

**Hancock County Board of Commissioners**  
**Regularly Scheduled Meeting**  
**August 17, 2021**

Commissioners met for a regular session. Those present were Board of Commissioners President John Jessup, Commissioner Vice President Marc Huber, Commissioner Bill Spalding, Auditor Debra Carnes and County Attorney Scott Benkie. Commissioner Jessup called to order the August 17, 2021 Hancock County Commissioners Board meeting at 8:00 AM.

**AIC/SRI Scholarship**

David Bottorff, Executive Director of the Association of Indiana Counties awarded a \$500 scholarship to Macy Huber, Commissioner Huber's daughter. AIC, in partnership with SRI, awards four scholarships to a graduating senior who has a relationship with a county official (parents, grandparents, guardians, etc.). The scholarship is designed to help county employees.

**Highway Department**

- Gary Pool (Highway Engineer) requested signatures for a title sheet for Segment B on 600 W and First Group for construction inspection for the guardrail treatment/school zone flashers for Eastern Hancock Schools will begin in December.
- Commissioner Huber made a motion to accept plans for Stage 3 of the 600 W project Segment B. Commissioner Spalding seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**
- Commissioner Huber made a motion to enter into a consulting contract with First Group Engineering, Inc., DES 1702757 for guardrail treatments and school zone flashers at Eastern Hancock Schools in an amount not to exceed \$80,500. Commissioner Spalding seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**
- Engineer Pool is assisting with the hire of a new employee to assist RDC with the new TIF district. He will defer to the Commissioners for final decisions with the new hire.
- Highway department is down four drivers and one intern. Engineer Pool hopes aligning driver's pay with industry standards will curb any further loss.
- A regional transport bidding contract was sent to County Attorney Benkie for review. The contract is from HART for the senior services transportation program.
- Due to the New Palestine dragon run, 600 W will be closed September 11<sup>th</sup> from 8-11AM.
- Engineer Pool will include field tile in the RDC project Segment A for Surveyor Bodkin between 300 & 400.
- Clark Packer is out sick today; so the meeting is postponed.
- Sealcoating will end this week and micro sealing will begin. Micro seal/restriping of 600 N, Fortville Pike, 1050 E coming up August 30<sup>th</sup>. Crack sealing will begin September 7<sup>th</sup>.
- New snow contract bidding for county parking lots will start soon. Engineer Pool clarified the Facility Manager should be paying for the county's salt use. Commissioner Jessup requested the new contract to include the Memorial Building.
- Commissioner Huber made a motion to approve a 15' utility easement for NineStar at the shooting range to maintain their electrical line running to the new jail. Commissioner Spalding seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

**Pennsy Trails Update**

- Mary Ann Wietbrock, Pennsy Trails President updated Commissioners on the Pennsy Trails progress and reported trail activity has doubled.
- Commissioner Huber introduced Ordinance 2021-8E establishing the DNR Next Level Trails Grant Fund 9119.

- Commissioner Huber made a motion to suspend the rules and adopt on same day as introduction Ordinance 2021-8E. Commissioner Spalding seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**
- Commissioner Huber made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2021-8E. Commissioner Spalding seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**
- Progress, including an update of \$670,802.50 DNR Grant.
- Commissioner Huber made a motion to approve the DNR President Harrison Conservation Trust Fund documents as presented. Commissioner Spalding seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**
- Ms. Wietbrock expressed concern over motorcycles, golf carts, motorized vehicles on trails. Engineer Pool suggested he and County Attorney Benkie look into this further.

#### **Johnson Controls**

Russ Patrick (Construction Manager for Johnson Controls) updated Commissioners on work in the county buildings. Johnson Controls is working with Premium Mechanical to restore dome lighting, possibly the cove lighting and pendent lighting in the courthouse.

#### **Community Corrections Update**

- Wade Kennedy (Executive Director) updated Commissioners on home detention/work release criteria guidelines. County Council has approved his 2022 Budget for 10 new hires to start work release. He is working with the Courts and the Sheriff for a start date.
- Director Kennedy requested to transfer \$1,000 from Project Income to an employee's salary to allow for a lateral move for an employee from the Sheriff's Department to Community Corrections. Commissioners were fine with this transfer.

