

**Commissioners Meeting
October 16, 2023**

Present: Mark Koors, Jeremy Pasel and Tony Blodgett

Mr Koors welcomed everyone to the Commissioner's October 16th meeting; he then announced Title VI forms are available for anyone who would like to fill out and turn in at the Auditor's office.

Sheriff Bill Meyerrose led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag; Mr Dennis Speer then offered a prayer.

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

Mr Pasel moved to approve the claims, Mr Blodgett seconded, and Mr Koors concurred. Mr Koors asked that all departments be mindful of what they are spending taxpayer money on.

Mr Pasel moved to approve Payroll for September 29th, Mr Blodgett seconded and Mr Koors concurred.

Todd Houk, Highway Superintendent, gave his report: Bridge maintenance continues as well as mowing, berming and patching roads. **30 mph speed limit** signs have been installed by South Decatur Elementary School set by Ordinance 2023-13.

Mr John SanGiorgio, PE with United Consulting, is under contract for bridge inventory. Bridges are required to be inspected every 2 years. County is reimbursed for 80% of the cost by the Federal Highway Administration. Decatur County has 184 bridges currently on the list. 62 of them are over 50 years old. United Consulting recommends 14 of these bridges to be replaced at a cost of nearly \$13.8 million and 6 bridges for rehabilitation at a cost of \$3.2 million. Mr SanGiorgio stated the County has done a good job prioritizing work and maintaining the bridges allowing them to last as long as they have. Mr Pasel moved to approve \$8,970.00 for **Strand and Associates** for Professional Services performed in September for the Highway Garage final design and construction services. Mr Blodgett seconded the motion and Mr Koors concurred. Mr Koors reported that the new Highway Garage is currently \$1.3 million under budget at an all-in cost of \$10,205,061. Interest rate is tied to the bonds with a rate around 5.25%.

In the past 2 weeks, **County Building Inspector Kenny Buening and Area Plan Director Krista Duvall** completed 36 building inspections, issued 13 new building permits with plan reviews, issued 3 permit renewals and 2 red tags of building without a permit. He plans to visit properties in Burney and Lake McCoy that have had complaints. Mr Blodgett had conversations with Burney residents regarding some clean ups and water drainage issues. These issues will be an ongoing effort to resolve.

Sheriff Bill Meyerrose brought forward the **Work Release Ordinance 2023-24**. Money will be retained by the Sheriff's office for training and supplies. Mr Pasel moved to approve, Mr Blodgett seconded and Mr Koors concurred.

Deputy Clerk Patricia Louagie announced **Sara Biggs** has joined the **Marion Township Advisory Board**. Mr Pasel moved to approve, Mr Blodgett seconded, and Mr Koors concurred.

Communications Director Erika Free asked for an additional Supervisor position to restructure the disciplinary chain of command within the Dispatch Center. This position will be self-funded through 12/31/2023 and all of 2024. Director Free would like to make sure it works before budgeting for 2025. Mr Pasel asked about the layout. Director Free stated this will give shift leads more oversight during their shift and make any corrections as needed as they occur. Mr Blodgett asked if there will be any leadership training given. Director Free stated she requires certifications and training for everyone in the department. This will move from all 14 dispatchers answering to 1 supervisor down to each shift having a Supervisor, Shift lead and 5 Dispatchers. Tuesday, October 10th was **World Mental Health Day**. A Health Services Agreement was approved by the Commissioners at the last meeting and already has employees enrolled in services.

Mr Koors gave an update on the **Fairgrounds expenditures**. \$82,059.92 was spent on capital improvements, \$28,085.00 of donated time and materials, and \$24,886.41 for utilities. Some improvements include LED lighting, insulation, exhaust fan repair, bought a tractor, new glass in pagoda, new signs and stands, new water heater, concrete blocks, and asphalt.

For **Best Way** to be allowed to vacate County Rd 280 E they were required to build a cul de sac and pave County Road 100 S from 421 to 46. This has been done. Mr Pasel moved to approve **Ordinance 2023-25** to vacate County Rd 280 E, Mr Blodgett seconded and Mr Koors concurred.

A new **County logo** has been created and bids were sent out for vehicle and clothing use. **Maulden Signs** was the only bid for vehicle signs. Mr Pasel made the motion to approve Maulden Signs, Mr Blodgett seconded and Mr Koors concurred. Both **Baker Design Wear** and **Rivera Screen printing** turned in bids for apparel. Both companies had very similar costs, waived set up fees and provide online ordering. Mr Koors suggested approving both bids and letting individuals decide where to order from. Mr Blodgett made the motion, Mr Pasel seconded and Mr Koors concurred.

