

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

March 4th, 2024

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The Parke County Board of Commissioners convened in a regular meeting at 4:00 p.m. on Monday, March 4th, 2024, having adjourned from a regular meeting on Monday, February 19th, 2024.
- II. **ROLL CALL:** Members present were Jim Meece, President; Dan Collom, First Vice President; Bruce Hartman, Second Vice President; Nick Sauter, Commissioners' Attorney; Mary Anne Wood, Auditor; and Leanna Collisi, Deputy Auditor. Also present were John Martin, Randy Norman, Jason Frazier, Chris O'Brien, Jessica Lancaster, Pam Sanders, Marcie Graves, Jacqueline Torongeau, Will Dudley, Stacie Amerman, Luke Gill and Don Daniels.
- III. **MINUTES:** Minutes for the regular meeting held on Monday, February 19th, 2024 were approved on a motion from Bruce Hartman. Jim Meece seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
- IV. **PAYROLL:** No County Payroll report for Monday, March 11, 2024 due to being at an out of town meeting last week. Union Hospital Security payroll in the amount of \$7,196.16 was approved for release on Monday, March 11th, 2024 on a motion made by Dan Collom. Bruce Hartman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Acknowledgement of receipt of Payroll Claims Accounts Payable Report for February 26th, 2024 and March 11th, 2024 in the amount of \$419,556.63 was approved on a motion by Dan Collom. Bruce Hartman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Accounts Payable Claims for March 4th, 2024 in the amount of \$ 699,093.56 and \$359,803.37 were approved on a motion from Dan Collom. Bruce Hartman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
- V. **NEW BUSINESS:**
 - Jim Meece presented the Board of Commissioners with a proposal to make Friday, March 8th, 2024 Parke Heritage Dance Team Day. The Dance Team won two State Competitions on Sunday, March 3rd, 2024 in Pom and Jazz. Jim Meece made the motion to make Friday, March 8th, 2024 Parke Heritage Dance Team Day. Dan Collom seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
 - Mary Anne Wood did not have any out of cycle checks for approval.
 - Mary Anne Wood presented the Commissioners with a claim from Traveler's Insurance for an AT&T box repair. This was just for informational purposes.
 - Jim Meece said that Donna Whitmer requested permission to place a Banner and Pinwheels on the Northwest corner of the Courthouse lawn from April 3-30, 2024 to recognize Child Abuse Prevention Month. Jim Meece made a motion to approve a Banner and Pinwheels to be placed on the Courthouse lawn for the Month of April. Dan Collom seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
 - Jim Meece asked Bruce Hartman and Dan Collom if they would agree to approving Don Prunner authority to sign work orders for \$2,500.00 or less on already approved expenses or projects. This would prevent Don Prunner from having to wait on a commissioner's signature for approval on those types of work orders thus speeding up the process. Jim Meece made the motion to approve authorizing Don Prunner to sign work orders for \$2,500.00 or less. Dan Collom seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

- Mary Anne Wood presented a phone message from Juan Ramirez, from the Tippecanoe Commissioners' Office, concerning if any decision had been made from the Parke County Commissioners' Office on the LEAP Lebanon Project. Jim Meece explained the LEAP Lebanon Project and how it has been discovered that there is not enough energy and water supply for this project to go any further without specifically having a supplemental water supply. The idea of tapping into an aquifer to help supply 700 million gallons of water each day to potential businesses had been proposed. The Governor of Indiana has requested a study to be done by the Indiana Financial Authority (IFA) to compile the effect of tapping into an aquifer. This will hopefully help in the decision-making process as to whether or not to tap into an aquifer. Jim Meece, Dan Collom and Bruce Hartman have not made any decision on whether to support or not to support the tapping into an aquifer to help supplement the water supply for the LEAP Lebanon Project. They would like to wait to see what the study shows before making any decision. Mary Anne Wood will relay this information back to Juan Ramirez. If Juan Ramirez were to have any further questions that Mary Anne Wood cannot answer, then she will give him Jim Meece's contact information.

VI. OLD BUSINESS:

- Jim Meece began to review the draft of the Parke County Transient Merchant License (TML) Handmade Exemption requirements. He referred to state legislation defining Handmade. It must be grown by or manufactured by hand. Jim Meece would like to add to our description that the handmade vendor must make less than \$1,500.00 per year and must prove the income. Assembly does not mean handmade. The Commissioners are directing the Auditor's Office to handle handmade exemptions in such a way. Nick Sauter will work on an Ordinance for the TML Handmade Exemption requirements for Parke County.

VII. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Chris O'Brien:

- Chris O'Brien presented the Commissioners with the new radio console contract to be signed. All the Commissioners signed the contract. It had already been approved at an earlier meeting.
- Chris O'Brien reported that heavy traffic is expected in the Rockville area during the Solar Eclipse on April 8th, 2024 especially after 3:00 p.m. There will be communication/cell phone issues in the area as well.

