

NOBLE COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING
Monday July 1, 2024 1:00 PM
NOBLE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT
NOBLE COUNTY NEW ANNEX

PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

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

George Bennett, Council President, brought the meeting to order at approximately 1:00 pm

CASA

Judge Hagen, Superior Court II, was present to discuss CASA and the county's financial obligation to the agency. Kristy Bachman, CASA Director, was in attendance as well. Judge Hagen explained that he uses the agency all the time as any CHINS case needs a child representative. Judge Hagen feels that the use of CASA is much more effective than getting a guardian ad litem each time it is necessary. CASA serves the 5-county area and Christy told the group that she has attended council meetings in the other counties as well to discuss this issue of funding. She told the council that it is hard to make expenses at this time and that the agency will have to fold if more funding does not become available. Christy told the group that they currently have 3 full time employee and 4 part time employees and she will continue to do grant writing and fund raising to help with funding. Christy went on to add that the United Way was a big contributor to this program, but their funds have continued to drop since COVID. DeKalb County – at this time – is the only county that is in question as to how much they plan to contribute. When asked about DCS's part in this process, Christy commented that DCS's goal is to unify the family. CASA focuses on the child and what is the very best for that child, which sometimes means that the family is not the best answer. Judge Hagen explained that this will be a budget item for 2025 and that he will have the entire \$68,250.00 listed in his budget. Currently he has \$20,000.00 in Superior II budget, Superior I has \$6,940.00 as does Circuit Court. Those will all be combined and in his budget with an increase of \$34,370.00 needed.

HIGHWAY

Zack Smith, Highway Engineer, was present to update the council on the highway department:

- CCMG - Zack explained to the council that the 2nd round of funding is open, but since Noble County got the full amount of available funding for this year in the 1st round, we will not be submitting any more this year.
- HMA 2024 -01 for asphalt replacement has been awarded to Phend and Brown and should be completed this fall and HMA CN-01 will be concrete repair and was awarded to Pulver's.
- The department is working on chip and seal areas of construction currently.
- Zack informed the group that all of the LPA projects - of which there are 13 – are all running on schedule.
- There will be 3 bridge LPA projects on the schedule for 2025.

COURTHOUSE RENOVATION

Zack Smith, Project Manager, provided the following update on the courthouse renovation:

- Zack said that there is continuous progress with Weigand and sub-contractors on site every day.
- Progress has been made on the west side sidewalk and ramp.
- A decision was made that rather than do extensive plaster repair, it would be more cost effective to just install drywall, so that is being done in certain areas.
- Financially – we have made over half of the payments at this time. We have used all of the ARP dollars and have made the final draw on the loan but still have contingency for the added cost when they pop up.
- Completion is on track for January of 2025

CORRESPONDENCE

- Rome City Redevelopment Commission – Certification of Tif funds.

MINUTES

Minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved as corrected. Tom Janes moved to approve. Mary Wysong seconded the motion. Motion carried 7-0.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- The salary committee met prior to the meeting today and are bringing two recommendations before the council for approval:
 1. The assistant maintenance position was refactored and was upgraded to a LTC III. This would increase the salary to \$46,500. Tom Janes moved to approve the increase and make it effective 6/28/24. Mary Wysong seconded and the motion carried 7-0.
 2. The second was for the Assistant Jail Commander – This was factored at a Civilian Pole IV with a salary of \$55,823.00 which was approved with a motion from Mary Wysong with the effective date of January 1, 2025. Max Franklin seconded. Motion carries 7-0.
 3. There were also committee reports for Region 3-A and Northeastern Center.

KENDALLVILLE LIBRARY PUBLIC HEARING

Mindy London, Library Director, along with members of the board, were all present to conduct the public hearing to initiate a new bond.

- Mindy informed the council that the current bond was expiring and that the board is requesting that they initiate a new bond in the fall of 2024 to pay for repairs and maintenance at their two locations in Kendallville and Rome City.
- The improvements will include technology, safety with the implementation of security lighting, and ADA compliance.
- A presentation was handed out concerning the financial situation at the library. This was prepared by Baker Tilly.
- The representative that was with Mindy explained that the borrowing amount would be \$5,500,000.00 with a 20-year payback. This will keep the current tax in place with no increase.
- Mindy reiterated that there would be no financial obligation on the part of the county as they are a taxing unit of themselves.
- Public Hearing concluded.

