

## Randolph County Commissioners

March 4, 2024

The Randolph County Commissioners met at their regular meeting at 9:00AM in the Commissioners and Council Room in the Courthouse with the following members present: Board President Michael Wickersham and Gary Friend. Also present was Randolph County Auditor Laura J Martin, Sheriff Art Moystner and County Attorney Meeks Cockerill.

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Pledge of Allegiance

### **Council's update**

Mike said first item on the agenda is a council's update. We have two council persons here, Bev Fields and Missy Williams.

Bev said Community Corrections applied for a grant, \$218,000.00. We passed four ordinances, amending the sheriff, operation pull over, extension office ordinance, Community Corrections case manager work release ordinance, Farmland EMS building, and there were several other discussions held. Additional appropriations were tabled for drug free community, Health Department and then a subsequent Health Department request for funding was approved. That's just a brief, there were several things that day.

Mike said thank you. Do you have any questions of Bev?

Gary Friend said no.

### **Mindy Stephens- Termination date for VHF usage, employee & shift update**

Mike said Mindy Stephens, 911 office, terminate date for VHF usage, employee & shift update.

Mindy Stephens said Chris and I were tasked with trying to find a new schedule that would eliminate overtime for our department. I think he emailed a copy to all of you. It looks like we're going to have to try to stay on a 12-hour shift. Right now, we're on two 40-hour weeks per pay period. But if we could change that to one 80-hour, I can eliminate all the overtime by having twice a period, having somebody come in two hours late. It will still be our same 12-hour rotation, things like that. I don't see any way of being able to do that if we stay on the two 40-hour weeks. And also, I would ask that the holiday hours if we're putting in a 12-hour shift, that we could be paid for the holiday? We're still being paid for eight hours since we're still in 8-hour employees that we work 12 hours. But we're only getting 8 hours for 12 hours of holiday time.

Mike said so, you're going to work 80 hours in a two-week period?

Mindy Stephens said uh huh.

Mike said in 12-hour shifts?

Mindy Stephens said yes. We work 12 hours now, but the way the pay period falls, we have one short week in the first 7 days and then we have a long week in the second 7 days. So, that's going to give us essentially, 4 hours of overtime every pay.

Mike said so, your short week is 36 hours?

Mindy Stephens said 24.

Mike said 24, and your long week is?

Mindy Stephens said 60.

Mike said and that's 84 hours?

Mindy Stephens said uh huh.

Mike said and then you have four hours of overtime?

Mindy Stephens said every week.

Mike said so if you go to 12 hours, are you going to work 84 hours in that 80-hour period?

Mindy Stephens said no, we're 12 hours now. So, two times in the two weeks pay period, if we go to the 80 hours instead of 2 40s. There will be two times in that pay period, somebody would come in two hours late, which would two hours this week and two hours the following week. That would eliminate the extra time.

Mike said they'd only have 10 hours that day?

Mindy Stephens said right.

Mike said okay. I was trying to figure out how it went into 80 and.

Mindy Stephens said yeah, and then that would make it exactly 80.

Mike said I was about ready to get my calculator out.

Mindy Stephens said and that would make it exactly 80 hours.

Mike said okay. And then for a holiday, would be still an 8-hour pay period?

Mindy Stephens said well holidays, I was assuming they would be 12 since we're working 12. We only get paid for 8 now, even though we're working 12-hour shifts.

Mike said well if you work 12 hours on a holiday, you would get, I would say you would get 12 hours, but, for the holiday pay itself, would only be the 8 hours. I don't see how we can bump that up.

Mindy Stephens said I thought it was something like that. And we are down, we will be losing one other person in the next week. So, I think that puts us down two full-time people. So, we're not even able to work an 8-hour shift. We're not staffed. We're barely holding on by a thread, working 12-hour shifts, bare minimum.

Mike said and it's, is this proposal, do you feel more comfortable with this proposal as opposed to keeping it the way it is and if the county were willing to pay you overtime for the hours you work over the 40 hours each week, and that comes with your paycheck, would that be a better way to do that?

Mindy Stephens said I know that everybody would appreciate the money.

Mike said we were doing, sort of doing that last fall.

Mindy Stephens said yes. I know there's a lot of overtime being worked right now. I know I've worked 84 hours in a week just to cover, just to cover because we're so short staffed. So, I guess it is an incentive to help. I know that would be appreciated by everyone if that's a possibility.

Laura said it would be so much easier if either you pay the overtime, or give comp time, not both, because right now, they're using comp time and we're trying to pay it out, and tracking is horrid for my office. And Chris and I have discussed it.

Gary Friend said is it true that comp time can't be used to enhance overtime?

Laura said what?

Gary Friend said comp time cannot be used to enhance overtime with that policy?

Laura said I don't know what you are saying?

Gary Friend said you can't have comp time and then collect overtime as well?

Laura said that's what kind of we've been doing. And it's a nightmare to track it.

Meeks said to pay overtime, you have to work those hours. So, to be able to be eligible for overtime pay, you much have worked whatever our hours, is it 35 to get overtime?

Laura said theirs are 40.

Meeks said you must work 40 hours. You can't take 8 hours of vacation or comp, and work 32, and then get.

Laura said right, exactly. And that's our policy, yes.

Meeks said okay.

Gary Friend said that was my question. We're not doing that?

Laura said no, we're not. But it would be preferable for us if either you put them on paid overtime or you put them on comp time, one or the other, instead of mixing them up, because it's been horrible.

Mike said the problem with comp time is they can't find time to use the comp time. That's why we went the overtime.

Mindy Stephens said yeah, a lot of us had to sell our vacation back to the county because we can't get the time off.

Mike said what would the harm be if we just asked council to pay out all comp time for 911, and then put them on an overtime schedule and pay them overtime each pay period?

Gary Friend said what would also, I agree with Mike there, you're putting forward the possibility of an 80-hour work, I mean are we allowed to do 80 hours bi-weekly?

Meeks said it all depends on their, they have a different distinction, because they're emergency services. Regular, it's 40.

Gary Friend said why wouldn't we also hire more people?

Mindy Stephens said we've been trying.

Gary Friend said but let's just say the schedule filled up, you finally get through it, would we even need to have that type of schedule if you just hired more people?

Mindy Stephens said like the 12-hour schedule?

Gary Friend said yeah, why wouldn't we just go back to what it was three years ago before, two years ago, with enough manpower? We had enough manpower at one time, right?

Mindy Stephens said yeah, we did.

Gary Friend said and do we still have in the budget, do we still have that budgeted to hire those people?

Mindy Stephens said I honestly don't know. Chris handles that part.

Meeks said in the budget, you'd have to have in the budget, enough to cover all those shifts, so you would probably have that budgeted.

Gary Friend said yeah. And I would say, I'm with Mike on it, I think we should probably pay this overtime out instead of getting into all kinds of, not only, in my opinion, does the, 8 hours doesn't work, you've taken it to 12, you have the highway on 10 hours, whether you're a 40-hour or 35-hour. That goes for your vacation too. A vacation day is not a 12-hour day. It's paid at 8 hours.

Mindy Stephens said I know on the 12-hour schedule, when we went to that, I think for the center, they enjoy like having the schedule, we get every other Friday, Saturday, Sunday off. I think that's actually helped keep a few people there, because before, we would get you know, a weekend off every six weeks. And so, I think that was one of the, kind of the incentive for that.

Mike said and I'm not proposing not to work 12 hours. I'm just proposing that if you work 12 hours or if you work 48 hours this week, get 8 hours overtime, then the county pays you, as opposed to the county banking 8 hours of comp time that you don't know when you'll get to use it. Then if you haven't used it by the time vacation comes around, you lose it, then it's just unfair. And it's, there are situations where it's not unfair, but in a situation where you don't have enough employees to cover the tasks, then it becomes unfair to the employees. So, I guess that's what I would recommend.

Gary Friend said I would too. I would also recommend you and Chris together can tell us what would you have for us to consider to get fully staffed? What's in the way of getting fully staffed? What exactly is it, and is it even possible to get there, and it has to be. So, what is that? What is that answer?

Mindy Stephens said yeah, we don't know.

Gary Friend said I'm with Mike. I think we continue paying the overtime, stop the comp time.

Mindy Stephens said we do have three people in training right now. So, as soon as those people get released, hopefully, they'll stay. One of the people that just turned in their two-week notice was a trainee. We've just been going through trainees like crazy. I think we lost 13 people in the last year. I think Chris and I figured that up, it was 13 people.

Gary Friend said do have a feeling for what that's all about?

Mindy Stephens said I know before we got the raises, it was the money. Sometimes, it's just the hours worked and then not being able to take some time off. So, that was a thing. And then some people, I mean, a lot of people did leave for surrounding you know, areas. But I mean, the raise did help kind of get you know, some people in there and stuff, but I'm not sure, I don't know if they get overwhelmed or just burned out or what it is exactly.

Mike said it's not an easy job.

Mindy Stephens said no, it's not.

Mike said there's a lot, I mean, every county, every city, or metropolitan area, they have this service, so they have lots of opportunities to go someplace else. So, and I think the county's done a nice job in the last couple of years of bringing that pay scale up to maybe prevent some of that migration. It's still an issue we have to deal with. I guess, what I'm saying, is opposed to going to the 80-hour pay period, we just keep the schedule pay period the same and we just ask council to pay up overtime for the 911 operators.

