

DEKALB COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

April 26, 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 HUMAN RESOURCES

Patrick Grant is bringing professionalism to the Weights and Measures office. He is very organized. He is digitizing forms and getting trained on new equipment. The Commissioners are very pleased with his work.

The search still continues for qualified Zoning Administrator candidates. The posting that had been extended will end on April 30th.

Dotty Miller and Susan Sleeper are looking into three Sheriff positions that may be misclassified.

Other HR topics discussed: unemployment claims; workers compensation claims and open and filled positions.

MATTER OF MINUTES

Michael Watson made a motion to approve Commissioners' minutes dated April 19, 2021. Todd Sanderson seconded, and all approved. Todd Sanderson made the motion to approve the Joint Public Hearing minutes dated April 5, 2021. Michael Watson seconded, and all approved.

MATTER OF PUBLIC BIDS FOR COUNTY ROAD 36A PROPERTY

At 9:00, President Hartman opened the County Road 36A property up for bidding. Mr. Jeff Rynearson had called in to the Commissioners' meeting and was the only bidder. The Commissioners accepted the Rynearson's bid of \$61,500 and closed bidding. The average of the two appraisals was \$61,500. Mr. Rynearson said that he will pay the full amount when he signs the purchase agreement. The Rynearsons are responsible for the cost of the survey. The County property needs to be split since the 11.7 acres that are being offered is part of 119.54 acres. It has no road frontage and is in the far northwest corner of 09-05-24-400-001. Todd Sanderson made a motion to sign the sale agreement with Jeffrey M. and Lisa L. Rynearson. Michael Watson seconded, and all approved.

MATTER OF TRAVEL REQUESTS

Michael Watson made a motion to approve the following travel request:

- 1) Bailee Grayless and Michelle Ford (Probation) to travel to Indianapolis, IN for the CSAMS Exam on June 3rd. Estimated cost of \$164.08 to be paid from department travel.

Todd Sanderson seconded, and all approved.

MATTER OF PART TIME POSITION FOR VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER

The Commissioners discussed Ronda Hunkler's request for a part time position for her office. Todd Sanderson made a motion to allow a part time VSO officer for up to 20 hours per week, pending Council approval of the funding. Michael Watson seconded, and all approved.

MATTER OF RESCUE PLAN'S FISCAL RECOVERY FUNDS

There was discussion about possible uses of the Fiscal Recovery Funds.

Auditor Bauman briefed the Commissioners on what she learned in a webinar last week called "How Indiana Counties Can Leverage the American Rescue Plan" given by Indiana's OCRA. They emphasized a partnership model that includes the gathering of civic, business, and government representatives to determine what is best for the community. Furthermore, municipalities can also collaborate by finding a driving issue or common interest that unites all of them. The key is to start now and to set priorities. We are still waiting for more specific guidelines from the federal government. The Commissioners discussed how to approach forming a committee.

Auditor Bauman also showed the Commissioners a template of an ordinance they will need to pass to create the fund for the receipt of funding. She will have that prepared in the next week or two.

MATTER OF DART QUARTERLY REVIEW AND INVOICE

Duane Blankenship reviewed 1st Quarter 2021 for the DART program. He briefed the Commissioners on the following: annual audit performed by independent auditor in February; re-opening of the facility; masks are still required; monthly luncheons beginning in June with a 75-person limit; Indiana Transit planning meeting and review in March 2021; new LED signage project expected in May; expectation of 2 new transit vehicles; and status of DART drivers. Also discussed was the possibility of having to raise the fee DART charges passengers in the future; the last increase was done approximately 3 years ago.

Mr. Blankenship needs to send \$135,466 in de-obligated FTA and State funds back to the State of Indiana for re-distribution. These are not CARES dollars.

Mr. Blankenship is working on the calendar year 2022 Grant for operating funds from the State that is due mid-May to INDOT.

Todd Sanderson made a motion to have President Hartman sign two forms: 1) the form notifying the Indiana Department of Transportation of the de-obligation of \$135,466 in FTA 5311 Operating Funds, and 2) Invoice #243 in the amount of \$105,083 for INDOT Quarter 3 CARES operating budget. Michael Watson seconded, and all approved. Quarter 3 CARES operating budget is actually for reporting period January-March 2021.

