

Benton County Commissioner Meeting  
February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022

The Benton County Commissioners met at 8:15 a.m. in the Commissioners room at the Benton County Courthouse. Those in attendance were Commissioners Bryan Berry, Mike Freeland, Steve Cox, County Attorney, Jacob Ahler and County Auditor, Audrey Freeland

Others in attendance were: Walt Wilson, Gail Lange, Angie Taylor, Ron Shoup, Lucas Darling, Damon Munson, Kelly Balensiefer, Paul Jackson and Amy Schellenberger

**Business:**

The February 1st, 2022 regular scheduled meeting minutes were reviewed and approved with a motion by Commissioner, Mike Freeland, second by Commissioner, Steve Cox and motion carried.

The board held an emergency meeting due to the weather conditions and signed an emergency declaration to extend the candidacy filling deadline due to the Clerk's office being closed. Those minutes were presented and approved with a motion by Commissioner, Steve Cox, second by Commissioner, Bryan Berry and motion carried.

Pay at once claims were reviewed and approved with a motion by Commissioner, Steve Cox, second by Commissioner, Mike Freeland, and motion carried.

Payroll was approved as presented. They were approved with a motion by Commissioner, Steve Cox, second by Commissioner, Mike Freeland, and motion carried.

The county home report for room and board was approved with a motion by Commissioner, Steve Cox, second by Commissioner, Mike Freeland and motion carried.

The 2022 appointment page was approved and signed by the board. The approval was given with a motion by Commissioner, Steve Cox, second by Commissioner, Mike Freeland and motion carried.

Commissioner Berry asked Commissioner Freeland if he had reviewed the KONE proposal for the elevator.

**Angie Taylor – Economic Development**

Angie said that she spoke with Trent Remsburg about the purchase of the IGA through contract. He will be meeting with the bank(s) for funding and she feels that they will be able to help him out a little bit. She is going to speak with him again to see if he has a business plan together to review and see where they can possibly assist him. Commissioner Berry and Angie have discussed that until they are able to see the business plan they are not going to just hand over

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funds. Commissioner Cox asked if she had reached out to the Town of Fowler to see what/if anything they can do in the way of funding.

**Damon Munson – Highway**

- Raub – Commissioner Berry asked if there is an update from NIPSCO about the lines at the Raub property, not there is not
- #36 Bridge Bids – there were two bids presented and they were as follows;
  - E3 Bridge - \$134,855.00 (already together). Walt added that it is a bridge that is already put together. Commissioner Berry asked if they would have to shim or cut it. He then asked if the end vents would have to be adjusted. Walt said no the headwalls/end vents will not require adjustments.
  - Anderson - \$139,053.00 / concrete bridge
  - Anderson - \$156,182.00 / all steel bridge

The board discussed what was being charged for Brad to install the decks. The board tabled the discussion and awarding the bid until the labor cost is reviewed.

- #28 Bridge Bids – there were two bids presented and they were as follows
  - E3 Bridge - \$175,600 / 8 in concrete top
  - Anderson - \$199,919.00 / concrete
  - Anderson - \$202,361.00 / all steel

The board tabled the discussion and awarding the bid until the labor cost is reviewed.

- County Home – Commissioner Freeland asked Damon if they could use any of the 4X8 sheets leftover from the County Home remodel and soffit. Damon thought they had grabbed it all but they will go back out and grab that also. The soffit can be returned to Deno's

**Business continued:**

Commissioner Berry stated that Jason was unable to attend and added that there was not many updates on remodel but they are adding the finishing touches. They will be adding the locks, they are waiting on another heat pump and they are waiting on Indigital and Mike will be running the fiber this week to connect dispatch to the courthouse.

The insurance proposals are ongoing and will be reviewed on March 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Commissioner Berry said that that he spoke with Scott Davis regarding the bill and the contract. The contract was signed by a jailer. They have exchanged numbers and will be discussing it more soon.

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**Kelly Balensiefer – Assessor**

Kelly currently has a contract with Elevate for her mapping but they are now Schneider. She came before the board today because of issues with the online sketches on WTH and that they are all wrong. Kelly is asking for approval for an additional \$672 for Schneider to host and place the property cards. Commissioner Berry asked who does the work, Kelly will have to make sure they are there. Commissioner Berry asked who will be correcting the sketches. Kelly said that the sketches are right on their side just not on WTH. Commissioner, Mike Freeland motioned to approve the additional cost to get it fixed, second by Commissioner, Steve Cox and motion carried. Kelly has the money in her budget to cover the expenses.

**Business continued:**

Commissioner Freeland said that he received a letter from AT&T who like to have a rep come discuss fiber options for the county. The board will not be reaching out to them.

Commissioner Berry asked Attorney Ahler if he was able to review/amend the ordinance for rights to carry. Jacob stated that he has it done but did not bring it today. He will email it to the board when he returns to the office.

Commissioner Berry asked Commissioner Freeland to give an update on the County Home remodel. Commissioner Freeland stated that Bill Molter will be out there today to finish framing the door and hanging the drywall. They will hopefully be able to paint this week. Tonya has not gotten in touch with Jennifer at Deno's to discuss the flooring. Shawn will be laying the floor also. Commissioner Freeland asked what the board preferred for trim, they will try and get it to match the original.

