

## WHITLEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

April 4, 2022

The Whitley County Commissioners met in regular session Monday, April 4, 2022, at 1:00 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 Theresa Green and Commissioner George Schrupf attended via computer. Others in attendance were Auditor Tiffany Deakins, Chief Deputy Auditor Tamela Tincher, Sheriff Marcus Gatton, Health Director Scott Wagner, Treasurer Kay Gatton, Assessor Kim Erdly, Community Corrections Director Paula Worden, Amy Biggs and Kyle Bair from Whitley County EMA, Mary Hartman from Peabody Public Library, Rob Schuman, Nicki Venable, Timothy Kumfer, Beth Johnson from USI and Joan Null.

Chair Banks opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**COUNTY ATTORNEY REPORT:** Attorney Shipman stated that he has reviewed the agenda items and he sees no problems with them.

**EMA DEPUTY DIRECTOR INTRODUCTION:** EMA Director Amy Biggs was present to introduce her new Deputy Director Kyle Bair. Kyle is from Churubusco and currently serves as the Assistant Fire Chief for Churubusco Fire Department and works EMS for Parkview.

**PUBLIC DEFENDER CONTRACT & UPDATED BOARD:** Paula Worden was present from Community Corrections to ask that the Commissioners approve moving forward with the presented Public Defender Contract with Judge Fahl. Commissioner Green made a motion to approve, with a second from Schrupf and carried with a 3/0 roll call vote. Paula also had submitted a new board member list that has added Gary Parrett, Anthony Churchward and Elizabeth Deckard. Commissioner Green made a motion to approve the updated board list, with a second by Schrupf, passing with a 3/0 roll call vote.

**BRIDGE INSPECTION CONTRACT:** Commissioner Banks stated that the Commissioners need to approve and have Commissioner Banks sign the Bridge Inspection Contract via DocuSign. Commissioner Green made a motion to approve the Bridge Inspection Contract, seconded by Schrupf and passed with a 3/0 rollcall vote.

**HOUSE BILL 1245:** Scott Wagner from the Whitley County Health Department wanted to let Commissioners know that there has been an approved House Bill that will mean changes for the County and its septic systems and sanitary sewer. As of July 1, 2023, local government will have less control on the restrictions that can be placed. Attorney Shipman stated that he and Scott should sit down next week and go over this. Commissioner Banks stated that he likes the idea of having to use a third party to do septic inspections so that they County wouldn't be held liable for the changes that are coming.

**FACILITIES REQUESTS:** Commissioner Banks presented two facility requests. The first is for the use of the Courthouse lawn for First Fridays. Commissioner Green made a motion to approve the request, with a second by Schrupf and passed with a 3/0 rollcall vote. The second request is for the Church St. Paul of the Cross, allowing that the gazebo to be used April 10<sup>th</sup> from 9:45 am to 10:45 am for Palm Sunday. Commissioner Green made a motion to approve, with a second by Schrupf and passed with a 3/0 roll call vote.

**SHERIFF DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT:** Sheriff Marcus Gatton presented the 2021 annual jail report to the Commissioners. A few highlighted items included a total inmate count for 2021 to be 1,374, the number one booking offense for Whitley County was drug related, the confinement staff conducted 776 unannounced cell walk-throughs and other facts contained in the 2021 annual report. Sheriff Gatton also wanted to let the Commissioners know that the jail is still understaffed with lack of being able to obtain employees. Once individuals learn of the shifts that they will most likely be working they do not wish to continue with the employment. Gatton also let the Commissioners know that the County has been awarded a grant for body cameras for the Sheriff's Department. The only commitment that will need to be given will be \$3,800 towards the amount. Sheriff Gatton is also looking to get new computers for the squad cars but feels that he will have enough in his commissary account to cover that cost.

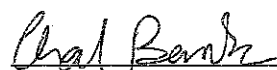
**MINUTES AND CLAIMS:** The claim distributions from March 22, 2022, through April 4, 2022, were reviewed by the Commissioners. Commissioner Banks checked the accounts payable, and payroll claims and noted that we purchased a kennel for the Sheriff's Department and was curious about that. Sheriff Gatton stated that the Sheriff's Department plans to add another K9 and that is the cost related to the kennel to house the new K9. Green made a motion to approve the payroll claims, seconded by Schrupf and passed with a 3/0 roll call vote. Commissioner Green made a motion to approve the accounts payable claims, with a second by Schrupf and carried with a 3/0 roll call vote. The Commissioners reviewed the regular meeting minutes from March 21, 2022. Commissioner Green made a motion to approve the minutes, with a second by Schrupf and passed with a 3/0 roll call vote. The Commissioners also reviewed the meeting minutes from the Joint Commissioner and Council meeting that took place on March 28, 2022. Commissioner Green made a motion to approve the meeting minutes,

Commissioner Schrumpf abstained, Commissioner Banks seconded the motion and carried with a 2/0 vote with Schrumpf abstaining.

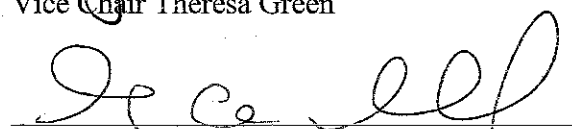
**IN OTHER BUSINESS:** Commissioner Green stated that she wanted to let everyone know that she is aware that the Government Center is in need of security after the recent events that have transpired and employees feeling unsafe. The Sheriffs Department had already planned on having this in the budget for 2023, the Commissioners may look into this sooner.

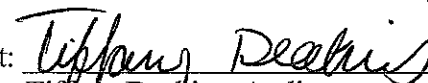
There being no further business and no further questions or comments from the public, Chair Banks adjourned the meeting at 1:36 PM.

**WHITLEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

  
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Chair Chad Banks

  
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Vice Chair Theresa Green

  
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Commissioner George Schrumpf

Attest:   
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Tiffany Deakins, Auditor