

HOWARD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING: NOVEMBER 6, 2023

The Howard County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Monday, November 6, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. in Hearing Room 338 of the Howard County Administration Center. Those in attendance included President Brad Bray, Vice President Jack Dodd, Commissioner Jeff Lipinski, County Attorney Alan Wilson, and County Auditor Jessica Secrease.

The meeting was called to order by Major Cook and conducted by President Bray. President Bray led the Pledge of Allegiance, and Commissioner Lipinski offered a word of prayer.

IN THE MATTER OF SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS & RECONGINTION:

Employee Service Awards

The Commissioners congratulated the following county employees, and Commissioner Lipinski read their Employee Service Awards into the record:

Employee	Years of Service
Christopher Spane	5
Susan Woolley	5
Tammy Baker	10
Jeanine Faulkner	10
Michelle Harris	15
Jeremy Stevens	20
Laura Rood	25
Priscilla Shoffner	25

IN THE MATTER OF APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the October 16, 2023, regular meeting, having been previously submitted and reviewed, were approved as presented on a motion made by Commissioner Dodd. Commissioner Lipinski seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

IN THE MATTER OF DEPARTMENTAL BUSINESS & REPORTS:

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

2024 Fleet Purchase

Major Gary Cook submitted documentation of vehicles the Sheriff's Department would like to purchase for 2024. The vehicles are currently being held for the Sheriff's Department.

HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE

YMCA Policy Revision

Human Resources Director Kari Rennaker submitted a revision to the current YMCA policy for full-time employees. This revision would allow for all full-time employees who have an insurance policy, even if it is outside of the County's insurance policy, to have access to the YMCA benefits. They would no longer have to be covered under County insurance to use the YMCA benefits. Commissioner Lipinski made the motion to approve the YMCA policy revision. Commissioner Dodd seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Employee Benefit Time

Human Resources Director Kari Rennaker submitted a revision to the current employee benefit time. This revision would create a prorated schedule for personal and vacation time for full-time employees. Commissioner Dodd made the motion to approve the benefit time revision. Commissioner Lipinski seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Vacation Benefits Revision

Human Resources Director Kari Rennaker submitted a revision to the current full-time employee vacation benefits. This revision would add an additional week of vacation for any full-time employee who has 20 years or more of service with the County. Commissioner Dodd made the motion to approve the vacation benefit revision. Commissioner Lipinski seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Vacation Time Revision

Human Resources Director Kari Rennaker submitted a revision to the current full-time employee vacation benefits. This revision would allow full-time employees to receive vacation time starting at 6 months of service and then adding a prorated schedule for that time. Commissioner Dodd made the motion to approve the Vacation Time Revision. Commissioner Lipinski seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT

Ejector Pit Control Panel for Howard Haven

Maintenance Superintendent Bill Stonestreet submitted a quote to replace an ejector pit control panel at Howard Haven from QPH in the amount of \$7,450.00. He would like to pay for this quote from the Cumulative Capital Fund Building Repair line item 1138.47241.000.0000. A motion was made by Commissioner Lipinski to approve the quote to replace an ejector pit control panel at Howard Haven as presented. Commissioner Dodd seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Fire Alarm Panel for Government Center

Maintenance Superintendent Bill Stonestreet submitted a quote to install a fire alarm panel at the Government Center from Elwood Fire in the amount of \$7,261.36. He would like to pay for this quote from the Cumulative Capital Building Repair line item 1138.47241.000.0000. A motion was made by Commissioner Lipinski to approve the quote to install a fire alarm panel at the Government Center as presented. Commissioner Dodd seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Advertise for Annual Bids

Highway Superintendent Amber Tolle submitted to get approval to advertise for her annual bids. These bids would be for prestressed beams, asphalt emulsion/tack, asphalt, stone, equipment rental, and diesel fuel. A motion was made by Commissioner Dodd to have the advertisement done for the annual bids. Commissioner Lipinski seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

HOWARD HAVEN

Approval of New Resident

Howard Haven Superintendent Jennifer Brower applied for a new resident to be approved as a private pay. The resident's name is on file in the Auditor's Office. A motion made by Commissioner Dodd to approve the new resident subject to a 90-day probation period. Commissioner Lipinski seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

IN THE MATTER OF NEW BUSINESS:

Update from Guardian Advocates

Linda Johnson provided an update to the Commissioners on Guardian Advocates, Inc. Guardian Advocates, Inc. is a nonprofit agency that provides guardianship of the elderly and incapacitated adults who have no family to help them. They have had a 20% growth over the past year and Howard County is 40% of Guardian Advocates' client base. Mss. Johnson requested a donation of \$7,500.00 from the Commissioners to Guardian Advocates, Inc. A motion made by Commissioner Dodd to approve the \$7,500.00 donation to Guardian Advocates, Inc. Commissioner Lipinski seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

