

PERRY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES
April 7, 2025

The Perry County Board of Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m., as was duly advertised. Commissioners: President Randy Cole (RC), Vice President Pam Jamniczky (PJ) and Rebecca Thorn (RT) were in attendance. Auditor Kristinia Hammack, Deputy Daymion Marsh, and Attorney Andrew Foster were also present. There was no *News Representative* in attendance.

The meeting opened with all present reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA

RT made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by PJ. Motion carried 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

a) Mark Grossman – 11995 Leopold Road

Grossman appeared to discuss the proposed guard rail that will be put in his yard. Grossman stated that the pond on his property has been in existence since 1978 to his knowledge. Grossman did not change the grade or move the pond any closer to the road; although he did dirt work which made the grade where it can be mowed.

Grossman stated he has been in contact with Southern Indiana Power, as they are getting ready to move the three-phase power lines that run through his field and his neighbor's field to the road, where they will have access to it. Grossman stated that Southern Indiana Power are proposing putting three power lines down right where the County is proposing to put a guard rail.

Grossman provided pictures of locations within two miles of his property. He stated that these locations are four times worse than the area of his property.

RT asked Grossman how close to the road is the edge of his pond, and he responded his guess is thirty feet. RT asked Steve Howell, Highway Superintendent, how many feet the County has for the right-of-way? Howell responded twenty-five feet on each side of the road. RC asked Howell that he is putting the guard rail on County right-of-way, and Howell stated yes, the guard rail has to be two feet from the edge of the road.

RC asked Grossman if there has not been any modification to his lake at all, and the water has been that high this whole time? Grossman responded that he drained it and dug it out, removing all the sludge out of it. The lake is no closer to the road. The guard rail will be in his front yard, and will decrease the value of his property.

RT stated that this guard rail is for public safety with the lake being by the road.

PJ asked Howell where the discussion of the guard rail started from, a public complaint? Howell responded that the Commissioners and County Council had complaints about it, plus Howell received complaints from many residents.

Howell stated that when the pond was redone, it opened it up along the road by removing some brush. The old pond was not very big, and now it is a lot bigger and it appears it is closer to the road. Grossman responded that the pond is larger towards the back of the property, it did not move a foot closer to the road.

Howell stated most complaints revolve around the winter, as people are afraid if they go off the road, they are going to go into the water.

Howell stated that his job is to limit the liability of the County and make sure it is not going to get sued. With all the complaints that have been received by the Commissioners, County Council, and from the residents, if nothing is done, the County will be liable. Howell stated this is why he brought this to the attention of the Commissioners and County Attorney.

RT asked how many feet of guard rail would be needed, and Howell responded 200 feet. RC stated that a concern is the school with their buses. Howell added that the Transportation Director at Perry Central School Corporation stated they are concerned about this area.

PJ stated that she feels that before the County invests to put the guard rail up, they should contact Southern Indiana Power.

PJ made a motion to put on hold, seconded by RT. Motion carried 3-0.

b) Leonard Hahus, Perry County EMS Director

Hahus appeared requesting additional appropriations due to what he feels was some miscommunication on getting some additional equipment for the ambulances. Last year they received the ARP funds and purchased a lot of new items. Hahus stated that during the meeting last year, it was asked specifically does EMS need more new equipment? With the receipt of new monitors and other equipment, Hahus stated he probably led everyone to believe that no, EMS would not need anything. However, some smaller equipment needs to be replaced that are not large purchases at this time. The specific items are blanket warmers, a stair chair, and IV fluid warmers.

Hahus stated he contacted Auditor Hammack asking about funding. Since the Council moved around money to create the new account to set aside funding for future years, the equipment fund that was typically there is no longer available, it was moved. Hahus further stated there is no equipment fund to replace some of the smaller items that need replaced. He was told he had to ask for additional appropriations to pay for these items.

RT asked Hahus how many of each item is he wanting, and Hahus responded that they have already been purchased. When he reached out to Auditor Hammack in January, she responded to buy the equipment and give the invoice to the County, which will be paid out of the General fund for the equipment, which at the time was \$40,000. This was before all the money got moved.

