

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR SESSION OF THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS HELD February 24, 2025**

Comes now the hour of 8:30 am. on the 24th day of February, 2025 in the Commissioners Room in the Noble County Annex building, Albion, Indiana, being the time, date and place set for a regular session of the Board of Commissioners of Noble County, Indiana.

Present were:

Gary Leatherman, President
Anita Hess, Vice President
Gary Timmerman, Member

Also present were:

Jacqueline L Knafel, County Coordinator
Dennis Graft, Noble County Attorney
Matt Getts, KPC Media
Zack Smith, Highway Engineer

Gary Leatherman, Commissioner President, called the meeting to order at approximately 8:30am.

MAINTENANCE

Glenn Ryan came before the commissioners informing them that one of the part time employees had quit. She was working about 25 hours a week. Glenn informed the commissioners that he was already down 1 part time person and now 2 and is having difficulty finding part time people. He was asking about the possibility of hiring one full time employee instead. Gary Timmerman and Anita Hess had a couple of people that they thought might be interested. Glenn will set up a time to talk with the council about a possible full-time position being added. Gary Timmerman moved to allow Glenn to seek part time or full-time pending Council approval. Anita Hess seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

AUDITOR

Shelley Mawhorter, Noble County Auditor, came before the commissioners to get permission to proceed with a virtual claims process. The financial system LOW has a program which will allow department heads to fill out claims on-line and attach a copy of the invoice and send electronically to the auditor who will review and approve or deny the claim. If starting this year, the system is free and will be at a cost of \$4,000.00 for each year following. Anita Hess moved to approve the auditor to proceed with paperless claim processing. Gary Timmerman seconded. The motion carried 3-0.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Notice of a peaceful demonstration was given by the Resistance Coalition to be held on the sidewalk around the courthouse on Saturday March 15, 2025 from 11:00 am until noon.
- IDEM – landfill semi annual inspection report
- Clerk - report for the month of January.

MINUTES

Minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved as corrected with a motion from Anita Hess and a second from Gary Timmerman. Motion carried 3-0.

CLAIMS

Claims dated February 24, 2025 were approved as presented. This was a 12-page report totaling \$373,600.81. Motion to approve came from Gary Timmerman. Anita Hess seconded. The motion carries 3-0.

PAYROLL

Payroll dated 2/20/25 was also reviewed. This was a 3-page report that totaled \$534,503.73. Anita Hess moved to approve the report. Gary Timmerman seconded and the motion carried 3-0.

OLD BUSINESS

The ordinance that was approved last week did not get signed. This is signed at this meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

- Liberty Mutual – proxy card for annual meeting board of directors- the commissioners took no action on this.
- The Health Department has sent up a copy of the Certified medical assistant contract that was just hired. The commissioners signed the contract with a motion from Anita Hess and a second from Gary Timmerman. Motion carried 3-0.
- The first amendment to the EMS contract was reviewed. This change was due to the fact that the contract called for annual payment and we have done monthly payment in the past. This amendment accomplished that change. Motion to sign came from Anita Hess. Gary Timmerman seconded and the motion carried 3-0.
- EMS Building repair – Gary Leatherman has spoken with Greg Trabel from Parkview. There have been some issues with the heating unit in both the Cromwell and Kendallville buildings. Gary had received a call last week that there was NO heat at the Cromwell facility due to the heating tube bursting. A quote of \$9,983.76 was give for a new unit. With freezing temperatures being an issue last week, Gary gave approval to replace the unit. Parkview will be responsible for \$1,000.00 of the charge. Anita Hess moved to approve the bill for the heating unit at the Cromwell EMS building. Gary Timmerman seconded and the motion carried 3-0. As far as the Kendallville unit, Gary is meeting with a person this afternoon who is very familiar with MEGA products. Gary will have him inspect the Kendallville unit as this gentleman feels that simply replacing that bottom tubing will fix the problem. This will same dollars if this is possible. Gary will secure quotes from this guy as well.
- Council on Aging – the commissioners were contacted by Cherish Mishleau, Council on Aging Director, about an option that is now available to discontinue the county as a pass-through agency for the COA. Cherish indicated that after discussion with her board, all felt that this was just another layer of over-sight that needed to be in place. The letter received gave the option to continue with the pass-through agreement or discontinue the agreement. Anita Hess moved to approve the continuation of the pass-through agreement with the council on aging. Gary Timmerman seconded. The motion carried 3-0.
- Lastly, Jackie Knafel, County Coordinator, had received a call from Vicky Jellison who serves on the Albion Town Council. After the resignation of Jared Own as the towns 2 mile jurisdiction rep on the plan commission board, the town had recommended the commissioners appoint Stacey McGinnis which the board did. Stacey apparently resigned prior to the first meeting and up until now there was no one that was interested. Vicky has someone interested who the town is recommending. Jason Koontz is interested in serving. Anita Hess moved to appoint Jason Koontz to the Board. Gary Timmerman seconded and the motion carried 3-0.

