,926.56
Project 9	\$30,966.88	\$30,758.52
Project 10	\$15,215.00	\$14,024.75
Total 7-10	\$233,896.46	\$238,990.39
Total 1-10	\$1,528,036.92	\$1,514,377.00

Ben Parker's recommendation after review of the submitted bids is to award Brooks Construction for the 2023 CCMG Highway Resurfacing Project.

Michael Watson made a motion to award Brooks Construction for the 2023 CCMG Highway Resurfacing Project for \$1,265,714.11. Todd Sanderson seconded, and all approved.

MATTER OF HIGHWAY

Ben provided the letter of certification for the CR 56 project. He also let the commissioners know that he is still working on the tower proposals. Ben then gave an update from a meeting that he had with BF&S on the County Rd 56 project and there will be a new proposal on constructions costs.

MATTER OF LITED FUNDS PERTAINING TO THE HIGHWAY GARAGE PROJECT

Jeff Peters from Peters Franklin provided analysis of using a 10-year repayment term versus a 15-year repayment term versus using a 15-year amortization and calling the bonds in 10 years. In summary, a 15-year amortization results in roughly \$1.0 million more in interest expense than 10-year but only consumes ~36.5% of annual LITED funds versus ~49% of annual LITED funds for the 10-year amortization. The policy question the Commissioners need to decide on is- are \$210,000 more per year in LITED funds more valuable than ~\$1.0 million in interest paid across the next 15 years and can the County set aside \$2,805,000 by 2033 in order to call the bonds?

Rick Ring wanted to make a few things clear that the Councils want to keep under the \$10M value will work with any of the options provided, but will want to know what avenue the Commissioners want to go with their LITED funds. All three Commissioners are in favor of the 10-year term.

Todd Sanderson made a motion to commit to the 10-year option proposed by Jeff Peters of LITED funds for the Highway Garage Project Bond. Michael Watson seconded and all approved.

MATTER OF DEKALB COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT 2023 FEE AGREEMENT

Anton King returned from last week and discussed the reason for the Regional Partnership now billing the DeKalb County Economic Development Partnership, Inc. Under the new leadership of the Regional Partnership, they were cleaning up the contracts and invoicing to be with the local economic development organization (LEDO). Commissioner Watson feels that communication will be key with changing the formula of invoicing and the Regional Partnership needs to understand what the local level is expecting. Commissioner Hartman stated he has had some constituents not in favor of this partnership and feels if the regional partnership were not a thing there would not be any difference. Anton King explained that the LEDO's goal is to create a better economic landscape so that the businesses have the ability to be in an environment to be successful in creating jobs, expand the existing businesses and bringing in new business and industry to the County. Commissioner Sanderson asked Anton's opinion on Starlink and how long he thinks it will take to come to the County and wondered if a County has ever approached Elon Musk individually with a proposal to get Starlink in a County sooner. Commissioner Watson feels that the partnership overall is the first point of contact for someone wanting to come to DeKalb County with a new project/business and that unincorporated DeKalb County needs an advocate for economic development. Rick Ring went back in history and explained in the 1980s DeKalb County did not have anyone but Alan Graber to help with economic development and he only did it to build houses, therefore the County put together the DCEDP so there was a contact for those wanting to come to DeKalb County. Rick Ring also feels that what the DCEDP does is a huge benefit for DeKalb County as a whole, not just the City residents. Commissioner Sanderson asked what the main need is for DeKalb County to bring economic development besides broadband and housing. Anton explained that with the Commissioners help through ARPA \$ that a housing study could be performed with boots on the ground to see what is really needed. Commissioner Hartman asked if Anton was an advocate for Tax Abatement. Anton feels it is on a case-by-case basis but tax abatement is a tool that companies can utilize and is a key incentive that local companies can tap into to attract new growth. Commissioner Hartman feels getting a business in and turning around and giving a tax abatement seems counterproductive and feels they should not have abated taxes for someone else to pay. Anton explained that there is a multitude of different factors that go into making a decision on where a business comes, and at the local level; tax abatement is the only incentive that is available and a State backed tool that can be used by local municipalities. Commissioner Watson gave an example of Team Quality Services and Credent Wealth Management, as they both could have set up anywhere but choose to stay local with the incentive of the tax abatement. Rick Ring gave an example of a manufacturing facilities and explained that tax phase in occurs because they are buying a piece of equipment that is going to be added to the assessed valuation that would have never been added to the AV had the tax abatement not occurred. Rick Ring also explained that one change that has happened is a tax phase in could be awarded in different amount of years from one to ten years, not an automatic 10-year abatement as previously done. Further discussion took place on various topics of tax rate, depreciation, and growth quotient.

