

PERRY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES
January 16, 2024

The Perry County Board of Commissioners met at 6:00 p.m., as was duly advertised. Commissioners: President Randy Cole (RC), Rebecca Thorn (RT) and Randy Kleaving (RK) were in attendance. Auditor Kristinia Hammack and Sheriff Alan Malone were also present. There was no *Attorney* or *News Representative* in attendance.

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

RT made a motion to open up the Board of Finance meeting, seconded by RK. Motion carried 3-0.

AMANDA LASHER, TREASURER

a) Board of Finance Report

- 1) Treasurer Amanda Lasher stated the first order of business was to elect the President, which was done at the Commissioner's Organizational Meeting on January 2, 2024, Randy Cole.
- 2) The second order of business is to elect the Secretary, who is always the Treasurer of the County.

RT made a motion to elect Amanda Lasher, seconded by RK. Motion carried 3-0.

- 3) Treasurer Lasher presented the Investment and Deposit Policy (see attached) for the Commissioner's signature. Once signed, she presents this to the banks that the County does business with for their signature.
- 4) Treasurer Lasher presented a report that states the banks the County currently uses and the ending balance as of December 31, 2023 (see attached). Lasher stated that German American Bank, Old National Bank and Fifth Third Bank accepts property tax payments for the County at no charge to the County. The report listed the interest earned in 2023 by institution for a total of \$621,951.95. This report also listed the interest rates paid by the banks. RC stated that the Treasurer can move money at any time of day from one institution to another that if paying the highest rate. This allows for a higher return for short-term money.

RT made a motion to accept the Treasurer Report on the finances including the Investment and Deposit Policy for 2024, seconded by RK. Motion carried 3-0.

RK made a motion to close the Board of Finance meeting, seconded by RT. Motion carried 3-0.

AGENDA

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- a) Coroner Warren Taylor stated that there has been a leak in the roof above his office for the last couple of years, and it has been patched several times by Greg Hendershot, as well as a company from Jasper. They have found and fixed different holes in the roof and it is still leaking. RC asked if it is just in his office where it is leaking, and Taylor confirmed this.

Taylor stated there are some metal high beams in his office, and the water follows this beam. He further stated that once the weather breaks, Greg Hendershot will go on the roof again to see if he sees any holes. Taylor stated this has been going on for the last three years, and patching it is not working.

RC stated that if Hendershot does not see anything on the roof, they will call in Hedinger to look at it. RC stated it will be fixed.

TARA LUCAS, PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE SUPERVISOR

- a) Lucas asked for permission to proceed with some updates for their clinic room. This room is a smaller room that currently houses the two upright refrigerators and upright freezer that contains vaccines. All three units can run at the same time and it gets very warm in that room, sometimes 80 degrees. This puts a lot of stress and strain on those three units. The company that comes in to service these

units every six months, and routinely they mention the condensation on the unit itself.

With Steve Hauser's help, they reached out to Jeff Johnson at Valley Supply to get his opinion what it would take to put that room on its own heating source or unit so it can be controlled better.

Lucas did receive a quote from Valley Supply, and she checked with the state because the Health Department does have a grant that this can be completely covered by, as it does house their vaccine storage units. Lucas would like to proceed rather quickly on this as there is \$60,000 in equipment plus another \$80,000 in any given time for vaccines.

RT asked what is the quote amount, and Lucas responded \$7,210.00. RC asked what would be put in this room, and it is a Mistubishi Heat Pump Indoor Unit. It is 14,100 BTU. Steve Hauser stated this quote includes them separating the one huge unit. He further stated that with the current units, it requires air conditioning pretty well all year round. Hauser stated that the air conditioner is having to be kept on, and the way it is set up now, you have to have all 5 rooms either with air conditioning or all the rooms with heat on. Keeping the air conditioner on for this room does not allow to have heat on for the other offices.

RC stated the only problem with this is inside the building it is hot, and trying to run an air conditioner outside when it is 10 degrees, you would have to have heaters on all your outside equipment or else your freon and oil will become too thick.

RC asked if this air can be captured somewhere else in the building, possibly the large room that stores EMA equipment? Hauser stated no, there is a hall between the areas.

RT asked if the grant will cover this, and Lucas stated yes, they have no problem with it as there is a lot of equipment and money in that room.

