

September 7, 2021

Council Chambers  
Vigo County Annex  
Terre Haute, Indiana

**Roll Call:**

**Present:** Mike Morris, Chris Switzer and Brendan Kearns.

**Others Present:** County Attorney Jared Modesitt, County Attorney Michael Wright, Auditor James Bramble, Tammy York-Allen, Norm Loudermilk, Tim Cunningham, Diana Winsted-Smith, Kevin Gardner, Bill Watson, Terry Modesitt, Bob Leib, Vickie Oster, Sarah Holbert, Kara Wright, Todd Thacker, Larry Robbins, Kylissa Miller, and several members of the public.

**Pledge of Allegiance.**

Mike Morris called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Review of Minutes/Claims.** Auditor James Bramble presented the minutes for August 31, 2021. Chris Switzer made a motion to approve the August 31, 2021 minutes. Brendan Kearns seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote of 3-0, the motion unanimously passed.

Mr. Bramble then presented the Board with expenditures for the period of August 28, 2021 through September 3, 2021 in the amount of \$2,262,222.11 plus payroll in the amount of \$1,022,894.26 for a total amount of \$3,285,116.37. There was a brief discussion about the claim for the Solid Waste Grant. Chris Switzer made a motion to approve the August 28, 2021 through September 3, 2021 claims. Brendan Kearns seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote of 3-0, the motion unanimously passed.

**Juvenile Center – Norm Loudermilk.** Norm Loudermilk, Director of the Juvenile Center, was present to ask for approval for funding of repair of the ceiling in the recreation room. The current ceiling is similar to insulation with plastic backing, not meant for a gymnasium area. It has become ripped and torn over time from various balls, etc. hitting the ceiling. It currently is in violation of the Indiana Fire Code because it is blocking some of the sprinkler heads. He has requested multiple contractors for ideas on how to repair it and for a quote to repair but the only quote received was from Garmong Construction in the amount of \$26,318, a copy of which was given to the Commissioners. Mike Morris questioned previous repairs and requests for funding and why this had not been included among those asks. Mr. Loudermilk noted that it was his understanding, per Judge Mullican, that the Commissioners were in charge of building repair. He also noted that the last time he had appeared before the County Council requesting funds for building repairs, he had been asked why he had not asked the Commissioners for the funds since it was for building repair. There was a lengthy discussion about repairs that had been made from prior requests for funding, including why funding for this repair had not been requested when the requests for other building repairs were made. The uses of the non-reverting fund were discussed. Mr. Loudermilk stated that it was created to supplement repair of the buildings, not supplant funding from the Commissioners. It was currently unknown how much money was left in the Commissioners' budget for building repair but they did know that some of it had already been budgeted for other repairs. After further discussion, Chris Switzer suggested that they revisit this matter after checking what was left in their maintenance budget and get back to Mr. Loudermilk. Mr. Switzer also suggested in the interim that Mr. Loudermilk check with maintenance to see if they could possibly duct tape some of the ripped pieces in order to clear it from blocking the sprinkler heads.

**Comment from Commissioners or other Elected Officials.** Mr. Morris noted that he was not in attendance at the last meeting due to being in settlement negotiations regarding a county lawsuit. Mr. Kearns said that he

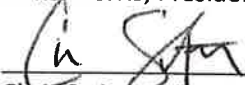
had mentioned last week that the Commissioners might recommend their preference on which firm conducts the compensation study and salary review for the County but has since re-thought the matter. Chris Switzer asked Mr. Bramble to give a brief review of the county tax sale and how it worked. Mr. Bramble advised the steps that needed to be taken once a property is acquired at tax sale. There was a lengthy discussion on the matter. Mr. Switzer asked if there was some type of explanation documentation that could be put on the County website to assist people in their understanding of the process and also the difference between a tax sale, a certificate sale and a Sheriff's sale. County Attorney Michael Wright gave further explanation and said he thought he and Joel Modesitt could come up with something that could be put on the website. Deed Sales were discussed and the possibility of that happening in the future. Chris Switzer then asked County Assessor Kevin Gardner about Beacon and why transfer histories showed up on some parcels but not others. Mr. Gardner explained that it was probably due to the timing and certifications and when title is changed in Plat Mapping.

**Public Comments.** A representative from ReThink, a small not-for-profit organization, was present to see if a solution could be found to help her organization retain properties that had been given to the organization from Redevelopment. These lots had back taxes on them when they were given to ReThink. ReThink has very few resources and has not paid the back taxes. Those lots have now been placed into the tax sale. She is wanting to see what her options are to be able to retain the lots that are used for Community Gardens. It was noted that she had been working with Brendan Kearns and County Auditor James Bramble to understand the situation and look for solutions. After a very lengthy discussion, it was determined that the back taxes would have to be paid in order to retain the lots. However, the lots had been removed from this year's tax sale so she would have another year to raise the funds to pay for the taxes.

Phil Deckert commented that he bought property via a tax sale certificate on March 31, 2020. At that time, there was a 90-day extension granted and then another 30-day grace period which would expire at the end of July but he still had no certificate. He had been informed that no Judges were signing off on anything. The property he bought was an industrial property that he drives by daily. He sees the former property owner dismantling/damaging things on the property but he is unable to do anything about it without the deed being in hand. He had followed all the rules and met the terms and conditions of the tax sale but cannot legally stop this person from further damaging the property because a judge will not grant the deed. He is represented by private counsel who has informed him that his hands are tied until the deed is issued but the judges are not signing anything at the present time. He is seeking any help he can get from the County in getting the issue resolved. It was felt that this might have to do with the eviction moratorium in place by the federal government that will expire in October but that isn't known for sure. The County Attorneys will see what they can find out and see if they can get an answer for Mr. Deckert.

Today's meeting recessed at 10:02 a.m.

  
Mike Morris, President

  
Chris Switzer, Vice President

  
Brendan Kearns, Secretary

Attest:

  
James Bramble, Auditor