

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

April 7th, 2025

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The Parke County Board of Commissioners convened in a regular meeting at 4:00 p.m. on Monday, April 7th, 2025, having adjourned from a regular meeting on Monday, March 17th, 2025.
- II. **ROLL CALL:** Members present were Jim Meece, President; Dan Collom, first Vice President; Bruce Hartman, second Vice President; Nick Sauter, Commissioner's Attorney; Susan Kramer, Auditor; and Leanna Collisi, 2nd Deputy Auditor. Also present were J. B. Butler, Kim Shorter, Jason Frazier, Steve Collisi, Beth Martin, Paul Gable, Mike Strack, Brad Buchanan, Chris Marsolf, Michelle Mundo, Gregg Larson, Roger Smith, Loren Hoopingarner, Julie Lanzone, Chris O'Brien, John Stacks, Tyler Ochs and Matt Stechley.
- III. **MINUTES:** Minutes for the regular meeting held on Monday, March 17th, 2025 were approved on a motion from Dan Collom. Bruce Hartman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
- IV. **PAYROLL:** County payroll in the amount of \$276,428.84, Union Hospital Security payroll in the amount of \$2,736.45 and the Courthouse Security in the amount of \$877.44 were approved for release on Monday, April 7th, 2025 on a motion made by Dan Collom. Bruce Hartman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Acknowledgement of receipt of Payroll Claims Accounts Payable Report for April 7th, 2025 in the amount of \$267,067.96 was approved on a motion made by Dan Collom. Bruce Hartman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Accounts Payable Claims in the amount of \$989,932.04 were approved on a motion made by Dan Collom. Bruce Hartman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
- V. **NEW BUSINESS:**
 - There was one out of cycle check that needed approval. The claim voucher was from VS Engineering in the amount of \$1,133.12 for the Melcher Covered Bridge. Dan Collom made the motion to approve the VS Engineering claim voucher for \$1,133.12 to be paid as an out of cycle check. Bruce Hartman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
 - Chris O'Brien presented Ordinance 2025-02 Local Disaster Emergency Declaration to the Parke County Board of Commissioners. This ordinance will help recoup some costs associated with the most recent storm damage in Parke County. Jim Meece made the motion to approve Ordinance 2025-02 Local Disaster Emergency Declaration. Dan Collom seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
 - Susan Kramer, Parke County Auditor, distributed the Parke County Highway Annual Operational Report for 2024. Bruce Hartman made the motion to approve the 2024 Parke County Highway Annual Operational Report. Dan Collom seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
 - Jim Meece reported that the incoming Parke County Highway Superintendent is still on medical leave, therefore, moving his start date to April 14th, 2025, if released from the doctor.
 - Gregg Larson from Billie Creek informed the Parke County Board of Commissioners that a White River Valley ATV Race will be at Billie Creek this coming weekend due to them getting washed out at the original venue and would like to be able to have the participants cross over Old 36 like they have done in the past. This would not close it down completely only when the participants would need to cross over Old 36. This would be a monitored situation. This event is from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 12th, 2025 and Sunday, April 13th, 2025. Dan Collom made the motion to allow Billie Creek's White River Valley ATV event to cross over Old 36 as needed over the weekend. Bruce Hartman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Also mentioned, were the Civil War Days that are scheduled for May 3rd through 4th, 2025 and would

like to request to close Old 36 during certain times. The closure would be from 8:00 a.m.-10:00p.m. on Saturday, May 3rd, 2025, 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 4th, 2025 and 10:00 p.m.-3:00 a.m. on Monday, April 28th, 2025 and Tuesday, April 29th, 2025. Jim Meece made the motion to give Billie Creek the ability to close Old 36 as requested by Gregg Larson during the Billie Creek Civil War Days. Dan Collom seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

