

MINUTES
FOUNTAIN COUNTY COUNCIL
March 10, 2025
9:00 a.m.

The following Council members were present: Jim McKee, Denise Crowder, Todd Hegg, Jeff Fishero, and Kelly Carlson. Jeff Carver and Dudley Cruea were absent.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Denise Crowder and seconded by Jeff Fishero to approve the minutes of the Council meeting of February 10, 2025 as well as the joint meeting from March 03, 2025 as presented. Denise wanted to make sure the minutes were adjusted for the Wabash River Greenway Project.

Vote: 5-0

Review & Acknowledge Clerk's Monthly Report for January 2025

A motion was made by Todd Hegg and seconded by Denise Crowder to acknowledge the Clerk's Monthly Report for January 2025.

Vote: 5-0

Report of Collections – as submitted

A motion was made by Jim McKee and seconded by Jeff Fishero to acknowledge the Report of Collections for the Health Department for the month of January 2025 and the Ambulance, Clerk's Office, and Sheriff for February 2025.

Vote: 5-0

Review and Acknowledge Treasurer's Bank Reconciliation & Monthly Comparison Report

A motion was made by Todd Hegg and seconded by Jeff Fishero to acknowledge the Treasurer's Bank Reconciliation for December 2024, January 2025 and the Monthly Fund Comparison Report.

Vote: 5-0

Dispatch- Dana Stonebraker

Dana informed the Council that she would like to bring back a floater position that was removed from the salary ordinance back in 2023. This would be a part time position with no overtime and no benefits. There are currently 5 operators, 2 lead operators, deputy director, director and 3 part time employees. The pay for this position would be \$22.00 per hour. Dana does believe this would help cut down on overtime. The Council would like to discuss this position and the additional funds. They may have to do an additional appropriation. Dana also thanked all the emergency personnel and dispatchers for their hard work yesterday. Dana would like this employee to start in April.

Sheriff

Andrew Krout asked the Council to discuss the longevity for Bob Kemp. Kelly said after watching the meetings, they voted \$2,000 for instructor incentive, \$2,000 for longevity, and the 5% across the board. They had discussed in previous meetings. Andrew is asking if Bob was also due an additional 2%

Holiday Pay

Andrew Krout would also like to discuss the additional 6 days of holiday pay. He stated he is sitting down with the Commissioners to discuss the holidays. He said they would be willing to bank holidays. The deputies could use these 15 banked days any time as long as they didn't all take at the same time. Andrew spoke with the deputies and they said they would work shorthanded if someone used a banked day. The ambulance department and 911 have to have the coverage so they have to have employees working. Kelly Carlson would like to have an agreement in writing. Ethan Myers agrees on having an agreement.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Ambulance- Garth Kagels

Garth reported that collections were good this month. He said they are working with Medicaid representative to get reimbursements quicker. Garth has been working on the Government Ambulance Payment Adjustment Fee. Garth has been working with a law firm in Indianapolis. They run the reports based on the number of runs, hours, costs, etc. Then the company comes up with a percentage to be reimbursed.

Garth would also like to send a huge thank you to the dispatchers for their hard work yesterday. They did a great job.

Grinder-

Garth said they are working on the grinder. They have done the trenching. Andrew said they have been very busy. They had hit a water line that was not marked. That caused a small delay. Last week they ran into a fiber optic that wasn't located. They are getting ready to dig into the driveway. The employees have been parking around front.

Transfers

MVH

From: 1176-0530-22000	Office Supplies	\$377.41
To: 1176-0530-22260	Other Supplies	\$377.41
From: 1176-0531-22260	Other Supplies	\$2,384.40
To: 1176-0531-22420	Bituminous	\$2,384.40

CCD

From: 1138-0172-33600	Maint & Repair	\$233.84
To: 1138-0172-33690	Elevator/Chair Lift	\$233.84

A motion was made by Denise Crowder and seconded by Todd Hegg to approve the transfers for MVH and CCD.

Vote: 5-0

Commissioners Room/Auditor Office

Slider Tree Service would like to have 50% down. Ricketts Electric is doing the electrical work. This will come out of the Council budget under building repairs. Microphones or any additional equipment will come out of the Commissioner's budget.

Highway – Jason Lewis

Jason was not at the meeting today but was able to get a text to Kelly Carlson stating that the County had been awarded the Community Crossings Grant for \$1,373,450.62. Our match would be \$457,816.88. The highway dept will approve bids at the next Commissioner's meeting. USI would also like to present a bridge improvement plant at the next joint meeting.