RC asked if a second quote was sought, and Hauser stated no, Valley supply is the company that put in the original whole system, but they can seek a second quote.

Hauser stated Valley Supply does all the service work on the whole system.

RK made a motion to install a self-contained heating and air conditioning unit for the vaccine room, seconded by RT. Motion carried 3-0.

MINUTES

a) 12.28.2023

RT made a motion to accept, seconded by RK. Motion carried 3-0.

b) 01.02.2024

RK made a motion to accept, seconded by RT. Motion carried 3-0.

KRISTINIA HAMMACK, AUDITOR

a) 01.15.2024 Payroll: \$179,002.14

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

b) 01.15.2024 Payroll W/H: \$38,993.03

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

c) Health Claims: \$37,221.17

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

d) Flex Spending: \$15.00

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

e) 01.16.2024 AP Claim Docket: \$1,096,529.02

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

COMMISSIONERS

a) Hospital Board Appointment

The County received four letters of interest, Pam Jamnizky, Stephanie Epple, Dan Freed, and Tim Harding. RC stated that earlier this year the Hospital Board had sent a few names in but no letters. This is an appointment that is generally done in September. The passing of Jon Hartz opened this seat up, and this appointment is to fill his existing term until it expires in September 2025.

RK asked RC if he is aware of the Hospital By-laws regarding selecting the names for appointments? RC stated that they can submit them, but the Commissioners choose from those names or from the others that have applied.

RC stated he did look this up, and there is not a requirement on the Commissioners to only pick from their list. RK asked if there was nothing in there regarding the Hospital picks three names, and if the Commissioners did not choose one of those three, they would submit three more, and if the

Commissioners did not choose any of those, then the Commissioners went to outside names? RC stated he did not read this. RK asked if the County should include the three names the Hospital submitted, and RT responded if they submitted a letter. RC stated these individuals did not submit a letter; the Hospital Board just stated these three individuals they recommended.

RK nominated Stephanie Epple to be appointed to the Hospital Board, seconded by RK. Motion carried 3-0.

b) Ambulance Service

RC stated that they met with them last week. They came before the commissioners looking for funding a couple months ago. RC stated that in 2022, the Hospital did not send the County any bills for the last six months of the year. He believes this was the period of time when they were changing CFO's and they just did not do it. He further stated that the County should have probably caught this and contacted them, but they did not. At the end of 2022, the funds were not paid out, only paying them approximately \$129,000. At the end of 2022, those funds were just rolled over and not allocated. In 2023, the County had \$300,000 set aside for the Ambulance Service, different categories, and the old bills were paid. Then the County received new bills, and they didn't have sufficient money budgeted to pay those bills. It comes back to 2022 where the shortage occurred. The Hospital got a list together of what they need and it is a little over \$200,000. The County does not have the money set aside to pay them \$200,000. After discussion with the Hospital, they suggested that if the County would purchase an ambulance, which they need an ambulance, the Hospital would forget about the nonpayment.

RC stated that according to the 1986 contract between the County and the Hospital, the County is only obligated to pay them whatever was budgeted. If the Hospital did not send the County a bill, the County is not obligated to pay, so the County has a way out. RC does not feel this is the good neighbor thing to do; they didn't knowingly do it, it happened.

RC stated there are Tribal Funds with a little less than \$190,000, and the County rolled over \$60,000 that was set aside to purchase a new ambulance or to put towards it, which would be approximately \$250,000. This would buy or come close to buying an ambulance if the County dedicated those Tribal Funds to the other \$60,000. RC wanted to bring this to the Commissioners for discussion, and he will need to talk to the Council to see if they would support something like that, but the Commissioners need to decide if this is something they want to consider.

RC stated that they also had another discussion regarding those smaller vans that are like ambulances. One of their challenges is the big ambulances are used for transport. They transport due to not having a lot of services here at the Hospital. Many miles are put on those ambulances due to transports. These van vehicles are set up for transportation and it is substantially less money. They are looking into this now to see if the county might want to invest in one of those vans to do the transfers which will keep the mileage lower on the full ambulance. In addition, it would keep the big ambulance in the county to save your life if needed. The mileage issue on these ambulances is what they are fighting with. RC stated he was informed that there are two ambulances up and running, and sometimes there are three. At the beginning of 2023 there was one running, and now up to two and sometimes three. They are heading in the right direction. RC stated this is a service that we hope we never have to use, but if we need it, we want it there.

