

OCTOBER 28TH, 2024

The Jay County Commissioners met in session on Monday, October 28th, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. in the courthouse auditorium. Attending was Rex Journey, attorney Wes Schemenaur, auditor Emily Franks, and Chad Aker, president, presiding. Absent was Brian McGalliard

COURTHOUSE

Bruce Sutton, superintendent, discussed quotes with the commissioners for repair work stemming from the water damage on September 4, 2024. There were three quotes presented for approval. The first was from Hays & Sons at \$20,720.24, The second was from Mustard Seed Remodeling at \$33,284.88 and the third was from JC Construction at \$19,191.52. Mr. Sutton stated Mustard Seed's quote might end up being less if they were not required to move as much furniture. However, it would still remain the highest quote. Mr. Aker noted the recorder had been happy with the services provided already by Hays & Sons. Mr. Sutton echoed those sentiments adding they had been on top of services. Rex Journey made a motion to approve Hays & Sons Construction for the remodeling of flood damage for \$20,720.24. Chad Aker seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Mr. Sutton also presented a quote for the carpet and flooring repair in the circuit court office for \$5,240.02 from Medler's Furniture. The damage in that office is also related to the water damage on September 4, 2024. A quote for carpet and flooring repair in the assessor's main office was quoted at \$7,063.97 from Medler's. The commissioners asked if Mr. Sutton had obtained other quotes for the work. Mr. Sutton stated he had not because they had been used prior for work in the clerk and retirement center and liked their work. Rex Journey made a motion to approve both flooring quotes from Medler's Furniture. Chad Aker seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

JEMS

The shift supervisors were unable to attend the meeting due to the change to 5:00 p.m. They did submit their monthly financial report for commissioners to review.

RETIREMENT CENTER

Cindy Bracy, JCCL Advisory Board of Directors President, came to the commissioners to give a monthly update on operations. She presented an admissions application for commissioner approval as it was already approved by the advisory board. Mr. Aker questioned who would make the determination if a mental health psychiatric evaluation is needed. Mrs. Bracy clarified it would be the director's decision. A brief discussion was had over whether it should be the director's decision or through the board. It was decided if it was a questionable item, it should be brought to the board's attention.

Mr. Aker asked if the final decision of admission be solely the director's or if there would be any appeal process in place, suggesting it should have an appeal process through the board. It was decided to change the wording so the applicant may appeal to the board of directors in writing and striking out all decisions of the director are final. Mr. Journey asked for clarification on who would be responsible for the costs of any required evaluations. Mrs. Bracy confirmed it would be the applicant's responsibility. Mr. Journey made a motion to approve the admissions policy subject to the changes discussed. Chad Aker seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote. Mr. Aker questioned if they were going to have the new policies signed by the residents. Mrs. Bracy explained the draft code of conduct was read to the residents first for their feedback with no issue. She added it would be one of the first items completed by the new director to update all resident files.

Mrs. Bracy gave a run down on operations with the resident count currently at 20 and this being new director Stacey Johnson's first day. She added that she will most likely visit Kokomo's facility to get training, but it is not set in stone. Mrs. Bracy provided a quick year in review for the board. In November 2023 a study committee was formed to address fiscal accountability, safety of residents and staff, and repairs to the facility. The RCAP process has been streamlined and now they are filed the first day at the facility. They have been working on residents rent to get direct deposit to ease the burden on staff and residents.

In March 2024 the board of directors was established and job descriptions were reviewed and established. RCAP money was received for the grant, pest control was put in place, and furniture had been obtained from Adams County. Ball State University continues to provide activities and programs to the residents with Purdue Extension offering programming for gardening and nutritional planning. Second Harvest is approved pending final inspection of the facility. The electrical updates are approved and pending completion.

