

REGULAR SESSION RUSH COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SEPTEMBER 19, 2016

The Rush County Board of Commissioners met in regular session Monday, September 19, 2016 with Commissioners Bruce Levi, Mark Bacon, Paul Wilkinson, Mary Ann Beard Auditor, and Attorney Leigh Morning in attendance.

President Bruce Levi called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes of the meeting of September 6th were approved on a motion by Mark Bacon and seconded by Paul Wilkinson. Motion carried.

Commissioner Paul Wilkinson moved to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of September 12th. Commissioner Mark Bacon seconded the motion. Motion carried.

CLAIMS

Mark Bacon questioned the Sheriff on the prisoner housing claim for safe keeping. Paul Wilkinson moved to approve claims. Mark Bacon seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Payroll was approved on a motion by Paul Wilkinson and seconded by Mark Bacon.

FIBER HUT

Bruce Levi reported a meeting was held with Nine Star Connect and Rush Shelby Energy to discuss new locations for the fiber hut. The hut is located in a county owned building but must be moved to allow construction of the new jail. It was proposed that a manager be contracted for the moving process and to define the work required.

APC

Bryant Niehoff, APC executive director presented the planning and zoning report for August. Niehoff then reported that he has tendered his resignation as of October 14, 2016 stating that he regrets leaving his community but he has been put into a very trying position and noted a lack of leadership. Commissioner Mark Bacon stated "I hate to see you leave, but I know why and I want to offer a public apology for what is going on and the fact that I didn't stand up for you".

PURDUE EXTENSION

Extension educator Gracie Marlatt reported that the second educator in the office was required to take an early maternity leave. The office continues to operate through shared responsibilities.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Cindy Humphrey presented the monthly report for August noting that balances remain nearly the same level as last year. The State Treasurer will be visiting on Thursday to discuss investment options in Trust Indiana. Mrs. Humphrey noted that all mobile home owners have paid delinquent taxes and there is no need for an auction; 25 demand notices for personal property delinquencies have been processed, and 58 parcels remain on the tax sale list. The sale is slated for October 13th. Commissioner Levi asked for a list of sewer liens for tax sale properties within the Western Rush County Sewer District.

SHERIFF

The Sheriff reported the slowest week of the year with 51 inmates detained. Three new thefts, one death investigation, and one business fraud are currently on the investigators blotter.

Security is a high priority issue with the arrest of a knife-wielding individual arrested in the courthouse. Commissioner Levi would like to see a study committee consisting of a Commissioner, a County Councilman, and the security officers to develop a plan to secure the courthouse while maintaining the integrity of the architectural structure. Residents Craig and Verlin Custer commended the security staff and noted that security plans could be attained from other counties such as Decatur since they have a fully integrated system without the need for a study committee.

Sheriff Cowan explained that Mike Rowe from Work One would like to lease space at the new jail to provide an "education to reform" program, but working with Judge Hill and Ashley Stevens of Community Corrections there is the desire to begin this program immediately. Commissioner Levi thanked the group for their involvement.

HIGHWAY

Highway Superintendent Jerry Sitton submitted his monthly report noting that balances have increased slightly. Sitton shared that 114 miles of road has been chipped & sealed and he has received the final disposition on three federal aid projects.

Senator Jean Leising sent a letter of concern about the iron bridge on 100S at the Rush County Line. Sitton explained that the bridge is actually in the Shelby County jurisdiction. Sitton was asked to draft a letter for the Commissioner's to send to the Senator.

COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Levi reported that ICAP is applying for a grant to provide ramp building assistance.

A notice from IDEM approves a confined feeding operation for Dan Miller at 7927 E 1000 S, Rushville.

COUNTY WEB SITE

Attorney Leigh Morning presented a contract with NET- NOGGIN, LLC to design a new web site for the county. Paul Wilkinson moved to sign the contract. Mark Bacon seconded the motion. Motion carried.

EMS

EMS run reports from Raleigh and Anderson Township volunteer fire departments were reviewed.

ASSURED PARTNERS

Kevin Krekeler and Melany Smith appeared upon the Commissioners' request to try to resolve problems with the billing of the county's commercial insurance and worker's compensation policies. Mr. Krekeler explained that the county has one policy that is separated into eight invoices for the various offices. His company has gone back two years and matched payments with invoices and now all payments are posted on a spreadsheet. Ashley Stevens and Jerry Sitton have individual problems that need to be addressed by the company.

PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was conducted a 10:00a.m. to consider a request from Rush County Stone to vacate a county road in Section 8, Township 12 N, Range 9 E. This represents a section of county road 750 South running east from 600 West to a dead end for a distance of .73 miles in Orange Township. The Auditor reported that adjoining owners had been notified by certified mail and the public meeting had been advertised according to statute. Hearing no objections, Mark Bacon moved to grant the request. Paul Wilkinson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

JAIL CONSTRUCTION

Ron Jarman, Rush County Jail Committee member presented quotes for a survey of city owned property located behind Kroger for the relocation of a communication tower. Two quotes were received by Schneider Engineering for \$4,500 and Koor Consulting for \$3,700. Since the City needs to approve the land usage, Mark Bacon moved to approve Koor's quote of \$3,700 contingent on the City Council's approval for the use of the land. Paul Wilkinson seconded the motion and the motion carried.

WIND FARM SUPPORT

Craig Custer shared information that he had received from the Tipton County Auditor that property values have not declined and owners are not selling their property because of wind turbines as stated in a Commissioner campaign flier. There have been no health and safety hazards due to wind turbines filed with the State. Custer continued with the following questions: Why were wind farm contracts signed with NextEra? Why weren't Mark Bacon's recommendations for the APC appointment considered? Does the county have an economic development plan? Commissioner Levi answered that the NextEra plans were signed because he had not studied the proposal thoroughly. Commissioner Wilkinson stated that all recommendations were considered even though Commissioner Bacon was not in attendance. Mr. Levi then stated that he would set an appointment with Mr. Custer to discuss the issues presented.

Verlin Custer shared that he had appeared before the BZA to request gas and oil drilling rights on his property but was denied. He was asked to sign an affidavit stating that the statements made on the document were true and to submit said document to the BZA. Custer asked if the Commissioners have knowledge of any other party who had to sign an oath. Custer declared that Wind is good for Rush County and he is pro economic development. He asked how the county plans to pay for the security project for the courthouse. Mr. Custer informed the Commissioners that the contract for the wind turbines would bring produce a revenue for the county of \$1,755,000 to \$2,551,000 and the ninety nine signed agreements with landowners would generate \$4,998,603 for them.

Craig Custer spoke with a retired principal in Benton County to learn the impact on their county schools.

Verlin Custer finished by saying that disallowing wind farms is a serious mistake for the county. Wind companies are the only businesses asking to locate in Rush County.

JAIL

A copy of the Rushville Republican newspaper was displayed by Verlin Custer. He asked why there have been no news releases on the construction of a new jail. Custer stated that the public would riot if knew the proposed cost on the jail.

Mark Bacon moved to adjourn with Paul Wilkinson seconding the motion. Motion carried.

Mary Ann Beard, Auditor

/s/ Bruce Levi
Bruce Levi, Chairman

/s/ Mark Bacon
Mark Bacon

/s/ Paul Wilkinson
Paul Wilkinson

ATTEST:

/s/ Mary Ann Beard
Mary Ann Beard, Auditor