

Benton County Commissioner Meeting May 20, 2025

The Benton County Commissioners met at 8:15 a.m. in the Commissioners room at the Benton County Courthouse. Those in attendance were Commissioners Phil McGinnis, Shawn Leuck and John Gick Benton County Auditor Beth Budreau and Attorney Jacob Ahler.

Others in attendance were Mike Budreau, Evan Puetz, Colin Sullivan, Josh Gaskill, Penny Titus, Jonathon Devers, Jason Thomas, Latisha Provo, John Cox, Dave Fisher, Bryan Berry, Derek Fuehrer, Ed Geswein, Christina Lovelace, Andrew Grimes, Karen Barnard, Jacob Roddy, Sam Smith and Randy Miller

Mike Budreau – Highway Superintendent

- Hauling Stone
- Patching county roads are done; they have been working on town roads now.

Commissioner Shawn Leuck asked Mike how the digging at the Jail is going, Mike stated it is a mess, the height of tile is the issue. Evan stated that there is a 2-foot difference. Commissioner John Gick asked about putting in an outside sump pump, Mike stated he doesn't know what else can be done. They have reached out to Matt to see if there are any other options. Commissioner Phil McGinnis stated to have Matt bring his locator in to see if they can figure out where the tile comes out.

Jonathon Devers – EMS

Jonathon came before the board requesting their approval to purchase a 2019 20' Kaufman full tilt 10,000lb trailer for \$4,500. Jason wants something larger than the one they currently have. Jonathon stated that they do have money in their local emergency management fund, which is where they would pay for it from. Jonathon stated that he went out and looked at it and the deck is solid, it's a clean trailer, the tires are in good condition. Commissioner John Gick asked what they would use to pull the trailer, Jonathon stated that his truck would pull it and the white and yellow truck will as well. Commissioner Shawn Leuck asked if they were getting rid of the little trailer, Jonathon stated he believes that is Jason's plan. Commissioner Leuck stated he just doesn't want to keep acquiring stuff, so if they get this trailer then they should get rid of the smaller one. Commissioner John Gick made a motion to approve the purchase of the trailer, seconded by Commissioner Shawn Leuck, motion carried.

- Storm damage – all the power should be back up, NIPSCO was the last to get people restored and SR 352 opened back up.
- House on 3rd that was majorly damaged by the storm was taken care of.

Jason Thomas – Comcast

Comcast wiring is currently only in Otterbein, but Comcast acquired a bunch of companies in Q4 and now they can serve anywhere even out of the county. Jason was hoping to get a meeting with IT to see how the county is set up. Jason went on to ask the commissioners some questions regarding how phones and internet as set up. Commissioner Phil McGinnis stated that the county just made a full transition to a new IT company in April of this year. Jason asked about running wire and what the steps are that would need to be taken through the county. Commissioner Phil McGinnis stated that there are agreements and permits that would have to be presented to the board for approved before any of that would be able to happen. Commissioner Phil McGinnis stated that there are already companies working in the county that have our investments in their services.

Colin Sullivan – BF&S

Colin stated the project engineers on the bridge will be at the meeting in June, they didn't have everything designed out with the change. On bridge 125 – 900 S they had found if it was changed from steel to concrete there would be a 20% savings on \$200,000. As of right now concrete is a lot cheaper than steel.

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Colin wanted the commissioners' opinions on it, Commissioner Phil McGinnis asked about the longevity of it, concrete vs. steel. Colin stated that that is what they are working on right now with the cost analysis. Colin stated that June 6th is the small structure presentation at the county highway, and they can present the plan there or if the commissioners would rather attend the June 3rd commissioners meeting. Commissioner Phil McGinnis asked them to meet on the 3rd during the commissioners' meeting.

John Cox – Sheriff – Jail - Fairgrounds

- Hoosier associates brought in some people to look at jail blueprints, they are doing their own assessment so if something catastrophic happened to the jail it is insured properly.
- CO Position open
- He was able to lay some bricks at the fairground building for the open house on Saturday.
- Been working on the cabinets, reducing the number of cabinets. It should be delivered on Monday.
- Bathroom floors were sealed.
- Vic will be in to set up the toilets and sinks.
- Water is on.
- Rod Green will take care of the dirt work around the building.

Business

Commissioner Phil McGinnis presented an EMS proclamation; this is the week that we recognize our EMS workers. To designate the week of May 18-24, 2025, as Emergency Medical Services Week. Commissioner Phil McGinnis made a motion to approve the proclamation, Seconded by Commissioner John Gick, motion carried.

County Auditor Beth Budreau presented the April County Home Report, Commissioner John Gick motioned to approve the report, seconded by Commissioner Shawn Leuck, motion carried.

Payroll was reviewed and approved with a motion by Commissioner Shawn Leuck, seconded by Commissioner John Gick, motion carried.

The commissioners opened the sealed bid that was received from the 2009 Chevrolet Pickup 2500HD that was for sale. Commissioner Phil McGinnis motioned to approve the bid for \$2,975, seconded by Commissioner John Gick, motion carried. Let the record show that Commissioner Shawn Leuck abstained from voting.

Meeting minutes from 05.06.2025 were approved by Commissioner Shawn Leuck, Seconded by Commissioner Phil McGinnis, motion carried.

Pay at once claims were reviewed and approved with a motion by Commissioner Shawn Leuck, seconded by Commissioner Phil McGinnis, motion carried.

