

Benton County Commissioner Meeting
March 1st, 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, Lucas Darling, Paul Jackson, Leo Ramslug, Mike Budreau, Darcy Lash, Jason Fisher, Austin Napier, Kristine Muller, Natalie Kidd, Amber Carrigan, Dave Fisher, Kathy Sarault, Miranda Wirtz and Amy Schellenberger

Mike Budreau – Highway Supervisor

- Fixing roads and cutting brush
- Cement stabilization – will not happen until the end of May (Tate & Lyle and Freeland Dairy)
- Highway shop – Mike would like permission to purchase a TV for the guys so when there is bad weather and they stay over at the shop. Chuck quoted them one for \$500 but found one on amazon for \$250.
- DocuSign – LPA certificates are now requiring an online signature. The board does not want that as they are the contracting body and signatory for the county so no changes will occur at this time. It will always be the Commissioners who sign
- Macks – will not be in until the end of March or first part of April
- Bridge – no update from Nick
- Bridge contract – Commissioner Cox asked if the bridge contract is up this year or next. Leo said that the contract is up this year (4 yr. contract) so they will have to advertise this year. Leo has been working with Liz at the highway for items that INDOT is requiring. The LRFR (Load resistance factor rating) load rating must have additional work and Benton County has 19 bridges that need work. It has to be completed by November of 2022. Commissioner Cox asked what the cost will be; \$8,740.00. Leo said that he was able to find a way to lower that amount some. Since the county replaced two bridges with pipes so that inspection fee is removed. The new cost is \$5,122.00 which the county pays 20% and the federal pays 80%. Attorney Ahler reviewed the contract and advised that he did not have any reservations with the board signing it. The contract resolution amendment #1 was signed with a motion to approve by Commissioner, Steve Cox, second by Commissioner, Mike Freeland and motion carried. Commissioner Berry asked how many of the 19 bridges are newer bridges, Leo said most of them. Leo added that the LRFR method has only been in use since 1994.
- Raub – Commissioner Berry said that they are just waiting on NIPSCO to remove the meter
- Pipes – 2 pipes that were ordered if Mike needs help can he ask Rick to help him. The board is ok with Mike reaching out to someone if he needs assistance.

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Jason Fisher – DHS / EMA Supervisor

- New hire – Jason introduced Austin Napier who is a full time EMT, and another individual was recently hired name Josh Satchell. Austin is interested in the paramedic position. Commissioner Berry asked Austin if he understood the three year commitment to the county through the tuition reimbursement agreement that would be signed by both parties. Commissioner Cox asked if he lived within the county, not as of right now but is open to possibly relocating at some point. Austin stated that Jason and he did discuss that and he has no problem with the terms.
- Run report – Jason presented a report that shows the runs from 2016 – 2022 to date to show the board the number of increased runs each year
- Supplies – Jason wanted to talk to the board about pre-ordering saline and epi pens as they are starting to see a lot of necessary items being on back order
- Dispatch – Commissioner Cox asked it was coming along. Jason said that they are waiting on In Digital at this point
- Communication – Jason would like to replace all of the EF Johnson radios (20+ yrs. old). Battery replacement is just an expensive as a quote (approx... \$1,500) so Jason was able to get a quote for 10 refurbished radios totaling \$3,050.00. Commissioner Steve Cox motioned to approve the purchase, second by Commissioner, Mike Freeland and motion carried. Jason said that they could possibly sell them for component pieces to possibly offset. Commissioner Freeland asked if they were compatible, yes they are. Commissioner Berry asked if he needs more than 10, no that will replace all of the EJ Johnson radios which will include highway but do not know if Matt Hull's will be replaced. They will be paid for out of the LEPC local funds (4108).
- Fiber – Commissioner Berry said that the fiber is 20 weeks out so Jason needs to call Ted and see if there is a better wave then the 50 grand for the microwave. Haley's will be on site today to do the locks. Commissioner Freeland asked about the overhead doors, they have been installed. Jason is still waiting to hear about getting the lines buried. Jason asked the board to stop by and check out the progress.

Darcy Lash – Borrowed Time (Kristine Muller and Amber Carrigan)

Darcy wanted to come today to inform the board about her new business and what she hopes to do; it is a non-profit to assist the youth within the community. They have been partnering with Genesis for grants to be able to put on camps.

