

Commissioners Meeting
May 5, 2025

Date & Time: 2025-05-05 6:00 P.M.
Location: Room 106]
Attendees: Jeremy Pasel, Gabriel Nobbe, Brian Wenning

Opening

Welcome and Opening Remarks

- The meeting commenced at 6:00 PM with a welcome to attendees.
- Title VI forms are available for attendees to fill out and submit to the auditor's office.
- **Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer**
 - The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Todd Houk followed by prayer from Brian Wenning.
- **April 21st Commissioners' Meeting Minutes**
 - Correction noted: The prayer was led by Terry Canfield.
 - Motion to approve the minutes with the correction was made by Gabe Nobbe, seconded by Brian Wenning. Motion passed unanimously.
- **April 21st Executive Session Meeting Minutes**
 - No further discussion; motion to approve was made by Gabe Nobbe, seconded by Brian Wenning. Motion passed unanimously.
- **April 24th Executive Session Minutes**
 - No issues raised; motion to approve was made by Brian Wenning, seconded by Gabe Nobbe. Motion passed unanimously.
- **Claims Review**
 - Motion to approve claims was made by Brian Wenning, seconded by Gabe Nobbe. Motion passed unanimously.
- **Payroll for April 25, 2025**
 - Total payroll amount: \$403,877.75.
 - Clarification sought on overtime (OT) and other payroll entries.
 - Motion to approve payroll claims was made by Brian Wenning, seconded by Gabe Nobbe. Motion passed unanimously.

Highway Department

- **General Maintenance**
 - Ongoing activities include patching, mowing, and signage.
- 2024-2 HMA overlay is nearly complete, with positive feedback on the work done.
- **2025-1 Chip and Seal Project**
 - SC Construction to meet on Wednesday, planning to start the second week of June.
 - Preparatory work includes wedge and overlay on certain roads.
- **Quarterly Meetings with INDOT**
 - Meetings attended for Bridge 131, with updates on project timelines and constraints.
- **Secretary Position**
 - Job posting has received several applications.
- **Road Maintenance Concerns**
 - Specific roads (200 South, 300 South, 500 South) discussed for maintenance and repair.
 - Plans to address problematic areas with patching and potential skip patching.

Asphalt Types and Considerations

- **Standard vs. High-Grade Asphalt**

- Discussion on the use of standard asphalt versus thicker, tougher asphalt that might resist breakdown better. There are comments about other places in the county using runway-grade asphalt due to heavy semi-traffic.
- **Examples of High-Grade Asphalt**
 - High-grade asphalt has been tried near the dairy on 700, with positive results. Jennings County uses cold-mix asphalt, which self-heals, though it requires a significant amount to cover a road.
- **Cost vs. Maintenance**
 - Investing more upfront in higher-grade asphalt could reduce maintenance costs over time, potentially saving money given the road's yearly issues.

Road Survey and Adjustments

- **Survey Stakes at 700 East and 400 North**
 - The initial plan to take the Lake Santee job approach was altered due to proximity to a house and a ravine across from Jackson's nursery.
- **Current Approach**
 - The road will maintain a 90-degree corner but will be shifted inward and widened, with a guardrail added from Jackson's nursery around the corner to where 400 turns left. This aims to improve safety and reduce injuries.
- **Additional Measures**
 - Radius signs will be added to assist drivers, especially during holiday weekends and winter conditions. The intersection will be widened to a 50-foot radius to accommodate semi-traffic and farm equipment.

Health Department Updates

Health First Indiana Funding

- **Funding Reduction**
 - The Health First Indiana funding decreased from \$50 million to \$40 million. The exact figures for Decatur County are not yet available, but a formula is being used to determine allocations.
- **Impact on Services**
 - Despite the funding cut, there are no anticipated reductions in personnel or services. Grants have been received to maintain operations.