RT stated there needs to be one dedicated ambulance for transfers. RC stated that conversation regarding the transport van was discussed, and it is half the price. RK asked if these are fully equipped, and RC stated yes, they are an ambulance. RT asked if these can be leased or bought, and RC stated it depends how this all comes about. They are looking into it further to see if this is something the Commissioners need to consider; if we can keep the mileage down and provide a vehicle that is cheaper keeping the costs down.

RT asked if this transfer van can be used if both ambulances are out on calls and another call comes in, and RC stated he believes you could use this.

RK stated that at one time, the brand of the box unit for the ambulance could be reused. He would like to stay with the same thing if they can. RC stated that is an option, as they usually just pull the chassis out from under them. RC stated they discussed this, and part of the challenge is the chassis is part of the support unit of the ambulance, so they are running even when they are parked.

Everything is running to support the box. There are new options, where the box has its own unit, and the chassis has its own unit.

RC feels that Deaconess and their ambulance service is a real asset due to purchasing many ambulances. There was also discussion that if we need to buy an ambulance that gets an extra 50,000-100,000 miles, then that is a good investment. RC is hoping to use some of their expertise to decide what is the best option for the County. He further stated that if the box is a solid box, it can be reused. RK stated that they purchased a box that can be used more than once or twice.

RT stated that with Deaconess purchasing many ambulances, maybe they can get a better price, and RC agreed stating they have more buying clout.

RC stated that ambulances are currently 18-24 months out so a decision needs to be made due to the ambulances are getting miles on them. RT asked if a transport van is that far out, and RC replied he did not ask about that.

RK stated that the County generally sets these purchases up on a three-year plan, and asked Auditor Hammack if they were paying out anything now, with Auditor Hammack replying no. RK stated it is time to purchase one, as the County does every three years in the past. RC stated that the County needs to recognize these ambulances are going to have to be replaced and set aside capital every year into a fund, instead of being on the backside and making payment for three years. Also, then they would not come into a situation where the County has to come up with a quarter of a million dollars. RC stated we know we are going to need them, we know they are going to wear out, we just need to put a plan together so the county can fund them. Life expectancy is known, so the County needs to make sure to set aside the funds so they can repurchase an ambulance.

RT asked if there are any grants that could help with this purchase, and RC stated you always have options with the USDA, but part of the County's problem is that it has a little too much money. He does not believe Tell City qualifies for these grants, nor the county. Reaching out to Region 15 can answer better if there is something available. RT asked if this plan would deplete the Tribal Funds, and Auditor Hammack and RC stated that it would. RK asked if they could ask the ARP Committee for money, and RC stated that ARP money could be used as well as Tribal Funds. RC believes the Tribal Funds need to be spent or else they will frown upon the County for not using them. RK stated to maybe use half and half. RT asked if the county is waiting on cost, and RC stated the cost is going to be approximately \$250,000 for one unit. The transport van is approximately half of this amount. He further stated that if the box is suitable, then the \$250,000 cost is too high.

RK made a motion to pursue funding options with the County Council for a new ambulance, seconded by RT. Motion carried 3-0

- c) On March 8, 2024, the Courthouse will be closed for an all-day training. Part of the training will be at the North Annex, and after lunch the training will be moved back to the courthouse. Training for CPR and First Aid will be conducted at the North Annex. RT asked if the North Annex will be closed as well, and Steve Hauser stated it would be not. RK stated that the training for the North Annex will be done at some other time. The entire courthouse will be included in the afternoon training. This is not a day off; County employees have to be here for training.

RT asked how many people know where the AED device is located at the courthouse, and how many people know what to do with the AED? RK stated that will be part of the training. Steve Hauser stated he is in the process of getting prices on two more devices. Auditor Hammack stated that the AED in the Courthouse Meeting Room will be relocated in the lobby, and the two to be purchased will be located one in the Judicial Hall and the other in the Legislative Hall. RT asked that an AED be put in each of the County buildings.

She further asked how often the batteries are checked on the AEDs, and he responded they were just checked a month ago.

RT made a motion to close the courthouse on March 8, 2024 for employee training, seconded by RK. Motion carried 3-0.

