

## Minutes

February 15, 2022

Commissioners Present: Michael Pepple, William Bateson and Timothy Bechtol.

Also Present: Lynn Taylor, Cindy Land, Phil Johnson, Adam Witteman, Mayor Muryn and Jeff Kelley.

Commissioner Pepple opened the meeting at 9:30 a.m. in the Commissioners' 1st floor. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Minutes from the February 10, 2022, meeting was read with Timothy Bechtol making the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

The Clerk presented the following resolutions for consideration:

Resolution #82-22 – Authorizing the payment of the listed and/or attached Purchase Orders. Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #83-22 – Advance of funds from the General Fund to Water Pollution Control. Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #84-22 – Repayment of advance from Water Pollution Control to General Fund. Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #85-22 – Repayment of advance from Water Pollution Control to General Fund. Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #86-22 – Repayment of advance from Water Pollution Control to General Fund. Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #87-22 – Repayment of advance from Water Pollution Control to General Fund. Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #88-22 – Transfer of funds within the appropriation – ADAMHS. Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #89-22 – Transfer of funds within the appropriation – Sheriff. Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #90-22 – Transfer of funds within the appropriation – Children Services. Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #91-22 – Transfer of funds within the appropriation – Developmental Disability. Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #92-22 – Additional appropriation - within the Auditor's certification – Commissioner's to appropriate to severance. Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #93-22 – Additional appropriation – within the Auditor's certification – Commissioner's to appropriate to Real Estate. Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #94-22 – Transfer of funds within the appropriation – ADAMHS. Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

The Commissioners signed and approved the American Rescue Plan Checklist projects for the Landfill, the Public Defender's Office and the Common Pleas Courtview. Commissioner Pepple explained that the ARP Committee reviewed the requests and finds them acceptable. Two travel requests were approved for the Auditor's Office.

Cindy Land presented the following resolutions for consideration:

Resolution #95-22 – Authorizing a contract with Robin Kershner, D/B/A Kershner Excavating for the design and installation of a new home sewage treatment system as part of the Hancock County WPCLF Grant Project #HS390032-003-2021-06. Cindy stated that per the grant guidelines, not more than half of the grant proceeds can be used for sewer taps. This is a sewer tap project. This is an 85/15 project on Western Avenue and the borrower has paid their 15% portion. Tim Bechtol inquired if the property is located within the City of Findlay, and Cindy stated that she was unsure, but it is not a requirement of the grant. Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution #96-22 – Authorizing a contract with Robin Kershner, D/B/A Kershner Excavating for the design and installation of a new home sewage treatment system as part of the Hancock County WPCLF Grant Project #HS390032-003-2021-07. Cindy stated that this is also a sewer tap project and an 85/15 homeowner contribution project. These projects must be done by September 30, 2022. Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Phil Johnson requested the following resolution for consideration:

Resolution #97-22 – Authorizing entry into Change Order #2 to contract with TTL Associates, Inc. for further performance of Tier 1 Delineation and Tier 2 Evaluation activities upon real property at 136 N. Main Street in Findlay. Phil stated that this property was purchased 5 years ago and this change order has been recommended by Steve Wilson, project manager. The amount is \$3,250 for additional testing. Timothy Bechtol made the motion to approve, William Bateson seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Adam Witteman had nothing to report.

Mayor Muryn stated that she is present for the 10:00 a.m., meeting.