Community Baby Shower

- **Event Overview**
 - The community baby shower aimed to address high infant mortality rates by connecting newborn mothers and pregnant women with resources. Approximately 10 vendors participated, offering information and gifts.
- **Feedback and Turnout**
 - Positive feedback was received, highlighting the event's success in connecting attendees with resources. The turnout included 34 expectant mothers or mothers of children under six months, totaling 80 attendees.

Proposed Pool Ordinance

- **Purpose**
 - The ordinance aims to formally permit and inspect public and semi-public pools in the county, covering schools, fitness centers, apartment complexes, hotels, and summer camps.
- **Inspection Frequency**
 - Year-round pools will be inspected twice a year, while seasonal pools will be inspected once a year.
- **Fees**
 - Proposed fees are \$600 for year-round pools and \$300 for seasonal pools, intended to cover enforcement and inspection costs.
- **CDC Findings**

- One in eight pool inspections results in closure due to major health violations. Over 7 million people are affected by waterborne illnesses annually.
- **Inspection Goals**
 - Routine inspections aim to prevent risks such as respiratory irritation from poor ventilation and over-chlorination, and drowning, a leading cause of death in children ages one to four.

Implementation and Feedback

- **Comparison with Other Counties**
 - Fees range from \$100 to \$600 in other counties. The goal is not revenue generation but cost recovery.
- **Inspection Process**
 - Inspections will check pH, alkalinity, chlorine levels, and bacteria presence. Immediate corrections can be made on-site for minor issues, while significant violations may lead to pool closure.
- **Motion Approval Process**
 - A motion was made to approve the first reading by Jeremy Pasel, seconded by Gabe Nobbe. Motion was carried and moved to the second reading.
 - Agreement to address certain issues before the second reading.

Child Mortality Concerns

- **Data and Concerns**
 - Child mortality rate was reported at 1.7 thousand.
 - Despite high numbers compared to lower counties, the data is unstable due to small population size.
 - The issue remains a prime concern, with most cases being preventable.

Zoning Approvals

- **Approved Petitions**
 - Three petitions approved from A1 to A2 zoning by the Area Plan Commission.
 - Ordinance 2025-1 for Cameron Tipton: Approved with six yeas, no opposition.
 - Ordinance 2025-3 for Black Acres/Toby Venata: Approved with seven yeas, no opposition.
 - Ordinance 2025-8 for Hastings Farms LLC: Approved with seven members present, no opposition.
 - Motion made by Brian Wenning to approve all 3 petitions; Gabe Nobbe seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Comprehensive Plan Review

- **Survey and Next Steps**
 - Surveys finalized on April 28th and set to be distributed this week.
 - Surveys are intended for public posting, potentially reaching individuals outside Decatur County.
 - Next steps include committee involvement and public engagement once surveys are completed.

Insurance Renewal and Coverage

- **Insurance Renewal Details**
 - Renewal date set for May 22, with Liberty Mutual as the current carrier and Travelers providing a competitive quote.
 - Travelers offers broader coverage, including replacement cost for the courthouse and per occurrence deductible.
 - Liberty Mutual and Travelers exclude coverage for City Park Dam; Travelers covers Westport covered bridge.
- **Discussion on Risk Pooling**
 - Consideration of pooling insurance with other counties to lower exposure and rates.

- Work comp program with IPEP is a risk-sharing pool, but similar pooling is less common for casualty lines.
- **Deductible Concerns**
 - Wind and hail deductible increased from \$10,000 to \$100,000 last year.
 - Deductible buy-down options are available but come with additional premiums.
- **Cyber Liability**
 - The cyber liability component is still pending and needs to be finalized before the next meeting on the 19th.

Insurance Options and Bids

- **Current Options**
 - Liberty and Travelers are considered, with Travelers being a favorable option for cost containment and company improvement.
- **Concerns**
 - There is a desire to ensure comprehensive coverage without policy nuances that might leave gaps.

YMCA OCRA Grant Pay Application

Grant Details

- The YMCA obtained an OCRA grant from the Office of Community and Rural Affairs, State of Indiana, for roof replacement.
- Grant amount: \$500,000.
- Total project cost: \$1.3 million.