Gary Friend said I agree.

Mike said we'll can just do that by consensus. Okay?

Mindy Stephens said alright. Thank you.

Mike said oh, Mindy, do you have anything about the VHS usage termination?

Mindy Stephens said I do not. I think Chris said that he asked if he could address it at the next meeting.

Mike said okay. That's fine. Thank you.

**Debra Johnting – Ordinance 2024-03 Amendment to zoning map – second reading**

Mike said Debra Johnting, ordinance number 2024-03, an amendment to the zoning map. This is the second reading. This passed the first reading and it's in title only. It's an ordinance to amend the zoning map of Randolph County. The change would be to property owned by Shaun and Brook Patterson.

Gary Friend make motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Mike said that motion carries. We'll have the third and final reading at our next meeting.

**Wendy McDavid – new Health Department schedule**

Mike said Wendy McDavid here representing the Health Department, proposing a new Health Department schedule.

Wendy McDavid said I think Sherri was in here talked to you about the last month, and we were going to do weekends and that became not really a good solution, so we decided just to do Tuesdays and Thursdays until 6 pm so that there is somebody in the building in the evening, even though we'll be there too. But Marita and I are going to work on Tuesdays and then we're all going to rotate Thursdays until 6. We'll work 10 until 6 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. But the office will be open 8 to 4 every day, Monday through Friday.

Mike said so, has the health board seen this?

Wendy McDavid said yes.

Mike said and they approve it?

Wendy McDavid said yes.

Mike said okay.

Gary Friend said a question I had the last time was to make sure this wasn't a flex hour situation, it's fixed hours.

Mike said we're going to have to change the handbook, so we might as well make a motion to do that.

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Mike said okay, anything else, Wendy?

Wendy McDavid said not today.

**Joe Copeland – SJCA Task Order 22 for inspection of Bridge 250 for NTE fee of \$35,000.00**

Mike said Joe Copeland, SJCA Task Order 22 for inspection of bridge 250, for not to exceed fee of \$35,000.00.

Joe Copeland said yes sir. It was approved at the last meeting but we just need to sign the task order. It's the bridge 250, which we received Community Crossing Matching Grant funding for. And we're ready to begin.

Joe Copeland said the right-of-way for that bridge has been, we're close to acquiring it, we got a, both parties have agreed and signed the paperwork. I've submitted a claim for payment, and Meeks is looking over the documentation, and then we'll record it.

Mike said okay. Did we use our new firm for that?

Joe Copeland said yes.

Mike said how did that work out for us?

Joe Copeland said good.

**Greg Sommer – 4-way stop 100 E & 700 N (at school)**

Mike said I'm going to move, change this around a little bit. Is Greg Sommer here?

Greg Sommer said yeah.

Mike said Greg, you're on the agenda for a 4-way stop at 100 East and 700 North, and is that at the Award School number 5?

Greg Sommer said yes.

Mike said and our engineer, Joe Copeland has dealt with 4-way stops in other counties, and he's proposing that we might want to investigate that area with traffic counts and things of that nature, and determine whether or not a 4-way stop is appropriate. And I think that probably would be a pretty good idea before we would make any decisions on going forward, and use the services of Joe. I don't know if those counters, if we could just use those from Henry County, or if they're going to charge us for those, or are they in your truck?

Joe Copeland said they'll be here week after next. I've got road school next week.

Mike said is that okay with you Greg?

Greg Sommer said yes. Our main purpose for getting a 4-way stop was, once we get the school a 100% complete, and start doing our field trips for elementary students, we want it where the traffic will be slowed down, be aware of the 4-way stop being there. But we do have a problem going in between 50, 65 mile per hour through there nonstop. And since the school house is pretty much on a hill, you've got to overlook the hill.

Mike said okay. Let us look, investigate it and from the traffic county standpoint, we'll take into consideration that you're probably going to have a higher number of traffic out there once you're fully complete, and if not, if we don't go down the road of a 4-way stop, I'm sure there's some way the county can protect that situation when school buses are going out there, and you have kids out there. But I think we start with an investigation. I don't know what the time that would be, how long that would take.

Joe Copeland said I need three days counted, usually Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays for the count. I don't want weekends or Fridays or Mondays. So, once I get that count, then I can sit down and look at the traffic, the amount of traffic, the speed and so, oh, yeah, I should be able to get it by then, yeah.

Gary Friend said how long before it's ready to open anyway?

Greg Sommer said we're probably about a year, a year and a half away.

Gary Friend said okay.

Greg Sommer said that's where we're at now.

Mike said is the first meeting, we can wait a little bit longer.

Joe Copeland said I just need help in setting those counters out. Once we set those counters out, hopefully, two weeks from today, we can set those out and then we can get them started. I'll get them charged up and ready to go.

Mike said let's go to mid-April, second meeting in April.

Joe Copeland said okay, alright, sounds good.

Mike said and call me if you need my help, I'll come out and help you.

Joe Copeland said okay. It's all based on the Indiana manual and Uniform Traffic Controlled Devices. They set a particular way and you need to follow it or you're liable.

Mike said okay.

Joe Copeland said alright, thank you.

Mike said thank you. Does that work for you, Greg?

Greg Sommer said yeah.

**Jessica Olson and Jay Long – Use of CCMG and Windfarm balance to pay state**

Mike said it doesn't look like Mike is here, but Jay and Jessica are here.

Jessica Olson said we are here to ask permission. We have two different funds we'd like to see if we could utilize. The first one is in the Windfarm fund and there was money appropriated for bridge 173. It has been completed and everything has been paid out of that line, but there's a remaining appropriation of \$20,950.06 in that line. And we were asking permission to move that appropriation to bridge 308. That's all being paid out of Wind right now, all the engineering is being paid.

Mike said this says we'd like permission to use remaining cash balance in the CCMG grant fund of \$23,570.52.

Jessica Olson said that is our second thing.

Mike said okay. That's the second one?

Jessica Olson said the reason I came to, was coming to council and commissioners is because it's Wind. So, that's why. That's why I sent the transfer over for the \$20,000.

Mike said this one is a total of \$30,497.28, is that fair?

Jessica Olson said okay, so, we owe, yes. We owe money back to the state in the amount of \$30,497.28. We were asking permission on that one to use the remaining, there's remaining match money that you guys, that you guys gave out of Wind into the CCMG grant.

Mike said and that's \$23,570.52?

Jessica Olson said that's correct. And that one, we would like to use to pay a portion of that \$30,497.

Mike said okay, for the other, bridge 174 and bridge 162?

Jessica Olson said correct.

Mike said so then you have \$6,926,76 balance out of MVH to pay back to state?

Jessica Olson said yes.

Mike said I don't see any problem or reason for not doing that.

Gary Friend said I don't either. I don't understand, how do we owe the state money?

Jessica Olson said Joe, I think it came in under bid.

Mike said Joe, why do we owe the state money?

Joe Copeland said when you do a Community Crossing matching grant fund project, they don't give you the contract and the actual money until you bid it. Once it's bid then they enter the contract, they send you the money and then at that bid, or that project comes under that amount of money that they sent you, they expect to get the remainder back.

Mike said so bridge 162 and bridge 174 both came under?

Joe Copeland said yes. Two out of three came in under.

Mike said so, you want to move to approve that?

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Mike said okay, now the other one that we don't have, it's just a transfer?

Jessica Olson said I've got a copy of it. It's just a simple transfer.

Mike said that's council's work, so. I hate to take council's work away from them.

Jessica Olson said well I just wanted you to be aware of it.

Mike said anything else this morning?

Jessica Olson said that was it for me. Thank you very much.

**Ed Thornburg – New Lisbon utility agreement, Ridgeville cell tower drainage project**

Mike said Ed Thornburg. New Lisbon utility agreement and Ridgeville cell tower drainage project. So, this is a New Lisbon telephone company phase two, west of State Road One, cabinet two, work order number 23-2-68-216.

Ed Thornburg said yep.

Mike said are you recommending this?

Ed Thornburg said yes, I am.

Mike said any questions?

Gary Friend said no.

Mike said and you're recommending this?

Ed Thornburg said yes.

Mike said okay.

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Ed Thornburg said my second thing is, we got the drainage project for the Deerfield cell tower done. Here's a map of the drainage that we put in.

Mike said right. It looks nice.

Gary Friend said yes, it does.

Ed Thornburg said the guys did a really good job on that. And anyway, it went well.

Mike said we should send this to our architect engineer, show what it looked like when it's done. Okay. Well, we have the claim on the agenda for later, Proficient Drain, \$22,777.61?

Ed Thornburg said something like that.

Mike said that was about what they bid?

Ed Thornburg said yeah.

Mike said okay.

Ed Thornburg said there was some extra work involved in, it was slightly higher, but the extra work involved that we hadn't counted on the stone upgrade inside the fenced area. And then also, the last condition for getting to do the job was we repaired the tile that outlets our tile across the gentleman's property that owns it.

Mike said right. Okay. Very good. Thank you, Ed.

**Mike Stults - Leap Managed IT Scale Server Support quote**

Mike said Mike Stults. Leap Managed IT scale server support quote.

Mike Stults said you guys already have a copy of the quote?

Mike said I think I do.

Mike Stults said I have copies if you need it as well.