MATTER OF MISCELLANEOUS COUNTY BUILDING MATTERS

Larry Lane brought several matters before the Commissioners. He began by distributing signage options for the 220 East 7th Street Building. The Commissioners would like a second quote.

Next, he asked about the status of installing steel reinforcements for the roof in the 220 East 7th Street Building that would displace the Health Department temporarily. The Commissioners said it is on hold for now.

The White Room is set up for the Jail Committee meeting tonight.

Two of the courthouse light posts that were repaired last year have issues. The contractor that did the work has been contacted and is coming to inspect all of the light posts.

Mr. Lane will be getting a quote to paint the roof and sides of the pole barn next to the Holben Building.

Mr. Lane would like to have an extra set of hands for various projects on building grounds. After discussing options for paying the individual, Michael Watson made a motion to allow the transfer of \$5,000 from the Courthouse Part Time account to Grounds Maintenance to assist A-1 Janitorial with the cost of extra help. Todd Sanderson seconded, and all approved.

Finally, everyone (Commissioners, Auditor, Attorney, Larry Lane, Dave Kurtz) left Commissioners Court at 10:55 a.m. to go to the Auditor Transfer Office to look at a wall that needs to be repaired. All returned to Commissioners Court at 11:05 a.m.

MATTER OF HIGHWAY

Mr. Parker opened bids for the Holiday Lakes resurfacing project. For the 3 roads in that housing development, API Construction bid \$125,423, and Brooks Construction bid \$122,393. Todd Sanderson made a motion to table the bids until next week so Mr. Parker can review them and come back with a recommendation. Michael Watson seconded, and all approved.

Todd Sanderson made a motion for the Commissioners to sign the Highway 2020 Annual Operational Report. Michael Watson seconded, and all approved.

The geotechnical report for Bridge 46 indicated that marley soil was found. This is going to cost the project a lot more money because 20 feet of soil will need to be excavated and backfilled in order for a foundation to be poured, or, 40 foot pilings will need to be put in underneath the box structure that is going to be installed. When the soil borings were done, the nearest one was 30 feet away from where the bridge is located. Mr. Parker wanted to understand why the borings weren't right where the bridge would be. The engineer that did the borings got defensive and said if the County wanted more borings we would have to pay for them. To do 2 borings at 25 feet would cost \$3,750. If pilings are used, additional borings would probably not be necessary. Mr. Parker will check with consultant USI to make sure using pilings would be an appropriate alternative.

Pavement Solutions will be starting soon on crackfilling of county roads.

Todd Bauer with Foresight is suggesting the County go with Earth Source for the delineation plan for the Henderson property development plan.

The Highway Department will start summer hours (10-hour days) beginning May 10th.

The offers for additional rights-of-way on the County Road 56 properties are going out this week. Most of them are for small grassy areas. One will encroach further into a person's yard and may take negotiation that is more involved.

Other Highway topics discussed: Morningstar bridge.

MATTER OF OTHER DISCUSSION

Other discussion topics included: mowing invoices for Doc Coleman Landing; resolution for sale of Highway Department; and rough timeline for making a decision about the jail for funding purposes.

The Commissioners' meeting was recessed until 6:00 p.m.

MATTER OF JAIL COMMITTEE (6:00 P.M. IN WHITE ROOM OF ANNEX BUILDING)

President Hartman reconvened the Commissioners' meeting at 6:00 p.m. He announced it would be a 90 minute meeting and each person would have 3 minutes to speak. He asked that questions or comments not be repeated in interest of saving time.