2024 Howard County Board of Commissioners' Meeting Schedule

Commissioner President Bray submitted the 2024 Howard County Board of Commissioners' Meeting Schedule for approval. A motion was made by Commissioner Lipinski to approve the 2024 Howard County Board of Commissioners' Meeting Schedule for approval. Commissioner Lipinski seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

2024 Howard County Holiday Schedule

Commissioner President Bray submitted the 2024 Howard County Holiday Schedule for approval. A motion was made by Commissioner Dodd to approve the 2024 Howard County Holiday Schedule for approval. Commissioner Lipinski seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

2024 Humane Society Contract

The 2024 Humane Society Contract was submitted to the Commissioners. Commissioner Lipinski asked County Attorney Alan Wilson if the County was any closer to establishing a County-wide humane society ordinance. Mr. Wilson stated that there has been a draft created for the ordinance. A motion was made by Commissioner Lipinski to approve the 2024 Humane Society Contract. Commissioner Dodd seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

IN THE MATTER OF CLAIMS AND REPORTS:

Howard County Auditor Jessica Secrease submitted the following claims and reports for the Commissioners' information and approval:

1. **Salary Claims:** The Commissioners' Salary, Hourly, and Overtime Claims for payment on October 20, 2023, in the amount of \$939,486.44 and on November 3, 2023, in the amount of \$945,526.21 was submitted and approved on a motion made by Commissioner Dodd. Commissioner Bray seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
2. **Payroll Expenses:** The Commissioners' Payroll Expenses for payment on October 20, 2023, in the amount of \$939,486.44 and on November 3, 2023 in the amount of \$945,526.21 was submitted and approved as presented on a motion made by Commissioner Dodd. Commissioner Bray seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
3. **Operating Claims:** The Commissioners' Operating Claims to be paid November 6, 2023, in the amount of \$3,673,867.24 was submitted and approved as presented on a motion made by Commissioner Dodd. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bray, and the motion carried.
4. **Monthly Reports:** Auditor Jessica Secrease presented the following reports to be received into the record:
 - a. Treasurer's Monthly Report for September 2023

IN THE MATTER OF ATTORNEY ISSUES:

Resolution No. 2023-BBCR-17 – Authorizing Transfer of Property to Indiana Economic Development Corporation
County Attorney Alan Wilson presented Resolution No. 2023-BBCR-17 – Authorizing Transfer of Property to Indiana Economic Development Corporation. Resolution No. 2023-BCCR-17 was submitted and approved as presented on a motion made by Commissioner Lipinski. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dodd, and the motion carried. Commissioner President Bray signature was ratified on the resolution in a motion made by Commissioner Dodd. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lipinski, and the motion carried.

Resolution No. 2023-BBCR-18 – Establishing the Intent to Conduct a Commissioners' Certificate Sale
County Attorney Alan Wilson presented Resolution No. 2023-BBCR-18 – Establishing the Intent to Conduct a Commissioners' Certificate Sale to sell tax sale certificates for properties that are severely delinquent in payment of property taxes. Resolution No. 2023-BCCR-18 was submitted and approved as presented on a motion made by Commissioner Lipinski. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dodd, and the motion carried.

Resolution No. 2023-BBCR-19 – Regarding the Transfer of Property Between the Howard County Board of Commissioners and Taylor Township

County Attorney Alan Wilson presented Resolution No. 2023-BBCR-19 – Regarding the Transfer of Property Between the Howard County Board of Commissioners and Taylor Township. This is to purchase a brush truck for \$4,000.00. Resolution No. 2023-BCCR-19 was submitted and approved as presented on a motion made by Commissioner Lipinski. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dodd, and the motion carried.

Redevelopment Commission Appointment

County Attorney Alan Wilson presented the appointment of Joey Dyer to the Redevelopment Commission. Joey Dyer’s appointment to the Redevelopment Commission was submitted and approved as presented on a motion made by Commissioner Lipinski. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dodd, and the motion carried.

IN THE MATTER OF COMMISSIONER ISSUES:

Township Assistance Appeal Hearing Decision

Commissioner Dodd presented his decision on a Township Assistance Appeal Hearing that was on November 3, 2023 for Juanita Triblet and the Center Township Trustee. Commissioner Dodd made a motion to uphold the denial of the trustee and agrees not to give the aid. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lipinski, and the motion carried.