HIGHWAY

Bob Howell, Superintendent, informed commissioners the 2009 Sterling Dump truck that was previously turned into a salt truck is needing repairs. As they are transitioning in new trucks, they would like to decommission it. They will remove the salt bed from that truck and will sell the cab and chassis on Purple Wave. Rex Journey made a motion to approve the decommission and selling of the 2009 Sterling Dump Truck. Chad Aker seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote. Mr. Howell also informed commissioners they have along with REMC been working on removing brush and trees from power lines and right of ways. There have been a few resident complaints, but wanted to stress they are only cutting into the right of way, not into resident's yard. He added while they do not want to be aggressive in removal, they do not want to have to come back again next year.

Mr. Howell also discussed Bridge 14 on 600 W, North of SR 26, in between SR 26 and 200 N and whether the county could use an aluminum or cement concrete culvert instead. EGIS believes it might be doable, but will require a complete hydraulic study and will come up with a dollar amount to complete the full project. EGIS also looked at bridge 177 and 178 and completed a deflection test. They are waiting on some information to come back. Ms. Klarer, assistant superintendent, explained the bridge on 300 E between 300-400 S is slated for a community crossings grant in a few years. Mr. Journey questioned if the hydraulic survey shows it will take the water, then it would qualify to be used. Mr. Aker confirmed it could be as long as the engineers are okay with it.

EGIS- TIMBER BRIDGES

Mike McCool, EGIS Engineer, came to discuss the county's 42 timber slab structures. He stated they are all the same, a longitudinal slab span bridge with a dowel-laminated deck design. The main load carriers are the spreader beam running transversely under the timber slab, longitudinal to the road. The timber slab on top, which is the spreader beam, is what is holding up the panels. They are held together with a shiplap joint with a bolt that runs through the joint. What they see happening on the failing bridges is that the joints are not working and only one panel is taking the load. When they complete load tests, if one panel dips, and the other stays the same, there is an issue within the joint. These issues are harder to locate in this type of bridge because the failing is between boards. Some of the things they can look for is if all the boards are sitting along the spreader beams, or are the bolts tightened. He did find some instances where the bolts were loose. Mr. McCool stated this issue can happen overnight or under one big load.

Mr. McCool discussed possible solutions to fix what we got. He is looking at adding additional spreader beams to help carry the load. Another option which is pretty evasive, but common, is to take part of the deck out. He does not recommend this option for Jay County. A third option would be complete spreader deck repair, which requires a lean grout mix to be applied. The most permanent option would be to pre compress these bridges to transfer the load. It would be a pricey option and could compress the width by up to 10 inches. He does not recommend it for those reasons, as well as not being sure of the full condition of the bridge. He has not priced any of these options, but can work on an estimate.

Mr. Journey questioned how long any of these temporary fixes would work. Mr. McCool was unsure as the youngest bridge was 38 years old with most of them over 40 years old. The option is to buy some life on that, but he is unsure until one is done. In the one he has reviewed; the panel took more load than what it was designed for with the permanent deflection. They would have to jack it up to put a spreader beam in to maybe add 4-5 years to the life of it, or maybe up to 10 years. He noted the life of a timber bridge is estimated at 25-40 years. Mr. Journey noted since we have already exceeded the life of the bridges, he

would be interested in putting a plan in place to see the estimated cost. Mr. McCool stated they do have a grant writer on staff that is looking into a federal grant for the bridge investment program and can be awarded from \$2.5 to \$100 million in funds. They group bridges together into one grant application to get them taken care of together and will work to see if that is an option. They typically do not recommend replacement of bridges based on age, but might start bringing that in as a factor.

Mr. Aker noted the county just signed a 4-year bridge inventory contract. As part of the process, they flag different bridges and these popped up unexpectedly. Mr. McCool noted they have also been putting together the county's asset management plan for the community crossings grants. They can sit down with the county after every year to review needs and options. He added this was a curveball and not something they have seen before. They have been having ongoing discussions with INDOT as these assets are reported to the federal government.