Hahus stated that they have already purchased two blanket warmers, two fluid warmers, and the stair chair. The blanket warmers were placed on the County's P&L for February. Hahus further stated that typically that would have gone through the equipment budget, but since there was no budget, it was thrown in with the General fund as far as P&L.

Hahus stated that the IV warmers were just shy of \$1,500, and the blanket warmers were just shy of \$800.

Auditor Hammack stated that the County normally has the \$35,000 which was moved to \$40,000 this year budgeted for equipment. What has always been done, Hahus orders his equipment and it is paid out of that line item. In the budget session, there was a lot of talk about putting money back for the ambulance. Hammack stated that she forgot that the County was going to be moving that amount. Because of the ARP money to fund the EMS, the talk during budget was that the money that is put aside for equipment, which was \$40,000, typically was not spent or only a portion of the money was spent, it would not carry over to the next year. Hammack stated that the thought process by Council was to create a fund where the money is moved to this new fund. The Council put back \$86,000 a year to be able to fully fund a fully equipment ambulance. There will be a total of \$100,000 that is going to be moved to the EMS.

Hammack stated she reached back out Hahus and stated that the money for equipment was moved due to all the equipment that was purchased through ARP, there was no money budgeted for extra equipment.

RT asked Hahus what was the cost of the stair chair, and he responded \$5,264.05. Hammack stated that the \$879 for blanket warmers has already been paid, as it was paid out of Ambulance Services. Hahus responded the \$879 for the blanket warmers and the \$1,499.98 for the fluid warmers were on the P&L. Hahus stated he anticipated purchasing everything out of the equipment fund. Hahus stated he is asking for the \$5,264.05 for the stair chair, plus they will have their yearly preventative maintenance coming due on all four of their ambulance stretchers. Hahus does not know the exact cost of the maintenance, but estimates it to be approximately \$2,000, and that would be if there are no repairs that would be needed. This maintenance is annual.

RC stated that he assumes the Medical Director is on-board with purchasing this equipment and that it is needed for the ambulances, with Hahus responding he did not ask him, but it is needed.

RC asked Hahus how many ambulances at any one time does he have on the road, and Hahus responded up to three. Hahus was asked how many stair chairs the Ambulance Service now has, and he responded four good, high quality stair chairs. Hammack asked that they have three ambulances on the road, but need four stair chairs? RC stated that they have been working through this, but an ambulance that is not on the road does not have to be equipped, as it becomes a cost issue.

Hahus asked if the County has a number of ambulances they would like to see on the road, and RC responded it is still unclear what it cost to put one ambulance on the road 24/7 365 days a year. Once that cost is clear, the County will have to take a look at its budget and decide that they would like to have X number on the road, but can the County afford it.

TRACI FISCHER, COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS DIRECTOR

Fischer appeared to request support and approval of the Community Corrections grant applications. This is all grant funded.

Fischer stated she has the Community Corrections grant which covers the day reporting and house arrest programs. She is requesting \$314,052 for 2026, which is an increase from last year to cover increases of salaries and benefits for all the Community Corrections staff. The Drug Court Program grant is a separate grant still through the Department of Corrections grants and that request is \$111,297. This amount is also an increase from 2025 to cover the increase in budgets and salaries and benefits.

Fischer is seeking approval for both of these grants with signatures of the Commissioners in order to submit them. RC asked if this grant runs January 1 to December 31, and Fischer confirmed this. Fischer further stated that Community Corrections requires no county funding, so their project income, the income they receive from their clients for payments and drug screens, plus the other grant, pays for all of their operational costs. RC asked how many years have they had this grant, and Fischer responded since 2008.

RT made a motion to approve the grants, seconded by PJ. Motion carried 3-0.

Fischer stated that last year, the Indiana Office of Court Services grant was also included in with these grants, however, this year the State is requesting a separate application, which she sent to the Commissioners. Fischer stated it does not need signed approval, she just wanted to mention that she is applying for it this year. It has been applied for in the past years, but just on a separate application this year.

