

## December 18, 2023

The Wabash County Board of Commissioners met in regular session in the Wabash County Courthouse on Monday, December 18, 2023. Chairman Brian K. Hauptert called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. with all commissioners present: Hauptert, Barry J. Eppley and Jeff D. Dawes. The proceedings were recorded by Wabash County Auditor Marcie Shepherd. The minutes of the December 11, 2023 meeting were reviewed. Dawes made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Eppley seconded the motion; it passed by a 3-0 vote.

The following quotes were brought up for approval:

1. Zesco - Kitchen supplies for the new jail in the amount of \$4,737.62. Eppley made a motion to approve. Dawes seconded the motion; it passed by a 3-0 vote.
2. Republic Services - Contract for trash service at the new jail which includes two 8-yard trash dumpsters and one 4-yard recycling dumpster for \$716.27 each month and a one-time service fee of \$285.05. Dawes made a motion to approve. Eppley seconded the motion; it passed by a 3-0 vote.
3. QPH - Contract for HVAC and plumbing services for one-year in the amount of \$54,846. Hauptert explained we have not yet found a maintenance person to learn all of the systems and to keep them up and running. Eppley made a motion to approve. Dawes seconded the motion; it passed by a 3-0 vote.

Andy Oswalt and Wabash Mayor Scott Long presented the City Ambulance Services contract. Long reported he did not realize the contract renewal was coming due so quickly or he would have made the county aware of the price increase. Oswalt reported the new ambulance cost over \$400,000 compared to the last one at \$165,000. The increase of the new contract will put us in line with the expenditures to cover 70% of the county. Eppley made a motion to approve the new City Ambulance Services contract. Dawes seconded the motion; it passed by a 3-0 vote.

Hauptert presented a quote from Intrasect Technologies for a firewall and phone system to keep Community Corrections up and running after the Sheriff's office moves from the building. Eppley made a motion to approve the contract for up to \$3,000. Dawes seconded the motion; it passed by a 3-0 vote.

Cole Wyatt, County Highway Superintendent, presented:

1. NIPSCO road closure request for 400 E between 1100 N and SR 114 to be closed a few days in early January for a gas line investigation. Eppley made a motion to approve. Dawes seconded the motion; it passed by a 3-0 vote.
2. A task order by United Consulting to prepare a roadway pipe crossing proposal for an amount not to exceed \$6,300. Dawes made a motion to approve. Eppley seconded the motion; it passed by a 3-0 vote.

Tyler Guenin, for the Wabash County Sheriff, stated there are currently 88 inmates in the jail, with 8 additional in the Miami County Jail, 21 in the Tipton County Jail and 19 in the Fulton County Jail. Last week there were 13 book-ins and 14 transports to other facilities. The peak population was 88 with the total prisoner count being 151.

Hauptert asked when the Sheriff's Department planned to move into the new jail. Guenin stated no date is set but the office staff is beginning to move in. They are waiting on exam tables and some door issues to be resolved.

Steve Downs, County Attorney, reported on ongoing projects:

1. A proposed ordinance for how driveways should enter onto county roads. He will investigate and report back.
2. Working with the Health Department on a new swimming pool ordinance.

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3. Midland Engineering started replacing the new jail roof last Monday.
4. Kettelhut is requesting their retainage be released. This could be paid out with the owner's rep's approval. Downs reported that Terry Burnworth suggested we hold the retainage on Kettelhut and Downs concurred. The retainage for D & D and QPH can be released. Eppley made a motion to approve holding the retainage on Kettelhut and release the retainage on D & D and QPH. Dawes seconded the motion; it passed with a 3-0 vote.

Jim Dils, County Coordinator, presented a request for use of the Roann Covered Bridge for a wedding on January 7, 2024. The request was approved.

Marcie Shepherd, County Auditor, presented:

1. Accounts payable claims and allowances for docket ending 12/18/2023. Eppley made a motion to approve the claims and allowances as presented. Dawes seconded the motion; it passed by a 3-0 vote.
2. Payroll claims and allowances/withholdings for pay period ending 12/09/2023. Eppley made a motion to approve the claims. Dawes seconded the motion; it passed by a 3-0 vote.
3. Request for appointment of Kevin Cruell to the Laketon Area Regional Sewer District Board. Eppley made a motion to approve. Dawes seconded; it passed by 3-0 vote.
4. December settlement for \$15,508,613.52 to be distributed to all taxing units. Eppley made a motion to approve the settlement. Dawes seconded; it passed by a 3-0 vote.

Hauptert asked if there were any ADA or Title VI concerns; none were heard.

The commissioners thanked Steve Downs for his service to the county from 2007 through 2023 and presented a certificate of appreciation. Downs is retiring at the end of 2023.


Andrea Schlemmer, speaking on behalf of her parents, would like to see the county establish a procedure for contractors accessing private property. The recent work on 50 E went through private yards which left ruts. She was informed the county's permitting of closures or crossing installations does not give anyone rights to enter private property. That should already be covered by existing laws.

Cheryl Ross wanted to know who was paying the \$6,300 just approved for United Consulting. It was stated the expense will be paid from county highway department funds.

With no other public comment or other business to come before the Board of Commissioners, the meeting was adjourned. The commissioners will next meet on Tuesday, January 2, 2024.

Also present: *In person*: Shelly Bauccho, Keith Walters, Barry Stroup, Andrea Schlemmer, Dan Schlemmer and Dave Nelson. *Via Zoom*: Connie, Jade Hall, KBarker, 828, Melanie Penn and Don Jervis.

**WABASH COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

  
Brian K. Hauptert  
Chairman

  
Jeff D. Dawes  
Vice-Chairman

  
Barry J. Eppley

Attest:   
Marcie Shepherd, Wabash County Auditor