Darcy shared the camp she will be hosting with the grant funds and spoke briefly about her desire to add after school programs as things progress. Darcy said that in Benton County there is no place for individuals to do community service. She went on to state that the business is 501(c) (3) so she is able to offer those types of services to individuals. Currently there are no volunteers but she is open to that at some point.

Kristine then began to speak about an upcoming grant and why they are here today and ask who the past had received funding. She asked if this is an annual grant and if what Borrowed Time is along the necessary criteria. Auditor Freeland spoke as the Coordinator for a Drug Free Benton

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County. She stated that it is an annual grant, and that it would probably qualify under the prevention/education or treatment section. The funding is limited from the fees collected from the alcohol and drug countermeasures. Audrey explained how and when the grant cycle is and what can be expected if awarded any funding. Audrey said that the deadline for the 2022 grants and if awarded funds would be available from April – February and then a re-cap would be presented to the coalition to wrap up the grant. Commissioner Freeland asked Audrey to let them know how they would be notified if they were awarded any funding.

Kristine said she would also like to ask if they are aware of any other funding opportunities or programs they can get involved in. Darcy also asked what they felt was/is an area they should target. Gail Lange said suicide. Darcy stated that her and Amber will be attending a training on suicide and bullying. Audrey said that through the Coalition she is also part of the regional setting and with them being a 501(c) (3) with a lot larger funding opportunities. Darcy said that when she began this and spoke with Valley Oaks who said they should contact Lafayette since they have only a handful of clients. She is looking to the board for some type of validation that there is a problem in the county. Audrey said that she feels that they need to attend the coalition meetings and they will be able to answer or address those concerns. Commissioner Freeland said that the Community Foundation is another place they can could possibly reach out to for funding.

Darcy thanked the board for letting them come today and invited everyone out to the open house which will be held on April 23-24th, 2022. She said that there will be games, food and a small scale rodeo to name a few. Gail said that she would like to touch base with them further to get an article for the paper. Commissioner Berry said that they could also talk with Angie Taylor. Auditor Freeland gave Kristine her contact information.

Business:

Dave Fisher asked if the drainage board meeting for the Iroquois on April 19th at 10:00 a.m. could be held at the annex building so there is sufficient room for the expected attendance.

Natalie Kidd – Clerk

Natalie is here today is the location of the early voting for the upcoming election. In the past it was held in the commons area on the second floor and then during the pandemic it was held on the first floor. Natalie continued on by saying that there were pros and cons to each location and wanted to see if there was chance to possibly have it in a room. She is asking this because of the past issues where public and employees sometime forgets that it is a polling place and needs to be treated as such as well as securing the area. She has even thought about the possibility of using the back portion of her office. Commissioner Berry asked if there was any to make the flow easier. Natalie said that as a voter, a commissioner or candidate do you notice anything. Natalie said that she sees that the public who walks through there and feels that it is social hour but it needs to treat it as the polling place it is. There should not be discussion on the candidates, election in general so she would like to see what the board's thoughts are.

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Commissioner Berry said you are looking for a room to hold it in, that would be nice if possible. Natalie said that there would be three meetings that would be affected if they were able to use the Commissioners room. She is not expecting an answer today, Commissioner Berry said that they would give her an answer at their next meeting. Auditor Freeland said that she did tentatively mark out the meeting dates on the annex calendar in case they did decide to move those meetings.

Commissioner Berry asked if she has all of her workers for the election, unfortunately no due to some of the races on the ballot. Commissioner Berry asked if it was a problem for Hanne Cox to be part of it since Steve is on the ballot. That is not an issue, however there are some delegates that are contested but she has reached out to the state for clarification. Commissioner Berry then asked about keycards for the election board members. Natalie said that they (Hanne Cox and Mike Brewer) will need one for May 2nd through May 4th with 24/7 access. Her chief deputy has 24/7 access and is requesting that Holly have it as well. Commissioner Berry asked her to submit the specific days she is requesting that for.

Natalie asked if she could get approval for her staff to earn comp time on Election Day since it is a holiday for the rest of the employees. The board was ok with them receiving comp time (6.5 hours) and it will be tracked through the time clock. Auditor Freeland reiterated that comp time is earned hour for hour until 40 hours in a week is achieved, then it is earned at 1.5 hour increments.

Natalie asked Mike Budreau if she was able to utilize a couple of his employees to help set up and transport the voting machines. Mike told her that he was ok with it as long as the board approves it. The board was ok with that and approved them to be utilized during both the primary and general election set up.