The Commissioners have explored 3 different options:

- 1) Building a stand-alone jail
- 2) Having Sheriff's administrative offices occupy the Community Corrections building and connecting a detention facility to it
- 3) Not building a jail at this time

Kevin Wallace, retired Superior Court 1 Judge and former Community Corrections Advisory Board Chairman, began by saying he believes we need a new jail. The proposal increases the current jail bed count from 80 to 220, an increase of 275%. The Work Release beds would go from 52 to 12, which is a 77% decrease. This is the wrong way to go and the wrong way to think about criminal justice. At the last Jail Committee meeting, Chief Probation Officer Michael Lapham used the phrase "bait and switch" Mr. Lapham was talking about the Department of Corrections and was afraid that we presented ourselves—this facility—as a Work Release facility. They have donated a lot of money in training and getting the facility up and running. He was concerned that the Department of Corrections would not look kindly on the bait and switch. Judge Wallace also thinks the bait and switch goes to the citizens and voters of DeKalb County. This facility was studied, conceived, planned, designed and presented as a residential work release facility—not as phase 1 of a new jail facility.

Commissioner Sanderson wanted to make it understood that his opinion has changed since the last Jail Committee meeting. He believes that Community Corrections should be left as it is now—a stand-alone facility. That is our only choice if anything is done at all at this time.

Jeff Bickel works at the jail. He gave some history on the jail. It was built in 1984. Every facility that runs 24/7/365 has a multiplier applied to it. The jail has a multiplier of 4.2 which makes it about 155 years old. In 2015/2016, an NIC jail study was completed. A jail feasibility study was completed. Both of them recommended that a new jail be built. A jail inspector inspects the jail on an annual basis. Their recommendation is a new jail. Not building a jail is not an option. We need it.

David Powers explained that 5 years ago, it started out that the jail and Community Corrections were to be considered as 1 package. But, if the project cost went above a certain amount of money, it would have to be brought before the people. The decision was made to separate the projects. The cost of the Community Corrections project was kept below the threshold for a referendum. The jail was then put on the back burner knowing that it would be above the threshold and be required to go before the people for a vote. State law decides what the threshold is. We had dug into how the jail could be refurbished, but there was a lot of clamor against the idea. Mr. Powers' opinion is that Community Corrections should be under the jurisdiction and oversight of the Sheriff, an elected official, who would be directly responsible for it rather than someone who is hired.

Patrick Hunter said in talking to people about this issue, the question that comes up is the grant money. What is the source of grant money that funds so many projects? President Hartman responded that it is taxpayer money. It is a bait and switch. It baits you into doing things because the perception is that the money is free. It is not free. The State takes money from your left pocket, keeps 20 cents, and puts the remaining 80 cents in your right pocket. It is a money exchange. You are baited into doing things you

probably shouldn't do because of grant money. Sometimes it makes you go into the negative. An example is the covered bridge. We got a \$50,000 grant for it, but the problem is that it delayed the project for a year. In that year's time, construction costs went up so much that the grant money was lost to construction costs. Grant money sounds good and feels good, but it is still coming out of your pocket. Commissioner Watson added that if we don't take advantage of it, it will go somewhere else. President Hartman agreed that you have to "play the game."

Prosecutor ClaraMary Winebrenner said that in 2009, a group of people within law enforcement got together to talk about the jail that was too small. They talked about the fact that a new jail was needed but how that would never happen for 10 years, so we would need to go with what could be done which was Community Corrections. There were, and are, a lot of financial incentives for Community Corrections. As Prosecutor, much of what she deals with is executed sentences with either the DOC or the jail. But Prosecutors are fundamentally charged with doing the "right thing." What is deemed as the "right thing" changes over time. Community Corrections is a movement to put evidence based practices in place, for sanctions and incentives to improve behavior of those members of society who have done wrong things, or who are living in a way that is deemed socially unacceptable. Right now, criminal justice is of the belief that sanctions and incentives can create better behavior. Work Release is not necessarily Community Corrections. Community Corrections cannot be put under the jail. Work Release can be put under the jail. The decision was made to put Work Release under Community Corrections. Community Corrections is also under elected officials. The Advisory Board is made up largely of elected officials. There is a lot of political control over the Community Corrections program. There's no question we need a jail. Prosecutor Winebrenner thanked the Commissioners for moving this project forward. In 2009 we were told it would be in 10 years. In 2019 we were told it would be in 10 years. Now it looks like it won't be 10 years. It is going to be expensive, so now the question is what is the cheapest way to get the best product.

