

# WHITLEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

December 18, 2023

The Whitley County Commissioners met in regular session Monday, December 18, 2023, at 1:00 PM in the Commissioner's Meeting Room located on the first floor of the Whitley County Government Center. Commissioners in attendance were Chair Chad Banks, Vice Chair Theresa Baysinger and Commissioner Robert Schuman. Others in attendance were County Attorney Andrew Boxberger, Auditor Tiffany Deakins, Deputy Auditor Tamela Tincher, Commissioners' Assistant Cami Hippenhammer, Planning Director Nathan Bilger, Highway Director Ryan Getts, EMA Director and Deputy Amy Biggs and Ed Scott, Todd Geiger from Purdue Extension and Mike and Ginny Rowland.

Chair Banks opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**IN THE MATTER OF WELL VARIANCE:** Scott Wagner from the Health Department presented a well variance for Ernie Miller on 300 South. He wants to add on to his existing structure, and to be able to move forward with that addition they need to get the well variance approved. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to approve as presented, with a second by Schuman, passing with a 3/0 vote.

**2024 EXTENSION MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING:** Commissioners received the 2024 Memorandum of Understanding with the Purdue Extension Office. This is the same MOU that is received every year with only the dates and contractual amount being changed. Attorney Boxberger stated that the MOU is missing verbiage that should be included in all contracts after the County's last State Board of Accounts audit. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to approve the MOU once the State Board of Accounts verbiage is added, with a second by Schuman and carried with a 3/0 vote. Todd Geiger was also present to give Commissioners and constituents an update from Purdue Extension and 4H.

**IN THE MATTER OF THE THOMAS MARSHALL HOUSE REHAB COVENANT:** Commissioners and Attorney Boxberger have reviewed the Covenant that is needed for the DNR grant for the Thomas Marshall House. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to approve, seconded by Schuman, and carried with a 3/0 vote.

**IN THE MATTER OF THE MULTI-HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN & MASS COMMUNICATION:** Emergency Management Director Amy Biggs was present to seek Commissioner approval for two items. The first being the Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan Grant Application. This is something that has been in the works for the past 5 years. The plan is for the County over all to identify any gaps. This is a federal requirement to get reimbursed for any disasters that may happen and help with obtaining grants. The Commissioners would be signing a letter of intent for a grant. Commissioner Schuman made a motion to approve the letter, seconded by Baysinger and passed with a 3/0 vote. For the past 8 months Amy and Ed have been working with a board to test out mass communication vendors. This would be for both internal and external mass communications. There will be a voluntary option to receive optional alerts and notifications, however if there are any emergent situations those would be pushed to all in the alert area. EMA will oversee the emergent notifications, and there will be a secondary level for alerts as well. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to approve the agreement and thanked Amy and Ed for all their hard work with this, seconded by Schuman, and passed with a 3/0 vote.

**IN THE MATTER OF FACILITY REQUESTS:** Commissioner Banks stated there were two requests for Commissioners to review. The first request was from the Republican Party to utilize the Courthouse first floor for a reception on January 1 from 11 am to 1 pm. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to approve, seconded by Schuman and passed with a 3/0 vote. The second facility request is for KD's Joy to play live music while the Columbia City Fire Department hands out candy on Christmas Eve from 5:30 – 7:30 pm. Commissioner Schuman made a motion to approve as presented, seconded by Baysinger, and carried with a 3/0 vote.

**IN THE MATTER OF MINUTES AND CLAIMS:** The claim distributions from December 5, 2023, through December 18, 2023, were reviewed by the Commissioners. Commissioner Baysinger reviewed the claims, along with Banks and everything looked good. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to approve the payroll claims, seconded by Schuman and passed with a 3/0 vote. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to approve the accounts payable claims, seconded by Schuman and passed with a 3/0 vote. The Commissioners reviewed the regular meeting minutes from December 4, 2023, Baysinger made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Schuman and carried with a 3/0 vote.

Chair Banks let the constituents know that Commissioners had opened bids at 10:30 a.m. earlier that day for the Highway and Engineering Departments annual bids. Also, the workman's compensation policy was decreased by 19% for 2024 because of all the great employees the County has. The Commissioners would like to thank the employees for being safe.

**IN THE MATTER OF PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Mike Rowland asked Commissioners if there were any updates pertaining to Solar or the EDJ, Commissioner Banks let him know that the city had withdrew the request and nothing had been heard regarding anything solar.

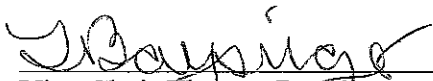
Auditor Deakins let Commissioners know that the State had issued the 1782 notice for the County and was approved, as well as the Auditors office had issued payment to taxing units for the fall tax settlement.

Commissioner Baysinger wanted to let the constituents know that Commissioners and Council will be working with Paula Worden on a plan for updating the Community Corrections building. She has volunteered to sit on that committee.


There being no further business and no further questions or comments from the public, Banks adjourned the meeting at 1:40 PM.

**WHITLEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

  
Chair Chad Banks

  
Vice Chair Theresa Baysinger

  
Commissioner Robert Schuman

  
Attest: Tiffany Deakins, Auditor