

**NOBLE COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**Monday November 4, 2024 1:00 PM**  
**NOBLE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT**  
**NOBLE COUNTY NEW ANNEX**

**PRESENT:**

George Bennett  
Tom Janes  
Max Franklin  
Doug Harp  
Mary Wysong  
Brandon Chordas

**NOT Present**

Trey Forbes

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Jackie Knafel, Noble County Coordinator  
Dennis Graft, County Attorney  
Matt Getts, KPC Media

President George Bennett brought the meeting to order at approximately 1:00 PM

**MINUTES**

Minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved as corrected with a motion from Max Franklin. Tom Janes seconded and the motion carried 6-0.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- Salary Committee - Brandon Chordas and Tom Janes met prior to the meeting to discuss a couple of salary options. The factoring committee met and have recommended a salary of between \$48,000 and \$51,000.00 for an environmentalist II. After some discussion and a review of the job description, the committee is recommending to the council that this salary range be approved for 2025. They are also requesting approval for an assistant school liaison/translator part time position be paid \$23.00 an hour. With the committee's recommendation, Brandon Chordas moved to approved the salary and part time pay. Mary Wysong seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

**NEW BUSINESS**

The Kendallville Public Library is requesting an appointment to their board. Their recommendation is Amanda Jansen. Mary Wysong moved to appoint Amanda to serve on the Kendallville Library board for a period of 4 years. Tom Janes seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

Appointment sent to Mindy London 11/8/24

**HIGHWAY**

Zack Smith, Highway Engineer, was present an engineering update for the Highway:

- Zack reported that he had submitted a "letter to the editor" concerning a recent article that was posted about spending at the county. He was unsure of where some of the information had come from but wanted to get the facts to the paper. Zack went on to say that funding is sometimes difficult to understand especially when it comes to the highway department. Funding comes from mileage of roads and gas tax not property tax. Noble County does not have a bridge fund and uses the CCD funding as a source for bridges but that is not much. Zack has been instrumental in getting LPA projects approved which is grant funding that pays – in most cases – 80% of the project costs.

Zack went on to encourage the council if there were questions from the residents, to have them call him and he will be glad to provide the funding sources and amounts.

- HMA 01 - the asphalt work is complete with striping on 1000 E yet to be done.
- LPA new project application open up next week and Zack is bringing 3 projects to the council for consideration.
  1. The first is Bridge 67 – this is on CR 450 W over the Elkhart River Chain. Total cost of this project is estimated at over \$4 million with estimated cost to the county \$990,000.00
  2. Project two is on River Road just south of Albion over the Elkhart River. The cost of this project is over \$3.5 million with county's estimated cost at \$758,600.00.
  3. The third project is Baseline Road from 600 E to Old State Road 3. This is a huge project and Zack – while thinking that it would be beneficial to the area and county to improve this stretch of highway but is very expensive and a huge project. The estimated cost was at just under \$11 million dollars with the county's responsibility being over \$2 million. When asked about funding for this project, Zack indicated that could be done but would mean that there would be less done to other roads such as chip n seal etc.

With this information Doug Harp moved to forward in the application for Bridge 67 and Bridge 75. Mary Wysong seconded and the motion carried 6-0.

As far as the Baseline Road, Doug Harp indicated that he would much rather see local funding on other roads rather than spend those dollars on one project. Tom Janes then moved to NOT submit the Baseline Road project. Max Franklin seconded and the motion carried 6-0.

- Bridge 136 and Bridge 44 – Zack provided pictures of the two bridge projects going on at this time. Zack told the council that both should be complete by Thanksgiving this year.

#### COURTHOUSE RENOVATION

- Zack reported that things are starting to come together with work coming to a close on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. Crews are working their way down from top to bottom.
- Zack reported on many of the sub-contractors on site and the work that they are doing.
- Target completion is set for January of 2025
- Zack is working with the Judges, Weigand, American StructurePoint and others to come up with an open house for the Courthouse. He is tentatively looking at a Friday in April.
- Financial information – Zack told the council that as we approach the finish line on this project, contingency is running out but the project is within the budget.

#### HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Carrie Ryan and Melayna Gingerich are present to make sure that the Asst school liaison /translator hourly pay was approved. They told the council that in checking services by out agencies would be in the \$50.00 per hour category. Even phone use for a translator could be up to \$320.00 per use. This would be \$23.00 an hour for a person not to exceed 28 hours per week. The council told Carrie that they did approve the \$23.00 an hour earlier today.