Commissioner Sanderson commented that the 2015 assessment of the jail and the 2016 jail study both stated that the County desperately needs a jail. The jail study gave a combined cost for the jail and Community Corrections, so they could have been built together and at the same time. The Correctional Facility LIT rate allows the County to issue a rate of up to .20% toward the cost of correctional facilities. Using that rate would have provided enough money to build both of them. He thought that the cost was approximately \$24 million back then, and now it would be approximately \$35 million. He doesn't want to point fingers. The fact is, it would have covered the cost back then, but now it won't. The reason why is we are using .13% now for the Community Corrections bond. That would leave .07% to build a \$30 million jail, and it is not enough. The only way around that is to raise the general income tax by .3%. But the County only gets to keep 60% of that. Commissioner Watson disagreed with the .3% figure that Commissioner Sanderson stated. Commissioner Watson said that the updated figures he received from Baker Tilly today indicated only a .14% increase would be necessary, and that is without the cities and towns pledging their portion of the increase. President Hartman adamantly disagreed with the .14% figure. Commissioner Sanderson said perhaps Commissioner Watson is right, but there still would be an increase above the maximum .20% CF LIT rate that wouldn't have been needed before.

Councilwoman Amy Prosser wanted clarification. She understands that 2 of the 3 options given at the beginning of the meeting would result in tax increases. As a Councilwoman, she is concerned about raising taxes for the citizens when the new federal administration is spending a lot of money. What would the tax increase for the jail look like in real dollars for a family in DeKalb County? Commissioner Watson provided figures from Baker Tilly. With an increase of .07% of the CF LIT and a .14% increase on the PS LIT, a household with a \$56,000 median income would see an increase of \$117.60 per year. This would be for an 18.5-year bond. The CF LIT expires after 22 years, and we are 3.5 years into that now. The Community Corrections bond drops off in 8 years. President Hartman said that the increase to taxpayers for the Community Corrections facility was \$75 per household. That figure needs to be added

to the \$117 figure to get the true overall increase in income taxes for both projects. Commissioner Sanderson reminded all that the Community Corrections bond cannot be paid off early.

David Stine understands there is a max on the tax rate. If we reach the max and need something else in the future, would the County be able to pay for it? Commission Sanderson answered that yes, the overall local income tax still would not be at its maximum, so there is leeway there. Something to keep in mind is that there are roads and bridges that need to be maintained, and if the local income tax is to its maximum, a wheel tax may need to be adopted to help with them.

Noel Johnson does maintenance at Community Corrections. He didn't realize how important a place like Community Corrections is to men and women getting out of prison. Being a taxpayer, we need to understand that if men and women coming out of prison don't see a change in their life, it will be a revolving door with them going back through the system. That costs money too. We need to put more money in the young men and women coming out of prison because they are the future taxpayers of the county and of the state.

Don Grogg, former Commissioner, explained a trip that he, former Commissioner Jackie Rowan, former Sheriff Don Lauer, and one of Sheriff Lauer's staff took to Aurora, Colorado in August 2015. It was a training conference hosted by the National Institute of Corrections (NIC). He highly recommended at least 2 of the Commissioners and the Sheriff take that training. The first day they talked about what kind of jail do you want? One with close contact, no contact, and so on. It was very informational. They toured the jail. Then they talked about the footprint and where the jail, commissary, kitchen, and other areas would be located. There was a designated place for future expansion. Do you build cells or pods? They also showed how they come up with all the calculations on what it is going to cost. What they stressed mostly is what is it going to cost to run it? It's going to cost more to run the jail than it will be to build it. Staffing will have to be increased. Utility bills, maintenance, and insurance will increase. Their idea, proven nationwide, was to build a jail and Community Corrections center so they can see each other. People in Community Corrections know that if they mess up, they are going to be "over there"—the jail. And people in the jail can see the others in Community Corrections coming and going and gives them incentive to do better. It doesn't make sense to send a person owing back child support to jail because they don't have a job. Someone in Work Release can continue working and paying the support. It's a rehab center. Mr. Grogg highly recommends the training. NIC paid for all expenses. It didn't cost the county a thing. It was a tremendous learning experience and would be good to attend before finalizing a new jail.