Todd Sanderson made a motion to approve and the president to sign the 2023 Fee for Service Agreement with DeKalb County Economic Development Partnership, Inc. for \$105,000 (\$95,000 for DCEDP and \$10,000 for Regional Partnership). Michael Watson seconded and motion passed (2,1) with Hartman voting against.

MATTER OF MINUTES

Michael Watson made the motion to approve the minutes as dated March 6, 2023. William Hartman seconded, and all approved.

MATTER OF CLAIMS

Todd Sanderson made a motion to approve Special claims in the amount of \$5,053.61 consisting of warrant # 134051 and wire transfer #23880 that were processed on March 7, 2023 and General claims processed on March 13, 2023 in the amount of \$499,869.27 consisting of warrant #'s 134052 thru 134088 and wire transfer #'s 23881 thru 23988. Michael Watson seconded and all approved.

MATTER OF TRAVEL REQUESTS

Todd Sanderson made a motion to approve the following travel requests:

- 1) Kevin Likes & Randy Coffey to travel to Riley Hospital concerning Deposition State V. Burrow case #17D01-2112-F1-008 on April 7, 2023. Estimated cost of \$147 each paid from department travel.
- 2) Lindsey Kartholl to attend Cybersecurity Seminar at Ivy Tech in Fort Wayne on April 14th. Estimated cost of \$0.00.

Michael Watson seconded, and all approved.

MATTER OF RESOLUTION 2022-R-3: AWARDING BUILD-OPERATE-TRANSFER TRANSACTION AND TAKING CERTAIN OTHER RELATED ACTIONS

Michael Watson made a motion for all three to sign Resolution 2022-R-3: Awarding Build-Operate-Transfer Transaction and Taking Certain Other Related Actions. Todd Sanderson seconded and all approved.

MATTER OF AGREEMENT TO TERMINATION OF LEASE OF DEKALB HUMANE SOCIETY

The DeKalb County Commissioners and DeKalb County Humane Society agree to terminate the Ninety Nine Year Lease for the property located at 5221 U.S. 6, Butler, Indiana. The parties agree to the following:

- 1) That the Ninety Nine Year Lease dated July 28, 1980 is hereby terminated.
- 2) That both parties are released from any obligations under said lease.
- 3) That the DeKalb County Humane Society, Inc. has already dealt with the building that they owned which was on said real estate.
- 4) That DeKalb County, by its Commissioners are free to do what they wish with said real estate.

Todd Sanderson made a motion to approve and all to sign the Agreement to Termination of Lease as detailed above. Michael Watson seconded and all approved.

MATTER OF DEKALB COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP BOARD


William Hartman made a motion to appoint Todd Sanderson to the Economic Development Partnership Board. Michael Watson seconded and all approved.

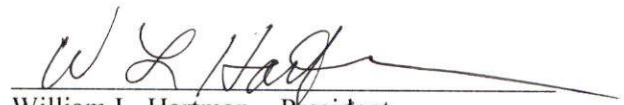
MATTER OF OTHER DISCUSSION

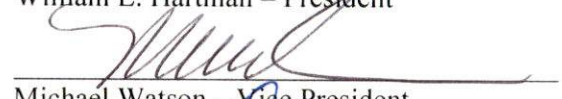
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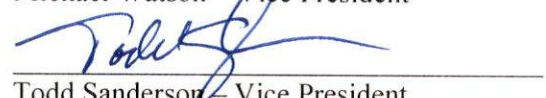
Wood-Land-Lakes meeting review and Hartman is not interested in being on the board and Commissioner Sanderson does not want to be part of the board either. Lynn Reinhart feels that the discussion seems counter-intuitive with preserving farmland. Commissioner Hartman asked Lynn if he was interested in being on the board, and Lynn would have to look into that before deciding.

Attest:


Susan Sleeper, Auditor


William L. Hartman – President


Michael Watson – Vice President


Todd Sanderson – Vice President