

Ripley County Commissioners Meeting

June 28, 2021

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Mark Horstman, President, Chris Schmaltz, Kendall Hankins, Amy Copeland, Auditor & John Ertel, County Attorney.

Maintenance – Craig Herbert

Mr. Herbert stated that the lawn mower needs serviced. Mr. Herbert stated the lawn mower needs new tires also. The Commissioners told Mr. Herbert to get the mower fixed.

Clerk – Ginger Bradford and Diane Macek

Commissioner Horstman stated that he learned last week that the stuff in the break room upstairs will go back to the state. Commissioner Horstman stated they got prints of the election room and Ms. Bradford's office was not supposed to be storage. Ms. Bradford stated that the election machines have to be in a secure location. Ms. Bradford also stated that the election machines cannot be stacked on top of each other. Commissioner Schmaltz asked the weight of each machine and Ms. Macek guesstimated 15 lbs. Commissioner Hankins asked about why the roll down door was not put in the office when built but Ms. Bradford stated that for some reason the roll down door would not fit. Commissioner Hankins asked about the Coroner's office for storage. Ms. Bradford stated they never see the Coroner. Ms. Bradford stated not sure why the Commissioners could not make the Commissioner break room the Coroner's Office. Commissioner Schmaltz thinks the Coroner's office will be too small for the election machines. Mr. Gindling stated that during the election it is a lot of work to get ready for the election and they need to be in the Coroner's office, not the break room. Commissioner Hankins stated that he did not think the Clerk needed the break room, he stated that the break room needed to stay a break room.

Assessor – Shawna Bushhorn

Ms. Bushhorn came in with the assessor bids for cyclical reassessment. She stated they had 2 bids one from Tyler and one with Luxor. Tyler's bid is \$618,844.00 and Luxor's bid is \$525,700.00. Ms. Bushhorn stated she was not comfortable going with Luxor. Ms. Bushhorn stated that Luxor's bid came in a lot lower in our county then it did in surrounding counties. Tyler's quote was less than last years. Commissioner Hankins asked if he could speak to both companies. Luxor spoke and stated the other counties wanted a walk around of properties and Ripley only wanted a drive by. Luxor stated they have been in business for 15 years. Attorney Ertel asked if there are any state approvals required and Luxor does have the experience they need. Luxor did state that they have no Indiana counties. Ms. Bushhorn stated that this is the first year they have done a drive by. Ms. Bushhorn stated that the form she asked for, she did not get from Luxor, but did receive from Tyler. Commissioner Horstman stated that he was not comfortable with Luxor being with us for the first county in Indiana. Commissioner Schmaltz asked why Luxor did not return the bid form she asked for. Luxor turned in form 55932 and the form asked for was form 55930. Luxor stated that they would do good work for Ripley County. Tyler stated they have worked in the state of Indiana for 50 years. Tyler stated that they work with 26 counties in Indiana. Tyler's price is lower than last year due to the drive by assessment. Tyler stated that they have been with the county for a decade. Tyler does work in all the surrounding counties. Commissioner Horstman asked how to justify why we should pay for them over Luxor. Tyler stated they understand our

county and understand the people in our county. Tyler stated they do not know how Luxor came in at that price. Ms. Bushhorn stated due to Covid is why she chose the drive by. Commissioner Hankins asked how long Tyler had been in Ripley County, Tyler stated 10 years. Tyler stated they have a great working relationship with the DLGF. Attorney Ertel wanted to know if you have to be certified with the DLGF and Tyler stated yes they did. They have to fill out a form to turn into the DLGF.

Auditor Copeland just asked them to remember that what the Assessor does affects the Auditor and Treasurer's Offices to get their job done on time. Commissioner Hankins asked to table the matter and give them a couple weeks to make a decision.

Highway – Ray Toops

Mr. Toops mentioned the problem on 5075 W CR 650 N, Osgood, IN 47037 with Mr. & Mrs. Schebler. The Scheblers came in to talk about their driveway washing out. Mr. Toops stated that he has been out there numerous times to fix the driveway. Mr. Huntington brought in pictures of the driveway to show the Commissioners. Mr. Huntington stated that an 18" pipe doesn't hold the water. Commissioner Horstman stated that he doesn't want their driveway on our county road or our road washing out. Commissioner Horstman asked Mr. Toops what has the county done in the past about the situation of the flooding of a driveway. Mr. Toops stated, in his opinion, the Scheblers should put in a bigger culvert. Mr. & Ms. Schebler stated that the neighbor caused the situation. Mr. Horstman stated that if the Scheblers bought the pipe the county would put it in.

Mr. Vestal from Zimmerman came in to let the Commissioners know that the tractor that was bid for the county was sold. Mr. Vestal came in with a new bid for a 6105E John Deere tractor for \$142,229.00. Mr. Vestal stated if they are wanting a John Deere it would be October or November before we can get the tractor. Mr. Vestal also brought in a bid for a TS6.110T4 New Holland tractor. The bid for it is \$129,899.00 which includes the ditcher head. Mr. Toops stated that he thought it was a good idea to go with the New Holland. Mr. Vestal stated that he could rent the tractor but thought that was not a good idea with the grant.