Sam Smith – Plan & BZA

Sam came before the board to present an application for a Pole Barn for Andrew Winger. Sam stated that the setbacks are 50 feet from the center of the road, it will be right next to the one that is already built. The Plan & BZA board members approved of it already. Commissioner Phil McGinnis motioned to approve the application, seconded by Commissioner Shawn Leuck, motion carried.

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Business Continued

Attorney Ahler wanted to discuss the purchase agreement for the Oxford school. He stated generally when you purchase a property you prorate the property taxes up to the date of purchase. Attorney Ahler stated that he can change the verbiage on it stated that he won't owe any taxes on it. Also Attorney Ahler asked if they commissioners would like to have the sale ran through a title company. Attorney Ahler stated most of the time when there is a grant involved that want some type of title insurance to show proof of ownership. The commissioners agreed to have a title company do the closing. Commissioner Phil McGinnis motioned to approve the purchase agreement upon changing the language regarding property taxes owed, seconded by Commissioner Shawn Leuck, motion carried.

The board temporarily closed to hold the Drainage Board meeting at 9:25am, then reopened at 9:50am.

Karen Barnard – Taxpayer

Karen came before the board to discuss possible animal control for the towns. She presented a petition that have signatures from community members. Commissioner Shawn Leuck stated that our Economic Developer was looking into this and asked Latisha to explain what she has found out. Latisha stated that she has been talking to Jennifer Price, with BOA and she stated that they don't really have any jurisdiction over it, they will be having some training workshop on how they can work with local law enforcement. Latisha has asked about funding, and there just isn't a lot of grants out there for it. Latisha said it basically comes back to local authorities. Commissioner John Gick stated that he would like to see the Towns take care of it themselves. Karen stated that all the towns within the county as so small, she stated even if there was a dog tax or pet tax to help fund it. Sheriff Cox stepped into the conversation, he stated he attended the last Oxford town board meeting. They have approved to purchase the less lethal shotgun and noose for Aaron May their town Marshall. They are going to buy an oversize dog cage and looking into their ordinance and change it to go back to the pet tax and start issuing fines to the people that are repeat offenders. Sheriff Cox stated that he is in the process of meeting with all the towns, because it is overloaded for the county deputies because most of the calls for dogs/animals happen in the towns. Commissioner Phil McGinnis stated to Karen at this point the commissioners will take it under advisement, and they appreciated her coming in and speaking with them. He stated as of right now they will move forward with what Sheriff Cox is doing by meeting with the towns to see if that helps with some of the issues.

Ed Geswein – Christina Lovelace – Andrew Grimes – Mary T Klinker Restoring Hope

The group came before the board to introduce themselves and explain their cause, with new county commissioners they wanted to update them on what is going with the old armory in Boswell. The Mary T Klinker is a non-profit organization, their mission is to restore hope and stability to Veterans. Through a Veteran-centered approach of healing, peer-to-peer support, a personalized comprehensive stability plan, and a residential programming facility; they empower Hoosier veterans with the tools needed to heal with dignity.

Christina is the executive director of the Mary T Klinker Veteran Center, they have 7 core principles of healing – Physical, mental, social, spiritual, financial health, life skills and selfless service to community. Christina went over their resources that they will be using for veterans' healing.

Andrew went through their financial needs moving forward with the armory. In just over 6 months, 102 founding patriots rallied to raise \$250,000 to give the property located at 417 S Old Hwy 41, Boswell, IN 47921 back to Hoosier Veterans. They have a lot of work to do; they are full steam ahead on securing the funding and partnerships needed to bring veterans home. They are looking forward to early next year to

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have the home complete. The facility will have 13 single occupancy sleeping quarters and two designated family sleeping rooms. They appreciate the support from the county.

Commissioner Phil McGinnis asked if everything they were doing is solely fundraiser based and how do they meet their monthly bills once they are fully open. Christina stated that they have several non-federal grants that they are looking into. At this point it has been strictly fundraising, but they have been looking into other funding options to get them to those next steps.

Jacob Roddy – Enterprise

Jacob came before the board representing enterprise fleet management. He stated he talked to Commissioner Gick a couple weeks ago, enterprise works with several counties and cities around the state. They have about 50 government companies across the states. What they do is all the way from acquisition to tracking your maintenance data, fuel spend, telematics, replacing vehicles and selling them. They piggyback of Source well, so there is no need to go to an RFP every year, they go to the manufacturer so you're going to get exactly what you want. With the local governments, they don't drive much annually, so they replace the vehicle at the right time. It's not a lease per say, it's a lease for tax purposes, but the government doesn't apply. But what they are doing is taking the capitalized price of the vehicle knowing that they are going to sell it at a given year, but they aren't going to depreciate it to zero. It lowers the monthly payment and when they sell the vehicle, they pay off the unpaid principal and return the equity back to the county. Typically, the counties roll it into the next lease to lower the payment which lowers the budgets each year. Ultimately the county isn't penalized for going over mileage or anything, the equity piece may just be a little bit lower. Enterprise is just helping logistically bring everything together. Commissioner John Gick asked if he could put together an estimate specifically for our county and then they can look at it before making any decisions.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 10:36a.m. With a motion by Commissioner, Phil McGinnis, second by Commissioner, Shawn Leuck, motion carried.

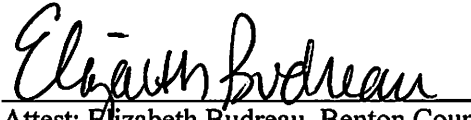


Phil McGinnis

Shawn Leuck

John Gick

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A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Elizabeth Budreau", written over a horizontal line.

Attest: Elizabeth Budreau, Benton County Auditor