

Vermillion County Commissioners

Meeting Minutes

January 7, 2020

8:15a.m.

Commissioner's Courtroom, 2nd Floor, Courthouse

- I. **Call to Order.** The Commissioner's convened in a regular meeting on January 7, 2020 at 8:15 a.m. in the Commissioner's Courtroom.
- II. **Pledge Allegiance to the Flag.**
- III. **Roll Call.** Members present were President Tim Wilson, Tim Yocum, Auditor Amy Tolbert, First Deputy Auditor Stephanie Simpson, and County Attorney Jon Spurr.
- IV. **Approval of Minutes.** A motion was made by Wilson and seconded by Yocum to approve the minutes from the December 24, 2019 meeting. All in favor, motion carried.
- V. **Approval of Claims.** A motion was made by Wilson and seconded by Yocum to approve the claims for January 10, 2020. All in favor, motion carried.
- VI. **Approval of Payroll.** A motion was made by Wilson and seconded by Yocum to approve the payroll for January 10, 2020. All in favor, motion carried.
- VII. **President and Vice President.** A motion was made by Yocum and seconded by Wilson to appoint Wilson as President of the Commissioners. All in favor, motion carried.
A motion was made by Wilson and seconded by Yocum to appoint Tim Yocum as Vice President of the Commissioners. All in favor, motion carried.
- VIII. **Open Issues**
 - a. **Vermillion Rise.** Executive Director Bob Grewe gave an update on Vermillion Rise. Grewe reported that the Reuse Authority is considering working with a commercial realtor to help market the shell building, because it has been three years since the building was completed and it has not yet been leased for sold. Grewe said the one concern is that if a commercial realtor is used, the realtor would be owed a commission of about \$200,000 when the building sells. He said he may draft a proposal regarding how to pay that commission, and that one option would be to pay it from the 1.5 million that the county had put toward the cost of contracting the building. If that is done, the county would be reimbursed \$1.3 million when the building sells, and the remaining \$200,000 would be paid back over a period of time. Yocum asked if the realtor would only be paid this commission if the building is successfully sold or leased, and Grewe said yes.
Grewe also reported that Newport Pallet has extended their lease for six months. Grewe also stated that talks are ongoing with a solar development project which would utilize the TNT area of Vermillion Rise, an area which due to the presence of structures that would be costly to demolish, is considered less viable for conventional development. If the project moves forward it would utilize the 300-acre TNT area, plus an additional 200 acres.
Grewe also reported that discussions are ongoing regarding a confined feeding operation, which could be located on the far west side of Vermillion Rise, and would actually be outside the secure fencing of the property. Yocum asked Grewe if he felt that such an operation would have an effect on drawing other businesses to Vermillion Rise, and Grewe said he did not feel that it would be a deterrent. He said most companies that would consider locating in western Indiana would not be surprised to have agricultural facilities located nearby, so most would be indifferent.

- b. **VTA (Vermillion Trails Alliance).** No comments.
- c. **Jail Renovation/Expansion.** Sheriff Mike Phelps said that the jail committee had decided, if the jail expansion moves forward, to only build half of the shell of the new addition, and leave room for expansion. This would still allow the new cells to be monitored from one location, but would save about \$1 million by not building what would, at the present, remain an empty shell until further expansion takes place. Phelps said funding for the expansion will be brought before the County Council at their next meeting, which is set for Monday.
- d. **Handbook.**
- e. **Courthouse Phone System.** Paul Fouts of EAS Technology said he is gathering more information on the courthouse phone system, as well as on AT&T's proposal to upgrade the line to the courthouse. Fouts explained that there is a possibility that, due to the age of the current phone system, it may not be possible to license it to work with the upgrade. He said this is because the system is officially three years past its useful life, and no new licenses can be issued on it. Fouts said he will need to talk to technicians from AT&T to be sure.
- f. **IT issues.** Fouts reported that the additional cost of extending the IT upgrade to all county facilities would be about \$243,000, and he said that this will be brought to the Council for approval Monday evening at their meeting.
 - a. **New wave agreement.** It was stated that it would be 30 to 60 days to make the upgrade, it will be \$200 more a month for 100 x 100. A motion was made by Wilson and seconded by Yocum to approve the New wave agreement. All in favor, motion carried.
 - b. **EAS Block of hours agreement.**
- g. **FEMA/MVH Grant.** Mark O'Heir said he is working on the close out letter for the FEMA/MVH Grant reimbursement.
- h. **Contract with Historical Society.** Spurr said he needs a couple of dates for the contract and he will change some of the wording and have it ready for their next meeting.
- i. **Highway Engineer.** No comments.
- j. **Ambulance Service Contract.** Eric Shaughnessy of Illiana EMS gave the Commissioners his year-end report. He also provided the Commissioners with breakdowns of the number of calls by zip code, as well as response times by zip code, both for the year as a whole, and broken-down month by month. He stated that 2/3 of the calls are from south of U.S. Highway 36, and 1/3 are north of U.S. 36.