Pay Application

- Current pay application amount: \$81,375.54.
- Remaining balance and retainage: \$576,627.93.
- Motion to approve pay application number four for the YMCA OCRA grant was made by Gabe Nobbe, seconded by Brian Wenning. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner and Council Insurance Discussion

Projected Revenue Deficit

- SB 1, the property tax bill, is projected to cause a revenue deficit for Decatur County government:
 - 2026: \$517,710.
 - 2027: \$615,520.
 - 2028: \$781,450.

Insurance Cost Analysis

- Insurance costs for council and commissioners in 2025: \$106,866, approximately 20% of the projected deficit.
- Discussion on potentially eliminating insurance for commissioners and council members to save costs.
- Emphasis on maintaining employment and services without layoffs.

Future Considerations

- Consideration of inflation and potential raises for employees.
- Discussion on the impact of SB 1 on local income tax and potential adjustments.

Rezoning Fairgrounds

- Current zoning: Agricultural.
- Proposal to rezone the parcel for the new community building to accommodate commercial nature and adjust setbacks.
- Motion to proceed with rezoning was made by Jeremy Pasel, seconded by Gabe Nobbe. Motion carried unanimously.

Survey Contract

- Contract with Andy Scholle, County Surveyor, for surveying work related to rezoning.
- Contract cost: \$3,000.
- Motion to approve the survey contract was made by Gabe Nobbe, seconded by Jeremy Pasel. Motion carried unanimously.

Fairgrounds READI Project Update

Project Funding

- Initial proposal: \$4 million.
 - \$1,950,000 from READI funds.
 - \$800,000 from private donations and in-kind work.

Funding Disbursement

- READI funds potentially available by January 2026.
- Options discussed for proceeding with the project:
 - Option 1: Halt further progress until state funding commitment.
 - Option 2: Proceed with county's committed \$1.2 million.
 - Option 3: Continue forward with potential bank loan to cover shortfall.

Financial Strategy

- Confirmation that READI funds can reimburse EDIT funds or loans used for the project.
- Emphasis on demonstrating commitment to the project to the governor.

Payouts and Scheduling

- **Current Status**
 - The schedule has moved, affecting the payout timeline. Greg Martz with GM Development mentioned a new pay application will be submitted soon, but the exact timing is uncertain.
- **Projected Schedule**
 - The schedule was initially set for 4-1-2025, but the project is behind. The second draw has not been announced yet but is expected soon after the first.
- **Financial Details**
 - Architecture and engineering costs are \$49,000.
 - Pre-engineered building costs are \$554,201.57.
 - Earthwork costs are \$52,454.
 - Farm and home building renovation costs are \$49,676.03.

Consensus and Project Continuation

- General consensus is to proceed to an appreciable level where the building is enclosed.
- **Production Continuation**
 - It is advised not to stop production due to the costs already incurred and the potential delays and increased costs if contractors are put off.
- **Motion Approval**
 - Motion to approve the first payout to Greg Martz was made by Gabe Nobbe, seconded by Brian Wenning. Motion passed unanimously
 - Fundraising and Community Engagement

Fundraising Video Proposal

- **Committee Meeting**
 - The fundraising committee met a month ago to brainstorm ideas for presenting the project to the community and potential donors.
- **Video Proposal**
 - A suggestion was made to create a video similar to the Bread of Life campaign, highlighting the project's benefits to the community.

- **Video Content**
 - The video will encompass the vision of the entire READI project at the fairgrounds, including updates to a large portion of the grounds and the impact on the community. It will also reflect the agricultural heritage of Decatur County.

Approval and Funding

- A quote of \$2,000 was received for the production of a promotional video for the fairgrounds.
 - 50% upfront (\$1,000) and the remaining \$1,000 upon completion.
- Funds will be paid from the edit fund previously adopted.
- Motion was made to approve funding for the video by Gabe Nobbe, seconded by Brian Wenning. Motion carried unanimously.

