

**Commissioners Meeting  
December 20, 2021 8:00 a m**

**Present: Mark Koors, Jerome Buening and Chuck Emsweller**

President Koors welcomed everyone to the Commissioners' final meeting of 2021; he then announced Title VI forms are available for anyone who would like to fill out and turn in at the Auditor's office.

Chad Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag; Pastor Mike Barlett then offered a prayer.

(Meeting minutes, payroll and claims are emailed to each Commissioners, each Thursday before their Monday meeting)

Mr Emsweller asked to amend the December 6<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes stating the Commissioners had requested the Vote Center Plan to come before the Commissioners and Council should anything change in the Vote Center Plan. Mr Emsweller moved to approve the amended December 6<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes, Mr Buening seconded and Mr Koors concurred.

Commissioners questioned a couple of claims: Mr Buening asked why the Sheriff gave an **Amazon Gift Card** for \$200, charged on the department's **First Financial Credit Card**, to the cleaning lady for Christmas. Mr Koors asked why a department head purchased office decorations using the county First Financial Credit Card. Auditor Chadwell said currently there isn't a written policy for that type of purchases. Mr Buening stated **Community Corrections'** grant budget includes an appropriation for food. Mr Buening moved to approve the claims, Mr Emsweller seconded and Mr Koors concurred.

Mr Emsweller found some discrepancies on the December 10<sup>th</sup> payroll concerning start dates in relation to the longevity pay for the Road Deputies. **Teresa Reiger, Sheriff's Administrative Officer**, will get with **Ashley Wilson, Sheriff's Administrative Supervisor**, to check. Mrs Reiger stated if there is a discrepancy, she will change it next year. The Commissioners would like to review the payroll reports before payroll goes out; but the Commissioners' meetings are usually after payroll 'goes out'. Deputy Auditor Christy Smiley offered to email the payroll reports before payday. Mr Emsweller moved to table the approval of the December 10<sup>th</sup> payroll, Mr Buening seconded and Mr Koors concurred. Mr Koors would like to receive the reports for payroll and claims before the Auditor leaves the Courthouse for the weekend. Those reports were sent out later than usual since this is the last meeting to approve payment of claims.

**Mark Mohr, Highway Superintendent**, gave updates on some projects: the 4-way stop signs are in place per **Decatur County Ordinance 2021-21**, at County Road 1000 South and County Road 60 East; Highway crews will focus on 2 bad culverts on County Road 60 East for the next **Community Crossings Grant**, cutting tree limbs back, patching sign work; 2 culverts have been replaced on County Road 300 South off of U S Highway 421. Mr Mohr presented 'an unofficial detour' reimbursement agreement from **INDOT** to replace a bridge on U S Highway 421 South, just past County Road 550 East. The detour is County Road 550 East to County Road 400 South, back to U S Highway 421. Mr Buening moved to sign the agreement, Mr Emsweller seconded and Mr Koors concurred.

**Communications Director Erika Free** shared information on a request she will present to the County Council tomorrow, December 21<sup>st</sup>. Due to a credit from **INDIGITAL** who had double-billed for services in 2019, there are monies available which she would like to use to pay her 16 Dispatchers a COVID Stipend for 'carrying the load' during 2020, into 2021, which includes IT Josh Tressler. Director Free will propose a tiered pay according to seniority, with \$2,000 going to those employed prior to 2020, then \$1,500, \$1,000, \$500 and those hired after July 1, 2021 will receive \$250. This is a 'one and done' pay and she will not be using 2022 monies.

Mr Mohr asked the Commissioners to define "essential employees". Mr Koors believes the Highway, Sheriff, 911, EMA, anyone who is on call 24/7.

**Dave Ritcher, United Consulting**, shared his perspective as an employer on the overpayment on the payroll issue; anytime there is an error in payroll, that error may be corrected on the next payroll. **County Attorney Chad Smith** advised this is not an issue for the Commissioners.

Mr Smith shared updates on the Gatewood litigation: he has been working with Gatewood's attorney in the Federal lawsuit and asked for the Commissioners' approval of a settlement for him to take back to the attorney. Lien holders had paid the Decatur County Treasurer \$29,731.54, which a pro-rated amount

should be returned to those lien holders. Gatewood's attorney fees are \$5,350. Mr Buening moved to approve the proposal settlement, Mr Emsweller seconded and Mr Koors concurred.

Mr Emsweller moved to re-certify the current district lines as drawn for the Commissioners' and Council's districts. Mr Buening seconded the motion and Mr Koors concurred.

Mr Smith has reviewed the nepotism statements submitted by the department heads/elected officials and those are appropriate. Commissioners agree there needs to be one letter explaining nepotism to department heads so they'll know what it is.

**Parks and Rec Superintendent Teresa Kovacich** presented two invoices for fixing the boiler in the Armory after the June flood; \$14,765 and \$1,234.40 totaling \$15,999.40. She told Commissioners the Parks Department does not have enough funds to pay both invoices. Commissioners have approximately \$11,000 if Parks can come up with the remaining \$4,999.40.

**Economic Development Commission Director Bryan Robbins** told Commissioners the next task after being awarded the \$20 million of the **State's READI Grants** is deciding what projects to put on hold and what projects to do. He's already looking ahead to the **READI 2.0** and maybe creating a Regional Development Authority Group to apply for Federal funds. Mr Robbins is very proud of the group's team efforts as they received the second highest leverage funds in the State. Commissioners appreciate the work done by the group.

Mr Ritcher thanked the Commissioners for the work awarded his company over the years as he will be retiring at the end of the year.

Mr Smith has not received any response from the **Decatur County Fair Board** after the letter sent by Mr Smith from the Commissioners; the letter included a request for a response before December 13, 2021. Commissioners have contacted Luehr's regarding Fair rides for the 2022 County 4-H Fair. Commissioners are considering starting a 'building campaign' to raise a \$1 million plus to replace the Commercial Building at the Fairgrounds. Mr Buening moved to take the necessary steps to move forward and start this project. Mr Emsweller stated the American Recovery Plan Committee is interested in a study and have the community get together on this project; he then seconded the motion. Mr Koors concurred.

Mr Buening moved to reappoint **Drew Young** to the **Public Defenders Board**, Mr Emsweller seconded and Mr Koors concurred.

Mr Koors announced Dr Arthur Alunday has submitted his resignation as the **County Health Officer**, effective December 31, 2021.

Commissioners wished everyone a Merry Christmas!

**The Commissioners next meeting will be January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022 at 8:00 am.**

With nothing else to come before the Commissioners, Mr Emsweller moved to recess, Mr Buening seconded and Mr Koors concurred. Meeting recessed.

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Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_