- Matt Stechley reported that Core Facilities has closed Phase One of the Copper Piping/Plumbing Project at the Parke County Sheriff's Office and Jail. CDI's variable on the ceiling grid looks good. Phase One is 100% complete at the Jail. Jim Meece asked why the original copper had failed. Matt Stechley explained that there was a period of 5-7 years' span back when the Jail was built that a new flux was used. This new flux caused cracking and weakness in the copper when used. This is the only explanation that has been discovered. This flux has since been discontinued from use. Matt Stechley explained that there were two bids for Phase Two. HFI came in at \$155,800.00 and Commercial Services came in at \$170,000.00. This phase is the smallest phase of the Jail project. HFI was awarded the bid. Half of the balance will be due in June 2025 and then second half will be due January 2026. Jim Meece stated that legislature is trying to increase income taxes, but Parke County is already the 6th highest in the State of Indiana on Income Tax Revenue to supplement any short fall on Property Tax Revenue. Jim Meece made the motion to approve the Phase Two of the Jail project and the payment schedule of Phase Two. Bruce Hartman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Matt Stechley suggested that Parke County may want to consider breaking Phase Three into a Phase Three and Four, since it is such a large project. Currently, they are trying to locate and fix multiple leaks throughout the Sheriff's Office and may require between 6-7 sets of flashing to complete the project with an estimated cost of \$13,000.00. Matt Stechley wants FYDEA to take a look at this project and see if they can bid this job cheaper. Matt Stechley also reported on the progress on the Parke County Highway Department's roof replacement project. This project is being completed by FYDEA and will take 2-3 weeks for completion. They have found the roof to have 3-4 layers of roofing material on it and some wood boards and block need replaced as well. There may need to be an additional \$16,000.00 - \$18,000.00 needed to complete the roofing project. Matt Stechley asked the Parke County Board of Commissioners permission to approve any additional expenses as needed on the Parke County Highway Department's roof repair to complete the project. Jim Meece made the motion to give Matt Stechley permission to approve any additional expenses needed to complete the Parke County Highway Department's roof replacement project within the \$16,000.00 - \$18,000.00 range. Dan Collom seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Jim Meece also mentioned that he would like to have Matt Stechley take a look at the Parke County Courthouse windows that need replacement.
- Nick Sauter, the Parke County Board of Commissioners' Attorney, opened a bid from Milestone for the Community Crossings Grant for Paving 2025-01. This is the only bid and the Parke County Highway Superintendent will need to review it before being approved by the Parke County Board of Commissioners.
- Roger Smith from PCI informed the Parke County Board of Commissioners that PCI would like to do some updates on the Mecca Covered Bridge. These updates would be 100% paid for by PCI. PCI has reached out to Don Cobb to complete this project for them. A ramp (non-ADA compliant) would be installed on one end of the bridge. Steps will be removed and replaced with new steps and a hand rail on the other end of the Mecca Covered Bridge along with some repairs done to the paved/concrete edges of the bridge. The PCI Board has already approved the work to be done to the Mecca Covered Bridge. Jim Meece made the motion to approve repair work on the Mecca Covered Bridge by PCI and to be paid for in full by PCI. Dan Collom seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
- The Parke County Board of Zoning and Appeals has granted a change in zoning from AG to CTB for the land the new Dollar General Store would like to build on. This was with a 6-1 vote to recommend the change in zoning for the Dollar General to the Parke County Board of Commissioners. Tyler Ochs, an attorney from Bose, McKinney and Evans, represented the incoming Dollar General Store during the Parke County Board of Commissioners' meeting. He

stated that the Dollar General has taken into consideration the Parke County Board of Zoning and Appeals recommendation of a conditional variance by decreasing the number of parking spaces from 53 to 40 and they are still waiting to hear back from INDOT about adding a second entrance. The Dollar General is a needed service for the community because this area is considered a food desert. In addition, Tyler Ochs stated that there will be little to no impact of light pollution to the Miami Nation as neighbors. Dollar General is not asking for any tax incentives. Dollar General will only increase the Parke County's tax base. This location is on the far eastern part of Parke County and should not impact the local businesses. There were several people that were present that expressed opposition to the Dollar General Store. Mike Strack was concerned with traffic safety. The east and west bound traffic may have a difficult time stopping for traffic turning into the Dollar General parking lot. Brad Buchannon from the Miami Nation stated that their land was given to them with the intentions of keeping the land all natural. Lighting issues are a concern and they do appreciate Dollar General's attempt to control the light pollution. They only want to see wise development that invest in the county. The Dollar General has a lot of law suit cases against them – from paying employees to charging different prices to customers. Jim Meece stated that if an issue comes to us, like this one, with a majority vote from a board, it is hard to over rule their decision. Boards are put together to perform their area of expertise and should be respected as such. Bruce Hartman asked what J. B. Butler's opinion was. J. B. Butler explained that a grocery store was an important part of this type of Dollar General. The community would not have to travel far to get groceries. It would add to Parke County's tax base and employ residents of Parke County. Chris Marsolf looked into the different kinds of Dollar General stores and realized this store will have different options for its' customers. He also stated that if Dollar General does not receive approval from Parke County, they could go 3-4 miles to the east into Putnam County and receive approval there. Dan Collom stated that his main concern was traffic issues arising and why he was the "No" vote on the Board of Zoning and Appeals for the Dollar General. He would like to see an ingress and digress into the Dollar General store parking area. He was concerned that people with boats/campers may get stuck in the parking lot of the Dollar General and may end up backing up onto the highway. Jim Meece made the motion to approve the recommendation from the Board of Zoning and Appeals to change the Dollar General's zoning from AG to CTB. Bruce Hartman seconded the motion. Dan Collom opposed the motion. Brad Buchanan added, on behalf of the Miami Nation, they will respect this decision and everyone involved and will be good neighbors.