Mike said so, I understand the 3-year license in coverage of \$20,592.03. My concern is the recertification fee.

Mike Stults said what had happened is, is the scale, an email was sent to a previous provider's email here, and it got sent to us later, late last year, that the licensing was coming up for renewal. Well, it had lapsed on the scale server. So, licensing and support both were lapsed at beginning or February, I believe the date was February 14<sup>th</sup> of 2023. So, we got that information way late, that that had happened. So, I got in contact with Scale, got a representative, started working with them on everything, got the quoting together. So, the three years is covering actually, 2023's coverage of licensing, 2024 and 2025. So, it's actually covering retroactively 2023's licensing for those three years. And then, the recertification fee is a fee that Scale puts on there if we don't have it licensed for at least one year. If it goes out of licensing after one year, and that lapsed in February. So, when we received the information, we started looking into what our other options were. Scale is not a provider that we'd normally worked with, so, we were looking at different options of what we could do for you guys to get you set up with the high availability server solution that you have. What that means is you guys have three servers that are running all the time. And instead of having like one go down, and you have to spin up other things, it's actively has resources available so it can, if ram drops off this one, it can automatically drive it from here, and you have like an always up time, is what that is. So, the recertification fee is something that they're pushing on us because we missed the servers have been not licensed for a year, over a year.

Mike said and I guess my concern there is whose responsibility is that? I understand we are the owners, so, it's ultimately, our responsibility, but we've contracted with this company, and we've contracted with your firm to, and I'm going to just be blunt, to make sure that doesn't happen.

Mike Stults said yeah.

Mike said and I don't know, I guess I'm concerned as to why it happened.

Mike Stults said okay. So, I was not aware that there was going to be that fee until later after we had started talking with them, and then they gave me that information like a month before the licensing was going to lapse. So, I was not even aware that there was going to be a fee. And once we knew that we were out of licensing, we started doing the review of the solutions that you guys have, because the plan will be, moving forward, is that after this year in 2025, the hardware is not under warranty any longer and you'll still have support, but we won't, we'll be looking into a different solution for you at that point.

Mike said different solution for maintenance?

Mike Stults said as in a different server solution, because the hardware will be out of warranty at that time. So, we'll be looking at replacing that hardware, and we could go with Scale again, or there are other solutions available to us.

Mike said so, if it expired in February 2023.

Mike Stults said uh huh, and we weren't, I can go find the email that we were given that information. It was the last quarter. I don't know the exact date, but it was the last quarter of 2023. But the email was going to Fred Hoffman. And then we didn't have access to that, and we found out about it. I believe it got someone from Scale reached out to Laura, Laura passed it on to us. And then we got.

Mike said that was way too late.

Mike Stults said well it wasn't late for the recertification fee. It was after the licensing had lapsed. But we only had a few months to really look into it to see what we could do to figure it out. And then last month, it was given to me that oh, there's this recertification fee if you don't sign this by the February date.

Gary Friend said and they're putting that on us?

Mike Stults said yeah.

Gary Friend said and you guy are putting that on us?

Mike Stults said yeah, it's, I'm passing everything directly through, directly through to you guys.

Mike said I guess my problem, I'm not sure what we can do about it, but my problem is, I'm not, I don't feel comfortable accepting the responsibility for the recertification.

Mike Stults said okay.

Mike said a 100% of it.

Mike Stults said okay. I understand that.

Mike said and I guess between Scale and LEAP and the county, I can place responsibility on all three of us at some point in time.

Mike Stults said uh huh, that's understandable. I can go back to.

Mike said why Scale would send it to Fred Hoffman who retired four years ago?

Laura said three or four.

Mike Stults said that was, yeah, and that was the person that originally set up the servers and set up the contact with them. And we were not aware that the licensing was part, or the support and licensing was tied together. So, Scale does things a little differently than anything we've dealt with before where the support and licensing is all one thing. We believed that it was just support that had lapsed at that point. So, we were not aware that there was a licensing that was going to be included with that that would require us to have for firmware updates. So, once we'd gotten, started talking with them and realized that there was a firmware update, not a security one, but a firmware update that's available to us, then we realized that all of this is one purchase from them.

Gary Friend said correct me if I'm wrong, but that was Fred's email?

Mike Stults said uh huh.

Gary Friend said you guys have reset all email since you found it?

Mike Stults said uh huh.

Gary Friend said why didn't that bounce back?

Mike Stults said no, his account is still active.

Gary Friend said why would it be active?

Mike Stults said because of these situations where you still just have accounts and it was forwarded to the previous IT provider's account, that we do have access to that mailbox. But it's not monitored.

Gary Friend said how long do you keep his account active? He's been gone three years, maybe four.

Mike Stults said yeah, it's not a, you're not paying for the license or anything. It's just an active account for these specific reasons.

Gary Friend said well I'm saying is it is part of the reason we're in this position.

Mike said what do you recommend we do?

Mike Stults said well what I can do is I can go back to our team and discuss what the cost is on those, the recertification fees and see what we can do to help alleviate some of that from you.

Mike said I would appreciate that.

Mike Stults said and then go from there.

Mike said and go from there.

Mike Stults said it doesn't look like, and I asked the question, if we go past that time, that there be any additional costs that would be on anything from there. So, I can reach out to them and see if there's anything that Scale can do again. I asked a couple times, I'm like hey, you know, I told them the situation that we were in, you guys weren't contacting us, we were in a kind of a communication mishap here.

Gary Friend said what's the alternative if we can't come to a resolution?

Mike Stults said we won't be able to do firmware upgrades and security upgrades on the actual hardware.

Mike said on the three servers.

Mike Stults said on the three servers. So, they wouldn't give us those because the licensing is not there for them. So, we wouldn't be able to update them. Currently, right now, you're not, there aren't any security updates that need to be installed. There are a couple firmware upgrades, but those are not anything that are crucial at the moment. So, we do have time to talk through this. But if one security update would be released, we would not be able to install that unless we had the licensing in place.

Gary Friend said I guess my question, let's just say we're done with Scale, we're not, what's the alternative for the county to consider?

Mike Stults said so, we have a couple different options where we can get hardware and have, Windows offers an option, there's a Lennox option that we can do. So, there are a couple different high availability services that are available out there. Scales just one option that's there. So, the goal will be in 2025, we will still have licensing for that year to be able to take the time, the hardware will be out of warranty, but we'll be able to take the time at that time to discuss with you guys, decide what route we want to go. And then have that year to implement the next plan in place.

Mike said and it doesn't make sense to move that up?

Mike Stults said no, not currently, no. Yeah, because you still have this year's hardware under warranty, there's not any need to really push that hard.

Gary Friend said Mike already asked you, what's our options today to make sure that we're still fully serviceable and protected? Do we need to pay any portion of it?

Mike Stults said well you'd have to pay all of this, yeah.

Gary Friend said today?

Mike said not today.

Mike Stults said not today. I could talk to them about a year to see if I could get that changed to just a year licensing, and we could get that paid today. But again, you're not under any security risk currently on that.

Mike said with this invoice, we're paying 23, 24, 25?

Mike Stults said yes.

Mike said and the one that, and I understand that, and I'm fully ready to accept that. It's the recertification fee that bothers me the most, and it's the smaller portion of bill but it still is, I just don't, yeah.

Mike Stults said I understand, yeah.

Mike said so if you could check with Gary and your team that would be great.

Mike Stults said yeah, we'll talk through it and see what we can do. And will mean we need the next meeting's approval once we get that figured out?

Mike said yeah. We can do that in two weeks.

Mike Stults said okay.

Mike said and then Gary Girton will be back too, so that will be good.

Mike Stults said perfect. We'll get it taken care of.

Mike said okay. Do you have any, I guess I'll ask you, have any feedback by the two-step verification?

Mike Stults said no, we haven't yet. So, we're working through that. Joey has done a fantastic job with the team, in making sure that you guys all set up with that.

Mike said what did we do about the sheriff's department?

Mike Stults said I'm not sure where Joey is at with that. Haven't talked to him recently about it.

Mike said I'll ask the sheriff about that in a minute so, okay. Thank you.

**Joe Batt and Kevin Nelson-Watch Communications Proposal**

Mike said Joe Batt. Kevin Nelson. Watch Communications Proposal

Joe Batt said Dan was supposed to be, well we were expecting Dan to be here to interview these guys. I don't know all the right words.

Mike said are you representing Dan?

Joe Batt said representing Dan. Well they're going to do all the talking.

Mike said morning gentlemen.

Joe Batt said so, the technology committee was asked to look at an approved internet for the county in different places. We focused on the northwest corner and an area down the southeast. These guys, Watch Communications has a presentation this morning to talk about that.

Mike said okay.

Kevin Nelson said so, I'm Kevin Nelson, VP of sales at Watch, and Chris Daniels, CEO at Watch Communications.

Mike said Chris Daniels?

Chris Daniels said yes sir. Chris Daniels, president and CEO.

Kevin Nelson said for the last several months, I've been attending the RCU technical committee meetings, listened to and discussing different approaches to help kind of bridge some of the digital divide between the rural areas and more urban areas inside Randolph County. We have a proposal in front of you. You received it yesterday to help bridge some of that gap, and it's split up in four components basically. It would be adding next generation fixed wireless access equipment to the Winchester tower, which would increase the, I forget the breakdown, pull that up, which would give approximately 1,111 people access to higher speeds than what they have now. And then second part would be adding next generation fixed wireless access equipment to the Farmland area, which would increase available speeds for about 1,236 addresses in the Farmland area. All in, those two towers would cover, provide another option for just over 8,000 addresses across the central part of Randolph County.