ABATEMENT

Kerry Leitch from B & J Medical and Specialty along with Melanie Kellog from the EDC were present to request a real estate and personal property abatement in Orange Township. The real estate abatement was requested in the amount of \$1,797,889. The company has purchased a vacate building to the west of the current building. By this being a vacant building,

there is a possibility of a vacant building deduction but not a real estate abatement. This will be reworked and resubmitted.

The personal property is for equipment that will be going into the facility. This is in the amount of \$5,463,444.00 for 12 pieces of equipment. Kerry indicated that this will create at least 9 new jobs and he expects a few more than that to be created. He told the council that they hope to have this up and running by November of this year. Doug Harp moved to approve the personal property abatement for 10 years in the amount of \$5,463,444.00. Tom Janes seconded. The motion carried 7-0.

NOBLE COUNTY PARK BOARD

Diann Scott and John Metzger, President and Vice-President of the Noble County Park Board, were present to discuss ordinance changes and funding for the park board. Diann explained that it is time to do a new 5-year plan. This is at a cost of \$7,500.00. Also, she is asking for a \$10,000.00 operating budget and a change to add a Treasurer to the Park Board and change the requirement of Council approval on grant to being able to apply at will for available grant money. There was some lengthy discussion about all of the requests. The minutes pulled from 2010 were very clear that there would be no county financial obligations for the park board. Diann indicated that they want to do more marketing, but as Mary Wysong brought up, the CVB does a good job of marketing events and things that Noble County has to offer. Diann indicated that they host a spring and fall summit and the CVB has funded this in the past. As far as the grants, Noble County would have to be a pass-through agency for the park board, so oversight of those grants needs to stay with the council. At the end of the discussion, it was suggested that the park board be in communication with the CVB and maybe even become a part of that agency. The CVB could then request additional dollars from the county to help with the extra expenses of the park board.

CCD

The Sheriff has requested that the claims for Equiparts in the amount of \$626.00 be paid from the CCD Fund. Mary Wysong moved to approve. Tom Janes seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

ADDITIONAL

The health department is requesting \$139,401.00 to be appropriated for the vehicles that were approved last month. This will be for account number 1206-44300-701 in the local health trust account. Motion to approve the additional came from Doug Harp. Brandon Chordas seconded. Motion carried 6-1 with Trey Forbes voting against.

TRANSFERS


In the general fund, Glenn Ryan has requested a transfer from 1000-17802-032 maintenance personnel in the amount of \$3,000.00 to 1000-31601-032 window cleaning. Glenn has contracted a company to wash the outside windows of the new annex building. Motion to approve this transfer came from Mary Wysong. Tom Janes seconded and the motion carried 7-0.

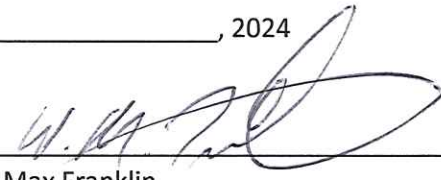
Randy Sexton, Noble County Surveyor, is requesting a transfer in his surveyor's perpetuation fund. He is requesting that \$456.00 be transferred from 1202-31500-249 professional services to 1202-44100-249 furniture and equipment. Motion to approve this transfer came from Doug Harp and was seconded by Mary Wysong. Motion carried 7-0.


ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business before the Noble County Council, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:15 pm until the next regularly scheduled meeting of the council being August 5, 2024.

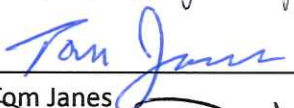
Dated this 5 day of August, 2024

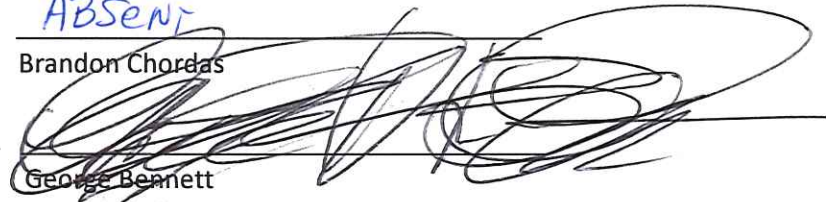

Trey Forbes


Max Franklin



Mary Wysong

ABSENT
Brandon Chordas


Tom Janes


George Bennett


Doug Harp

ATTEST: 
Michelle Mawhorter, Noble County Auditor