The topic of future use of the **old highway building** was discussed at length. Mr Koors would like to see the building put up for sale to help pay for the new highway building. Mr Pasel let everyone know that there was an Executive Session held with Consultant Reuben Cummings to discuss financing for several projects and what would work best for the County. Mr Pasel stated there is a shortfall of \$3.2 million for the Highway garage after TIF pays their portion of \$9 million. He believes the fiscally responsible thing to do is to sell the existing garage to help fund the new garage. Mr Blodgett stated there are some other County departments that could benefit from keeping the building. In the end, Mr Pasel made a motion to sell the old Highway Garage, Mr Koors seconded. Motion carried to sell the current Highway Garage. This will go to auction with a reserve put on.

Rick Anderson of Veregy was told that the project that he has presented for the Court Services/Annex Building would be put on hold and all bids rejected. The County cannot pay for it at this point in time.

EDC Director Bryan Robbins brought Ordinance 2023-26 regarding the Food & Beverage Tax. This allows for proposals/quotes to be made for the pool. He emphasized that accepting bids does not mean approving the pool project. Commissioners may still reject all bids if the project does not get approved. Mr Blodgett moved to approve Ordinance 2023-26, Mr Pasel seconded and Mr Koors concurred.

Request from the **READI Grant Application Committee** of \$15,000 For Decatur County's portion for 2024 READI Grant Application. Payment will be paid from Plans and Implementations. Mr Pasel made the motion to approve, Mr Blodgett seconded and Mr Koors concurred.

There was an **Executive Session held for disciplinary action of an employee.** Mr Pasel made the motion to give 5 days' unpaid suspension, Mr Blodgett seconded and Mr Koors concurred.

HR Director Patty Hensley has been looking into a Work from Home Policy. Currently, there is not a set policy, and each department has handled it differently. She has checked with other County's and most of them do not allow employees to work from home. Commissioners will need to discuss and decide on a policy whether to allow it or not. Mr Pasel stated Courts and Prosecutor offices do not apply. They are separate from County Policy. At this time HR will log what offices are working from home for a future discussion.

Mr Blodgett discussed the **Solar Eclipse Event** that will take place on Monday, April 8, 2025. There will be events taking place at the Fairgrounds with RV and tent camping sites with and without electricity. A joint venture with County, 4H and Power of the Past will have food trucks, vendors, and events. All money collected will run through the Auditor's Office and put into the Fairgrounds Fund.

Washington Township Trustee Bev Rivera is finished with the clean up effort of Lake McCoy. All the Washington Township owned property has been torn down and taken away. Andy Allen has done the work, and many residents are glad to see the work be done.

Stephanie Westbrook has been hired as the new **Solid Waste Director.** Mr Koors suggested Mrs. Rivera reach out to Solid Waste to see if they would be willing to set up dumpsters for the residents of Lake McCoy to start their own clean-up process.

Greensburg-Decatur County Chamber of Commerce Director Dawn Lowe announced the Chamber is meeting with Ivy Tech College out of Columbus, IN on November 6th for a lunch and learn presentation on how to best prepare for the Solar Eclipse as a business owner. This meeting is free and open to the public. For those that are interested but unable to attend, this will be broadcasted on the YouTube channel and Facebook.

Chamber Annual Dinner is November 17th at 6:00 PM – Entrepreneur of the Year Award, Small Business Grant Award and Don Horan Community Leader of the Year Award will be presented. Applications closed on November 1st.

Absentee Voting has been changed to April 11, 2024, due to the Solar Eclipse.

HR Director Patty Hensley reminded everyone that **flu shots** were going to be given at Decatur County Courthouse on October 20th.

Saturday, November 4th starting at 7:30 AM – the Fairgrounds will open for **RV/campers and boat storage for the winter**.

A **Food and Beverage Tax** meeting will take place on **Monday, November 6th at 6:00 PM** in the large meeting room at Court Services. This meeting is open to the public for discussion and concerns.

The Commissioners next meeting will be at 8:00 am on November 6, 2023

With nothing else to come before the Commissioners, Mr Pasel made the motion to recess, Mr. Blodgett seconded the motion and Mr Koors concurred. Meeting recessed.

Attest: _____

Date: _____