Motion: Commissioner Schmaltz made the motion to purchase the New Holland tractor when the grant money is received, **Action:** Approve, **Moved by** Chris Schmaltz, **Seconded by** Kendall Hankins. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Toops brought in the highway budget for the Commissioners to look at. Mr. Toops stated that they are asking for more than a 3% raise. Commissioner Hankins stated that we are 4 of 7 with a pay scale for our truck drivers. There are currently 711 miles of roadway in Ripley County. Commissioner Horstman asked what the state pays and Mr. Toops stated that it is a little over 20 dollars an hour.

Mr. Toops stated that as of Saturday, the county took on Woodland Trace Road.

Motion: Commissioner made the motion to make Woodland Trace a maintained county road due to it being up to county specs, **Action:** Approve, **Moved by** Kendall Hankins, **Seconded by** Chris Schmaltz. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Horstman stated that Cassandra called him about Mr. Bunselmeier. Mr. Bunselmeier stated that a lot of people got new bridges due to higher water flow. Mr. Toops stated that he had not been told about any high water flow. Commissioner Horstman stated he thinks it is between him and the town. Commissioner Hankins asked if the pipe had been taken care of on 200 South and 400 East. Mr. Toops stated no, but it would get done this week.

Commissioner Hankins asked how many exempt employees there are in the county. I could not answer the question without researching it. Commissioner Hankins thinks that the comp time policy needs to be updated. Commissioner Horstman stated that the vacation policy needs to be updated also. Auditor Copeland stated

that she thinks research needs to be done with it before a decision is made. Commissioner Hankins asked if you gave exempt employees comp time would it be overtime. Attorney Ertel stated that he would have to research the question.

Court Services – Jenny Wise

Ms. Wise came in for a signature on a letter for the community corrections grant. Commissioner Horstman signed the letter for the grant.

Southeastern Indiana Regional Planning Commission – Mary McCarty

Ms. McCarty came in for the Friendship Regional Sewer District for the 2nd Public Meeting. The grant amount is for \$550,000.00 and the local match was \$150,950.00. They are getting ready to start construction and Mike Holman Excavating is the contractor.

Commissioner Horstman asked for public comment.

Friendship Regional Sewer District – Tony Wood and Matthew Wirth

Mr. Wood came in to talk to the Commissioners about swift funding. Mr. Wirth from Commonwealth Engineers, Inc. stated that the funds are ran by the Indiana Finance Authority. Mr. Wood is wanting the Commissioners to help fund a project because the swift funding is needing a match for the grant. They are wanting the Commissioners to match with the ARP money. Mr. Wirth stated that the applications are due by July 15, 2021. Ms. Rungee told the Commissioners about the lagoon. The one lagoon needs the sludge cleaned out. It also needs new control items. The county match would be for option 1 at \$101,490 and option 2 is for \$37,400, these are just estimated costs. Commissioner Horstman asked how many customers are on the sewer and Mr. Wood stated 68. Mr. Wood stated that they are below capacity.

Commissioner Hankins stated that it improves our ARP money.

Motion: Commissioner Hankins made the motion for the county to give Friendship Regional Sewer District the \$101,490.00 out of the ARP money, contingent that they receive the Swift Grant, **Action:** Approve, **Moved by** Kendall Hankins, **Seconded by** Chris Schmaltz. Motion passed unanimously.

Surveyor – Jeff French

Mr. French came in about the Baker/Henson drainage complaint. Ms. Henson stated she would have her son come fix the problem. Attorney Ertel stated that he has to send out notifications to the people involved.

Discussion:

Commissioner Horstman wants to look at a better vacation schedule. Commissioner Horstman stated he would like for us to be where most other counties are. Commissioner Horstman thinks 2 weeks after the first year, 3 weeks after 5 years, and 4 weeks after 10 years. Commissioner Hankins stated that we really need to think how it is accrued.

Motion: Commissioner Hankins made the motion to approve to change vacation to 1st – 4th year 10 days earned, 5th -9th years 15 days earned, and 10th year and beyond 20 days earned effective June 27, 2021.,

Action: Approve, **Moved by** Kendall Hankins, **Seconded by** Mark Horstman. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: Commissioner Hankins made the motion to rescind the motion to change the effective date to July 27, 2021, **Action:** Approve, **Moved by** Kendall Hankins, **Seconded by** Mark Horstman.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: Commissioner Hankins made the motion to make the new vacation schedule effective July 1, 2021, **Action:** Approve, **Moved by** Kendall Hankins, **Seconded by** Chris Schmaltz. Motion passed unanimously.

Attorney Ertel mentioned that Tad Brinson stated that our solar power has no setbacks. Ripley County has setbacks on cell towers not solar power. Commissioner Horstman stated that he has had just a lot of questions about it.

Commissioner Horstman talked about the Economic Development coming up with researching the broadband situation we have in Ripley County. Commissioner Hankins stated that he would abstain from any decision made with broadband.


Motion: Commissioner Hankins made the motion to approve the June 14, 2021 meeting minutes, **Action:** Approve, **Moved by** Kendall Hankins, **Seconded by** Chris Schmaltz. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: Commissioner Schmaltz made the motion to approve claims and payroll, **Action:** Approve, **Moved by** Chris Schmaltz, **Seconded by** Kendall Hankins. Motion passed unanimously.


_____ Mark Horstman, President


_____ Chris Schmaltz


_____ Kendall Hankins

Assts: 
_____ Amy R Copeland-Ripley County Auditor