Melayna updated the Council on the things happening at the health department in particular the impact of the Health 1<sup>st</sup> Indiana funding.

- Funding was provided to St. Martins Healthcare
- McMillen Health put had 38 participants in Mom and Me Days
- Lead screening and case management – 15 cases
- Tuberculosis Testing.
- 443 flu vaccinations were given throughout the public schools, St. Johns and St. Mary's.
- Health supplies were given to Avilla Elementary, St John Lutheran School, St Mary's Catholic School and Islamic Academy of Kendallville.
- Alto Laverna Senior Living and Chandler Place Senior Living have benefited from the Health 1<sup>st</sup> Indiana funding.

- Melayna also provided the council with some of the upcoming initiatives that are planned.
- They also talked about a place in Garret that is now open to serve low-income families and those with no insurance.

#### PROSECUTOR

Jim Mowery, Noble County Prosecutor, came before the commissioners concerning camera license plate readers. Jim cited several cases of suspects being located through this new technology. These will be placed in different locations throughout the county and once information is put in the system this will record locations of where the vehicle was seen. Jim is hoping to get the support of the council to get this system up and running. The council gave a very positive response to this project.

#### SHERIFF

Max Weber, Noble County Sheriff, came before the board wanted to get approval for a new employee. This would be the Jail Release Coordinator and would be totally funded through the JRAC opioid settlement funds. This job will coordinate with the inmate to set up appointments for probation, court appearances and whatever is needed to prevent them from returning into the system. Doug Harp is wanting more data and more information. Max explained that until the program is tried there is no data. He is asking that this be a trial to see if it helps or not and is more than willing to discontinue the program if it shows no signs of helping the cause. Max had applied for funding through the JRAC board so that it would not cost the general fund as Judge Hagen had reported at a commissioners meeting, the sheriff's department application was the only one of the four submitted to check all the boxes that the committee had set forth for the program. Max has asked for the grant in the amount of \$90,000.00 to pay the employee and the benefits that come with a full-time employee. After a lengthy discussion, Brandon Chordas moved to approved the hiring of a full-time employee for this position for one year. Brandon thought that the program was worthy of trying it for at least a one-year period. Max Franklin seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-1 with Doug Harp opposing the motion.

#### TRANSFER

- Superior I is requesting a transfer of funds. They are asking to decrease 1000-14713-038 (mediation) by \$2,450.00 and increase 1000-14703-038 (special appointments) by the same amount. Doug Harp moved to approve the transfer. Brandon Chordas seconded and the motion carried 6-0.
- Circuit Court is also requesting a transfer. They would like to decrease 1000-14702-037 (pauper attorney) by \$300.00 and increase 1000-14703-037 (special appointments) by \$300.00. Motion to approve this transfer came from Mary Wysong. Brandon Chordas seconded. The motion carried 6-0.
- Circuit Court is also asking that \$200.00 be taken from 1000-14702-037 pauper attorney and be moved to 1000-14712-037 Guardian ad litem. This was approved with a motion from Tom Janes. Mary Wysong seconded. The motion carried 6-0.
- The last transfer was for the public defender. They are requesting the following:
 

Decrease 1000-17201-040	\$10,441.69
Deputy public defender	
Decrease 1000-14702-040	\$12,516.95
Pauper Attorney	
Increase 1000-17205-040	\$2,304.76
Asst public defender	
Increase 1000-13301-040	\$4,626.67
Education & Training	
Increase 1000-31500-040	\$7,257.40
Professional Services	

Increase 1000-17217-040

\$8,769.81

Asst public defender

All were approved with a motion from Mary Wysong and seconded by Tom Janes.  
Motion carried 6-0.

ADDITIONALS

The commissioners are asking for an additional in the CREDIT fund to pay for the new furniture and equipment at the courthouse. This is in the amount of \$200,000.00. Motion to approve the additional came from Doug Harp. Mary Wysong seconded and the motion carried 6-0.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business before the Noble County Council, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:20 pm until the next regularly scheduled meeting of the council being December 2, 2024

Dated this 2 day of December, 2024

WAS NOT Present @ Nov. meetn [Signature]  
Trey Forbes Max Franklin

[Signature]  
Mary Wysong

[Signature]  
Brandon Chordas

[Signature]  
Tom Janes

[Signature]  
George Bennett

[Signature]  
Doug Harp

ATTEST: [Signature]  
Michelle Mawhorter, Noble County Auditor