Mike said that would be adding that equipment to our tower?

Kevin Nelson said to the commercial tower that's already in place.

Mike said okay.

Chris Daniels said a commercial tower that we call Winchester, and also a second one called Farmland. And I think it's, are they both American tower? It's a commercial tower. It's not a county tower.

Mike said is there a reason you wouldn't use the county towers?

Chris Daniels said probably just the location of the tower. If there is a county tower that's in that same vicinity, that would be great.

Mike said there's a county tower that's two miles south of Winchester, on 27 towards the southeast part of the county.

Chris Daniels said we could absolutely explore that.

Gary Friend said also one in Deerfield, three miles east of Ridgeville.

Chris Daniels yeah, going east might be problematic. We've already, we have three sites that cover the eastern portion of Randolph County pretty well. Just really kind of in the center part of Randolph County and to the west. So, that might be the reason for that move. But we could absolutely take a look at the county tower in the western part.

Kevin Nelson said so, with these two new towers, the speeds available to residents would be up to 500 megabit downloads and 50 megabit upload speeds, so significant improvement over what they have available to them now. Part 3 of that proposal, I had discussions with Julie and Sue at the fairgrounds. They had expressed interest in being able to host online auctions, things like that, when they have events there. Also, to get wi-fi availability for patrons that are visiting the fairground. So, there is hardware listed to be able to support that initiative. And then similar for Winchester Speedway, a direct microwave link back where they're able to livestream video at carrier grades.

Mike said well, there again, the county tower is right across the street from the fairgrounds.

Gary Friend said how does this not compete with all the other vendors out there? How's this, I mean, helping, this is Randolph County providing tax money, from county residents, not from the state level to make you a direct competitor with Verizon, AT&T, Frontier? I personally, have.

Mike said New Lisbon.

Gary Friend said New Lisbon, thank you. And then Spectrum. I personally, haven't had to pay just recently for Star Link. And I'm in a part of Randolph County that you guys have a federal grant for, and still can't provide my address. But what happens to that? I mean, you asking us to help you pay for what you've already been granted for to provide northwest of Ridgeville? I mean, you're the people who are supposed to do that, and you told me no, personally.

Chris Daniels said to your household?

Gary Friend said to my household.

Chris Daniels said which is located where sir? I'm sorry.

Gary Friend said west of Ridgeville, Indiana.

Chris Daniels said west of Ridgeville? So, I'd have to look at.

Gary Friend said he said it would be another year when the last I contacted them.

Chris Daniels said yeah. So, the way, the way that the connect America fund works is, I'm sorry that you were told that that, given that answer. But the way this program works, there's a specific number of households that was identified by the FCC for that program that was funded on a per state basis. We, to cover this, we have specific milestones that we have to meet. The funding for this bill is provided over ten years. We have to build over six. So, we build a plan to do that and to make sure that we're ahead of milestones. As a matter of fact, we're, we maintain at least 10% additional deployment on an annual basis to make sure we're staying ahead of the FCC milestones that we're required to meet. As of, I don't know as of which date, but I can tell you that today, we're over 80% complete in Randolph County. We've built three sites. Unfortunately, for your location, they're actually in that eastern part of the county. Well, no, they're in the eastern part of the county. To the east of, we have something up in New Pittsburg. We have a site in Union City, and we also have a site called TNT that's down closer to Lynn in that kind of southeastern area. Winchester and Farmland is filling the gap, but there's only about a 100 to 120 additional locations that's being funded to cover. That's not, based on the numbers that you'll see, there's actually several thousand locations that we'll provide service to once we build those sites, even though the funding from the FCC is only to cover really, another 100 to 120 households. So, but we don't just build to those households. We build sites that provide much broader coverage. So, whether, you know, if you don't have access to service today, if we don't do this project, we don't accelerate it, you know, we will build, we're building this, but it's going to be some time mid to late 2025, just because of the pace of the project and the way that we've been rolling out. As far as the competition, you know, this is, all of these funding programs fund competitors of other carriers. We have deployments for example, in Jay County, where we provide fiber service throughout areas of Jay County, and also broadband wireless to markets in Jay county. There was just a fiber grant given in Jay County that's going to over build some of our wireless footprint that we're already providing customers with a 100 meg or better service levels in Jay County. We're about to upgrade those to 3, 400 meg services with 5g. That's all capital coming out of our pocket, but then we're being, we have competition coming from other county funding. It's no different and this goes on in every county of the country. So, I'm not saying whether that's right or wrong, because it affects us all as service providers, whether it's an AT&T or Watch Communications or Spectrum or whomever it is, any type of federal funding, any type of county funding is going to go to fund direct competition of the incumbent that's there.

Gary Friend said but why should we do that?

Chris Daniels said well because it's going to accelerate the delivery of this broadband service.

Gary Friend said unless the other folks that you are competing with are accelerating right now, they're running on their own.

Chris Daniels said that could be. And I guess that's the question. If that's, you know what, we, we're, we can very rapidly build these last two sites. We could have this done within, really the amount of time it takes us to get permitting and permission from these commercial tower companies, which is typically 45 to 90 days to get them to sign off and give us permission and building permits, and those types of things. Some times it's quicker. But once we have that, we can build sites within 3 to 5 days. So, we can very rapidly deliver 500 meg internet services to your constituents in those parts of the county, including yourself. Again, I'd have to look where your household is located. I'm speaking without seeing that. And we can do it very fast. I can't speak to what other carriers are doing. I can't tell you that. I will tell you eventually we will build them. But it's going to be, you know, it'll be sometime mid to late 25.

Mike said so these other commercial, these commercial towers, the one in Winchester and one in Farmland.

Chris Daniels said yes sir.

Mike said how high are you going to put your equipment on those?

Chris Daniels said it depends on the space that's available. But typically, we're in that kind of 200 to 300 feet of elevation.

Mike said so, and you'll be paying for that space?

Chris Daniels said yes sir. That's right. We typically do 10-year leases, and then they renew, yes sir.

Mike said I guess we've got three, 350-foot communication towers that when we built them, we were promised that folks like you would be knocking on our door to put their equipment on.

Chris Daniels said okay.

Mike said and it's three years now, and you're really the first one I've been able to talk to about putting their equipment on it.

Chris Daniels said well let's talk.

Mike said and I guess, you know, it would one way, either save you money for a period of time in the build out, and then a lease would come later or it would make the county money during the build out, and reflect in this grant you're requesting this morning.

Chris Daniels said okay.

Mike said I guess it just, and it may not make sense, I'm not trying to tell, I have no idea, and so, I was kidding about the wire, but my internet comes in by wire. I have Comcast cable as my internet. Anyway, the other question I have is, and we had a presentation in this room about 3 months ago, and it's about Indiana's rural broadband development project, it has how many million?

Gary Friend said 875 million dollars.

Mike said 875 million dollars.

Gary Friend said no one get left out.

Mike said and yeah, everybody's going to have high speed internet.

Gary Friend said in four years.

Mike said in four years. And I guess, are you a participant in that project, and would this project you're proposing be one that the state of Indiana would be willing to support?

Chris Daniels said so, the state, that program is likely tied to the broadband equity and deployment program, the bead program. It's part of the infrastructure act that was passed by congress back, you know, a little bit ago, right. We are, we will be a participant in that program. That program will, for example, as Kevin mentioned, the sites that we'll build will provide higher speeds to over 2,000, over 2300 households, and I think there're probably businesses in there too, right? Small businesses?

Kevin Nelson said addresses, yeah.

Chris Daniels said addresses, locations, in Randolph County. That, I don't know that all of those locations don't necessarily have access to a 100-megabit service. They may and they may not. So, if they don't, they would absolutely qualify under this bead program for a build out, right. Whether that build out would be fixed wireless or fiber, is yet to be seen. Somebody would have to bid that specifically, and the timeframe to your point, sir, is it's over several years, right. It's not something that's going to happen, you know, within the next few months. It's over several years. Yes, we're going to participate. It would actually eliminate these areas from additional bead funding because we would already have 500-megabit service here, right. So, they wouldn't, they would allocate it to areas that are unserved. Now there might be other areas that are under served in Randolph County, that we're unaware of. And those would absolutely qualify for that program. But this would be, this would be upgraded ahead of time before that program is really even finalized.

Kevin Nelson said and upgraded beyond the requirements of that program. 100 by 20.

Mike said the requirements of the program is what you bid I think, isn't it? You say I'm going to give 500 to 500 for this area, that would be your bid to the state, and the state would look it in that respect.

Chris Daniels said the requirement is a 100 meg.

Mike said I understand.

Chris Daniels said but yeah, we would bid. There're a couple, we would bid the higher speeds and then you also bid like amounts of matching funds and that kind of thing.

Mike said so, is this proposal going to take care of the northwest part of the county?

Chris Daniels said it takes care of the, there might, well, so, the very, very northwest part of the county, I believe, we will be able to cover through some sites that we're building in the northern county above, is it Jay County?

Kevin Nelson said Jay County, yeah.

Chris Daniels said that's in that kind of southern, southwest corner of Jay.