Supporting Materials

- Pledge cards and project summaries have been reworked to accompany the video.
- Detailed summaries include sections on community building, farm and home building, electrical upgrades, and horse arena improvements.

Fair Contracts

National Tractor Pulling Association (NTPA) Contract

- **Contract Details**
 - Sanction agreement for the upcoming fair.
- **Financials**
 - Typically a break-even event due to high expenses, but generates additional revenue through parking and vendors.
- Motion made by Gabe Nobbe, seconded by Brian Wenning. Motion carried unanimously for the NTPA contract, requiring immediate payment.

Sled Rental Contract

- **Total Amount**
 - \$1,650 for sled rental.
- Payment is due at the time of the event.
- Motion made by Brian Wenning, seconded by Gabe Nobbe. Motion passed unanimously.

Financial Review Update

Engagement with Baker Tilly

- Decatur County previously retained Baker Tilly for a financial review with projections extending five years.
- Due to changes in property tax revenues and local income tax revenues, an updated review is necessary.
- **Cost**
 - Previous review cost \$25,000, with \$5,000 appropriated funds remaining. The update is estimated between \$5,000 to \$10,000.
- Motion was made by Brian Wenning, seconded by Gabe Nobbe to retain Baker Tilly for an updated financial review. Payment will be paid from Plans & Implementations. Motion passed unanimously.

Baker Tilly Contract Adjustments

Fee Adjustments

- Baker Tilly had a clause in their contract of “not to exceed \$2,500” in which they would like to remove. Historical fees incurred by Baker Tilly were adjusted from \$3,682.75 to \$2,500 in 2023 and from \$5,244.75 to \$2,500 in 2022.

- Motion was made by Gabe Nobbe, seconded by Brian Wenning to adjust fees to regular costs instead of reduced amounts. Motion passed unanimously.

Adams Township Advisory Board Vacancy

Candidate Selection Process

- Commissioners received notice of a vacancy on the Adams Township Advisory Board.
- Due to the absence of a caucus, the commissioners are responsible for hearing from candidates and filling the vacancy.
- Candidates include Kylie Debaun, Clay Hargett, Deanna Legere, and Levi Weekly (submitted interest but was absent).

Presentation Format

- Each candidate was given three minutes to present their qualifications and interest in serving on the Adams Township Advisory Board.

Candidate: Kylie Debaun

- **Motivation**
 - Interested in serving on the advisory board to learn and contribute to the community, particularly in physical projects like cemetery maintenance.

Candidate: Clay Hargett

- **Motivation**
 - Wishes to bring business and financial management skills to the advisory board.

Candidate: Deanna Legere

- **Motivation**
 - Passionate about impacting the community directly, values the opportunity to raise children in Adams Township.

Voting Process

- A motion was made by Brian Wenning to appoint Kylie Debaun to the Adams Township Advisory Board, seconded by Gabe Nobbe. Motion carried unanimously.

Infrastructure and Maintenance

Wi-Fi Improvements

- **Current Issues**
 - Wi-Fi in the courthouse is unreliable, affecting various departments.
- **Proposed Solution**
 - Install access points in each courtroom, general area upstairs, and conference rooms. Replace two existing points in the treasurer's and auditor's offices.
- **Cost**
 - Estimated at \$1,200, to be funded from the courthouse budget.
- **Motion**
 - Motion made by Brian Wenning to proceed with the purchase and installation of Wi-Fi improvements; Gabe Nobbe seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Fairgrounds Drainage

- **Issue**
 - Drainage problems at the fairgrounds, particularly around the horse arena.
- **Solution**
 - Fix plugged pipes and install critter guards, with costs covered by the fairgrounds budget.

Adjournment

- Motion to recess was made by Brian Wenning, seconded by Gabe Nobbe. Motion passed. Meeting recessed.

The Next Commissioner meeting will be held on May 19th, beginning at 8:00 A.M. in room 106.

Attest: _____

Date: _____