

DEKALB COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

December 2, 2024

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

Recruitment around the County began the discussion this morning. Dotty discussed the Fire Procedures in the handbook and the information on where departments would go in case the weather was 32 degrees or below.

Michael Watson made a motion to approve Section 10: Fire Procedures as presented. Todd Sanderson seconded and all approved.

MATTER OF HIGHWAY

Structure #289: Ben received 2 quotes for the Small Structure.

St. Regis Culvert: \$47,775

Metal Culverts: \$44,596.50

Todd Sanderson made a motion to approve the bid from Metal Culverts in the amount of \$44,596.50 for small structure #289. Michael Watson seconded and all approved.

CCMG Closeout: Ben has closed out the project.

Covered Bridge Roof: Ben has not forgotten about the project; he will be working on getting specs to request quotes.

Misc: Fuel tank has been received and installed, generator is in Fort Wayne, Mark's Truck needs to be replaced, CR 23 property agreement in the process, CR 68 plan to fix,

MATTER OF BROADBAND UPDATE: ZACH SAND

Zach attended to give an update on the Broadband Strategies happening around DeKalb County concerning the Indiana Connectivity Program (ICP), Next Level Connections Round 4 Awards and Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD). Zach said all providers have been really good partners.

The BEAD Program has been delayed with eligibility requirements until 'sometime before end of year'. There were 92 addresses that qualified originally but with the help of Community Partners he was able to submit 13,502 addresses through the Challenge process.

Current agreement between Sand Strategies and DeKalb County expires at 12/31/2024, Zach is thinking that they should wait for the eligibility requirements and decide if the County wants to continue with Sand Strategies to help with the BEAD Program.

Allen County is moving forward with Lakeland Internet for a deeper dive into their broadband and Zach would like to come back at the end of December or beginning of January to share the plan and any overlap of service from Allen County's involvement.

Mike Watson left at pledge/break time.

MATTER OF ST. JOE/SPENCERVILLE SEWER DISTRICT DISCUSSION

Harry Riley, Jr. plant operator at the Sewer District since 1997. Over the last few years, they have been working with Commonwealth Engineering to come up with a plan to replace the tanks as they have been failing over time. The OCRA grant has been approved and has increased resident rates due to the quote coming in a lot higher than expected. Harry explained that they have 3 large businesses in their area that include Rhinehart, Nucor and Vulcraft. The district approached each company for financial help and all 3 of them declined assistance. One item that hadn't been planned was the lift stations, and there are 4 of them needing to be replaced.

William Hartman asked what the district is looking for in a dollar amount or what they are requesting from the County. Harry explained they will be closing on the loan on the 18th of this month and the OCRA funding will expire in January, so time is of essence. The loan that they are taking out will cover everything but the lift stations. Harry would like to see at least 2 of them replaced/rebuilt very soon and those 2 will be expensive because they are very deep, whereas the other 2 are not as deep. As for a value of need, \$500,000 - \$750,000 would put them in great shape for the 2 lift stations, but any amount is appreciated.

Ben Adams, Commonwealth Engineer: Total cost is around \$6 million, and the loan closing is a formality, as the soft closing with SLRF has already happened. Ben also let the Commissioners know that Kleinpeter Consulting will have a Resolution to pass today to get an additional \$50,000 from OCRA.

Ben also gave the following amounts as to the rate increases that affect residents and businesses with the 3 largest businesses getting hit with a large increase.

Residential Rates went from \$55-\$95 (2nd rate adjustment)

Nucor Rates went from \$5600 up to \$24,800

Vulcraft Rates went from \$1900 up to \$9200

Rhinehart Rate went from \$2500 up to \$7100

Todd Sanderson made a motion to give \$200,000 of ARPA dollars to be put toward the lift stations. William Hartman seconded and all approved.

Resolution 2024-R-14: Request of Grant Modification for the OCRA grant dollars going toward the St. Joe/Spencerville Sewer District.

The Resolution was read into the meeting record by Attorney Kruse. The County is the pass-through entity of the grant dollars.

Todd Sanderson made a motion to approve and for the President to sign Resolution 2024-R-14 Authorizing Request for Grant Modification to OCRA for an additional \$50,000 of funding. William Hartman seconded and all approved.

MATTER OF PAYROLL

Michael Watson made a motion to approve payroll for the period of Nov. 3-16, 2024, that processed on November 29, 2024, and was pre-approved by Commissioner Watson. Todd Sanderson seconded, and all approved.

MATTER OF CLAIMS

Todd Sanderson made a motion to approve November Bookkeeper and Payroll claims. Michael Watson seconded and all approved.

MATTER OF MINUTES

Michael Watson made the motion to approve the minutes dated November 18, 2024. Todd Sanderson seconded, and all approved.

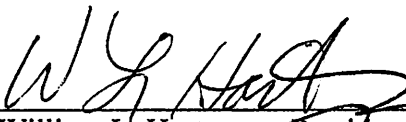
MATTER OF OTHER DISCUSSION

Sheriff Salary Contract for 2025:

Todd Sanderson made a motion to approve the 2025 Sheriff Salary Contract in the amount of \$131,960. Michael Watson seconded and all approved.

Travel Policy: Further clarification was discussed, and Auditor Sleeper will review the policy and present suggestions on wording to amend the ordinance.

Hurand-Auburn LLC: Commissioners received an email from them wanting to know if the County wanted to purchase parcel 18-06-30-301-006. The Commissioners are all in agreement that the County is not interested in the parcel and suggested Huran to talk with the neighbor north of the property.



William L. Hartman – President



Michael Watson – Vice President



Todd Sanderson – Vice President

Attest:



Susan Sleeper, Auditor