Mike said okay, that you're already building?

Chris Daniels said that we're going to be building, yeah, down the road. But this, the Farmland actually covers from that Farmland tower, the coverage goes out almost to the edge of the county. I don't think it gets all the way to the edge of the county, but it's pretty close. Yes sir. It actually covers the western portion, but there's like a little bit of a northwestern corner that I, just looking at the map, I don't see coverage in that small northwestern corner.

Gary Friend said or lower coverage too. You don't have coverage there.

Chris Daniels said there's a pocket in that lower corner as well, yes sir.

Gary Friend said but that 500, where's your 500 stop?

Chris Daniels said that's going to depend on where the house is. If the house is in the middle of a bunch of trees, there could be you know, 100 to 200 meg service. Where, if it's within, actually, you could be 6, 7 miles from the tower with line of sight to the tower and still see 500 meg service. But if you're within, you know, a shorter distance, let's say you're within 3 three miles, but you have a lot of trees around your home, it could be, you know, 200 meg, because of you know, foliage and getting through the trees. So, it's really, it depends on where the house is located, what type of foliage is around and so forth, really, environments.

Mike said so, your proposal doesn't include any of the southwest part of the county?

Chris Daniels said there's a spot in that southwest part of the county that is not covered, and I don't know, I apologize, I haven't looked at our build in that area. But we can take a look at that as well.

Kevin Nelson said for this proposal, that's not part of this, yes sir.

Chris Daniels said that's right. Now we do have service to the southwest, and again, I'm not sure which county is to the southwest, I should have shown a bigger picture. I'll have to look at our plans.

Mike said Modoc area is underserved.

Chris Daniels said okay.

Joe Batt said at some of our committee meetings, it's our understanding there's going to be fiber, quite a bit of fiber put down in that area. The Windmill don't help with wireless.

Kevin Nelson said that's true.

Mike said well that's what, we've approved that utility plan. They're running to fiber through the wind turbine conduits now. They're building up into that.

Chris Daniels said the wind turbines are in that kind of southwest area?

Mike said yeah, all but the ones that share with Jay County.

Chris Daniel said got you.

Joe Batt said sorry to interrupt you just a little bit. That northwest corner. Part of the issue with bead is those houses don't show up as higher priority addresses. Working with some of the other providers that, they didn't even consider those because they weren't the high priority, which has us surprised, because that's where we hear the most complaints is that northwest corner. So, I'm not convinced that the coverage maps are representing reality up over there.

Mike said well, and the citizenry has been challenged to report their low service, low coverage, and it's taken a while to develop that. But I guess I thought that state money applied to, with a program where you get discounted service for so many months, and then there's a program that you get regular service for so many months and you pay for it. So, I guess I thought it was kind of a two-tier opportunity, and it was providers developing plans much like this. I guess I would look at this and I guess, from talking to the state people, this seems like something they might consider. I'm not sure they would approve it, but they might consider it. Am I wrong in looking at it that way?

Chris Daniels said they would approve, they would consider this as part of these you know, next level for the bead funding program, absolutely. But they're primarily focusing those dollars on larger fiber belts right now, but from what we've seen, that cover much smaller areas.

Mike said okay. More population density?

Chris Daniels said yes sir. That's our business. I mean, we've been around, our company was founded in 1902, in Benton Ridge, Ohio. We've served rural communities for 122 years. I mean, this is what we do. And, you know, we have fiber, I mean we have fiber actually, going all the way up 27 through Jay County, I think, you know, not too, well actually, it stops at the bottom of Jay County. But again, in certain more populous areas, that makes sense. You know, for us to put fiber in an area like we're talking about with the Farmland site or with the Winchester site, would actually cost 10 plus million dollars to build fiber to every home, right, when we're looking at fiber in the home, as opposed to what we're proposing here today.

Mike said and I didn't have an opportunity to look at your proposal until this morning. And Gary Girton is our representative on the technology committee. He's not with us today. But, I'm sure he'll have an opinion regarding where you go. I don't know if he's been to your meetings or not, Joe, but, of late, but I'd like to take a little closer look at your proposal. And I guess I'd like for, if you could, take a look at our county and our communication towers and see if there's opportunity for you to use those as opposed to the ones we have, and maybe technology committee has already looked at that. I don't know if that's the case or not. But, I do know, we're not in Winchester, but we're at the highway department, and then we're at Deerfield School, which is up off 28, and we're west of Lynn on 36. And they're 350-foot towers. And to my knowledge, other than our communication equipment, there's nothing else on them.

Chris Daniels said okay.

Gary Friend said that's an easier bite for me to take if you'd at least look at that and say you could do the same thing, using our towers, and we could do something with the leases very favorable to you, versus me trying to grapple around, some people get it and some people don't. Their tax dollars pay anyway. And then also, the competition, where if we need to pay, we need to strenuously compete with 6 or 7 or 8 other interested internet service providers.

Chris Daniels said well if there's 6 or 8 internet service providers, no, I mean, respectfully, then people wouldn't have had this need, right. So, we're not really funding competition against 6 or 8 providers if the need exists to have higher speed broadband today.

Gary Friend said but you're not doing the whole need.

Chris Daniels said well we're doing it for 2300 locations. We can look at filling in these other spaces, and perhaps leveraging the county towers will allow us to fill some of that as well, right. Maybe we do another site. Maybe we do three sites instead of two, and sell it completely. So, I think as a follow up, gentlemen, what I'd like to do is have our, have Kevin coordinate with our project team that designs this essentially and let's look at your sites. I think they chose these sites without knowledge of where your county sites are located perhaps. So, let's take a look at that. I think that could be very beneficial for all of us. Let's take a look. Kevin will get with you to get that information.

Mike said well, we chose the sites so we could have emergency communications throughout the entire county.

Chris Daniels said sure. Yeah, that's great.

Mike said pinging off some of the state communication towers for emergency service.

Chris Daniels said it might have been, we may have been able to use all of your sites and built a, you know, instead of the three we already built. That might have been a really good option for us, even a couple years ago when we built those. So, in hind sight, I wish we'd looked at that already. So, let's take a look at those. We'll follow up and see how that will augment the coverage.

Mike said okay.

Gary Friend said also, how's this, what Mike was saying, going to tie into Indiana's initiative, because if we pay county tax funds to do that, then they're going to have no incentive to pay their share to Randolph County?

Chris Daniels said it won't. I mean it will, it will absolutely eliminate those locations.

Gary Friend said so, therefore, we would pay for what they're going to pay for anyway?

Chris Daniels said four years, a few years from now, yes.

Gary Friend said well four years from when we started it, so we're 3 ½ to go. But we would pay, we would pay for what they're going to pay.

Chris Daniels said yeah, I'm sure but again it matters, timing is, timing is the question, right.

Joe Batt said all this stuff increases, I'm sorry Chris.

Chris Daniels said no, please.

Joe Batt said all this stuff gets faster every year, right. So, we could wait 20 years and yeah, we won't need any of this, right. But what we want is, we want it now.

Chris Daniels said in 20 years, we probably won't care, right.

Gary Friend said what is your total cost proposal to Randolph County right now?

Kevin Nelson said \$328,000.

Gary Friend said \$328,000?

Kevin Nelson said yeah, for two towers.

Gary Friend said if we don't do anything, what are you going to do for Randolph County, just nothing?

Chris Daniels said no, we are, but we're doing it in the timeline that is prescribed in our CAF build out.

Gary Friend said so, you're saying that we pay this money to speed up things, or you're just going to be put on a normal CAF build out?

Chris Daniels said it'll be sometime in mid to late 25 is when we're building it. It's part of our plan of development.

Mike said the microwave wouldn't be in that CAF build out would it?

Chris Daniels said no sir. No, those microwaves are not part of that.

Mike said that's part of this 328? So, have you gotten other grants from counties?

Chris Daniels said yeah, as a matter of fact, we're actually working in Houston County, Texas right now. It's not with the county. It's actually with the rural electric company. That's actually a much bigger project. It's 4 million dollars. The, we have done other counties. In Vanderburg County, Indiana, as a matter of fact, we got a \$500,000.00 grant that we.

Mike said I heard about that.

Chris Daniels said yes sir. We did that. And actually, what we deployed there, was primarily 4g, 5g type of solution that's actually a 100-megabits. We're going to be able to upgrade that to 300-meg. But right now, it's a 100-meg by 20, highest speeds we can provide. So, the technology, to the gentleman, you know, as he mentioned, the technology changes so rapidly, right, and things are happening, that the technology we're using today actually will allow us to deliver up to those 500-meg speeds, that is opposed to what we were doing even, two years ago, right, which is pretty nice. But the Vanderburg County's the most recent example. We've got several counties in Kentucky, Hopkins County, Henderson County, uh, and a few others that our part of a group down there called the Green River Area Development District. And they funded, helped fund some of these build outs for the last probably, 5 years.

Gary Friend said are you going to, this service, this 500-meg, what's that, right now, what would that cost us, a client in Randolph County?

Chris Daniels said so, part of what we're proposing is that we would put together a discounted rate plan for Randolph County. If we were, in typical market when we're providing a 4 or 500-meg service, the cost is over \$150.00 a month. For a 100-meg typically, it's around \$100.00 a month. But, we're working with counties like yourselves, to bring that down so that we're providing folks with, say I'm making up numbers here, but let's say we discounted to you know,

I don't know, \$60.00 a month or \$70.00 a month for 100-meg and then scale it up from there. But that's something that we would work out with you.