Commissioner Berry wanted to add that he felt the guys did an amazing job during the recent snow storm. The board agreed.

**Amy Schellenberger – Auditor Deputy**

Amy presented the AMPS contract for approval and signatures. The board reviewed and approved the contract. The contract was signed

**Business continued:**

Commissioner Berry said that Duane and Jason have been discussing adding 5 additional cameras. They have provided a couple of quotes and they are as follows;

- Haley's / Hallways, Stairways and 1<sup>st</sup> floor by elevator - \$4,695.00

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The group discussed that it is needed. Commissioner, Mike Freeland motioned to approve them both, second by Commissioner, Steve Cox and motion carried. This will be paid for out of the either the Commissioners budget or the 5yr edit

- o Haley's / New handicap door - \$2,367.00

The bid was accepted with a motion by Commissioner, Steve Cox, second by Commissioner, Mike Freeland and motion carried. Auditor Freeland asked where they were both going to be paid from. After some discussion, the ARPA plan will be amended and will have \$15,000 allotted to the courthouse doors to meet ADA compliance standards.

Commissioner Freeland wanted to discuss the County Home's smoke/fire alarm system. He said that Terry Deno asked if they wanted the new addition to be tied into the existing alarm system. He also is asking if anyone knows who installed the original system. The board agrees that it should be tied in but they are not sure who did the installation as it was in place long before they began their time with the county.

Commissioner Freeland discussed a preventive maintenance quote from KONE for the courthouse elevator. The bid was doors -\$965.81 / Hoist - \$1522.46 / Machine maintenance - \$645.00. The board approved the preventive maintenance quote with a motion by Commissioner, Mike Freeland, second by Commissioner, Bryan Berry and motion carried.

Ron Shoup with the Town of Otterbein informed the board that the Town is going to receive a water grant.

Paul Jackson asked the board if they were aware of the standing water at the recycling center after it rains. Commissioner Freeland said that they are wanting to get the blade moved then fix it. Commissioner Cox said once the blade is moved to the county, then they will cut a ditch.

Commissioner Cox asked if the board could/would extend the property tax deadline 60-90 days. He asked how it was done before. Auditor Freeland shared her feelings on the matter. Last year when it was extended it was done under the Governor's executive order Commissioner Berry said. Commissioner Cox stated that he just wanted to ask because he was asked to bring it up.

Commissioner Cox said that the Farm to Fork is coming back this year and they would like to hold it at the Fairgrounds. He was asked what to charge but he feels they should waive rental fee and just suggested a donation. Commissioners Berry & Freeland agreed.

Attorney Ahler gave a few brief updates on pending cases with the county.

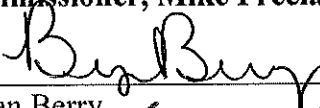
1. Keener – Attorney Ahler is going to send a response and discussed briefly what he is going to add in that response. His also shared his opinion on suggestions on future reimbursement agreements. Commissioner, Mike Freeland motioned to approve Attorney Ahler to send response with a settlement amount to which if they do not agree we will go to trial, second by Commissioner, Steve Cox and motion carried.
2. Redemption – Ingrid Barce asked Attorney Ahler if he could approve the Commissioners signed a quit claim deed for those properties from a tax sale. Commissioner Berry asked if everything was still going through the court process, yes they are. Commissioner Freeland asked if he was going to review them.

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Commissioner Berry asked if that would mess up Auditor Freeland. Auditor Freeland stated that those properties are not transferred via quit claim deed and that SRI prepares those for us. They (SRI) will prepare Commissioner Deeds for those properties, which Barce's office had to file the extension (after Commissioner approval) after speaking with Glen Luedtke at SRI about. Attorney Ahler stated that Ingrid sent him two quit claim deed. Auditor Freeland said that them preparing it is included in the fees that are paid to SRI, Inc every year. Auditor Freeland stated that she does not feel that the board should do that because they did not complete their responsibility in a timely manner and that is why they had to get an extension to begin with.

Gail Lange said that she was asked to pass this along to the board. After the Rotary meeting the other night one of the Otterbein Legion officers spoke to her about how they were upset that they did not receive a letter or information on the process of choosing the Veterans Service officer. Auditor Freeland stated that it is an appointed position by the Board of Commissioners and they do not have the legality or entitled to be served notice. Gail understands and said that they were upset that they were not included. Commissioner Berry said that he has put five VSO in office since he began and they have never been upset or involved before. Commissioner Cox said that he feels the one in office now is phenomenal. Auditor Freeland said that she has been approached about rewriting the job description, not necessary to be chosen but to offer their expertise. Commissioner Berry said that they as taxpayers and citizens need to reach out to the board.

**With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:11 a.m. With a motion by Commissioner, Mike Freeland, second by Commissioner, Steve Cox, motion carried**

  
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Bryan Berry

  
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Steve Cox

  
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Mike Freeland

  
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Attest: Audrey Freeland, Benton County Auditor