

MONDAY

DECEMBER 27, 2004

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The Board of DeKalb County Commissioners met in the Commissioners Court in the Court House in regular session, Monday at 8:30A.M. (EST)

PRESENT

William C. Ort
Connie R. Miles
Don Kaufman

ABSENT

MATTER OF SHERIFF/JAIL

Sheriff Dennis discussed the report and accompanying pictures with regard to an insurance claim filed when a woman fell at the jail. The claim was denied by the insurance company on the basis of liability. The injured person is asking for medical and emergency room costs to be paid. Attorney McCanna would like to have this person sign a general release form.

MATTER OF VETERAN SERVICE OFFICER

The commissioners conducted an interview with Brian Lamm of 828 Midway Drive, Auburn for the position of veteran service officer. Mr. Lamm is a 20-year retired air force veteran who is 40% disabled. During the interview the candidate stated that his experience obtaining his disability benefits would be an asset to his employment, as he has spent many hours for research using the veterans' administration web-site. The former county service officer had also been helpful, and Mr. Lamm is taking advantage of many other opportunities offered to veterans, such as education. Mr. Lamm is a student and for these reasons he feels he would have the time to devote to this part time position and could hold office hours as needed at various times to accommodate all veterans. He would be eager to share his acquired knowledge.

MATTER OF MINUTES

A motion by Don Kaufman to approve the minutes of December 6 was seconded by William Ort and carried.

MATTER OF SPECIAL CLAIMS

A motion by Don Kaufman to approve special claims was seconded by Connie Miles and carried.

MATTER OF VETERAN SERVICE OFFICER

The commissioners interviewed Tamara Brown the second candidate for veteran service officer. Ms. Brown is a veteran currently employed as a counselor at the Park Center, Inc. Her main avenue of service is counseling for drug and alcohol abuse, but marriage and family counseling also form a part of her work schedule. Ms. Brown has degrees in psychology and feels that her knowledge and experience within that area would be beneficial to the services she might offer veterans. Ms. Brown's current work schedule is flexible and would allow for the part time hours as needed to accommodate the work of the veteran service officer.

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The commissioners requested references from Ms. Brown, and upon concluding the interview instructed the auditor to obtain letters of recommendation from names given by both candidates. A decision will be made after considering these recommendations.

MATTER OF SUNNY MEADOWS

Herdsmen Howard Richardson returned to discuss his contract, and requested changes with regard to the milk bonus. The bonus is usually paid at 1½% of the bonus given by the milk purchaser. Howard would like ¾% and ¼% for the part time milker. Other changes will be adjusted for housing rental and utilities.

Howard stated that he was injured using the small Bobcat loader and the part time milker, Eric has been filling in. Howard wonders if Eric might be given a salaried position and what has been decided on renovation of the farmhouse. The commissioners will consider this, and the county attorney will make adjustments to the contract.

MATTER OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mike Watson of the committee to establish a DeKalb County Economic Development Commission addressed the commissioners with a request for 10% of the CEDIT monies to be appropriated to a director's salary and expenses to form the commission. Also present were Bob Howard, manager of the Town of Hamilton in Steuben County. All but 11 counties within the state of Indiana have economic development commissions to aid in bringing business and industry to the county. An experienced director would require a fairly large salary, but is very much needed if the county is to grow and maintain its businesses. Don Farrington of Ashley also expressed the need for a countywide economic development director to manage the task and focus on the current as well as regional business needs. Former County Commissioner, now State Representative Dick Dodge was also present to encourage the acceptance of the plan to request 10% of the CEDIT monies from each of the governmental units in the county to support the economic development commission. The committee has not yet met with all cities and towns, but has commitments from both Ashley and Waterloo. The amount estimated would cover the budget for one year if all units participated. DeKalb County's share would be about \$80,000. The board would have members from each unit as well as a representative from the county council, commissioners, visitor's bureau and chamber of commerce.

Mr. Watson continued to explain that the program would be based on three points, the first directed toward retention of business already located in the county. Secondly, the commission would act as a clearinghouse for business. The director would have knowledge of all available resources within the county and the ability to connect these in any manner as needed. Lastly, a full time executive director would be available to be pro-active in the position to search out and attract various forms of business rather than the reactive nature now employed by individual cities and towns. Terms of payment would be by yearly contract with each entity.

A motion by Don Kaufman that the county will participate in the program providing the council is agreeable to appropriate the CEDIT monies and that the majority of all other units participate was seconded by Connie Miles and carried.

MATTER OF HIGHWAY – UTILITY PERMITS

A motion by Connie Miles to approve a utility permit for Sprint on County Road 23 from County Road 20 north 600 feet to establish service was seconded by Don Kaufman and carried.

A motion by Connie Miles to approve a utility permit for Verizon North on County Road 52 to bore under County Road 70 for service to 5099 County Road 19 was seconded by Don Kaufman and carried.

MATTER OF HEALTH INSURANCE MEETING

Members of the employee's health insurance committee met with the commissioners, agent Brian Miller, and Felicia Staley and Joe Clark of BeniComp. Committee members present were Melissa Heffelfinger, Jackie Rowan, Linda Gulick, Janet Ordway, Jeff Hirons, and Auditor Sharon Hayes

Agent Miller presented information for the close of November 2004 indicating a claims cost of \$161,863. The average monthly cost for medical expense claims for 2004 is \$116,000.

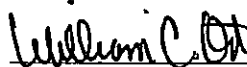
There followed a discussion of the results of the testing for use to determine the individual deductible costs per member. There was some confusion with the wording of the question regarding whether the individual used tobacco products. This led to several employees giving incorrect information, answering that they did use tobacco when they in fact did not. Other committee members were concerned that blood pressure readings were also erroneous, as some employees were upset due to the surroundings and the circumstances of the testing. This is sometimes referred to as "white coat syndrome." The body mass index rates (BMI) were also disturbing to some who preferred not to have their weight announced in the presence of other participants. These coupled with scheduling problems led the BeniComp representatives to admit that changes in the testing process would be considered before the 2005 screening. There will also be an appeals process. However, only previous blood pressure readings from a physician will be accepted and those who failed the BMI portion will be given a chance to be re-tested at the county health department. Testing results and information for appeals will be mailed to employees as soon as possible.

MATTER OF APPOINTMENTS

A motion by Connie Miles to reappoint Dr. Jeff Stephens, Dr. Chase and Dr. Dircksen to 4-year terms with the board of health was seconded by Don Kaufman and carried.

MATTER OF ADJOURNMENT

As there was no further business to come before the commissioners the meeting was adjourned.

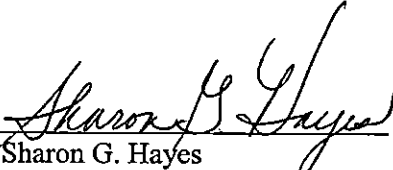


William C. Ort

Connie R. Miles


Don Kaufman

ATTEST:


Sharon G. Hayes