President Hartman told Mr. Grogg that he (Mr. Grogg) reiterated the fact that the jail and Community Corrections should have been built at the same time because they would face each other and people could see each other coming and going. Mr. Grogg disagreed and said they wouldn't have to be built at the same time. The thought behind it was to build Community Corrections, and it would reduce the number of beds needed in a new jail, thereby reducing the size of the jail. Also at that time, Central Communications was new which also had a bond. The Commissioners couldn't get over that hump and have the money to build a new jail also. Commissioner Sanderson asked if the thought behind it was to get the bed count down before building the jail. Mr. Grogg said yes. He also explained that people in Community Corrections pay to be there. People in the jail don't. The budget for the jail in 2021 is approximately \$4.9 million. The budget for Community Corrections out of the County's General Fund is \$65,452. The rest is grants. If Community Corrections has part of it moved here, and another part of it there, he can just about guarantee that the DOC will pull those grants. He said again how highly he recommends that they go to the training in Colorado and see how the rest of the country works.

Mary Diehl said someone else had brought up grants and that President Hartman had given the example about the delay costing the Spencerville Bridge a little more. The bridge has been closed since October

2018. There were circumstances that delayed the project on the front end. To blame the grant for costing the county more money is erroneous. It was pushing the decision down the road on the grant that cost more money, not the grant itself. President Hartman said we were waiting on the grant that one year, and that is why the can was kicked down the road. She then said nothing was going on in 2019 at all. The grant cycle was in October 2020, and the Commissioners agreed to wait for that grant cycle.

Rachel Lynn lives in DeKalb County and is also a Facilitator at Community Corrections. She is from Chicago. She has worked in that atmosphere in Chicago. Having Community Corrections is a big asset to the community. What are you going to do to reduce recidivism by moving the bed count from 52 to 12? President Hartman interrupted and said that Commissioner Hartman had said earlier that Option B is off the table and comments are starting to be repeated. He asked her to move on. She agrees there needs to have a new jail, and to have it right next door to Community Corrections is an eye opener to the residents there. The program that has been built is outstanding.

Former Commissioner Randy Deetz also thinks there should be a new jail. He brought up some things that have been forgotten that were part of the thought process back when the decision was made to build Community Corrections. It would have been wonderful to build both Community Corrections and a jail at the same time, but we didn't have the money. It could have gone to referendum, but DeKalb County at that time would have defeated a referendum. The Commissioners were dedicated to the fact that we needed a jail. We built a road with [at that time] CREDIT money. We also built a 52 bed Community Corrections facility in the hopes that it would reduce the jail size. Building Community Corrections first as well as the new road took \$6 million out of the jail project. We also got an excellent program. We talked to many experts, took many tours, and talked to many counties. The science was good to do a good program and to do what we did.

Dave Braun was happy to hear that keeping Community Corrections as it is now is back on the table. There has been great debate about what should have been done years ago. How much more are we going to spend by waiting longer? The jail is not going to get any cheaper than what it is now. He doesn't want his taxes to go up either, but it's better to have them go up by \$117 now rather than by \$314 later. We're kicking the can down the road, and in 10 years, those Commissioners will be talking about what the former Commissioners should have done.

Commissioner Sanderson addressed the comment on the costs and believes we don't know what the costs will be. Try to get supplies or services anywhere for anything. You're not going to get a firm bid from anyone. Commissioner Watson has some figures, but they are based on a fixed dollar amount for the project. Escalation clauses are written in contracts now. The insanity of increases in prices can't continue forever. Signing a contract right now is insane in this environment. What is building a jail really going to cost? We know what the quotes are, but what will it be by the time it's done? What is happening in the meantime while we are in the planning stages? There are labor shortages. Prices may come down. It's all speculation. President Hartman agreed. There are peaks and valleys with everything, including construction. Right now, they're telling us it costs \$100,000 per month while waiting to build a jail. We are probably at least 12 months away from starting a contract, so there's another million added to the cost of the project. The cost has been going up about 8% per year, and it has been growing so fast that we think it will reach the top and start to come back down rapidly. We have to look at the odds with the history of the peaks and valleys in the construction industry. He thinks waiting to build is less of a gamble right now, but we'll have to see. Right now, we should try to reduce the numbers of prisoners that go into the present jail. We have put close to \$2 million into that jail since Community Corrections was perceived to be built. We'll probably have to put another \$500,000 - \$1 million into it. To utilize that jail for another couple of years is not insanity. Commissioner Sanderson added that the quality of construction is declining. Contractors were busy when Community Corrections was being built, and he's not happy with the quality of that building. The estimate to build Community

