

WHITLEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

March 18, 2024

The Whitley County Commissioners met in regular session Monday, March 18, 2024, at 4:00 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 Rob Schuman, and Commissioner Theresa Baysinger. Others in attendance were Auditor Tiffany Deakins, Commissioner's Assistant Cami Hippenhammer, Human Resources Director Jennifer Shinabery, Treasurer Kay Gatton, Community Corrections Director Paula Worden, Clerk Cindy Doolittle, Recorder Rosemary Brown, Savanna Fettig, Dale Hinslea-Balante, Tim Longenbaugh, Dale Buuck, Matt Minier, Ginny Rowland, Nick Brewer, and Sonya Emerick.

Chairman Banks opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

SAND STRATEGIES: Dale Buuck, Nick Brewer and Theresa Baysinger from the Broadband Committee spoke to Commissioners to let them know that they would like to extend the contract with Sand Strategies as they feel the work that has been provided has helped with the internet problems that Whitley County faces. Commissioner Banks would like to see a 6-month contract rather than a year so that this could be re-evaluated after the 6-month period. He would also like to make sure that Attorney Boxberger review the contract as he was not the County legal counsel when the contract was signed previously. Dale stated that he would like to see ARP funds continue to pay for the contract. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to request the Council extend the contract another 6-months, seconded by Schuman, and passed with a 3/0 vote.

POLLING LOCATIONS: Clerk Cindy Doolittle was present to request that the Commissioners approve polling locations. These locations have not been changed and are the same as the last polling locations that were requested. This will be for the primary election only being held May 7th. Commissioner Schuman made a motion to approve the request as presented, with a second by Baysinger and passed unanimously with a 3/0 vote.

PLAT APPROVAL: Planning Director Nathan Bilger was present with a 2-lot plat called West Loon located off 700 North and Brown Road. The plat request was approved at the February Plan Commission meeting. Commissioner Schuman motioned to approve the plat as presented, seconded by Baysinger, and passed with a 3/0 vote. Bilger also updated Commissioners and constituents regarding solar and questions that have been asked. Bilger stated that the moratorium that was put in place is almost expired, as they only last a year. The Commissioners could enact another moratorium if they would like, but solar cannot be approved without the Commissioners and Plan Commission approval.

CREDIT CARD REQUEST: Recorder Rosemary Brown asked Commissioners to allow her to have a County issued credit card so she can pay for hotels for conferences as hotels have

changed their rules pertaining to being tax exempt. Baysinger made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Schuman and passed with a 3/0 vote.

FACILITIES REQUESTS: Commissioners had three facilities requests to review.

1. Whitley County Pride would like to use the courthouse lawn area for a band that will be at their event planned for June 1st from 1-9 p.m. Schuman made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Baysinger and passed with a 3/0 vote.
2. The City of Columbia City would like to use the courthouse lawn and west side of the courthouse for a public safety demo day. August 10th from 8 a.m-1 p.m. Baysinger made a motion to approve as presented, seconded by Schuman a passed with a 3/0 vote.
3. The Arts Commission would like to use the courthouse lawn on June 8th during the time of the farmer's market. Commissioner Baysinger would like to make sure that the farmer's market and arts commission are collaborating before approval. Baysinger made a motion to table, seconded by Schuman, and passed to be tabled with a 3/0 vote.

MINUTES AND CLAIMS: The claim distributions from February 21, 2024, through March 18, 2024, were reviewed by the Commissioners. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to approve the account payable claims, seconded by Schuman and passed with a 3/0 vote. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to approve the payroll claims, seconded by Schuman and passed with a 3/0 vote. The Commissioners reviewed the regular meeting minutes from February 20, 2024. Schuman made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Banks, and passed with a 2/0 vote with Baysinger abstaining.

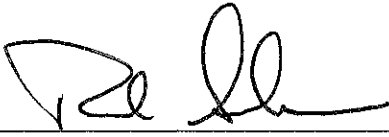
PUBLIC COMMENT: Ginny Rowland and Dale Hinslea-Balante from the public wanted to seek additional information regarding some survey flags that have been noticed in the South Washington Road area. Unfortunately, the Commissioners and Planning Director have no information at this time as no permits have been filed. The Planning Director stated that if you go to the County website whiteygov.com, departments, planning and building and solar ordinance is where the ordinance for solar can be found.

Commissioner Baysinger wanted to let everyone know that Wednesday the 20th from 4-7 p.m. there will be representatives from Surf Internet available at the Community Foundation to assist the public with grant applications for home internet. This can also be completed at home, but if someone needs assistance or would like to stop by representatives will be there to help.

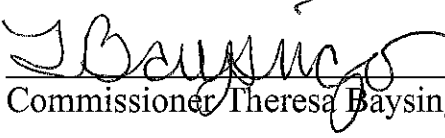
There being no further business and no further questions or comments from the public, Chair Banks adjourned the meeting at 4:29 PM.

WHITLEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Chair Chad Banks



Vice Chair Robert Schuman



Commissioner Theresa Baysinger

Attest: 
Tiffany Deakins, Auditor