Court Hearing for Stevens Property

Commissioner Lipinski asked Attorney Wilson to speak briefly on the court hearing he attended on the Stevens property. Mr. Wilson stated that Mr. Stevens and his wife did appear in court and that he requested that the court allow the County to go in and inspect the property and the judge agreed to that. Mr. Wilson asked for a reappear date to check on the progress of the property and the judge set the reappear date for February.

IN THE MATTER OF PUBLIC COMMENT:

Glen Luedtke: Mr. Luedtke represents SRI and spoke briefly on the Commissioners’ Certificate Sale. Mr. Luedtke stated the Commissioners must set a minimum bid for the properties. This would assign the certificates to the winning bid. He suggests that any property that has a delinquent tax at the time of the sale at \$500 or less be offered at \$50 and anything over \$500 be offered at \$75 apiece. He also suggests that the Commissioners approve the Auditor to work with SRI to send out flyers to adjacent property owners about the sale. Commissioner Lipinski does agree that adjacent property owners should be notified.

Resident Jerry Paul of 1326 S. Webster St., Kokomo, Indiana: Mr. Paul, who is the president of the Howard County Memorial Corporation, gave an update on the Opha May memorial. Mr. Paul stated that he wants the Commissioners to meet their previous commitment of \$10,000.00 to the memorial and to receive the commitment by November 17, 2023, which is their deadline to get the funds matched by the State. Mr. Paul said he made a promise to get this memorial done and wants to stick to it. Mr. Paul stated that the City has withheld their donation to the memorial until the County donated their funds. Commissioner Dodd stated that he has tried to work with Mr. Paul on where to put the memorial and that the County would give him a letter of intent, but the Commissioners cannot promise the location of the memorial. The security committee still must meet at the Courthouse before they can get an answer on where the memorial will go. Robin Williams, who is the vice-president of the Howard County Memorial Corporation, stated that on October 20th, an email was sent out about the funds being committed to the memorial from both the City and the County. Commissioner Dodd asked if a letter of commitment would meet their needs. Mrs. Williams stated that she would have to talk to the State and doesn’t understand why they were asked to submit their invoice if they weren’t getting the funds today. A motion was made by Commissioner Lipinski to give the memorial the \$10,000.00 they had previously committed to. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bray, and the motion carried. Commissioner Bray seconded the motion on the notion that Mr. Paul is flexible with the location of the memorial. Commissioner Bray also stated that the security meeting is on the 14th of November. Mrs. Williams stated that they are open to working with the Commissioners on the location.

Resident Brad Semon of 10954 E. 100 S., Greentown, Indiana: Mr. Semon stated that at the last Commissioners’ Meeting, an expert from California presented to them about solar panels. Mr. Semon states that it is ironic that the expert was from California because the State of California does not allow solar panels around residential homes. Mr. Semon talked about how the expert stated that we can grow things in Indiana very well because we have great soil. Mr. Semon stated that he doesn’t understand why we would want to cover up good farmland with solar panels. Mr.

Semon also stated that Engie’s agreement on testing wells still only covers those whose properties are adjacent to the solar field and not anyone else. Mr. Semon stated that on November 3rd, Representative Mary Miller stated that according to the EPA’s website solar panels contain hazardous materials that are harmful to humans. Mr. Semon stated that solar panels are hazardous to people and that Engie will never give the Commissioners the facts. Mr. Semon stated that he feels the Commissioners are not listening to him and that he wants the ordinance changed. Mr. Semon began talking about how he is working the polls in the upcoming elections. He stated that our elections are in trouble and that most of the people working are very old. He suggests that they need to raise the pay of the election workers to help entice younger people to work the poles. Auditor Secrease stated that the Election Board sets the rates for the poll workers.

Resident Clee Oliver of 5768 W 00 NS., Kokomo, Indiana: Mr. Oliver stated that he had heard that there has been discussion in regard to moving the Veterans’ Services Office from the first floor to the third floor of the Administration Center. He stated that he has a problem with that because a lot of veterans would have a hard time getting upstairs. Mr. Oliver stated that he had contacted the VFW and the American Legion on this matter. He stated that to move that office would not be a good thing and that the office should stay on the ground floor. Mr. Dodd stated that they have to look at space and he wishes that they had more space.

***There being no further business to come before the Board of Commissioners at this time
the meeting was adjourned at 5:06 p.m. on a motion made by Commissioner Dodd.
The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bray, and the motion carried.***

HOWARD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:

R. BRAD BRAY, PRESIDENT

JACK W. DODD, VICE PRESIDENT

JEFF S. LIPINSKI, MEMBER

ATTEST:

JESSICA SECREASE, AUDITOR

Howard County Commissioners’ Meeting: November 06, 2023