

DEKALB COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

February 18, 2025

Commissioners Present: President William L Hartman
 Vice President James Miller
 Vice President Kellen Dooley

Others Present: Auditor Susan Sleeper
 Attorney Andrew Kruse

MATTER OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Dotty began with a shoutout to our Maintenance Team on how clean the sidewalks are around our facilities. Workman's comp claims were covered, with only having 5 active claims currently. HR is working to finalize the wellness event with Parkview. Next week there will be a renewal meeting for health insurance. Recruitment around the county was covered and there are currently no departments actively recruiting at this time. HR is trying to scan files for employees that have left the County to help with viewing the documents at a later date.

MATTER OF RESOLUTION 2025-R-3: UDO-98 ZONE MAP AMENDMENT | 6878 CR 62, SAINT JOE

Chris Gaumer gave an overview of the proposed amendment before the Commissioners and discussion took place.

The DeKalb County Plan Commission held a public hearing on January 15, 2025, on the proposed zoning change from A2, Agricultural to I3, High Intensity Industrial. The DeKalb County Plan Commission sent a *favorable* recommendation for the zoning change to the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners. Discussion took place.

James Miller made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-R-3, UDO-98; A Resolution amending the zone map located at 6878 County Road 62, Saint Joe. Kellen Dooley seconded and all approved.

MATTER OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chris Gaumer provided a flyer for a comprehensive plan survey. The survey is part of the public input process for the Comprehensive Plan. People can stay up to date by signing up for emails at www.dekalb2040.com . Focus Group meeting & Public Workshops will be held on March 6 at the JAM Center in Garrett and on April 3 at the Butler Community Room, 2nd Floor of Butler City Hall.

MATTER OF HISTORICAL COMMITTEE COURTHOUSE DISPLAY

Mary Diehl is proposing a transition in management of the historical courthouse display cases. There was a display case committee created for the courthouses' centennial celebration in 2011,

with Bob Wilder being the sole remaining member from the original committee. Mary is seeking approval to establish and oversee a new committee that would maintain the existing display case system, document and inventory new historical donations and develop fresh exhibits that celebrate our courthouses and county's legacy. As part of the initiative, Mary would like to propose dedicating one of the display cases to the upcoming "America 250 Years in the Making" celebration. Bob Wilder expressed that at this time of his life he is more interested in getting rid of jobs on his plate instead of adding. He feels the County Historian is vital and would be the best person to head the committee.

James Miller made a motion to approve Mary as the head of the courthouse committee of 3 members to include Mary Diehl, Cody Burniston and one other member to be found. Kellen Dooley seconded and all approved.

MATTER OF BROWNFIELD GRANT RFP ACCEPTANCE

Chris Gaumer explained that DeKalb County was awarded a grant for \$500,000 of federal monies in May of 2024 for the brownfield program. Anton King was in attendance to give more details. Anton King received a message from the EPA representative for the grant that confirmed the federal monies will not be affected by any current or future President Trump executive order on federal funding. Anton explained there were 3 good candidates, and the committee scored the submissions and are asking the Commissioners to formally accept BCA Environmentalist Consultants the project. Anton explained that a brownfield is property that has been abandoned or is not currently in use and where development in those areas could be difficult because of environmental contamination.

Kelley Dooley made a motion to accept BCA Environmentalist Consultants Proposed Contract with the official approval and signing to be done at the next Commissioner meeting. James Miller seconded and all approved.

MATTER OF 2025 FEE FOR SERVICE AGREEMENT | DCEDP

Anton King presented to the Commissioners the 2025 Fee for Service Agreement with the following scope of services and remains at \$105,000.

- 1) Business Development Services
- 2) Community Development
- 3) Marketing
- 4) Data Utilization and Dissemination
- 5) Community Planning
- 6) Utilize and Participate in Northeast Regional Partnership
- 7) Communication

Anton also provided the 2024 Annual Report Outline and went over some of the highlights. For 2024, DCEDP went on 12 Business Retention and Expansion visits to DeKalb County companies (unincorporated) and there are 18 projects in the pipeline.

Recent Project DCEDP Wins & Assists from 2021-2024 totaled over \$148 million in investment to DeKalb County. The projects include:

SDI-Butler Flat Roll-2024 API Construction-2024 Brand Dairy Farm-2024
 Nucor Corp-2024 New Millenium-2024 IGBD BioGas-2023 Paragon Steel-2023
 Country Heritage-2023 SDI-Butler Flat Roll-2023 Midwest Culverts-2023
 Rhinehart-2022 Nucor Fastener-2022 SDI-Butler Flat Roll-2022
 Rathburn Tool-2022 Nucor-2022 New Millenium-2022 Tri-Wall-2022
 New Millenium-2021 Auburn Renewables-2021

James Miller asked what the total amount of investment was for the agricultural side of the County. Kellen Dooley asked how much was for new businesses vs. expansion. Kellen Dooley asked how DCEDP figures the amount requested from the contributing municipalities. Anton explained that prior to 2017 the amounts were a donation to the program, and the population figured into the formula. Further discussion took place explaining the logistics of DCEDP.