#### **Accept ROW for Scott Roland**

- Harold Gibson with Gibson Land Surveying requested Commissioners accept the ROW for 35' half ROW for Scott Roland Plat.
- Commissioner Huber made a motion to accept the 35' half ROW for Scott Roland Minor Subdivision off of 850 E & 100N. Commissioner Spalding seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

#### **Claims & Payroll**

Commissioner Huber made a motion to approve claims and payroll. Commissioner Spalding seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

#### **Commissioner Minutes**

Commissioner Huber made a motion to approve the Commissioner minutes for August 3, 2021 as presented. Commissioner Spalding seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

#### **Circuit Court/Prosecutor Travel**

Commissioner Huber made a motion to ratify approval for Gina Koorsen, Prosecutor's office for the RISE21 conference for Mental Health & Justice Reform from 8/15-8/18; and approve the out of state travel for Judge Sirk, Gary O'Neal and Beth Ingle for the Annual Drug Court Training Conference from 8/14-8/18. Commissioner Spalding seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

#### **Accept Performance Bond**

Commissioner Huber made a motion to accept the performance bond for Clayton Properties Group, Inc. dba Arbor Homes for Meadows at Sagebrook, Section 2 monuments in the amount of \$13,875. Commissioner Spalding seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

### **Al Neyer Rezone Request**

- Mike Dale (Executive Director Planning Department) presented Al Neyer LLC for Rezone of 11.047 acres R2.5 to IBP at 3738 N 700W. The Planning Commission gave a favorable recommendation.
- A landowner who lives one mile from the development requested Commissioners vote against the rezoning request and expressed many concerns. Commissioner Jessup said in this instance I can't see that the arguments apply. Commissioner Huber added the 11 acres are within a 60 acre parcel.
- Commissioner Huber made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2021-8F amending the zoning in Buck Creek Township for the Al Neyer project from R2.5 to IBP. Commissioner Spalding seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

### **Alfredo Melendez Rezone Request**

- Mike Dale (Executive Director Planning Department) presented Alfredo Melendez for Rezone of 2.16 acres IBP to CC. The Planning Commission gave a favorable recommendation, subject to Technical Committee and Planning Commission development review; to be sure it conforms to our standards and the project be subject to platting because it is less than 10 acres.
- Commissioner Huber made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2021-8G amending the zoning for 2.16 acres from IBP to CC at 600 W & 300 N subject to recommendations from the Planning Commission. Commissioner Spalding seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

### **David Hedge Rezone Request**

- Mike Dale (Executive Director Planning Department) presented David Hedge for Rezone of 8 acres RR to CC with commitments. The Planning Commission gave a favorable recommendation 4-2.
- Commissioner Huber made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2021-8H amending the zoning for David Hedge 8 acres from RR to IBP at 600 W & 100 S with zoning commitments as presented. Commissioner Spalding seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

### **E-911 Center**

- John Jokantas (Director E-911) requested approval for Greg Duda to travel out of state for training.
- Commissioner Huber made a motion to approve out of state travel for Greg Duda from 9/12-9/17 for the FBI-LEEDA Master Public Information Officer training event. Commissioner Spalding seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**
- Director Jokantas requested approval for a new position to be opened September 7<sup>th</sup>; he obtained approval from Council last week.
- Commissioner Huber made a motion to approve the request for a new employee for E-911 effective September 5, 2021. Commissioner Spalding seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

### **READI Grant Information**

Jack Woods, Senior Project Consultant with Thomas P. Miller & Associates passed out an agenda and updated Commissioners on the READI Grant progress and introduced Alex Cipoletti, Project Associate who is assisting with the READI Grant. September 30<sup>th</sup> the plan has to be turned into the State. A workforce innovation hub at the Gateway site has been discussed with county leaders. This is an initiative that would carry forward regardless of the READI Grant. Monday there is a plan for a visioning session to take place and Commissioners are invited.