Shaughnessy stated that the increase in cost that has been included in the contract extension does not even cover the salaries of the six additional employees that will be added to man the third location. O'Heir asked what other costs were involved, and Shaughnessy said they would include supplies, station costs and fuel costs. Jared Dreher asked why Illiana sometimes took patients to Terre Haute hospitals instead of Union Hospital Clinton, and Shaughnessy explained that they try to take patients to UHC when they can, but that some trauma patients are required by state protocols to be taken to trauma centers, which would mean either Union or Regional in Terre Haute.
- k. **Sheriff's Department – Clinton Union Hospital Security.**
- l. **Appointments.** Wilson and Yocum agreed to postpone the appointments until their next meeting when Crossley could be present also.
 - a. **Redevelopment Commission Appointment.**
 - b. **Newport Chemical Depot Reuse Authority Appointments**
 - c. **Alcohol Beverage Board Appointment**

IX. E911 Appointments. Some questions were raised about 911 board appointments. Phelps said that each Commissioner is supposed to appoint someone from his district, according to the original agreement. He said that the three Commissioners appointments were Bob Spence from the south, Cole West from the central, and the north position is the one open and that Peggie Parsons and Penney Barton had submitted their names for the appointment. Phelps said he believes that Spence, who is also a county Councilman, was the Council's representative and not a Commissioner's appointment. Tolbert said that the south Commissioner's appointment was Sonny Carey. Phelps said that Carey has been unable to attend meetings recently because they are in the daytime, and Yocum said the Commissioners may need to look into attendance when considering appointments. O'Heir stated that at the last meeting there were three of us there. Phelps asked if the 911 Board members should be paid the same as other boards, because they have never been paid. Tolbert said that there are several county boards that are not paid, and the Commissioners would have to decide whether the 911 Board should be, then ask the Council for the funds to do so.

X. New Business

- a. CASA – Judge Jill Wesch.** Judge Jill Wesch told the Commissioners she is working with Parke County on the possibility of combining the two counties' Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) programs, so that the money both counties have budgeted for a director can be used to pay one person as a full-time director. She said she feels this will help retain someone long term. She said at the present time, the director is not a county employee, but a contractor through the court, so that person will continue to be paid as such. Wesch said in the future they would like to find a way to have the director be a county employee in one county or the other, but that they have a year to work out the details on how to do so and to see if making it work as a combined position is possible. A motion was made by Yocum and seconded by Wilson to approve the combining of resources with Parke County to employ one CASA for both counties. All in favor, motion carried.
- b. Ordinance for Vacated Public Way – John P. and Pamela M. Pike.** It was explained that the Commissioners approved this vacated public way August 20, 2019 but the ordinance had not been presented to sign. The Commissioners signed the ordinance for vacated public way for John P. and Pamela M. Pike.
- c. Community Crossing Grant.** Yocum stated the County is working on the Community Crossings grant funding for this year, and will pursue \$1 million in funds from the state, with a \$333,000 match from the county, for \$1.3 million total. Yocum also said he is working with the state on funding for work on Bridge 122, which is located on Old State Road 63 near Hillsdale and is hoping to have more information soon.
- d. Sheriff's Department – Problems with ResCare.** Phelps told the Commissioners that the sheriff's department is having problems with ResCare's juvenile residential facility in the county, and that deputies are spending way too much time chasing their kids when they run away. He said he is gathering information to send to the Department of Child Services (DCS), which places most of the juveniles at ResCare. Phelps said we're talking hundreds of cases, some kids running away three or four times. Phelps said he would like the Commissioners to consider passing a nuisance ordinance. Spurr compared such ordinance to the one that fines businesses for excessive false alarms. That would allow agencies such as ResCare to be fined for repeated calls to deal with runaways, and establish a line item into which the fines could be paid to help recover the cost of

dealing with those calls. Phelps said the department dealt with the same juvenile multiple times last night, and have three or four in jail now for criminal cases. Phelps said these are not local juveniles, as they are placed by DCS from around the state. He said once the juveniles are picked up, some have to be taken to Vincennes or Gibault at the county's expense, because ResCare won't deal with them. Phelps said last night ResCare wouldn't take the department's calls or talk to them.

Phelps said he is talking to Prosecutor Bruce Aukerman about what can be done, and he said he is also talking to DCS, which he said is like talking to a wall because they don't care. Phelps said the main problem is with the people running ResCare. Phelps said even putting a fence around the outside of the place would help. He said that DCS finds open beds and they don't care where or who's running them. He said some of those placed with ResCare are special needs, and one needed medical care which was not taken care of.


Yocum asked if it would help to have someone from ResCare attend a Commissioners meeting. Phelps said if you want to listen to their BS; they would rather let the ones who run away be the county's problem.

Spurr said he would work on an ordinance to address the issue.

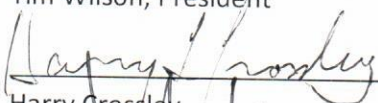
e. Contract Renewal with Indiana Office of Technology. A motion was made by Wilson and seconded by Yocum to approve the contract renewal with the Indiana Office of Technology. All in favor, motion carried.

XI. Adjourn. A motion was made by Wilson and seconded by Yocum to adjourn. All in favor, motion carried.

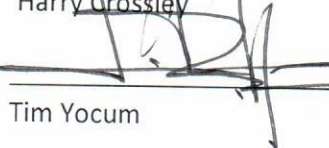
Read in full and approved by the Vermillion County Commissioners on the 21st day of January, 2020.




Tim Wilson, President



Harry Crossley



Tim Yocum

Attest: 

Amy Tolbert, Auditor