CLERK

Jon Eads, clerk, came to the commissioners to discuss obtaining a new collection agency for unpaid court costs. Mr. Eads believes the current company, Capital Recovery, is not performing as they should. The current pay structure has the company send all the money to the county and then asks for payment. Paycourt would be the new collection agent and would charge 30% on each basis as the person pays the fees at the time of billing. This would be an additional 30% owed on top of the debt. Mr. Eads estimates there are over \$800,000 in funds to be recovered. He added Paycourt will provide them weekly updates about who they have contacted and who has paid. Mr. Journey questioned if Paycourt would take over the cases that have not been paid. Mr. Eads confirmed they would and there will be a 30-day agreement to cancel the old agency. Mr. Schemenaur explained the new contract was for a 3-year term with a 30-day termination clause that covers the renewal. Rex Journey made a motion to approve Paycourt as the new collection agency for the clerk's office. Chad Aker seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

MAINSTREAM

Shawn Gardner, Mainstream Fiber, came to commissioners for a letter of support for submission with their BEAD application. The next rounds of applications will open up any day and they will have around 30 days to put the submission together. They informed the commissioners a letter of support would be worth 5 points in their application and without the support of the county, they would be dead in the water. Mr. Gardner also mentioned they were hoping the venture between them and the countywide emergency system works out.

Autumn Marshall, ECI Regional Planning District Broadband Coordinator, who has been working with several companies including Mainstream, spoke in favor of the company. She believes they prioritize people over profits more than any other company she has worked with and stressed 5% of the vote is determined by what the community wants through the letter of support. Mr. Gardner added they are an Indiana company focused on Indiana and rural Indiana. Ms. Marshall echoed those sentiments stating Mainstream is going to know what is needed in the rural areas and are committed to helping farmers participate in the program.

Mr. Journey questioned the estimated award amount for the BEAD program. Mr. Gardner explained they are estimated to grant \$848 million between four different BEAD allotments. The first round is slated to be disbursed the most to underserved and unserved. He explained they would need to pass 2,049 residents before they could get to the largest underserved and unserved areas. Mr. Aker questioned how much the company would be asking for. Mr. Gardner explained it is estimated to be a \$10 million project and are expecting about \$2-3 million from BEAD. They will need to have the letter of support within the next 2-3 weeks to put with the application. He added the letter of support does not hold the county financially liable to anything. Rex Journey made a motion to approve and sign the letter of support for Mainstream Fiber. Chad Aker seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

BROADBAND

Autumn Marshall, ECI Regional Planning District Regional Coordinator on Broadband, informed commissioners the Indiana Broadband Office (IBO) still has not released a final list of addresses. She has been working with EMA to combine Mainstream broadband with the emergency radio project. It looks like something that can be done even though it is really early days. However, it does require both to reevaluate the plans, but is optimistic it can be done by the end of the year. Mr. Aker clarified the different tower locations could provide for radio communications as well as internet services. Mr. Journey questioned who would be responsible for making sure it all gets done. Ms. Marshall explained while she was just sitting at the table for the most part, she would make sure everyone works to get an estimate.

OOR- OWNER OCCUPIED REHAB

Nate Kimball, ECI Regional Planning Assistant Director, came to the commissioners to give an update on the Owner-Occupied Rehab Program. They received word today from OCRA, the first 10-15 applications will need to be out for bid in November. The first 34 applications have been put out for radon testing and hope to have them all scheduled by Friday. Once that is complete, they will work on the engineering study. There have been a few with phone number changes or have already completed the upgrades. Mr. Journey questioned if the bid needed to be approved by the end of November. Mr. Kimball clarified they need to be out for bid by the end of November, but do not need to have accepted the bid by the end of November.

HEALTH INSURANCE- ONE DIGITAL

Jessica Clayton, OneDigital, came to give commissioners renewal options for 2025. The first option was fully insured from PHP at 8% over current year with the 40% refund agreement at an estimated \$1,536,131.28. The original renewal from them came in at 18%, but was decreased due to their partnership with OneDigital and the county. Over the last 13 years, Jay County's average increase has been at 5% despite the average loss ratio of 125%. There are some alternate plan proposals which will be 5% or less increase. The current claims are running at 102% and is now 116%.