STEVE HOWELL, HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

- a) Howell appeared asking the Commissioners to sign the Annual Operations Report for the Highway Department. RC asked Howell that he submits this to the State, and Howell confirmed this.

PJ made a motion to approve the Annual Operations Report for the County Highway, seconded by RT. Motion carried 3-0.

- b) Howell requested an additional appropriation which is to appropriate the money for the second Community Crossings for 2024. RC asked Howell that he has this amount in his highway fund, and Howell responded yes.

PJ made a motion to approve the appropriation for the section of Leopold Road to State Road 66, seconded by RT. Motion carried 3-0.

- c) Howell stated that a resident contacted him regarding the old Snyder curve area on State Road 37 between Gatchel and the new State garage. The resident was present at the meeting, and Howell stated that this was the wife's family farm years ago, parents and grandparents.

Howell believes that when the State changed the road, it moved the curve. There is a little section of the road that goes off of the County road that the County has not used in years. It is all grown up. The resident is requesting to have this right of way on this section turned back over to him.

RC asked if it was a County road, and Howell responded it was State when this was done. The State turned it over to the County, and Howell assumes the County got the right of way with this that was under the State right of way.

RC asked Attorney Andrew Foster that these old roads were basically taken over in the 1930's because the State Highway system came in, and a lot of it does not have clear title.

Lou Mancini, the owner of the property along with his wife, recently acquired 100% ownership of this property. During the acquisition, Surveyor David Lynch did a survey of the property which revealed a lot of information that was unknown to many people for many years. During the survey, Lynch uncovered that in 1932, when the State went in to straighten that portion of the road out, they had the owners of the properties to provide access or to give over the land. Lynch provided the documents that attest to this. Mancini's grandfather and great-grandmother deeded that portion of the land. Mancini stated that it was a very small

portion, less than an acre on the front of his property, where they would like to make some improvements.

Manci stated that in 1932 when the property was deeded over to the State to make a more gradual curve, the State never provided the land back on the old road. This old road has been abandoned since the 1930's.

RC asked if Lynch has surveyed this, and what kind of easement is the County maintaining? Howell stated he did not know. RC stated that the Commissioner's main question is going to be, depending on the slope of the ground and everything around it, is being able to get in there to maintain the ditches and the areas around it.

RC stated he does not have a problem deeding this back over to Mancy, it is not of real value, and RC knows how those roads were just taken over with no payment from the State of Indiana.

RC stated that there needs to be a survey on this and make sure the County understands the area, and how much needs to be reserved for maintenance of the existing road. RC instructed Howell to drive by the area and see if there are any prohibited slopes where he would need a little more area. A deed can be created for the rest of the area, and then the County will make sure Attorney Foster is fine with what is being done. The other Commissioners were in agreement with this.

RC made a motion that after Highway Superintendent Howell reviews the area and determines what is necessary for County maintenance, then the County would have the individuals wishing to have the deed presented to them to create a new description and a deed, and reviewed by Attorney Foster, then the County can act on this, seconded by PJ. Motion carried 3-0.

- d) RT stated that with the weather that the County has had this past winter, and with people living on gravel roads, plus there have been three slides on paved roads, her main concern log trucks and heavy trucks hauling on these gravel roads. She mentioned that there has been a lot of logging up by where she lives, and the logging company has made their log yard right on the road. The problem arises when they leave out, the taxpayers are stuck with their tax dollars fixing those roads.

RT stated that right now with the high water, Water Road is being travelled by everyone, as it is the only escape route.

RT stated she had a copy of a neighboring county Ordinance, and Perry County does not have an Ordinance that states anything regarding heavy truck traffic on the county roads. Howell stated that the only Ordinance the County has is if there is someone doing damage, the County can put up No Truck signs and then they can be fined if they keep hauling. RT responded that this was done, and they keep hauling, and Howell confirmed this. PJ asked that there is a written Ordinance for this, and Howell confirmed this.