Natalie said that she had gotten a list of departments from Auditor Freeland that would require a letter from the board for them to close early the day before the election so they poll center is secured. Commissioner, Steve Cox asked how early. Natalie stated that in the past it was 2pm. Those departments are B.E.M.A., County Nurse, Recycling and Extension office.

Commissioner, Steve Cox motioned to approve comp time for the clerk staff on election day(s), second by Commissioner, Mike Freeland and motion carried.

Commissioner, Steve Cox motioned to approve to close the annex building and all effected departments on May 2nd and November 7th at 2pm for polling place set up, second by Commissioner, Mike Freeland and motion carried.

Natalie then talked about the dates for the badges and were as follows:

Hanne Cox – May 2nd-May 4th

Mike Brewer – May 2nd-May 4th

Holly Logsdon – April 23rd, April 28th and April 30th for training nights

Commissioner Berry is asking if she is needing/requesting the East door to also be unlocked, yes. Natalie then said on election day/night she in the past has used a runner to man the door and

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asked if that is what they would like her to do again or what they preferred. Commissioner Berry said that they could set the door to be unlocked after 6pm that day only. The board was in agreement with that.

The board asked her to come back to the next meeting so they can give her their decisions. Natalie will get with Auditor Freeland to get on the agenda.

Kathy Sarault & Miranda Wirtz – Health Supervisor & County Nurse

Miranda presented the 2022-2023 flu vaccine reservation and she is wanting to order the same amount as last year (180 doses). The cost will be \$3,000.00 so she is asking for approval for when that invoice arrives. Commissioner, Mike Freeland motioned to approve the purchase, second by Commissioner, Steve Cox and motion carried.

Miranda then asked the board for approval to increase the fees charges for TB testing. The current fee is \$7.50 and she would like to increase that to \$20 for a single test and \$40 for a double due to the potential waste once a vial is open there is an expiration of 30 days whether all 10 doses are used or not. The vials are \$167 each. Commissioner Freeland asked if that much of an increase is going to deter people from coming. Miranda did not believe so because most of the people who have to have it done is for work.

Miranda wrapped up by discussing the Immunization grant which is coming due. The grant helps cover running the clinic, vaccines and Tara's salary. Miranda said that there are some changes per the state which includes weekend and evening hours. She continued by saying that it does allow some flexibility on how often, they will be attending the county health fair. Her question to the board is regarding her salary and Tara's, these hours would be outside of normal business hours. Auditor Freeland spoke that they both have an hourly rate set for when they are working the clinic and the grant has extra funds in there currently. Miranda said yes and that the grant will run into next year. Commissioner Berry asked if that meant they would be off site 3 times. Miranda replied that it would depend and what they are looking at is; going to Prairie Crossing to do a catch up clinic and she does not see it more than once a quarter. They will also do sports physical and catch up at Benton Central also at some point. Commissioner Berry asked if the grant would cover all the expenses, yes it is under personnel for county employees and staff wages. She said that they would just have to request an increase for those wages. Auditor Freeland added that she was meaning for next year's grant, yes that is correct. Commissioner Freeland asked what they are getting now and what are they going to request. Miranda stated that currently they are only asking for Tara's wages so she would have to increase what is needed to cover the extra clinics. Commissioner Berry asked for clarification on whether she is asking for the increase for when they go through budgets or just through the grant. Miranda said basically what she is asking is permission to ask through the grant, it will not affect the yearly budget just the grant. Auditor Freeland said that will require a budget amendment for her office.

Commissioner, Steve Cox motioned to approve the increase funding through the grant, second by Commissioner, Mike Freeland and motion carried.

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Commissioner, Steve Cox motioned to approve the increase fee for TB testing as presented (\$20 for a single and \$40 for a double), second by Commissioner, Mike Freeland and motion carried.

Kathy then talked about the nurse's door. Matt has talked with Mulhaulpts who said that it would be nearly impossible to do in a steel door. Commissioner Berry asked about just doing a regular door with the glass in it. Kathy stated that the other issue is that the door needs to swing in not out. The Commissioners said to get some prices on it. Kathy said that she will also need an awning for some weather protection.

Auditor Freeland said that the county budget for the immunization grant currently is budgeted for salary and wages, social security & Medicare, supplies, travel, contractual services and other operating expenses budgeted. What that means is when/if the new grant is approved that would have to be amended to match the grant.