- d) Planning and Zoning

With the absence of Junie Voges, and RC not yet talking with Kim Robertson, Sanitarian, the County has three requests for permits. One is for a house, one for a cabin, and one for an additional microwave on a water tower. T-Mobile is wanting to add the dish, and RC feels anything that is done to help with the County's cell phone service should be supported.

RC stated that before he decided to sign these permits as the correct person, he wanted to make sure he has the Commissioner's approval to sign and issue the permits. RT asked if these people are waiting on their permits, and RC stated yes, and one person is wanting to get their financing for their house and need the permit. The cell tower is wanting to schedule to get the equipment on top of the water tower. RT asked that they need a building permit for that? RC stated the County's zoning law states that anything over \$500.00 or more as an improvement requires a building permit. RC further stated that in the past, Junie Voges charged \$50.00, which is the minimum amount for a permit. There are multiple fees, but RC will follow what Voges was doing prior.

RC contacted County Attorney Andrew Foster to research as a county entity issuing permits, what is the liability associated with doing this and what are the County's requirements to visit the sites to ensure things are being done properly? Foster has not given an answer yet.

RT asked if there is any schooling required to write building permits? Auditor Hammack stated she believes there is only training. RC stated you need to have some sort of building background if you are going to do inspections.

RK made a motion to allow Randy Cole to sign permit documents to be issued for those needing and requiring a building permit until the county has a permanent person with a set of rules, seconded by RT. Motion carried 3-0.

e) Edit Plan

RC sent the proposed Edit Plan to the other Commissioners to review and if everyone is comfortable with it, can get it approved. Auditor Hammack asked if they were going off percentages, and RC stated it is just dollar amounts. He stated the dollar amounts are spelled out, and the remainder of the excess money would go into the special projects fund, which can fund things that we are fortunate enough to get such as the Community Crossings money of \$1.5 million, it will be funded out of special projects

Auditor Hammack asked if another account line needs created, and RC stated it will go into an account marked as special projects. These funds will not be allocated to anything in particular. RC stated it will be a Commissioner's account where they can direct that money where it needs to go rather than automatically give to someone and it not being used. This way it could be utilized for something else. The account will be Commissioner's Special Projects Account. RC stated this is where the Solid Waste fees will be paid out from.

RK stated there is still the Special Edit Fund, and he asked if that amount can be put in this new Special Projects account. RC stated yes, that was the supplemental that was received in May that was not allocated. In 2023, he asked Auditor Hammack if the supplemental amount was just spread among the other groups, and she stated yes. That fund did not grow in 2023. With this Edit Plan, that fund will grow due to taking the extra and putting in this new account. This way there is money when the County has different challenges.

RT made a motion to adopt the EDIT Plan, seconded by RK. Motion carried 3-0.

f) RC stated he sent the Commissioners the floor plan for the potential courthouse expansion. This will bring the Prosecuting Attorney's office to the courthouse. The Judicial side is longer than the Administrative side. This expansion will bring the Administrative side the same as Judicial side. The proposal includes to build additional parking the same as what is on the Court side. A kitchen was added plus a private restroom for the west side of the building. RC stated the old kitchen was an afterthought. The court side has private restrooms, and there are no private restrooms on the Administrative side.

RC stated this should be able to be built with the money currently paid to the Electric Department for rent, plus the efficiency for the Prosecutor's office.

RC stated that with the money that was over collected for the jail, rather than subjecting the tax payers to any increase, only have to change three words into Perry County Capital Projects so it can be used for this.

RT asked how many restrooms will be put in the new addition side, and RC stated two.

RK asked if the County used the money from the Detention Center, paying for it up front, then it would be up to the Council to keep it going with some backfunding for the rent saved for future needs of the detention center. RC stated this is the reason the nickel for Building Maintenances. RC stated if this expansion gets approved, he would like to repave the entire parking lot. Currently there is \$125,000 in that account, and will have \$250,000 at the end of this year.

RT made a motion to send to the Council for a language change and approval to proceed with engineering work for the expansion for the Prosecutor, seconded by RK. Motion carried 3-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:09 p.m. CST.
RT made a motion to adjourn, seconded by RK. Motion carried 3-0.

Randy Cole
President

Rebecca Thorn
Vice-President

Randy Kleaving

*Minutes prepared by:
Kristinia L. Hammack, Auditor*