Commissioners Room/Auditor Office

Carol Owens does not believe the construction is necessary. She believes all the people only attend because of solar. Denise Crowder said due to social media, more citizens are aware. She also believes a better setup is needed due to the sound system. Kelly Carlson stated that she has received phone calls from other offices that need updates in their offices. Kelly wants each department to write 5 things that need corrected in their office. She would like to discuss this with Aaron Fruits and the department head. Denise agrees this is a great idea. Kim Kalweit believes that opening the room will be very important to the transparency. She wondered if courthouse could be done in phases. Jeff Fishero likes the setup at Vermillion County. He likes their setup with microphones and a very good video camera. Kelly stated that we will have a podium with a microphone for citizens to talk into and microphones for the Commissioners and Council. Tammy Hinote states the recordings are hard to hear. She said it is hard to get into if there are many people. They need to move the location or make the location bigger and also look into better equipment. Chris Brunner said they need to speak into the microphones.

Dave Jinkins said he did get involved because of the Solar situation. He said that woke him up.

Dane Maltsburger said that Solar also woke him up.

A motion was made by Denise Crowder and seconded by Todd Hegg to approve Slider Tree Service LLC's bid of \$21,800 and Rickett's Electric LLC's bid of \$8,000 and pay out of the Council's building repair budget.

Vote: 5-0

Wabash River Greenway Project

The Council had some questions regarding this project. Todd Hegg distributed some information he had found. Kelly said that the improvements made to the property stay with the property and become ownership of the Myers Trust. This did say the property could not be subleased. Todd Hegg said they need a park board. Ethan Myers said the Commissioners could act as the park board. Jim McKee recalls years ago the Council asking if the Myers would sell and they denied. First presentation from Dale White was in September of 2021. Kim Johnson talked with State Board of Accounts and they stated the State would be looking for the County's business purpose of this expenditure and it would need to be documented. Kelly Carlson wants to make sure the grant money is received, but would like to know the County's legal position. Denise Crowder stated maybe a simple easement may be an option. Ethan Myers would like to see the trail plans. He thinks an easement would be an option. Ethan said the easiest thing to do would have the Myers Family Trust to give the easement to Covington. Todd Hegg said Dale has worked with the Myers Family Trust. He believes they are willing to work with the County. The Council thinks an easement to the city of Covington

like the new contract and board is positive. Just for clarification, Kelly reassured the public that the County did not give any land to Wega.

Public Comment

Larry Schrock asked about Paws n Claws and their contract. He wanted to know if they had gotten an increase. No increase was given to them, but their contract was renewed. The County currently gives them \$42,000 per year. Mr. Schrock said they would not euthanize animals at Paws n Claws. The Council did not like that everyone pays into Paws n Claws, but they don't service the whole county.

The Council is watching what they are doing and spending. They are going to have to be very careful come budget time. What is coming in has not increased, but salaries have increased. He asked about the salt barn being built. The Council stated it would pay for itself.

Carol Owens asked why we have so many holidays. She said there are only 10 Federal Days. The Council said the Commissioners approve those.

Dave Jinkins fears that the budget crunches are putting the County in jeopardy of needing the solar money.

Jim McKee had a question about Public Service Road. Kelly received a phone call regarding this road. Jason Lewis had informed them to cease using this road until it is repaired. Crossroads had been using this road and there are now issues. Jeff Fishero said he did see a grader on the road.

Dane Maltsburger said his in-laws live on Corporation Line Road. He said he saw 2 semis going out that way. Dane did get ahead of them and blocked the road. He asked where they were going and he told them they had to find a different route. Dane believes that the County could issue fines and penalties for the trucks taking the incorrect routes.

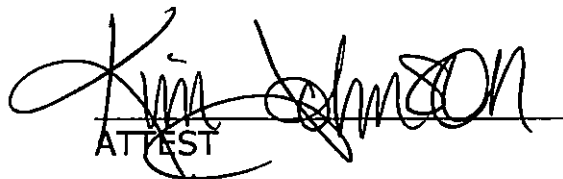
Carol Owens asked how much income the County had at this time. Jeff Fishero gave her the County General amount.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE A April 14, 2025 AT 9:00 A.M.

Hand-outs:
Financial Reports

Next:

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Todd Hegg and seconded by Jim McKee
Vote: 5-0


ATTEST