Corrections was \$2.3 million, but it actually cost \$4.6 million. If they tell me a jail is going to cost \$25 million, what will it really cost? There is uncertainty with the cost and the quality. What is the gamble if a judge tells us we need to build a jail? We would be able to show the plans and that we are ready to build if we need to. We're not abandoning any project. We're going by what the former Council, Commissioners, and Jail Committee decided which is to wait 10 years when the bonds are paid off.

The question was asked by an audience member what the balance is between the cost of a higher interest rate by waiting as opposed to building now at a lower interest rate? President Hartman answered that it's hard to say, and there's no crystal ball. He thinks it would probably be in the middle—as interest rates are going up, construction costs are going down. Commissioner Watson added that the CF LIT goes away because it has a definite end date. Either if we build the jail now or later, taxes will need to be increased in order to pay for it. Commissioner Sanderson interjected by saying not if we pay the Community Corrections bonds off first because we would have the full .20% to go toward the jail. Commissioner Watson disagreed saying the bond payment on a \$28 million jail is \$2.6 million per year. The full .20% CF LIT would bring in ~\$2.2 million. President Hartman insisted that the bond payment amount he is using is inaccurate. Then there was a brief, lively discussion about inflation and what interest rates will do. An audience member stated that as interest rates go up, the economy comes down, so following that logic, he sees higher interest rates proceeding lower construction costs. Commissioner Sanderson doesn't see interest rates going up in the near future because it will completely crash the economy.

Kevin Likes, Chairman of the Community Corrections Advisory Board believes we need a new stand alone jail to house offenders. It is not a rehabilitation center. He has been to every jail on multiple occasions in the 15-county area. Community Corrections Work Release is not just a place to sleep at. It was designed for rehabilitation. It has rooms for group meetings, substance abuse meetings, moral recognition classes and training rooms for staff. It needs to be kept in the way it was designed. There are also costs that are hard to calculate. Residential Work Release is meant to get people back on the right track. There are costs if we don't get people back on track and the person keeps offending: law enforcement costs, court costs, public defender costs, prosecutor costs, and probation costs.

Former Commissioner Jackie Rowan also attended the training in Colorado with Don Grogg, and she agrees with everything he had to say. She was really impressed by how they had their incarcerated people in one area below who could see people in Community Corrections above them, and vice versa to give them incentive. Also, there were 15-20 other states represented at the conference. It would really be worth the Commissioners' time to go.

Norm Yoder first thanked the Commissioners for their service. He was a “doubting Thomas” when serving on the Community Corrections Advisory Board. But having learned about Community Corrections and its programs, he is convinced that it is a necessary service: rehabilitation vs. detention. The challenge is getting more people into the program. Find ways to get more people into the program. They pay. They work. They reduce the necessity of the jail. If this really is your #1 priority, what can you do to start prepping toward the project? There is \$8 million coming from the federal government. You have LITED money that you get decide what is done with it. It's your decision how you spend your time and your money. It's your decision how you spend human development money. Buy some time and get some of the prep work done. Work with all the officials involved to get people into the program. It not only helps bring down the overcrowding in the jail, but it provides a service. Isn't providing service to individuals what being an elected official is all about? Do they need drug counseling? Alcohol counseling? Help with anger management? How do we maximize the program so that it helps the person when they're walking out the door?