Mike said that's similar to the state program.

Chris Daniels said yes sir, same type of thing.

Gary Friend said the state has theirs locked in a low income and for the life of the equipment. Now, what that is, nobody knows.

Chris Daniels said yeah, and we're not going, we could do similar things. Life of equipment is typically 5 to 7 years in any of this equipment. So, that would be what they would plan on, I'm sure. It wouldn't be longer than that. But yeah, we'd love to work with the county. I think we could provide a very nice solution, also filling a need for the fairground folks and also for the speedway, that would be very good for them as well. We could do it very rapidly. And that's something that we could deploy within the course of a couple of months, versus a couple of years.

Mike said couple of months?

Chris Daniels said once we get permission from the, if we could get on your towers, we could build it within, easily, within a couple of months, right. Like I say, to put radios on a tower, once we have all the equipment and everything, takes us about 3 to 5 days per tower. So, it's very rapid.

Gary Friend said would be a general lease on a tower from a commercial tower for somebody like you?

Chris Daniels said 5 to \$600.00 a month. And we could pay that to the county if, or we could work out something like that. Or, even some type of rent share type of plan if you want to do, go down that path. I mean, there's a lot of ways we could do something that's mutually beneficial here that still helps us to accelerate the plan that we have for the county for 2025.

Mike said so the Jay County build out, is that part of your federal fund program, or is that just you guys looking for more business?

Chris Daniels said the Jay County build out, the fiber build out, we did was something we did back in 2009, 2010, and then a few years after that, it was just a start up, organically funded start up in Jay County. A lot of the fixed wireless sites in Jay County, some of those were funded with our CAF program, just like some of the sites here in Randolph County, others, we funded organically, as well. But most of those have been funded through the Connect American Fund program.

Mike said okay.

Gary Friend said so, where I'm looking here, and I'll be done here Mike, you can reach into other counties with some of this, if you get into eastern Delaware County? They will get free for what Randolph County pay for?

Chris Daniels said okay.

Gary Friend said correct?

Chris Daniels said wireless has no boundaries.

Gary Friend said just wanted to ask.

Chris Daniels said yes sir. There's no way to stop it from going across the county line, that's right.

Gary Friend said oh, I know.

Chris Daniels said you're right, so, absolutely.

Mike said well we appreciate your proposal, appreciate your time. And really appreciate maybe more discussions going forward to see what our towers can do. And Gary got a copy of the proposal so, I don't know, do you want to schedule this for the 1<sup>st</sup> of April?

Chris Daniels said sure.

Kevin Nelson said that's fine. Can you advise who best to reach out to for the tower locations?

Mike said Ed Thornburg has it. He's the county surveyor.

Chris Daniels said it might be in a tower database too. I just don't know that they look for that. So, we'll, why don't we reach out to Dan and also, we'll take a look at the database again and just see if we can needle it out.

Mike said if you really get stuck, you can reach out to me and I'll drive you to them, or your guy to them.

Gary Friend said what's the range off a tower 300 feet up, 350, how far?

Chris Daniels said there's actually a limitation on the technology at 9 miles, currently. That could be expanded a little bit. With line of sight, we've seen, again the same speeds we're talking about, we can actually see speeds over 6, 700-meg with certain testing, and we've seen that 6, 7, 8 miles out, right. But, we typically cap it at 500 because of capacity. But we don't want to over subscribe too much, right. But yeah, we can actually go line of sight, up to 9 miles with this technology, which is better than 5g, by the way, much better.

Mike said okay.

Chris Daniels said gentlemen, thank you very much. We appreciate you having us in. Thank you.

**Jennifer Lee – Talking is Teaching (tabled from Feb 5)**

Mike said Jennifer Lee. Talking is Teaching and from reading the minutes. Jake can you come up.

Jennifer Lee said I'm Jennifer and I'm here representing the Talking is Teaching initiative. This is Ashley Breedlove. She is with Heart of Indiana United Way, and she is the coordinator for that program. I was here a month ago and talked to you a little bit about that. I did meet with Jake and we looked at the facility. And the original spot that we were looking at, it wouldn't work. It would interfere with traffic. It could interfere if there was an emergency, that kind of thing. But he did suggest another area which I think is perfect. The area for it is a, it's a 6 by 10 area. We need 5 by 8. So, it's just a nice little cubby area right as you walk in the ramp, when you walk in those doors, just to the left is where that is. The only thing that might interfere with would be a, like a fire panel, but that, even measuring it out, it would end right at the edge there, and should not cause any interference. This here, the first page that I gave you is what we're wanting to do. It comes with the mat, the table, the little couch, the pictures to hang on the wall. There're 50 books that come with it to start and then 20 books additionally each month. For a subscription, the posters are both in English and Spanish, so it hits a couple different demographics. And then the second page here is the actual floor plan that shows you where we would be at. So, like I said, it's right in that, up that ramp, right as you enter the door to the left.

Mike said is that the red square?

Jennifer Lee said it is the red square, yes, with the x in it.

Mike said okay.

Ashley Breedlove said Jennifer had mentioned that the last time she was here, there were some, you know, just wanting to make sure that the books were appropriate, and that sort.

Gary Friend said more that there was means to challenge a book?

Ashley Breedlove said yes. So, in that case, if there were a book that made people uncomfortable for whatever reason, then we could set that aside and I'm in Randolph County very often, and I'm easy to get ahold of so I can run through and grab them. They could be set aside. But also, these books are all directly provided through scholastic as part of an early literacy bundle. And so, the books that are going to be coming are developmentally appropriate for those ages. So, they will talk a lot about letters and numbers and getting along together and things of that sort. So, usually if we were to see any of those books that may be a little bit more controversial, then they would be in some of those older bundle packs. But these kits will be designed specifically for that 0 to 5 range.

Gary Friend said what we're talking about?

Ashley Breedlove said uh huh.

Mike said so this is recommended by the United Way?

Jennifer Lee said this initiative is through the Indiana Department of Education. Randolph County was given a \$125,000.00 grant to fund this. We are one of 5 pilot counties that is doing this initiative. And the focus of that is to create trusted messengers to transform spaces and then to provide resources to families that encourage engagement, family engagement, but also will enhance the literacy learning aspect.

Mike said so who is the local recipient of the grant?

Ashley Breedlove said there has to be a fiscal agent. The fiscal agent has to be a school corporation, and so Randolph Eastern is holding that money for us. However, through the United Way, I am the point of contact. I'm kind of navigating all of this. Luckily, I have good support team here with Jennifer and several others. But all of the, nearly all of the school corporations are participating in this. We have student groups from across the county that are actually helping us to plan some of these projects.

Mike said okay.

Gary Friend said it's okay

Mike said what's your asking for us is just the space?

Ashley Breedlove said yes.

Mike said seems like an appropriate space?

Jake Donham said yeah, when we met, once I seen the layout what they kind of had and the size they needed, it really wasn't going to work. It was going to net down our hallways too much for emergency egress. But that space, I did have in mind before we met and we kind of stepped it out really quick, and she felt really comfortable of it working. So, I drew this up really quick so, we had an idea, a visual of what was going on. And I offered too, it's kind of, it's not in a cubby hole, but it is kind of. But in the main area, offered if they wanted to hang posters or something or put something to kind of direct people to that site that come in from the other entry point. That would be an option as well.

Mike said raise awareness?

Jake Donham said yep.

Ashley Breedlove said yep. So, we can take this and kind of spread it out a bit as far as what would go on the wall. At the end of this, if we had extra money leftover and we wanted to add

more wall décor, or interactive things on the wall, we could come back and talk about that. But this kit is a great option, where there's a lot there. There is currently a book case in there that's a little free library, that is currently empty. I am working with the literacy foundation to try, they put those in there, to try to see how we can get some more books in there and get that filled, or what that looks like, because it is currently empty.

Mike said okay. Want to move approval?

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Ashley Breedlove said thank you so much.

Jennifer Lee said thank you so much.

Mike said when do you expect to be in there?

Ashley Breedlove said well I think order it today. I'm in the spending money mode today.

Mike said don't see a mayor here today.

**Other Business:**

**Art Moystner, Randolph County Sheriff**

**Envoy proposal**

Mike said I believe that brings us to other business. Art Moystner, Randolph County Sheriff.

Art Moystner said I think what's on the agenda is Envoy had sent a proposal after they'd been in the building. So, that was sent to me and I forwarded it to you guys, because it's more of a commissioner's issue than a sheriff issue.

Mike said have you done any, finding of anybody else to help us over there?

Jake said I'm still working with ARGO. Called a couple different people. They pretty much, I contacted Luther Mock up in the Ft. Wayne area, and he pretty much just passed me off to another vendor he normally uses. I didn't go any further with it. I'm dealing with ARGO and then we had this company step up.

Mike said Luther didn't happen to mention Ameresco did he?

Art Moystner said the name doesn't sound familiar.

Mike said wondering if, I mean, that's who Envoy has found seems to do the work.

Art Moystner said well the interesting thing with the proposal that was sent, was I think that is just Envoy's price and it doesn't really talk about what we're getting into with the other. I know,

when I walked through with them, there were a lot of things they were looking at, and it was initially, they wanted to do a feasibility study and look at a new jail. And I told them no.

