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## ***Vermillion County Commissioners Meeting Agenda/Minutes***

Tuesday March 8, 2016

6:00 p.m.

Commissioners Courtroom, Courthouse, Newport, Indiana

- I. **CALL TO ORDER.** The Vermillion County Commissioner's convened in a regular meeting on Tuesday, March 8, 2016
- II. **ROLL CALL.** Members present were President Tim Wilson, Vice-President Harry Crossley, Tim Yocum, Auditor Phyllis Orman, and Attorney Jon Spurr.
- III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.** The minutes from February 23, 2016 were approved on a motion made by Harry Crossley and seconded by Tim Yocum. The motion carried.
- IV. **EXAMINATION OF CLAIMS.** After reviewing the claims docket, the claims were approved for release on March 11, 2016 on a motion by Harry Crossley and seconded by Tim Yocum. The motion carried.
- V. **EXAMINATION OF PAYROLL.** After reviewing the payroll docket, the payroll was approved for release on March 11, 2016 on a motion by Harry Crossley and seconded by Tim Yocum. The motion carried.
- VI. **MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT.** Wilson acknowledged receipt of the monthly financial report.
- VII. **OPEN ISSUES:**
  - Bridge 122. Yocum said he has received a quote of \$22,000.00 for the repairs by a contractor. He said once he gets the prints he will talk to Highway Supervisor Russell Hall about doing the repairs themselves.
  - Feasibility Study. Nothing new to report.
  - Property for walking trail. Yocum said he talked to Keith Little and he said he had no problem with donating the property to the county but if the walking trail fails

he would like the property back. Spurr said that would be no problem. Surveyor Dreher said no one owns the right of way per CSX, it was an established easement and when the railroad was abandoned the easement was never diverted to either side of the property. Crossley said, so Little does not own it and Dreher said that is correct. Dreher said they would need to get agreements with all adjoining property owners. Yocum said they will look into this further.

- Building Inspector Job Description. Nothing new to report.
- Indiana Family and Social Services Administration Contract. Orman reported that she has not received the contract at this time.

#### **VIII. NEW BUSINESS:**

- Economic Development. Economic Development Director Dylan Riggen gave a brief update on what the Economic Development Council has done in 2015 and what they have planned for 2016. He stated that the Economic Development Council is running according to a 5-year plan produced by Ball State University in 2012 for 2013 to 2017. It focuses on the areas of economic development, workforce development, leadership development and community development. He said efforts during 2015 have included the creation of the Leadership Vermillion County program, with the first class set to graduate later this month. He said they have started three Main Street groups, one in Clinton, Cayuga, and Dana. He said he is hoping to start a group in Newport soon. He said they have also worked with the organization of workforce roundtables in conjunction with Parke County and the creation of a small business loan program funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture grant funds, with three applications currently in process. He said in 2016, Economic Development Council plans to focus on continuing the projects begun in 2015. A second Leadership Vermillion County program is planned, as well as continuing to develop the Main Street organizations, so they will be eligible to pursue grants. Riggen stated that the Clinton group, Rediscover Clinton, has already reach that point. There are also plans for a basic employability skills program in conjunction with the Wabash River Career and Technical Education Cooperative and the creation of small business development center. He said that 80 percent of employment in Vermillion County is through small business, those with 50 or fewer employees. He said it may become necessary to pursue an increase in Vermillion County's Economic Development Income Tax (EDIT), which is currently the lowest in the state. Yocum asked what is being done to find solutions for the county's high unemployment rate and Riggen said he felt many of the current efforts will contribute to reducing unemployment. He said the development of large industry at Vermillion Rise Mega Park will be one of the keys to reducing unemployment. Yocum asked if he felt that they had enough funds to carry out their efforts and Riggen said no. He said their operating budget is about \$250,000.00 per year. He said this year they loaned Dana \$110,000.00. He said if they want to really get out in front of some companies they will need more funds. He said the effort to attract companies to an area is very competitive, with many people in different areas doing the same job he is doing. He said that if an EDIT tax increase is approved, they could hire another person to focus exclusively on development of large

industry in the county. Yocum asked if there were are other opportunities for development beside Vermillion Rise, and Riggen said there are, and he is working on developing a comprehensive list of available sites which will be posted on the Economic Development website. Clinton City Councilman Dean Strohm said there are about 18 acres still available in the Clinton Industrial Park on North Main Street. He said there are currently negotiations in progress for this acreage. Riggen said that companies who are looking at specific sites are usually already far enough along in their search to be interested, and it is our job to make our communities appealing. He said it is going to take a few years but soon we should see our communities come back.

- Insurance Renewal. The commissioners received information regarding the county's employee health insurance renewal from Anthem. The renewal reflects an approximately 2 percent premium decrease compared to last year. The total savings is approximately \$31,728. The commissioners discussed whether they should shop around for other options but decided that since the renewal premium has decreased, they would accept this renewal. Crossley made a motion to allow pending funding from the county council, seconded by Wilson.
- DeBaun Property. Terry and Lorraine DeBaun of Hillsdale spoke about property located west of Old State Road 63, between Bridge 122 and Jefferson Lane in Hillsdale, which was to have reverted to them when the state turned Old 63 over to the county. It was noted that they have been working on clearing the matter up and having the property deeded back to them off and on since 1982. They asked the Commissioners to send a letter to the state releasing their claim to the right of way for the property, except for what is needed along the road, so the issue can be resolved. The commissioners asked Spurr to write the letter.
- Vermillion County Community Foundation Lease. Emergency Management Director Mark O'Heir noted that the Community Foundation has leased part of the office space where Economic Development previously was. Crossley made a motion to approve the new lease, seconded by Yocum.
- Undeveloped Road in St. Bernice. Brad Lindsey of St. Bernice spoke about a dispute regarding an undeveloped county road in St. Bernice. He said that a neighbor has blocked part of the road with blocks, which has made it impossible to drive through the area. Crossley stated that they did not give him permission to place those blocks. Sheriff Phelps asked where the boundaries were exactly so that they can enforce it. Crossley, Phelps and Surveyor Dreher agreed to work together to determine those boundaries.

### **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Read in full and approved by the Vermillion County Commissioners on the 8th day of March, 2016.

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Tim Wilson

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Harry Crossley

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Tim Yocum

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phyllis Orman, Auditor