

Benton County Council

February 22nd, 2024

The Benton County Council met at 8:30 a.m. at the Benton County Courthouse. Those in attendance were Council members: Jim Schoen, Angie Glotzbach, Jackie Steinmetz, Robert Sloniger, Trina Schutter, Brent Cox, Jack Duncan and Auditor, Audrey Freeland

Others in attendance were – Bryan Berry, Kathy Sarault and Miranda Wirtz

Business:

Councilman Schoen suggested that moving forward those who get on the agenda need to send the board as much information prior as possible and that department heads need to do the homework. He feels that if they do not then the board should not decide on the spot, so they have ample time to review and make an educated decision. The board was in full agreement and discussed the topic further. Councilman Schoen said another thing they need to know is what is the Commissioners position. Councilwoman Glotzbach asked if they needed to pass an ordinance for it, to be determined. Councilman Schoen asked the board to send him a list of any other items they would like listed and they will revisit the topic at the next meeting.

Kathy Sarault & Miranda Wirtz – Health Department

They came before the board to discuss the new public health fund (1161) and what it will bring to their department. The new fund will be funded by the state and assist local health departments with growth and the ability to offer additional services. They discussed that the new fund would replace one of the grants the department has relied on, the new fund will replace fund(s) 1168 and 1206. The cash balances will be kept by the county until they have been depleted, but the new fund is active and ready for distributions to begin. It will help remove grant-based employees to a more secure funding source and is more transparent for all. There is a county match, but those funds can be paid out of the 1159 County Health fund that per Auditor Freeland should have sufficient funds for at minimum of 4-5 years to cover those matching funds.

Councilman Schoen asked Miranda to explain the different columns on the materials presented. She said that they are the core services the department currently offers or will look to add to the department. On the spreadsheet they are broken out in a 60/40 core services so she can track where they are at and growing towards.

Miranda went on to discuss the one of the first things they will be hosting is becoming a car seat safety checkpoint. She spoke about a situation that occurred within the county and the time delays to get those certified individuals together will no longer be a concern which will allow her to serve the community better. The conversation continued as they talked about the needs for adequate spacing/office, community needs, additional staffing and with this new fund they will have funding that can be used towards that.

Councilman Schoen said that Purdue has a Health First Initiative grant program where they are going to receive 1 million dollars for 4 years for mental health, he will send her the information he has on that.

Business continued:

The meeting minutes from January 26, 2024, meeting were approved as presented with a motion by Councilman, Brent Cox, second by Councilman, Jack Duncan and motion carried.

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The amended mileage ordinance was discussed/approved at the last meeting was presented. It was approved and signed with a motion by Councilwoman, Angie Glotzbach, seconded by Councilman, Brent Cox and motion carried.

Auditor Freeland shared that each of them received a copy of the new light duty policy that was recently approved. This is being shared with all employees.

The group then discussed the broadband project that will occur in Freeland Park. Commissioner Berry spoke and said that he approached the trustee about purchasing the property for the services. He went on say that once it is established there is a possibility that 2 or 3 cell carriers would like to place some equipment on there. The county will make around \$1500 and would go up if the cell carriers join, and the county will own the tower. Councilman Sloniger asked where the funding was coming from. Berry said that the county's cash is about 750,000 and it is coming out of multiple funds, ARPA, Pattern Road fund, Meadow Lake and capital improvement plan. The total project will cost around 2.1 million. The approval for the purchase was given with a motion by Councilman, Robert Sloniger, seconded by Councilwoman, Angie Glotzbach and motion carried.

Commissioner Berry said that the board will be sending out postcards to landowners and a billboard will be erected. The slogan on the billboard reads: Don't be the solution to Lake County's pollution.

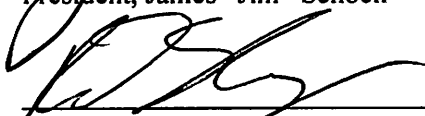
With no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:58 a.m. with a motion by Councilwoman, Angie Glotzbach, second by Councilman, Robert Sloniger, motion carried.



President, James "Jim" Schoen

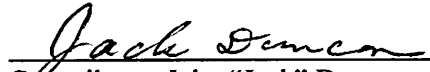


Vice President, Brent Cox



Councilman, Robert Sloniger

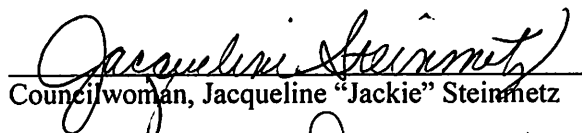
Councilwoman, Angie Glotzbach



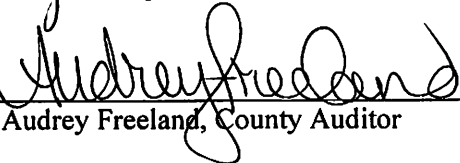
Councilman, John "Jack" Duncan



Councilwoman, Katrina "Trina" Schutter



Councilwoman, Jacqueline "Jackie" Steinmetz

Attest: 

Audrey Freeland, County Auditor