HIGHWAY

Richard Rogers, Highway Inspector, was present for the following:

- Utility permits were filed for Precision Utilities Group and NIPSCO
- Richard has a driveway variance for Jon Owen on 330 N. This is for a 2nd drive and Richard reported there were no issues with sight distance or drainage.
- The next driveway variance was for Kyle and Tessa Halderman on 50 W. This also was for a 2nd drive with no drainage or sight distance issues. Both driveway variances were approved with a motion from Gary Timmerman and a second from Anita Hess. Motion carried 3-0.

Zack Smith, Highway Engineer, has the following engineering business to bring before the commissioners:

- Zack reported that there was guardrail damage done to the NE corner of bridge #54. The estimated total of damages was \$7,329.28 and has been turned into insurance.
- CCMG 2025 – The projects were submitted and accepted and Zack is hoping to know by April whether or not Noble County got any of the awards.
- 2024 CN-01. This is cement work that Pulver's were awarded – this work is projected to begin early spring.
- NEW LPA Projects – Bridge 75 and 67 - Projects were submitted, accepted and Zack completed the presentations for both bridges on 1/22/25. Still no word on whether or not they were awarded.

- Bridge 136 - United has provided a supplemental agreement updating the billing rates since this project is not closed at this time. Gary Timmerman moved to approve the agreement. Anita Hess seconded and the motion carried 3-0.
- Bridge 44 – An LPA voucher for Construction Engineering was received in the amount of \$4,682.64. Motion to approve the voucher came from Gary Timmerman. Anita Hess seconded. Motion carried 3-0.
- Ball Road – there is a contract amendment for this safety project. Anita Hess moved to approve the amendment. Gary Timmerman seconded and the motion carried 3-0.
- Bridge 134 – Zack provided a CSX update on this project and talked with the commissioner about the Millhouse property. Mrs. Millhouse is elderly and this is a full acquisition of her property. Zack reported that she has been very cooperative during this whole process and would like to extend her time after closing from 30 days to 120 days to allow her more time to find another home and move. This home will be torn down so the county would just ask that she carry insurance on her personal belongings and pay the utilities while she is there. Because of all the issues with other pieces of property, this project has been pushed out to next February so this is not causing any delays for the project. The commissioners are all in agreement with these terms and conditions.
- Old State Road 3 – There is an LPA voucher for this project in the amount of \$3,260.00. Gary Timmerman moved to approve the voucher. Anita Hess seconded. The motion carried 3-0.
- Bridge 59 - this LPA voucher is for right of way services in the amount of \$727.50. Gary Timmerman moved to approve. Anita Hess seconded and the motion carried 3-0.
- Bridge 61 – There is an LPA voucher for this project in the amount of \$3,178.00. Gary Timmerman moved to approve. Anita Hess seconded. The motion carries 3-0.
- Bridge 56 – this LPA voucher is in the amount of \$4,960.00 and is for preliminary engineering. Motion to approve the voucher came from Gary Timmerman. Anita Hess seconded and the motion carried 3-0.
- Albion Excess Parcel - there was 2.33 acres of ground that acquired at the time of the Albion Road realignment. This was a parcel that was not used for realignment of the road and therefore just sitting there. The county completed the appraisal and advertised it for bids. There was one bid received from Nick Busche in the amount of \$45,010.00. The appraisal came in at \$41,600. Gary Timmerman moved to accept the bid of \$45,010.00 from Nick Busche and give County Attorney Dennis Graft the authority to prepare a quit claim deed for this property. Anita Hess seconded and the motion carried 3-0

PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was held for the reduction of speed on CR 600 W to 45 MPH between US 6 and CO 1200 N. There being no public comment on the ordinance the commissioner adopted the ordinance reducing the speed with a motion from Anita Hess and a second from Gary Timmerman. Motion carried 3-0.

COURTHOUSE RENOVATION

Zack Smith, Project Manager, made the following report about the courthouse renovation:

- Weigand is now off site for this project. Punch list items are being addressed by the various subcontractors like Schindler for the elevator
- PCO 117 was for a power run for probation. Gary Timmerman moved to approve the \$227.09 change order. Anita Hess seconded and the motion carried 3-0.
- PCO 118 – This was in the amount of \$907.73 and was for staining of a door in the courts. Gary Timmerman moved to approve. Anita Hess seconded and the motion carried 3-0.
- PCO 120 – This change order was for thermostat control on the 4th floor. This will be an evidence room and storage area so temperature can be set and lower temps. The amount of the change order was \$4,985.76 and was approved with a motion from Gary Timmerman and a second from Anita Hess. Motion carried 3-0
- PCO 121 was for dedicated circuits for the elevator. Motion to approve the \$845.60 change order was made by Gary Timmerman and seconded by Anita Hess. Motion carried 3-0.
- FFE – PSI provided a schedule of furniture delivery that Zack provided to the commissioners. Most will be done in March with a few backordered materials. Zack informed the commissioners that he was discussing moving with PSI which has a moving service they provide. He will try to secure a quote for the moving of items we have.

