

## WHITLEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

September 19, 2022

The Whitley County Commissioners met in regular session Monday, September 19, 2022, at 1:00 PM in the Commissioners' Room located on the 1st floor of the Whitley County Government Center. Commissioners in attendance were Chair Chad Banks, Vice Chair Theresa Baysinger and Commissioner George Schrumpf. Others in attendance were Attorney Matt Shipman, Auditor Tiffany Deakins, Commissioner's Assistant Cami Hippenhammer, HR Director Jennifer Shinabery, Chief Deputy Auditor Tamela Tinscher, Nathan Bilger and Craig Wagner from the Planning & Building Department, Treasurer Kay Gatton, Assessor Kim Erdly, Sheriff Marcus Gatton, Jason Spencer and Janelle Schmitt from the Whitley County Sheriff's Department, Katy Fry, Scott Wagner, Jenny Stephenson, Karli Hendry, Mark Sturtevant, Brad Millikan and LeAnn Holmes from Blue Lake Association, Beth Johnson from USI Engineering, Sonya Emerick, Sarah Haag, Joan Null, Rob Schuman, and Larry Long.

Chair Banks opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**UNSAFE BUILDING HEARING FOR 4350 N STATE ROAD 9:** Chief Building Inspector Craig Wagner was present to discuss an unsafe building that the Planning and Building Department received a complaint on. Craig stated that the residence has been unsafe to live in since June of 2022 when the high winds took off over 50% of the upstairs roof. Karen Hanlen the property owner was present via Gotowebinar and spoke on behalf of her property. The Commissioners, Craig, Karen, and Attorney Shipman had a lengthy conversation regarding this property. Karen would like an extension to November 15<sup>th</sup> so they can decide if they are going to sell the property and/or have the house demolished. Karen let Commissioners know that she will be serving papers to have the tenant removed from the property very soon as well. Commissioner Schrumpf made a motion to approve the extension to November 15<sup>th</sup>, Seconded by Banks and carried with a 2/1 vote, with Baysinger voting against. The unsafe building hearing was concluded at 1:30 pm and the regular meeting was re-opened.

**COUNTY ATTORNEY REPORT:** Attorney Shipman stated that he had nothing to report other than agenda items.

**ZONING CODE AMENDMENT & PLAT APPROVAL:** Planning Director Nathan Bilger presented Parkers Playground re-plat for the Commissioner's approval. The plat was approved by the Plan Commission at their August meeting. The re-plat is combining 3 parcels. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to approve the plat request, seconded by Schrumpf and carried with a 3/0 vote. The Commissioners had a few questions regarding the Solar Zone Code Amendments. Commissioner Schrumpf wanted to see different verbiage in the Ordinance so that the property owner would need to decommission the panels. Bilger stated that he would get another draft to present to the Commissioners at their October 3 meeting. Commissioner Schrumpf made a motion to table until the October 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, with a second by Baysinger and carried with a 3/0 vote.

**IN THE MATTER OF TAKE-HOME VEHICLES:** Commissioner Banks stated that the Commissioners are going to reach out to department heads regarding take home vehicles and whether the take home vehicles are needed. Commissioner Banks stated that the Commissioners just want to make sure that the County vehicles are being utilized properly. This will not be on the agenda again and the Commissioners will take care of this out of a public meeting as it is a procedural item.

### **IN THE MATTER OF HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT UPDATE & BUILDING IMPROVEMENT REQUEST:**

Highway Director Katy Fry was present to give a general update to the Commissioners as she has not done so recently. She let Commissioners know that the department has completed the 50 mile chip and seal project and that Niblock is roughly half way done with the project for Community Crossings. Katy also wanted to let Commissioners know that with the recent drainage project that the building has experienced no more flooding and that she is very thankful for the maintenance department and all their assistance. A new head mechanic was hired, Bradley Ottinger and wanted to let Commissioners know that Steve Schuman has decided to retire, and his last day will be September 20<sup>th</sup>. Katy also stated that she received word that the two trucks that the department has been waiting on since 2021 will start to be built this month and the department should expect to receive them around December. Katy stated that during the drainage project some issues were uncovered and need to be addressed. The 5 windows on the west face of the building will need to be replaced, the insulation needs to be replaced and the aluminum on the building will have to be replaced as the current is nailed on and not screwed, so this will be ruined in the removal process. Council members were out to see the damage and agree that something needs to be done. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to give a favorable pass to Council and have the expenses paid from Cum Cap, seconded by Schrumpf and carried with a 3/0 vote.