Business continued:

The February 15th, 2022 regular scheduled meeting minutes were reviewed and approved with a motion by Commissioner, Steve Cox, second by Commissioner, Mike Freeland and motion carried.

Monthly claims were approved with a motion by Commissioner, Steve Cox, second by Commissioner, Mike Freeland 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.

Commissioner Cox asked about the ordinance for the DocuSign. There is no updates needed as they previously decided it would remain as is.

There was an ordinance for the commissioners to have the right to carry in the courthouse was approved with a motion by Commissioner, Steve Cox, second by Commissioner, Mike Freeland and the motion carried.

Attorney Ahler discussed the opioid lawsuit and the need to adopt an ordinance to opt back in. Commissioner Berry asked if this was something they should sign now or when the law is passed. Attorney Ahler advised that they need to sign now as it will not be effective until the law is signed by the Governor. The ordinance was approved with a motion by Commissioner, Mike Freeland, second by Commissioner, Steve Cox and motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:31 a.m. for an executive session with a motion by Commissioner, Steve Cox, second by Commissioner, Mike Freeland, and motion carried.

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The Commissioners reopened their regularly scheduled meeting at 9:57 a.m. – those in attendance were: Steve Cox, Bryan Berry, Mike Freeland, County Attorney Jacob Ahler and Auditor, Audrey Freeland

Commissioner Berry spoke about his and Tom's concerns with VPN's and that there needs to be more limitations on access to social media and other non-work related items.

Auditor Freeland asked the board if they were open to the possibility of allowing employees to have to their paychecks direct deposited onto reloadable cards, there are currently a few new hires who are requesting this in lieu of a traditional bank account. After further discussion, Commissioner, Bryan Berry motioned to approve the ability for direct deposits to Chase or Chime cards on a trial basis, second by Commissioner, Steve Cox and motion carried.

Commissioner Berry said that he received an email from Randy Miller who stated that Rod Green does not believe he is the one who is to pay him and that the board is who owes Randy money. The commissioners stated that it was decided that Rod was to pay Randy's bill.

Commissioner Berry stated that Todd Smart (Smart Roofing) would be starting on the courthouse next week.

Commissioner Berry talked about the money currently in the Farmer's and Merchant's bank which is over 7 million. As the finance board he would like for them to consider investing 5 million of it with Curt Rooze.

Commissioner Berry stated that the county insurance review will occur on March 23rd at 10 am in the Commissioners room.

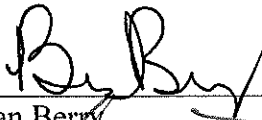
The new custodian, Darren Regnier came in and introduced himself to the board. Auditor Freeland stated that she has had a few ask if there was still a part time custodial position available and that they would possibly be interested in it. The board said that they would like her to forward applications to them and to run the advertisement in the paper.

Commissioner Cox said that Brooke King reached out to him about her \$1 raise since she is past her 90 days. Auditor Freeland will look at the budget to see if there is sufficient funds to cover that and stated to the board that a 90 day evaluation would need to be done prior. She stated that she asked Mike for a copy of Eric Fields, which has been received.


The board asked Auditor Freeland to inform her accounts payable deputy that they would like to have the second formatted reports sent to them as it contains a lot more information on what was purchased.

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 10:34 with a motion by Commissioner, Bryan Berry, second by Commissioner, Mike Freeland, motion carried.

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Bryan Berry



Steve Cox



Mike Freeland



Attest: Audrey Freeland, Benton County Auditor

Current price Patient Care Services charges for TB testing - \$7.50

Current price to purchase 10 dose vial of Tubersol - \$167.76

Vials are only good for 30 days once opened, then must be discarded.

To be more cost effective with use and wastage, we would like to increase charge for testing from \$7.50 to \$20.00 for a single test and \$40.00 for a 2-step TB test.

Recent changes to Immunization Grant -

Goal for this grant period is to reduce barriers to vaccinations by increasing access

- Requiring evening and weekend hour availability for vaccines, such as scheduled clinics, health fairs, etc..
- Budget includes Personnel line item which covers wages for county employees/staff who work under grant or on grant required activities
 - Current budget personnel line item covers full time hourly wages for Medical Assistant
 - Requesting to use Immunization Grant to cover wages for Nurse, Medical Assistant, or qualified staff for hours worked at scheduled clinics outside of normal business hours.