

WHITLEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

September 6, 2022

The Whitley County Commissioners met in regular session Tuesday, September 6, 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 Schruppf reported via ~~Go~~webinar. Others in attendance were Attorney Matt Shipman, Auditor Tiffany Deakins, Commissioner's Assistant Cami Hippenhammer, HR Director Jennifer Shinabery, Clerk Cindy Doolittle, Recorder Rosemary Brown, Planning and Building Director Nathan Bilger, Councilmembers Timothy Kumfer, James Argerbright, Joan Western, Thomas Warner, Treasurer Kay Gatton, Assessor Kim Erdly, Sheriff Marcus Gatton, Jason Spencer and Todd Cook from the Whitley County Sheriff's Department, Katy Fry, Scott Wagner, Mark Sturtevant, Richard Brooks and LeAnn Hughes from Blue Lake Association, Niki Keister and Pam Koch from Columbia City Connect, Leslie Blakley from Council on Aging, and Beth Johnson from USI Engineering.

Chair Banks opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

POLLING LOCATION APPROVAL: Cindy Doolittle was present to seek approval for the General Elections Polling Locations. The locations have not changed at all, and Cindy just needs signatures so that she can advertise where the locations are to the public. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to approve, with a second by Schruppf, and carried with a 3/0 roll call vote.

2nd QUARTER VOUCHER APPROVAL: Leslie Blakley from Whitley County Council on Aging was present to request approval of her 2nd quarter voucher to submit to the State for reimbursement. The request is for \$121,907. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to approve the voucher with the Chair to sign, with a second by Schruppf. Passing with a 3/0 roll call vote. Leslie did let Commissioners know that they are still waiting on the vehicles that had been purchased over a year ago and doesn't know if they will receive them. They are still short on drivers as well.

IN THE MATTER OF COLUMBIA CITY CONNECT REQUEST: Niki Keister & Pam Koch were present with Matt Shipman to seek approval to allow for Columbia City Connect to place four beacons on the Court House Square to allow for the Downtown walking app to work. This will be mainly grant funded however Attorney Shipman stated that at some point they may come to ask for funding even with this being a City program, but that is not requested at this time. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to approve, with a second by Schruppf and carried with a 3/0 roll call vote.

IN THE MATTER OF THE POLE BARN REQUEST: Scott Wagner from the Health Department is seeking approval to move forward with contacting a contractor to discuss a building site and costs to add a pole barn to the Armstrong property that the County is considering building the new jail. Scott stated that the health department, emergency management and the coroner's office would all benefit from this building. Commissioner Banks stated that he believes it is too soon to move forward with that request as they are unsure where the site location for the new jail will be at this point. There are federal funds and grants that can cover what Scott believes to be most of the costs but will not know that until a quote is obtained.

IN THE MATTER OF ROW PERMIT: Highway Director Katy Fry was present to have Commissioners approve a ROW permit for NIPSCO to do work mostly in Allen County near County Line Road and US 24. The Highway department has reviewed and sees no reason to not move forward with the request. Commissioner Schruppf made a motion to approve with a second by Baysinger and carried with a 3/0 roll call vote. Katy also wanted to seek approval for a letter of financial commitment from the Commissioners for a grant that she is trying to obtain. The letter is not required but will help the grant application receive a higher rating. Katy stated that this would be a reimbursable grant and would be paid back in four phases. She stated that you could use funding from any where to pay. Commissioners feel that this request should go before Council as it is a financial request. Commissioner Schruppf made a motion for a favorable pass to Council, with a second by Baysinger and passed unanimously with a 3/0 roll call vote.

IN THE MATTER OF TAKE-HOME VEHICLES: Commissioner Banks stated that the Commissioners would like to review information obtained from the Commissioners' Assistant and HR pertaining to the take-home vehicles and the policy that has been set in place. Department heads have filled out forms stating why their departments need to have take-home vehicles. Commissioners agree that they need more time to review. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to table, with a second by Schruppf and carried with a 3/0 roll call vote.