### **Recorder's Office**

- Recorder Moore requested US Image to have 24 hour access for scanning.
- Commissioner Huber made a motion to allow a door access card to US Image to scan the recorder index books September 30-October 2<sup>nd</sup> for 24 hour access. Commissioner Spalding seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

### **Animal Control**

- Commissioners discussed funding for 2022 Animal Control.
- Commissioner Huber made a motion for the County Attorney to draft an RFP for animal control in the unincorporated areas of Hancock County. Commissioner Jessup seconded the motion. **Motion carried 2-1.** Commissioner Spalding voted nay.

### **Enterprise Lease Update**

- Commissioner Spalding updated commissioners on his research into vehicles for Circuit Court and the Prosecutor's office; office holders are willing to order and wait 5 months for a vehicle to save the county money.
- Commissioner Huber made a motion to propose to County Council to lease Ford F-150 trucks for the Prosecutor, Circuit Court and Community Corrections pending approval from Council on where to pay for vehicles from. Commissioner Spalding seconded the motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

### **Wilkerson Dance Studio Request**

- Auditor Carnes updated Commissioners on the request from Wilkerson Dance Studio to utilize the Memorial Building. There was not a contract, but a portion of her fees were used for cleaning and maintenance of the building. Debbie Wilkerson offered to show proof of liability insurance with a Certificate of Liability; she requested 24 Mondays starting July-November from 6-9 PM. Commissioner Spalding said she paid the City \$42,000 over the last 30 years.
- Commissioner Huber questioned who would let her in and out of the building after hours; he suggested talking to Council for funding for swipe cards and suggested further discussion at the budget meeting.

### **Council Updates**

- Commissioners discussed Council's RDC appointment, Kent Fisk. Commissioner Jessup did not feel an elected official should sit on that board. Commissioner Spalding said Kent is clear on the expectation of board requirements. Commissioner Huber asked if there were legal issues with Kent sitting on the board. County Attorney Benkie said we are revisiting those issues, it's very possible; this has to be reviewed in my opinion. Commissioner Huber requested the County Attorney review by their next meeting. Commissioner Spalding suggested having an RDC representative give updates to Council and Commissioners regularly.
- Commissioner Jessup was surprised to hear Economic Development had 50-100 requests for information on Hancock County. On the surface, seems like exactly the requests we would hope for and expect to see but were unable to respond to them.
- Commissioner Huber said he requested information from Randy Sorrell, Director Economic Development and to date has not received a response. Commissioner Spalding suggested requesting Director Sorrell attend meetings every other week with an update. Commissioner Huber said if a response is received, he will share with the other Commissioners.

**Veterans Services**

- Bob Workman, Veterans Services Officer requested additional office, more storage room, to purchase a used microwave & refrigerator and additional furniture.
- Commissioner Spalding will meet with Veterans Services to discuss request.

**Vaccine Passport Discussed**

- Commissioners received a request from the Constitution Committee, Second Amendment Group to present the Constitutional Rights Sanctuary County to Commissioners. He said the group respectfully is requesting an evening meeting, because many members work during the day. The group would like to discuss an ordinance for the county, due to first amendment rights being denied.
- All Commissioners shared they have received many emails regarding vaccine passports. Commissioners agreed they do not feel a vaccine passport is the way to go in Hancock County. We cannot keep a private business from requiring their employees be vaccinated. The state legislature and governor have recognized there is an issue. Commissioners agreed they would not take a stand on vaccinating. Commissioner Spalding felt like statements could be said without an ordinance or resolution. Commissioner Huber would like something in writing. Commissioner Jessup said it could be a letter, an announcement, declaration or resolution.
- Commissioners rescheduled the August 31, 2021, 8:00 AM meeting to 6:00 PM. Auditor Carnes will send notice to the newspaper and post the notice in the Annex Building.

**Repurpose Old Jail Discussed**

Commissioners discussed repurposing the old jail for the Prosecutor, Probation, Drug Court and Community Corrections.

**The Hancock County Board of Commissioners meeting adjourned at 11:47 AM.**

**Hancock County Commissioners**

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Commissioner John Jessup, President

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Commissioner Marc Huber, Vice-President

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Commissioner Bill Spalding

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Debra Carnes, Hancock County Auditor