Stephen Hyde asked if there were other ways to reduce the urgency. Can regional jails be used? Could there be re-budgeting so that some projects can be scaled back or delayed so the money can be instead used toward the jail? President Hartman said the problem is that to some extent, other projects have been delayed even longer than the jail. It's going to be difficult to shift other funds around to fit these needs. We're not talking about wants. We're talking about needs. The Rescue money coming in has to be spent very carefully otherwise it needs to be sent back. Rescue money can't be used to reduce taxes.

Mary Smaltz believes everyone seems to agree that we need Community Corrections and a jail. The big question is how we are going to pay for it. We can't count on the federal government. Commissioner Sanderson said that we need to max out Community Corrections to reduce the number of beds needed in a jail. And he liked former Mayor Yoder's idea of starting to do things to prepare for a new jail, such as infrastructure and cold storage or maybe warm storage for the Sheriff. Take it in bites instead of bonding for \$30 million and increasing taxes to their maximum. Let's get 52 beds filled. Expand to 100. They are paying to be in the program. It would be good to take that approach. It buys us some time.

Kellen Dooley asked if Community Corrections was supposed to reduce the number of beds needed, why did jail study have the bed count jump so high to 225 beds for a new jail? President Hartman said that the architect used that number and it may be something we need to look at. If we build a jail now, the idea is to build what is needed for the next 20 years. Then, we can expand with another pod to set us up with enough beds for the next 20 years. Mr. Dooley said if the bed count can be reduced, it will keep some of the costs down for extra staffing. Sheriff Cserep explained that 225 beds still isn't up to the 257 beds the 2016 jail study was calling for. Also, there are certain criteria that has to be met before someone can be eligible for Community Corrections program. Because of all of the classifications of inmates that need to be accommodated. We need to have a place for each inmate to go. We need to be ADA compliant. We need to have places for high offenders and low offenders. 105 beds does not mean 105 people. 105 beds is actually for an 80-person capacity. We are not compliant with jail inspectors because we are not classifying correctly. Mr. Dooley also expressed concern over the cost it will take to operate the jail. Commissioner Sanderson explained that the new jail designs are less labor intensive and more efficient. What concerns him right now is the fact that there are so many unknowns. What is crime going to be in the future? Are we going to be softer on crime? Is marijuana going to be legal? What will the laws be?

Ryan Baker said the wear and tear on the current jail has made the Sheriff's job crazy. If we build a larger jail, we are future proofing ourselves. A higher population capacity is needed for a jail. If there is a capacity of 200, we don't want to have to house anyone near that number.

Sheriff Cserep said other jails will not always be willing to take our inmates when we need to reduce our counts due to overcrowding.

Timothy Baker currently works at Community Corrections and was in law enforcement for 40 years. We need a new jail. We need Community Corrections. We need to work together. Things won't go smoothly if we don't work as a team. The ACLU is taking aim at local jails. If we don't get things started now, the price is going to be way more later. Commissioner Watson brought up the fact that costs for residential are much higher than for industrial. Commissioner Sanderson believes industrial is about half that of residential right now. Mr. Baker said it's time to bite the bullet and move forward.

Community Corrections Director Kellie Knauer thanked the current and former leadership and citizens for supporting the program over the years. The residential Work Release program started in February 2020. We have supervised 72 individuals, and that was with COVID. It is being underutilized, but we haven't had the opportunity to work everything out and let it grow. The successful completion rate was 86% in 2020. We have received DOC increases in funding regularly over the last 10 years—over \$5.5 million. As long as we keep doing what we need to do, she believes that funding will be there. The

money is there for our taking. Let us use that money here instead of Indianapolis. We do need a new jail. Community Corrections will not serve everyone. They are voluntary. But some individuals need to be supervised by the Sheriff. Some will flow back and forth between programs. Ms. Knauer, the Sheriff, the Judges, Probation, the Prosecutor are all working on how all of this will flow. Finally, it is important to categorize people correctly. We can't put the wrong types of people together, because doing so will hurt people and make them more criminal by associating them with the wrong people.

President Hartman adjourned the meeting at 7:27 p.m.

William L. Hartman – President

Michael Watson – Vice President

Todd Sanderson – Vice President

Attest:

Jan Bauman, Auditor