IN THE MATTER OF SOLID WASTE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT AND RESOLUTION:

Attorney Shipman stated that the new Interlocal Agreement with the Solid Waste District has had some changes made pertaining to the Treasurer's office and fees; these are the only changes to the Interlocal. He knows that other changes are going to be worked out for the first of the year, but this helps fix problems right now with the Treasurer's office. The Commissioners need to approve Resolution 2022-09 before the Interlocal can be signed. The Resolution gives the Commissioners the right to sign the Interlocal agreement. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to approve Resolution 2022-09, seconded by Schrupf and carried unanimously with a 3/0 roll call vote.

IN THE MATTER OF AUTHORIZED SIGNERS FOR COMPUTERSHARE: Auditor Tiffany Deakins stated that Wells Fargo had reached out and are needing a new authorized signer sheet as the one that they have is from 2012 and outdated. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to approve with a second by Schrupf and carried with a 3/0 roll call vote.

IN THE MATTER OF WHITLEY COUNTY REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT: Attorney Shipman presented to Commissioners that he is bringing forth an Inclusion of Territory into the Whitley County Regional Sewer & Water District. This will allow for the pool of potential board members to grow. As it stands now there are only a select few areas of the County that constituents could live to fill the board vacancy. This would cover all parts of the County that are not included in any other district. Commissioner Baysinger stated that she would not be able to support this. Commissioner Banks stated that he is indifferent to it. Commissioner Schrupf made a motion to approve the request, with a second by Banks. Carried with a 2/1 roll call vote, with Baysinger against.

IN THE MATTER OF POLLUTION POLICY RENEWAL: Commissioners need to approve the new pollution policy for the County's landfill and recycle center. There is a slight increase in premiums, but this can be covered by the current budget. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to approve, with a second by Schrupf and carried with a 3/0 roll call vote.

IN THE MATTER OF COMMISSIONER MEETING DATES: Commissioner Banks stated that at this time he is not prepared to vote on this matter, but they can have a discussion on it. He feels that changing the meeting times to the evening will not make the public come to the meetings as he attended several other meetings that are held in the evening and there is not public present at them. Commissioner Schrupf stated that he would not be in favor of night meetings. Commissioner Baysinger would like to explore the option of night meetings and have that conversation. Commissioners think it would be best to table this until their first meeting in November. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to table until their first November meeting, with a second by Schrupf and carried with a 3/0 roll call vote.

FACILITIES REQUESTS: Commissioner Banks presented a facility request for the Whitley County Republican Party to allow for the use of the basement to hold a meeting for candidates to be educated on election forms. This will be open to all candidates and protentional candidates to meet with Jessica Hockemeyer the Election Supervisor. The request is for September 14, 2022, from 6-7:30 pm. Commissioner Schrupf made a motion to approve the request with a second by Baysinger and carried with a 3/0 roll call vote.

MINUTES AND CLAIMS: The claim distributions from August 16, 2022, through September 6, 2022, were reviewed by the Commissioners. Commissioner Banks checked the accounts payable, and payroll claims and noted that there were no concerns. Baysinger made a motion to approve the payroll claims, seconded by Schrupf and passed with a 3/0 roll call vote. Commissioner Baysinger 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 two sets of regular meeting minutes from July 18 and August 1, 2022. Commissioner Banks stated that the Commissioners did not receive the meeting minutes from August 15th in their packets, so he would ask that be tabled until the next meeting. Commissioner Baysinger made a motion to table the meeting minutes until the next meeting, seconded by Schrupf and carried with a 3/0 roll call vote.

Attorney Shipman wanted to let Commissioners know that he will be bringing a few items to the agenda for the next meeting.

There being no further business and no further questions or comments from the public, Chair Banks adjourned the meeting at 2:12 PM.

WHITLEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Chair Chad Banks

Vice Chair Theresa Baysinger *Theresa Baysinger*

George Schrupf
Commissioner George Schrupf

Attest: *Tiffany Deakins*
Tiffany Deakins, Auditor