Other options presented included; Anthem at a 4% increase over current with a 25% refund agreement. However, unlike PHP a 3rd party administrator handles their HRA claims which requires employees to submit their own bills for reimbursement. A quote from United Health Care came in at 19% and CIGNA declined to quote. Another option would be to restructure the current PHP plan with slightly higher deductibles at a 5% increase.

Lastly, a partially self-funding analysis with PHP as the carrier and TPA was presented. They had a couple of stop loss carriers decline to quote based off of risk and an annual estimate without any lasers implemented is a 51-52.7% increase. Mrs. Clayton noted there could be some positives to having that in place with an opportunity to win down the road. However, the PERATO option would issue two initial lasers one for \$2 million and the second for \$250,000.

BIXLER INSURANCE

Steve Stockton, Broker at Bixler Insurance and Forrest Williamson, Unified Group Services a Third-Party Administrator (TPA) came to the commissioners with a partially self-funded proposal. He also referenced the drug on the plan that would be separate from the estimated cost of \$1.5 million. If the county moved forward, it would be excluding that advocacy. Mr. Aker questioned if it was something a generic could cover. Mr. Williamson stated it would not be possible. He added the proposed plan would have a terminal liability option to allow the county to go back fully insured. Mr. Journey questioned if the network would cover all local insurance networks. Mr. Williamson stated the Encore combined network is favorable to the area, gives them control and would be a duplication of current benefits. The network covers IU Health, Lutheran, Parkview, Community, and Deaconess networks. The average estimated annual cost of the plans were \$1.52 million or \$1.503 million, with an annual maximum of \$1.8 million.

USI INSURANCE

Tom Schweistal and Alex Dickman, USI Health Insurance, came to the commissioners to ask to submit a quote. They still believe self-funding is a viable option for the county. There are some things they will have to address to submit a new proposal by the end of the week or first of next week.

Mr. Aker stated the county will take the first two proposals under advisement until USI submits a proposal.

DUNKIRK EMS BASE

Mr. Aker received clarification from Jack Robbins, mayor of Dunkirk, regarding the joint Dunkirk Fire and EMS base's gutters. The first quote was for \$7,500 for the back side of the building only and the second quote from Clemmons Home Solutions was for \$1,720.

Dunkirk's recommendation was to go with Clemmons Home Solutions. The amounts were for the county's portion only. Rex Journey made a motion to approve the estimate for \$1720 for Clemmons Home Solutions. Chad Aker seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

The payroll docket was presented for commissioner approval. Rex Journey made a motion to approve the docket as presented. Chad Aker seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

The claims docket for October was presented for commissioner approval. Rex Journey made a motion to approve the claims docket as presented. Chad Aker seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

A claim to Ritter Strategic Services for \$10,800 related to the phase two emergency radio study was presented for commissioners' approval. Rex Journey made a motion to approve the claim to RSS. Chad Aker seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.


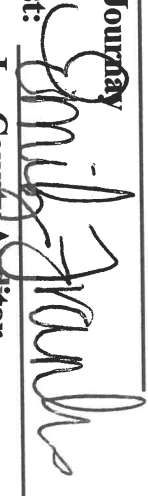
A sheriff's department claim for The Restore Store in the amount of \$3,927.69 was submitted for approval. Rex Journey made a motion to approve the claim. Chad Aker seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

A claim to Brooks Construction for \$1,129,085.70 for the 2024 CCMG was submitted for approval. Rex Journey made a motion to approve the claim. Chad Aker seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

With no further business, Rex Journey made a motion to adjourn at 6:42 p.m; Chad Aker seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

JAY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Chad Aker
Brian McCalliard


Rex Journey
Attest: 
Jay County Auditor