**IN THE MATTER OF DNR HISTORIC MUSEUM GRANT:** Commissioner Banks gave a brief rundown of the projects that need to be completed at the Museum for repairs. Commissioners' Assistant Cami Hippenhammer has been working with Region 3A to secure a matching grant to cover \$50,000 of the \$104,000

expenses. Attorney Shipman has looked over the documents and suggested that the Commissioners double check on whether the Museum needs to be ADA compliant to receive the grant. A Statement of Understanding needs to be signed for the grant, Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to approve and allow for the Chair to sign as only one signature is needed, seconded by Schrumpf, and carried with a 3/0 vote. A Matching Share form needs to be signed with only one signature as well, Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to approve and allow for the Chair to sign, seconded by Schrumpf, and carried with a 3/0 vote. The Commissioners decided to table the Covenant that needs to be signed as well until their October 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Commissioner Baysinger made the motion, seconded by Schrumpf, and carried with a 3/0 vote to table.

**911 STRAREGIC STUDY INTERLOCAL:** The City has signed an Interlocal agreement to have Ritter Strategic Services preform a study of 911 services and operations. Commissioner Banks stated that he is not in favor of this study at all, he is very impressed with the county's dispatch, they work well with other departments and thinks that they do a great job. He is also concerned that if the city and county combine that the townships may have to pay a fee. Commissioner Schrumpf also agrees with Banks; however, he feels that the study could be very beneficial and get good information. Schrumpf made a motion to approve the study, seconded by Baysinger and carried with a 2/1 vote with Banks voting against.

**MINUTES AND CLAIMS:** The claim distributions from September 7, 2022, through September 19, 2022, were reviewed by the Commissioners. Commissioner Schrumpf checked the accounts payable, and payroll claims and noted that the only concerns he had were bills for Journey. Schrumpf made a motion to approve the payroll claims, seconded by Baysinger and passed with a 3/0 vote. Commissioner Schrumpf made a motion to approve the accounts payable claims, with a second by Baysinger and carried with a 3/0 vote. The Commissioners reviewed two sets of regular meeting minutes from August 15 and September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Commissioner Schrumpf made a motion to approve the August 15<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes, seconded by Baysinger and carried with a 3/0 vote. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to approve the September 16<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes, seconded by Schrumpf and carried with a 3/0 vote.

**FACILITIES REQUESTS:** Commissioner Banks presented a facility request for the Whitely County Christmas Celebration on December 2 and 3<sup>rd</sup> from 4:30 pm to 8 pm both nights. This is the same request that is presented every year. Baysinger made a motion to approve the request with a second by Schrumpf and carried with a 3/0 roll call vote.

Sarah Haag from the public was invited to speak, she was wanting an update on the Surf Broadband that has not yet been voted on. The Commissioner Baysinger stated that the Attorney is working on the ARPA Ordinance and the Commissioners are hoping to vote on that at the October 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, then it would be passed to the Council. Council will only have one day to review as their meeting is October 4<sup>th</sup>, so Baysinger stated that this would probably get tabled until the November meeting.

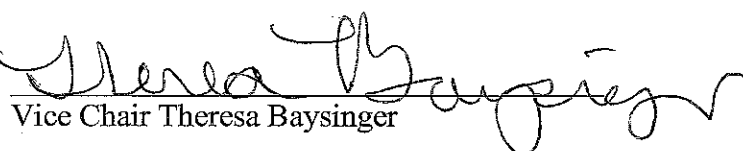
LeeAnn Holmes from Blue Lake Conservancy District was present to get approval for funds from the ARPA monies in the amount of \$28,730. Commissioners let her know that this will have to wait until the ARPA Ordinance has been approved by Commissioners and Council, but they will make sure that it is on the plan that gets presented to Council.

Commissioner Baysinger stated that the Plan Commission has a qualified candidate that she would like to have appointed and wanted to let the public know that his name is Jack Green. Commissioners last name used to be Green and wanted to state that he is not related to her at all for clarification. Commissioner Schrumpf made a motion to appoint Jack Green to the Planning Commission, seconded by Baysinger and carried with a 3/0 vote.

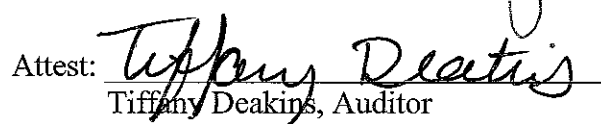
There being no further business and no further questions or comments from the public, Chair Banks adjourned the meeting at 2:22 PM.

#### WHITLEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

  
Chair Chad Banks

  
Vice Chair Theresa Baysinger

  
Commissioner George Schrumpf

Attest:   
Tiffany Deakins, Auditor