Mike said appreciate that.

Art Moystner said absolutely. And then they, as they walked through, it was a lot of upgrading-type conversation of putting in the latest and greatest whereas, when we walked through with ARGO, it was more of an in-kind type of updating so that we would be replacing fixtures with like fixtures instead of Envoy was talking about computerizing and setting everything up, like I said, with the latest and greatest. I'm more inclined to go with the switching in-kind. As we've been doing. And I think that's more economically feasible for the county. I know when Jake was over with us and we were walking through, one of the things that Jake had mentioned that I hadn't even thought of, was the domestic side of the building, with the showers, fixtures, sinks, anything like that. And we talked about them possibly giving us a price, so that as we moved forward with this, we would be able to shut down one or two of the inmate blocks and move them elsewhere so we could do a couple blocks at a time and work our way around the whole building with updating some of this. And obviously, my big concern when I came to you is the heating and cooling in the building. That probably has me most concerned. But I think Jake was on point with looking at what else do we need to do, what do we need to prioritize in that building? I know with ARGO they made the comment to me, when I talked to them afterwards, that they think that building is structurally sound, and could last us another 30 to 60 years. So, that would put us in that building, I think we have 30 years in there now. But some of the systems are starting to fail.

Mike said so, is ARGO going to give us kind of a quote to?

Jake Donham said so, yeah, so, since our last meeting, where we kind of wanted to open it up and see what our options were, ARGO actually had come back for a second visit with their engineer to actually put eyes on some things, and to do some more brainstorming. He's going, in the process of getting everything digested right now, he's going to try to get you an idea you know, package price where everything is at right now. Up until now, they haven't charged anything. So, when Herb, the engineer, came in, we actually looked at some of the HVAC units. Before he was on site, his impression was let's just redo what we have, let's rebuild the guts inside this unit. Well, the more they looked at it, the more problematic they seen. They said it's going to be more cost effective to just change out complete units. Duct work, leave in place, line it from the inside, seal it. And then the piping, they want to, they need to have somebody come in, open, take some sections of pipe out so they can investigate it, see what's going on, see what kind of condition is on the inside. Then from there, like the sheriff said, we went on the domestic side of it, all the, more so, the mechanicals of the domestic. The control devices for the shower, the toilets and that kind of thing for a cellblock are very outdated and getting hard to find parts for. So, they actually put eyes on that, took some pictures and information, and they're going to kind of see where they're at, as far as retro-fitting new devices in the cell blocks as well. So, I'm waiting on Tony to kind of put a packet together. I told him we were kind of looking at you know, the first of March, mid-March, if we could have something to go by.

Mike said well we're in a little bit of a hurry, but we're not in a real big hurry.

Jake Donham said and that's kind of the way we explained with ARGO when they were on site, that we know we need to do something, but it's not like, we don't need to do it today, but we need to be pretty proactive with this.

Mike said so, I would say at this point in time, we would, I would recommend tabling the Envoy proposal, wait on ARGO and see where that takes us. Okay. Anything else for us this morning?

Art Moystner said I have a couple additional appropriations. If you guys have questions for that, if you don't.

Gary Friend said I have one question. I seen on your weapons in Cum Cap. Is that a Cum Cap expenditure?

Art Moystner said I need to check with, I think we can buy equipment out of it. We do it with the pistols, or with the lights and radios for the cars. We buy equipment out of Cum Cap.

Gary Friend said well that's equipment, okay.

Art Moystner said with us looking at, I tell you this was, we did an additional appropriation last year for the pistols. Unfortunately, everything kind of went back and forth, and it didn't carry over, so, I think for the first time, I'm asking for a re-additional appropriation. But, yes, that's where we're at with that.

Mike said we'll let the council deal with that.

Art Moystner said perfect.

Mike said okay. Any other questions?

Gary Friend said no, thank you.

Art Moystner said thank you.

#### **Minutes of January 15 and February 5, 2024**

Mike said next item is our Minutes of our January 15<sup>th</sup> meeting and our February 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, which we've got copies of those.

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

#### **Payroll Claims \$ 319,283.36 & \$328,941.99**

Mike said next item is the payroll claims in the amount of \$319,283.36 and \$328,941.99.

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

**Regular Claims paid 2/20/24 \$591161.85**

Mike said next item our regular claims paid February 20, 2024, in the amount of \$591,161.85. We received a copy of these via email.

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

**Regular Claims \$1,996,735.28**

Mike said next item is our regular claims in the amount of \$1,996,735.28, dated March 4, 2024. We received a copy of these via email.

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

**Randolph County United \$20,134.34**

**Randolph County United Tourism \$2,365.66**

Mike said next two claims are Randolph County United claims, one is for Randolph County United in the amount of \$20,134.34. And the other is for the Randolph County Tourism claim in the amount of \$2,365.66. I would entertain a motion to approve both of these regular monthly draws.

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

**Achieva Resources \$5,000.00**

Mike said next item is an EDIT claim for Achieva Resources. We support the Achieva Resources, Achieva Resources is the guardianship program out of Wayne County, received a \$75,000.00 grant from the Supreme Court of the State of Indiana, and this is our local share of that, our local match of that.

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

**Housing Resource Hub \$2,000.00**

Mike said next item is the Housing Resource Hub, a claim in the amount of \$2,000.00. This is for consulting and planning for our community and the housing needs.

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

**Funders Forum \$20,000.00**

Mike said next item is our Funders Forum claim in the amount of \$10,000.00 for the county commissioners and the amount of \$10,000.00 for the county council. This put us a seat of the Funders forum board.

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

**Union School Windfarm Claim \$17,370.00**

**Randolph Eastern School Claim \$24,104.00**

**Randolph Southern School Claim \$209,050.00**

Mike said next three claims are for the Union School Corporation, Randolph Eastern Corporation and Randolph Southern School Corporation for their Wind Farm claims and shares.

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

**Butler Fairman Seufert Claim \$15,390.58**

**Butler Fairman Seufert Claim \$57,794.87**

Mike said the next two claims are Butler Fairman Seufert claims, one in the amount of \$15,390.58 and the other in the amount of \$57,794.87. And these are for work at the Randolph County airport in finishing up their taxi lane project.

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

**Proficient Drain Claim \$22,777.61**

Mike said the last claim I believe, is for the Proficient Drain for the work done at the Deerfield Tower site in the amount of \$22,777.61.

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Mike said that completes our claims.

**Washington Twp. Library appointment**

Mike said the next item is a Washington Township library appointment. And Sharon Abshear has been recommended to be appointed.

Gary Friend made motion to appoint Sharon Abshear. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

**EMS Director Resignation & Farmland EMS Building discussion**

Mike said next item, Farmland EMS building.

Gary Friend said I did some more research after Envoy. There are other builders out there who say they can build it in our first protected amount or very close to it. So, I figure we should put out an RFP.

Mike said yeah, request the proposals. Is that something you prepare?

Meeks said I have never prepared it, but it's something I could look at. I'm not sure what it entails. I've done the RFQs before, but that's usually for the architect.

Gary Friend said it's not what I'm proposing, it can be either wood frame or steel. I was talking to Briner building and they wouldn't be interested in bidding against a wood structure.

Mike said they seem to advertise those as awful cheap, inexpensive.

Gary Friend said well they lead me to believe that maybe the wood structure might even be less, and do just as well.

Mike said okay.

Meeks said I'll see what I can do. If I, if I don't think I can get something together, I'll let you guys know.

Mike said okay.

Meeks said I got the email from Gary this morning. I just haven't had a chance to look at it.

Mike said well I think we want to go on that route if we can. And I will mention that our EMS director, Duane has sent his letter of resignation as of April 1<sup>st</sup>. And, as of right now, we have 64 applications for our Highway Department superintendent job. So, we need to develop a methodology for reviewing all 64, paring that down a reasonable number. Part of me thinks maybe if we each cursory reviewed all 64, and then we'll assign a third of those to look at more closely, and then maybe come back with a recommendation of 8 to 12 of those, and we could meet in an executive session to review those. Have an executive session to review those, and come down with a list entered. It's an Indeed reply and my past experience with Indeed is that we get them from Washington and the west coast, and I think that many of them can be eliminated. But I don't know of, unless you have a better way to do it.

Gary Friend said no.

Mike said I'm not sure if there is a better way.

Gary Friend said our website, in posting it, only got what, 3, 4, 5 of them?

Laura said yeah, we maybe got I think, 4 or 5 hand delivered.

Mike said so, and I think we probably ought to put a deadline of April 1<sup>st</sup> on that one as well, because Mike's leaving April 12<sup>th</sup>, and we'd probably want someone to work, depending on who the ultimate hire is, we'd probably want them to work together. So, do you want me to do that, assign you?

Gary Friend said sure.

Mike said we'll do a third, third and third.

Gary Friend said I'll just look at the first, or last 25.

Mike said I'll just send you the names.

Gary Friend said that'll work.

Mike said do we want to set an executive session here? I don't know when Gary's going to be released. We meet the 18<sup>th</sup>. I think if we're going to do it, it's going to have to be a longer meeting. So, we can't meet before the 18<sup>th</sup>, so, how about we meet one day that week? It would be one day next week, in the next week, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday?

Gary Friend said Friday would be best for me.