Jason Frazier:

- Jason Frazier reported that he is having issues with the Medical Company for the inmates. He requested to give a 30-day notice to cancel with the existing Medical Company and seek a new Medical Company. Dan Collom made a motion to grant Jason Frazier authority to cancel the current Medical Company and seek a new Medical Company for the inmates at the Parke County Jail. Bruce Hartman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
- Jason Frazier requested approval for a Grant Application from the Community Foundation for the 2024 Parke County National Night Out. The Grant is for \$6,000.00. Jim Meece made the motion for Jason Frazier to pursue a \$6,000.00 Grant from the Community Foundation for the 2024 Parke County National Night Out program. Dan Collom seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Randy Norman:

- Randy Norman reported that they are about half way done hauling the 5,000 tons of material need for repairing and maintaining the county roads.
- The Highway Department is about two thirds complete patching Marshall Road to Rockville. Then Nyesville Road will be addressed for patching. There are crews working on roads in Rosedale and in the south part of Penn Township.
- The Highway Department is still working 4 ten-hour days.
- Jim Meece wants to plan lunch next week with Randy Norman to go over the Highway Department Superintendent's job description. It will take 4-5 weeks to hire a New Superintendent.
- Dan Collom gave an update on the Melcher Bridge after Lucas Collom, Joe Clark and Randy Norman had met at the bridge. They were supposed to drill the concrete face about 18 inches deep but there was nothing to tie into. There needs to be a new abutment created and they are waiting on blue prints. Dan Collom explained that is why the bridge is on hold for now.

Mary Anne Wood:

- Mary Anne Wood reported that she is working on getting bids for the copiers from Andrew Gauer and a representative from Ricoh.

Public Comments:

- Marci Graves presented an update on the Parke County Early Care and Education Coalition outreach events since last June 2023. They have created a home provider networking group that has met three times so far with positive success. Marci Graves put ads in the paper to recruit new child care providers to become licensed in Parke County. There are two classes of licensing for child care providers. The first class is for a single provider to care for 10 children by themselves. The second class is for a child care provider with a helper provider to care for 16 children together. Marci Graves has been working with the school systems to see if there are any high school students interested in a career in early childhood education or elementary education. She has providers that are willing to have those students come to their facilities to observe. There are several opportunities for scholarships in elementary education and early childhood education. Scholarships through TEACH will assist a child care provider who is licensed and works 30 hours a week. The Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children will pay 90% of tuition and books but will only pay for three classes at a time. She has met with the North Central Parke Superintendent to discuss a child care center for their school system. He would like to start small with Pre-K. There is a huge need for all day child care for children in Parke County. Half day rates would cause a problem as well as transportation issues. There are only 6 licensed home care providers in Parke County. There is a great need for Preschools in our county. United Way has gifted a huge amount of infant and toddler furnishings to Parke County. There are 2 new child care providers opening up in Parke County. One is located in Rosedale with 12 spots and the other location is in the Head Start building on York Street in Rockville with 32 spots. The cost for all day child care in the Indianapolis Area is around \$200.00 per week and more for infants and in Parke County the cost per week is \$85.00 - \$100.00 per week. A couple of upcoming events are the Early Childhood Expo on April 13th, 2024 from 1-3 p.m. at

the 4-H Fairgrounds. This will provide awareness and resources for the community. In May, the Parke County Early Care and Education Coalition will be partnering with SPARK Early Learning for a Community Training for providers and parents. The title of the training is Engaging Children with Books and Stories. Child care providers can get their hours needed for licensing. Marci Graves asked if the County could somehow cover the costs of TB screenings, CPR Classes and initial physicals for childcare providers and their employees. Jim Meece referred her to Stephanie Laws for assistance with associated costs for early childcare providers and their employees.

- Jackie Torongeau owns property in Judson and there are two back lots she is trying to purchase. However, it is still showing the Town of Judson owns the lots even though it does not exist anymore. The Town of Judson has been dissolved some time ago and the question is who really owns those two lots. Nick Sauter said that the County would own the property in question. Apparently, nobody dispersed the Town of Judson or closed it properly. Nick will have to research the Statue on properly closing the Town of Judson and get the process started so that Jackie Torongeau can purchase the two back lots to her property.
- Don Daniels was present to discuss the paving of the right of way of Midway Road to the well by the first of this year 2024. This still has not been done. Don Daniels further explained that he was here at a Board of Commissioners' Meeting seven months ago and was told it was in the budget to get done. Jim Meece explained that the Commissioners do not handle budget issues. However, they deal with the Community Crossings. Jim Meece would have to check with the Highway Superintendent, Randy Norman, to find out if he had budgeted the paving of Midway Road. Don Daniels asked if the meeting minutes could be reviewed when he attended for the same issue back in August or September 2023.
- Will Dudley asked what was the correct way to communicate to the Highway Department any repairs needing to be done to County Road 880. Him and his neighbors have been trying to patch holes in the road but it really needs to be grated and patched or graveled. Jim Meece said to report any need for road repairs to the Highway Department. If that does not work to contact Jim Meece direct. All the roads should be on a regular maintenance schedule and not just once a year. They should be maintained on a frequent basis.

ADJOURNMENT: Having no further business to come before the Board, a motion to adjourn was made by Dan Collom and seconded by Bruce Hartman. The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.



Jim Meece, President

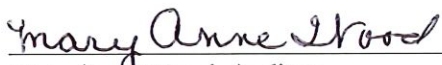


Dan R. Collom, 1st Vice President



Bruce A. Hartman, 2nd Vice President

ATTEST:



Mary Anne Wood, Auditor