William Hartman asked what service DCEDP provided to Easterseals, since they give donations, and Anton explained that they connect employers with Easterseals so they can provide services directly. Anton did explain that with anyone that donates, they are donating because they believe in the cause and services of DCEDP, not because they are expecting a specific service in return. He also explained that with the current SB-1 bill in legislative, depending on the outcome, the County could be looking at large budget cuts, and the Commissioners will need to carefully review their budgets.

Kellen Dooley made a motion to 'table' the 2025 Fee for Service Agreement with DeKalb County Economic Development Partnership, Inc, in the amount of \$105,000 until the next Commissioner meeting. William Hartman seconded and all approved.

MATTER OF HIGHWAY

Bridge #75: There were some costs left out of the scope due to the style of bridge or possible small structure and not another bridge, but the hydraulics would not support that, they are proposing a 3-beam bridge as they say it will keep the cost down and be a strong bridge.

The Engineer's estimate is just over \$700,000, and they are requesting the hourly not to exceed the amount to be \$43,500 in addition to the already approved \$94,075 not to exceed amount. The additional amount is for design services and will only be used for necessary services to complete design plans.

William Hartman would like to get with the surveyor on the watershed size to get a more precise size and see what value that BF&S is using to figure their amount. James Miller has already sent an email to the Surveyors office.

SR 1 & CR 40 Intersection: Ben provided the INDOT email on the review of the crash data from the most recent fatality. INDOT reviewed the data and felt that the accidents were not a result of drivers disregarding stop signs, but drivers 'failure to yield' the traffic on SR 1. INDOT does not believe that installing a flashing LED stop sign will be any more effective, rather they are proposing to make the intersection an all-way stop. This will include such traffic controls as oversized stop signs, reflective sheeting on the signposts, stop ahead signs, buzz strips and temporary message boards alerting traffic of the change in traffic controls. INDOT has

jurisdiction over the intersection but would also like to receive concurrence from DeKalb County to support making this change.

Mayor Hartman plans to send a letter in from the city and feels the resolution suggested is a wise decision. He was very impressed with Senator Smaltz who called the mayor right away, and the only disappointing thing was that there was no response from Senator Johnson or Senator Glick. Bob Wilder thanked the Commissioners for agreeing to support INDOT's decision to keep the citizens safe.

Covered Bridge Roof:

Ben received approval to replace the roof with steel sheeting to be matched as close as possible to what is currently on the roof and explained what the plan was moving forward. Ben asked USI for some values on the weight and materials. The project can be done under the hourly rate agreement and USI is wanting to enter a "not to exceed \$10,000" agreement with the County.

James Miller made a motion to approve entering into the not to exceed \$10,000 for USI to study the bridge and for Ben Parker to move forward. Kellen Dooley seconded and all approved.

Bridge #17: Ben requested a part-time on-call rate for an inspector from Zachrich that came in at \$198/hr. Ben wanted this to have a little bit of extra eyes and inspections on some of the critical parts of the project.

Kellen Dooley made a motion to sign the on-call authorization to proceed agreement for Bridge #17 with USI for an hourly rate of \$198/hr. James Miller seconded and all approved.

Misc: Ben has all the required documentation sent to INDOT for the 2025 CCMG and received a message back that everything has been received, and a P.O. will be issued soon.

MATTER OF INSURANCE TRUSTEES: CYBERSECURITY POLICY AND RENEWAL UPDATES

Kyle Pearson said that he was able to get the expiration date of the current policy that is set to expire on February 26, 2025, with Travelers extended to May 10, 2025, so that this policy is on the same schedule as the rest of the Liability Insurance dates. Benefits to hold a cyber risk policy with Travelers includes three cybersecurity coaches to help with breaches, HIPAA and security. As well as pre-breach services provided by HCL Technologies that include readiness assessments and professional consultation, awareness training videos and consulting services.

Kellen Dooley made a motion to approve renewing with Travelers transaction term for \$28,541 to extend to the May 2026 renewal date to be in line with the other county policies. James Miller seconded and all approved.

Worker's Comp: Kyle Pearson provided a brief update on the DeKalb County Worker's Compensation Loss Trends. Kyle expressed that the safety culture in general with the county has greatly improved and he feels a lot of the change is due to the Safety Committee that HR is involved in. Kyle explained what an experience mod means and that the rate is based off the prior 3 years calculations. Below are the past year's rates:

2020-2021 there were 17 claims for a total loss of \$278,800 or a 203% loss ratio
2021-2022 there were 27 claims for a total loss of \$151,415 or an 111% loss ratio
2022-2023 there were 25 claims for a total loss of \$44,133 or a 32% loss ratio
2023-2024 there were 31 claims for a total loss of \$68,109 or a 36% loss ratio
2024-2025 currently 29 claims for a total loss of \$19,614 with a current loss ratio of 10%

Sunny Meadows: Kellen Dooley had Kyle Pearson speak a little on the letter of non-renewal that was received. Kyle said it is more of a regulatory item that companies need to send out each year, he does not have concern of not getting renewal in the immediate future, but the long-term issues include lack of professional staff for the passing of medications and the licensure exceptions. Andrew Kruse said that we do not have to be licensed because we are not running a nursing home, we are a county home and the last one that remains run by the county and not an outside entity. Further discussion took place. Andrew Kruse concluded that we are operating legally because the statutes allow how we are operating.