Mike said Friday.

Gary Friend said or later on in the afternoon, like 3, 4 o'clock.

Mike said on another day?

Gary Friend said on another day, yeah.

Mike said 9 a.m.? Why don't we propose that to Gary?

Laura said March 15<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.?

### **Community Corrections Support letter**

Mike said next item is the Community Corrections support letter.

Laura said can we stop just for a minute? So, do you want me to shut off on April the 1<sup>st</sup>, the highway applicants on Indeed?

Gary Friend said before the executive session.

Mike said I think we ought to shut it down now.

Gary Friend said yeah, I do too.

Laura said okay. And then.

Gary Friend said the joint meeting is when?

Mike said 13<sup>th</sup>.

Laura said and then do you want an advertisement for the EMS position yet or do you just want to let me know on that? Duane did give me a link to a site, a state site, or emergency services only instead of doing Indeed, or we can do both.

Mike said I think we should, why don't we start with Duane's site now?

Laura said okay. Add it to that?

Mike said post it on our website now.

Laura said well there's more, like you have to have more qualifications here for this EMS, and that's why he gave me that link in case we wanted to use it instead. So, go ahead and put it on there?

Mike said okay. Yes.

### **Community Corrections letter of support**

Mike said next item is our Community Corrections support letter. This is the letter that goes with the grant application for the department of corrections that was mentioned earlier. We support it every year.

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

### **Commissioner's room chairs**

Mike said commissioners' room chairs.

Gary Friend said I'd ask Laura to look into order chairs to fill in our new desks.

Laura said they can't get the exact chairs, but some that are similar, and here are a couple of flyers that show pictures, not the ones with the buttons but those are pretty similar. And then the guy came around with samples of material and wood that would come close.

Mike said how much are they?

Laura said they're, if we do 5 to 6 chairs, which I think we need at least 5, because one of those has got a broken roller on it, over here. So, two, two, and then the broken one would be five. To do that many, would be \$1,136.00 each. If we replaced them all, it would be \$1,002.00 each.

Gary Friend said those are \$1,000.00 per chair?

Laura said \$1136 of we just do what we need.

Mike said we need five?

Laura said I think two for each of the new desks and then the broken one.

Gary Friend said we would need 10, 11, and 12 around for a joint sessions.

Laura said Gary asked me to look into it, and that's what I found out. I do have samples of the wood material here.

Gary Friend said we got the furniture, I thought we should get it finished out.

Laura said so, that's what I got. I know the only reason I'm saying either 5 or 6 or 12, whatever, how many we need to fill it, is because we cannot get the exact chairs, but they'll be close. And I've got samples here that they've sent me to match. They'll come close. I don't really see a reason to replace them all, but it's up to you guys.

Mike said so are you moving we should replace five chairs?

Gary Friend said yes, I am.

Mike said I'll second that motion.

All aye votes. Motion carried.

#### **Verkada – Guest management for courthouse**

Mike said Verkada, guest management for courthouse. That's an interesting way to put it.

Laura said this company called me and I did a demo.

Mike said I think we should refer them to Judge Arnett. He's the chairman of the security committee.

Laura said okay.

Mike said and I think we should send that to him. Matter of fact, I'll go ahead and do that since I'm on that committee, and then I'll see that we can get him, I'll send that to Judge Arnett because I think there are council members on that committee and the sheriff is on that committee.

Meeks said so, security is called guest management? Oh, I thought it was something different. Would you send me the proposal?

Mike said yeah, I can do that. I'll copy it. It's really not a proposal. It's more of a, this is what we can do. We'd like to talk about what you'd like to do. Our concern is having manpower out there, how do we avoid that?

Laura said yeah, because everything they proposed, we would have to have staff to manage it. And I told them we don't have that.

**Additional Appropriations:**

**Jail**

Computer Maintenance Contracts \$10,000.00

**Sheriff**

New Vehicles \$40,000.00

CCD (Pistols) \$11,135.00

Mike said so that brings us to additional appropriations. The first one is computer maintenance contracts of \$10,000.00, for the jail. And also, the sheriff, new vehicles for \$40,000.00 and the CCD pistols of \$11,135.00.

Gary Friend said is all this CCD funding? Is there a line in your budget for computer maintenance contract?

Art Moystner said yes, there is.

Gary Friend said okay.

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

**E911**

Assistant Director Vacation Pay \$832.80

Telecommunicator Vacation Pay \$1539.20

Mike said next two are for E911, assistant director vacation pay in the amount of \$832.80 and telecommunicator vacation pay in the amount of \$1,539.20.

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

**EDIT**

Economic Development \$20,000.00

Legal Fees & Other Service \$25,000.00

RC Promise \$10,000.00

Broadband Infrastructure \$387,625.00

Mike said next four are from EDIT, economic development, that's the 20,000 we just approved. Is that for the Forum of Funders?

Laura said no, it's the additional 20 you approved for Randolph County United from the budget.

Mike said okay. That's Randolph United, okay.

Laura said yes.

Mike said okay. For 20,000, legal fees and other services for 25,000, Randolph County promise for 10,000, that's our commitment to them, and broadband infrastructure.

Laura said that's the balance of the 400,000 because we paid Tower King 13 thousand something. It's just re-appropriated.

Mike said re-appropriating it into our EDIT plan?

Laura said correct.

Mike said okay, thank you very much. I'd entertain a motion to approve.

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

**Airport – Fly In Breakfast**

Misc. Expense \$2,000.00

Mike said airport fly in breakfast, miscellaneous expense of \$2,000.00.

Mike made motion to approve. Gary Friend seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

**Saratoga Fund**

Equipment \$8,000.00

Mike said Saratoga fund, equipment.

Laura said okay. It looks like Shaneyfelt's signature, so, but I didn't understand all this.

Mike said do you want to move approval of this?

Gary Friend made motion to approve. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Motion carried.

**Health Department**

Mobile Phone \$440.00

Contracted Work \$37,440.00

Other \$72,120.00

Mike said and health department. This is appropriation for a mobile phone of \$440.00, contracted work of \$37,440.00, and other expense of \$72,120.00.

Gary Friend said I don't know what the other is? I think the council took issue with that last month, didn't they?

Laura said that was a whole other one. This is a separate one.

Gary Friend said I don't know what other is and their not here.

Mike said want to hold it?

Gary Friend said yes.

Mike said okay. Hold it for explanation. That brings us to the end of our agenda. Laura, do you have anything for us?

Laura said no.

Mike said Meeks, do you have anything for us?

Meeks said I do not.

Mike said Gary, do you have anything for us?

Gary Friend said no sir. Thank you.

Mike said the only other thing I have is, and I was hoping Gary Girton would be here, but I've been contacted by Tom Schweisthal with USI Insurance about a county co-op for our health insurance that they're going to establish in January, 2025. And just prior to COVID, in January of that year, they had reached out to us about we could save some money in the county if we joined this county co-op, much like the school corporations have here in the county. And COVID hit and it never took off. And it sounds like they're getting back together. And I kind of think it would be worthwhile to talk to him. And I was going to ask Gary to talk to him, but Gary's not here. So, if you don't mind, I think I'll reach out to Gary and see if he wants to talk to him or if he want's me to talk to him. And, then basically, he says, instead of Randolph County going to the insurance carriers, as a 115-employee organization, it would be in essence 1,000 plus size organization. So, this could save the county some money. And I guess if I or Gary are going to talk to them, I would hope we could get somebody from the council to join in that conversation to see if it's something we want to pursue. Health insurance comes up for renewal in July.

Laura said Chris Burton, our current broker had brought up the co-op, and that he was looking into co-op as opposed to what we have now. But, I haven't got quotes from him yet. He said he, we had an insurance meeting.

Gary Friend said they are not in conflict with each other?

Mike said they're just brokers.

Laura said they're just brokers and they can pretty much go anywhere, and I know he is working at both. But, I've not got a proposal for either, at this point. He came to the insurance committee meeting and brought it up. But, he didn't have any specific information for us at this point.

Mike said this guy Tom, is with USI.

Laura said we used to have USI.

Mike said we did?

Laura said uh huh.

Mike said okay. So, I'll go ahead and, I'll have you reach out to Gary for me to see if he wants to talk to this guy. I'll forward you his email. I'll mention it to council tomorrow. Hopefully, council will want to talk to him as well. Okay. That's all I have.

**Citizen Comments (3 minutes)**

Mike said have any citizens here this morning that would like to share?

Sherrie Timmons said what funds for the chairs?

Mike said commissioners budget.

Sherrie Timmons said out of commissioners?

Mike said yeah. Any other citizens want to speak up this morning?

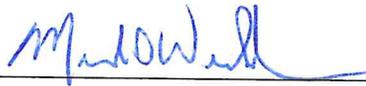
**Adjournment**

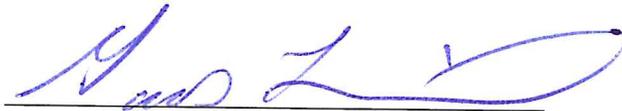
Mike said okay, then I'll make a motion to adjourn.

Gary Friend made motion to adjourn. Mike seconded the motion. All aye votes. Meeting adjourned.

Reviewed and signed this 18 day of March, 2024.

RANDOLPH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

  
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ATTEST:

  
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Laura J Martin, Auditor of Randolph County