- Zack provided pictures of the entry way which is now complete as well as a layout of the furniture plans for all the floors at the courthouse
- Ribbon Cutting is set for April 4 and he will have a final listing of invited guests at the next meeting.
- Wall Hangings --- Zack is working with the PSI group on this as well to have them hang the pictures etc. that the judges want hung.
- Zack again spoke of the storage and parking issues that still remain an issue. He has put together a report for the council about the parking spaces available at the courthouse and contacted department heads about their future storage needs.
- Zack told the commissioners that he had been approach by the Albion Rotary Club wanting a tour of the courthouse. The commissioners indicated that tours would not happen until after the Ribbon cutting ceremony which is April 4, 2025.

LIGTEL – BROADBAND

Mike Troup along with several other employees from Ligtel were present to update the commissioners on the progression of broadband fiber installation in the county. Mike explained that the first phase of the project is complete. The second phase includes Avilla town and the Kendallville area and north. The company is now going for the BEAD grants in order to help “fill in the gaps” or addresses that were left without service. These BEAD grants will help supply another 3000 people in and around Noble County.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Melayna Gingerich, Health 1st Indiana Coordinator, was present for her monthly update to the commissioners. Melayna shared a news released recently received from the state about bird flu cases in LaGrange County. In other information, Melayna shared the following:

- Noble County Resource Booklets are now complete and available at the clinic and will be handed out at the events that the health department participate in.
- Promoting the lead water testing with the health department being a drop-off site.
- The health department has vouchers for Pregnancy and STI testing at Parkview Noble Hospital.
- The department is sponsoring training at all schools for Emergency Triage with 9 nurses enrolled at this time.
- AED equipment was checked at various schools
- West Noble is having a “movie night” with the Addict’s Wake Documentary screening being shown on March 20 6:30 om – 8:00 pm.
- Melayna also gave a listing of the proposed members for the Noble County HFI Committee. The council member will be decided at their meeting on March 3, 2025 and Melayna is awaiting a response from Jasmine Herrera as the Ligonier Community member representative. Gary Timmerman moved to appoint himself to the board. Anita Hess seconded and the motion carried 3-0.

GIS

Steve Hook, GIS Director, was present to discuss a variety of topics:

- Data Harvest program – 2024 was the first year for this program and Steve and his staff provided several datasets to the IGIO office which earned Noble County a platinum star. This program has made seed grants available and Steve is asking permission to apply for the \$30,000.00 grant. Anita Hess moved to allow Steve to proceed in the process of apply for the grant. Gary Timmerman seconded and the motion carried 3-0.
- Steve is also wanting to get another full-time staff member. He told the commissioners that demands of the county as well as other city and town agencies are getting hard to keep up with. He also would like to share some of the data and programs that only he is aware of with another person. The commissioners totally agreed with Steve about his need for additional staff and gave their support pending council approval.
- There are many courses that are available on a website that Steve is currently subscribed to. He wants permission to renew his subscription at a cost of \$1400.00. Anita Hess moved to allow the \$1400.00 cost. Gary Timmerman seconded and the motion carried 3-0.
- Steve also talked to the commissioners about his contract. The contract is up at the end of this years so he is working on the next 4-year contract. The commissioners asked Steve to provide a copy of the old contract and a copy of the one he is proposing for discussion at a future meeting.

- Steve had also discussed with the IT department the need for more space on the GIS server. Dave Baum had asked that Steve put together a 5-year plan of strategy. He told the commissioners that he was working on this and would get it to them along with the contract.

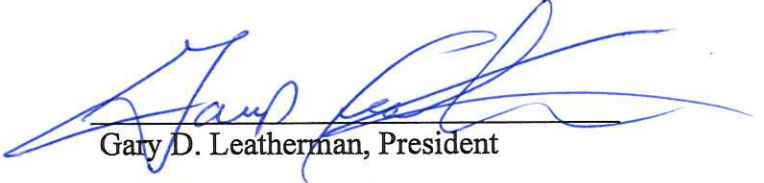
PLAN COMMISSION

Teresa Tackett, Plan Director, and Rachel Rogers, Code Enforcement Officer, came before the commissioners to discuss an issue around Cromwell at the Shady Acres Mobile Home Park. The park had commissioned a company to destroy old mobile homes and Teresa is saying that they are putting the scrap material in a field behind the park. She indicated that they at different occasions had discussed the removal of the debris but nothing has been done. She talked about liens, fines and several options. This was really nothing that the commissioners had any control over and Dennis Graft suggested removal of the debris and then placing a lien on the property.

ADJOURNMENT

This session of the Board of Commissioners of Noble County was at approximately 11:08 recessed from day to day until March 10, 2025.


Dated this 10th day of March, 2025



Gary D. Leatherman, President



Anita Hess, Vice President



Gary Timmerman, Member



ATTESTED: _____
Michelle Mawhorter, Auditor