MATTER OF PAYROLL

James Miller made a motion to approve payroll for the period of January 26-February 8, 2025, that will be processed on February 21, 2025. Kellen Dooley seconded, and all approved.

MATTER OF CLAIMS

Kellen Dooley made a motion to approve the January 2025 Payroll Claims and General Claims processed on February 18th the amount of \$1,348,365.52 consisting of warrant #'s 135847 thru 135848 and wire transfer #'s 31365 thru 31509. James Miller seconded, and all approved.

MATTER OF MINUTES

Kellen Dooley made a motion to approve the minutes dated February 3, 2025. James Miller seconded, and all approved.

MATTER OF OTHER DISCUSSION

DCCC Fire Range Use Agreement with APD: DCCC provided the 2025 Agreement with the Auburn Police Department for the use of their Firing Range and Training Facility for (1) one officer at the cost of \$200 to complete qualifications to carry a handgun.

James Miller made a motion to approve the agreement between DCCC and Auburn Police Department for 2025. Kellen Dooley seconded and all approved.

DART Capital Purchase Agreement:

James Miller made a motion to accept and the President to sign the QPA 44253/INDOT 539 Motor Vehicle Purchase Agreement for (1) one low floor minivan in the amount of \$72,027.40. Kellen Dooley seconded and all approved.

2025 Federal Share: \$60,350 Local Share: \$11,677.40

Health Board Appointment:

Mayor Clark provided a letter of nominees to choose from to serve on the County Board of Health that included: Claramary Winebrenner, Daniel Durrwachter and Simon Dunn.

James Miller made a motion to appoint Simon Dunn to the Board of Health to finish the term previously held by Tonya Weaver that ends on December 31, 2027. Kellen Dooley seconded, and motion approved.

Sunny Meadows Dryer approval:

Kellen Dooley made a motion to approve the purchase of the steel gas dryer from Van's in the amount of \$1,498 for Sunny Meadows. James Miller seconded and all approved.

Commissioners Priority List for 2025: Kellen would like to add the Airport Authority and if they will be TIF'd or how to handle development in that area. A short discussion took place about septic ordinance.

EXECUTIVE SESSION as noticed.

The Commissioners met in the Executive Session as noticed beginning at 11:30 a.m., in accordance with IC 5-14-1.5-6.1(b)(9). There were no decisions made, and no other matters discussed. The Executive Session concluded at 11:57 a.m.

Regular meeting reconvened at 12:00 p.m...

MATTER OF JOSH ARMSTRONG: INSURANCE DISCUSSION


Josh Armstrong and Todd Myers from The Armstrong Group explained they are a local insurance firm located in Auburn with a full-time office staff. Josh wanted to ask for an opportunity to quote the liability commercial insurance for the County. Josh and Todd have over 10 years of experience in the commercial side of insurance. Josh's idea in quoting is two-fold with the first being the 'old fashioned' way where they would reach out to companies and request a quote for the County renewal. Josh's other idea is a 'new fashioned' way that is called a captive format, which is where the control is put back into the agent and client. Meaning the agent/county would create their own policy of what is wanted/requested and then it is sent out to the insurance companies for a quote. The captive return policy premiums can remain for future policies or pay future claims, however since there is a reinsurance with a captive policy then the losses are only paid at 50%, and if there is any leftover profit then that profit comes back to the County. If the policy is not profitable the actuaries will increase to recover some of the losses and then the policy will return to the lower rate.

Kellen Dooley wanted to be sure nothing happened like in the past when Hartman had signed a letter for Gallagher. The ability to quote only travelers was the reason for the letter in question, not to become the County's carrier. Josh Armstrong wishes the letter would have been explained better so people would have understood what it was.

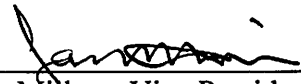
Captive options are not for smaller premium accounts which is why people haven't heard of the option. Hartman asked a few questions about the options and losses, to which Josh explained that when he left Gallagher all the County information remained at their company.

Kellen doesn't fully understand the new concept but does not have a problem looking into the option. Bill Hartman would like to hear the options. James Miller would like to hear the bids, as he feels it is important to have competitive bids.

James Miller made a motion to allow The Armstrong Group to quote for the insurance renewal for 2025. Kellen Dooley seconded and all approved.



William L. Hartman – President

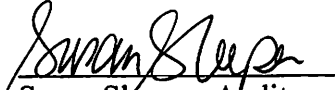


James Miller – Vice President



Kellen Dooley – Vice President

Attest:



Susan Sleeper, Auditor