RT stated that these trucks have torn up part of the paved road that goes into River Forest, with Howell confirming this.

Howell has spoken to the owner of the logging company, and the owner stated that there were some cracks in the road already. Howell told him it was a lot worse than what it was, with the owner responding that they will not haul unless it is dry. Either way they go out, they will be on a recently paved road. Howell asked the logging company owner if they were willing to pay for damages that they have done, and he responded he would have to speak with his partner, and Howell has not heard back from him.

RT stated that in her opinion, they need to be responsible for all damages on those County roads. These are Perry County's roads, and they leave and the County is stuck with repairs.

RC asked Howell how thick the roads were paved, and Howell responded that the area is breaking up, the County had a partially paved road, and went ahead and paved to the intersection. The part where it is breaking up was actually gravel and would be four inches maximum. However, the other section of the road had been paved.

RC stated that these heavy trucks should not be operating in the winter, and Howell responded that the County does have a Frost Law from October to March. Howell stated that all it amounts to is that a permit is obtained and there is no charge for it. With this, the heavy trucks are told which way the County wants them to haul out, as the County does not have the authority to say a company can not haul.

RT stated these companies need to repair what they tear up. Auditor Hammack will research this Ordinance. Attorney Foster stated that the County has weight limits on county roads. Foster will check into this and get back with the Commissioners.

- e) PJ mentioned there are a couple of empty offices at the Highway department, and stated that she would like to set up a Commissioner’s office there, possibly the Engineers room with the little conference table. PJ further stated that this would be a lot closer for her to meet someone there instead of coming to Tell City, plus at the Courthouse, the Commissioners do not really have an office. Howell stated there is the Engineer’s office, plus another little office that was going to be the Operations Manager’s office, and they are both currently used for storage. PJ will get with Howell on which space works the best.

MINUTES

- a) 03.18.2025

RT made a motion to accept as presented, seconded by PJ. Motion carried 3-0.

KRISTINIA HAMMACK, AUDITOR

- a) 03.28.2025 Payroll: \$194,829.38

PJ made a motion to approve, seconded by RT. Motion carried 3-0.

- b) 03.28.2025 Payroll W/H: \$41,544.60

RT made a motion to approve, seconded by PJ. Motion carried 3-0.

- c) Health Insurance Claims: \$108,253.60

PJ made a motion to approve, seconded by RT. Motion carried 3-0.

- d) Dental Claims: \$181.53

RT made a motion to approve, seconded by PJ. Motion carried 3-0.

- e) Vision Claims: \$162.83

PJ made a motion to approve, seconded by RT. Motion carried 3-0.

- f) Life Insurance Claims: \$1,626.24

RT made a motion to approve, seconded by PJ. Motion carried 3-0.

- g) Solid Waste Claim Docket: \$10,857.48

PJ made a motion to approve, seconded by RT. Motion carried 3-0.

- h) 04.07.2025 Account Payable Claim Docket: \$894,591.33

RT made a motion to approve, seconded by PJ. Motion carried 3-0.

COMMISSIONERS

- a) Amendment to the EDIT Plan

RC stated that all that was done is that a line was added to the plan that designates that any supplemental or additional over and above what 2024’s EDIT Plan listed, will go into the Special Projects fund. Other than that, it is exactly the same as the previous year.

PJ made a motion to approve, seconded by RT. Motion carried 3-0.

- b) Board Appointment – Airport Authority

RC stated that there was an individual who expressed an interest in the one seat that is available for the Airport Authority. That person is Justin Foster.

PJ made a motion to approve, seconded by RT. Motion carried 3-0.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, April 18, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:04 a.m. CST.

PJ made a motion to adjourn, seconded by RT. Motion carried 3-0.

Randy Cole
President

Pam Jamniczky
Vice-President

Rebecca Thorn

Minutes reviewed by:
Kristinia L. Hammack, Auditor
Minutes prepared by:
Leisa M. Ecker, Deputy Auditor