- Beth Martin from the Parke County Planning and Zoning Commission explained on Samuel and Susie King's behalf that the land their new warehouse is being built on is zoned AG Productive. The Parke County Board of Zoning and Appeals has already granted them a special exception to change this land from AG Productive to Commercial Local Business. Dan Collom made the motion to approve the request to change the zoning for the new warehouse from AG Productive to Commercial Local Business. Bruce Hartman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
- Jim Meece informed the attendees of the Parke County Board of Commissioners' Meeting that the board will be staying after the meeting to fill out an affidavit of discovery from a lawsuit the County is involve in with their Attorney. Anyone is welcome to stay.

VI. OLD BUSINESS:

- None

VII. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Jason Frazier, Parke County Sheriff:

- Jason Frazier reported that one of his deputies, Joshua Milbourn, lost 43 vacation hours when the department was trying to manage Comp Time. Jason Frazier asked the Parke County Board of Commissioners to approve reinstatement of the lost 43 vacation hours for Joshua Milbourn.

Currently, Jim Meece said the County is in the process of creating an Ordinance to manage Comp Time. Jim Meece made the motion to approve reinstating 43 vacation hours to Joshua Milbourn. Dan Collom seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Jason Frazier also stated that he still has some leaks in his office.

Julie Lanzone, Parke County Ambulance/EMS:

- Julie Lanzone informed the Parke County Board of Commissioners that she is expecting the new ambulance to come in on May 14th, 2025. She also reported that one of the 2021 ambulances with only 64,850 miles on it, needs a replacement engine. This is the back-up ambulance. Earlier this year, coolant lines were replaced on the ambulance for around \$2,000.00. She had this ambulance towed to a repair shop. It had lost all the compression in the cylinders. This ambulance is 4,850 miles past its warranty. Andy Mohr called with an estimate to replace the engine at \$12,829.94. There is Ford Pro Elite that may help with finances. She hates to just dispose of the ambulance because it does not have that many miles on it and it should last longer than it has. This ambulance is used as a back-up for Parke and Vermillion County ambulance services. This ambulance has a 7-3 gas engine in it along with the rest of the ambulances in the fleet. There is only one diesel. She will have to go to the Parke County Council to ask for approval to fix the ambulance. Julie Lanzone reported that the run volumes are good and finances are great. Vermillion County Ambulances are good as well. Vermillion County still has new officials trying to learn the ropes and it does not look like Vermillion County will be taking back managing the Vermillion County Ambulances any time soon.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS:


- Loren Hoopingarner asked the Parke County Board of Commissioners to please consider road repairs on 1200 E. The road conditions have extremely deteriorated through the years and just patching here and there is not cutting it any more. Many years ago, the residents on that road paid to have the road chip and sealed with the understanding that the county would maintain it. This has not been done by the county throughout the years. Loren Hoopingarner would like to see 1200 E paved this coming year. Jim Meece stated that there is a new Community Crossings Grant coming soon and hopefully some of that money can go toward repaving 1200 E.

ADJOURNMENT: Having no further business to come before the Board, a motion to adjourn was made by Dan Collom and seconded by Bruce Hartman. The meeting adjourned at 5:11 p.m.

Jim Meece, President

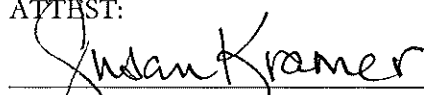


Dan R. Collom, 1st Vice President



Bruce A. Hartman, 2nd Vice President

ATTEST:



Susan Kramer, Auditor