Jeff Kelley stated that he has comments for the Sheriff and the Commissioners said that he could make his comments now and then again when the Sheriff arrives for the next meeting. Jeff indicated that he is a Hancock County resident, a current business owner and a United States Marine veteran. Jeff stated that he is concerned with the current state of the Sheriff's Office and if Sheriff Heldman can lead the office. Jeff is concerned with the amount of staff members that have left the office and the number of criminals walking the streets of Findlay, without going to jail. Jeff stated that the residents of Hancock County demand answers, not excuses. The following questions were asked by Jeff:

- What is the root cause of lack of staffing at the Sheriffs Office? Is it because of a lack of staffing or COVID problem? The Commissioners stated that the Sheriff can answer this.
- December 11, 2020, Governor DeWine authorized the use of National Guard to provide support for jails. Is this an option that is being explored? The Commissioners deferred to the Sheriff.
- Does the Sheriffs Office conduct exit interviews? The Commissioners deferred to the Sheriff.
- The bearcat is a great tool, however, why should one be purchased and putting officers' lives at risk if we are putting them in handcuffs and then letting them walk?
- The City has a contract with the County to use the Jail and the Mayor confirmed that statement. Jeff inquired if this is a breach of contract. Mayor Muryn stated that this is not really a breach of contract because the contract is based on a number of days and prisoners kept. Tim Bechtol

inquired as to how many outside contracts the City has. The Mayor stated that previously there was only one, however as of December when the situation at the Hancock County Jail was announced, the city looked into different options. They now have contracts with Seneca County, Putman County and are looking into a contract with the CCNO in Stryker.

- Jeff inquired if there was an avenue to have the Sheriff removed from office. Jeff asked the Commissioners if they have the authority to remove the Sheriff from the office and the Commissioners do not have that authority. Sheriff Heldman is an elected official. As a community, Jeff wanted to know what could be done prior to waiting until the next election. Bill Bateson stated that it would have to come from the State. Mayor Muryn stated that a recall could happen.
- Jeff also wanted to know if the 2 suspects from last week have been arrested. The Sheriff will need to answer this question.
- Jeff wanted to know if the Commissioners wanted to have a public meeting with the Sheriff, the Mayor and City Council where the public could attend and voice their opinion. Bill Bateson stated that public meetings are held every Tuesday and Thursday at 9:30 am. Anyone is invited to attend.
- Jeff wanted to know if the Commissioners have contacted the Governor's Office. The Commissioners stated that they have not. Mayor Muryn stated that she has not yet, at this point contacted the Governor's Office.

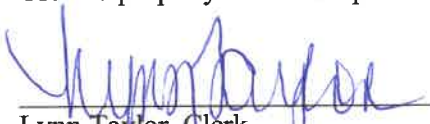
Tim Bechtol stated that he attended the Ag Council meeting.

Bill Bateson stated that he also attended the Ag Council meeting and discussed the Bearcat. (armored vehicle) Bill stated that the comments that were received were in support of the vehicle. Bill also attended the Wrap Around meeting, which is an extension of the Family First Council.

Mike Pepple stated that he attended the Alliance Board meeting and the Hancock Opioid & Addiction Task Force meeting.

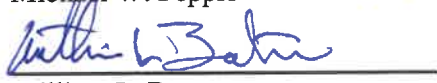
At 10:00 a.m., the Commissioners met with Sheriff Heldman and Captain Ryan Kidwell. Lynn Taylor, Cindy Land, Adam Witteman, Jeff Kelly, Mayor Muryn, David Bostwick, Beth Warnecke, David Beach, Judge Bishop, Candace Griffin and Rob Marin were also in attendance. Mayor Muryn stated that she would like to hear an update on the Justice Center and in light of recent events, may have further questions after Sheriff Heldman and Captain Kidwell comment. Jeff stated that he and the Sheriff spoke on Friday about the current situation and the Sheriff acknowledged. Jeff read a statement into the record about the staffing issues and that criminals are walking free. Jeff feels that the Sheriff is not upholding the oath he took once elected. Sheriff Heldman stated that they have been losing staff for the past 5 years. Hiring continues as evidenced by the hires in December. Five were hired and three have already left. Finding people that want to work has been a challenge. Dave Beach concurred and said that employment has been an issue nationwide. David Bostwick stated that he has worked with several counties in Ohio and staff recruitment is the number one issues right now. Pay is not only the issue, it is about finding the right person for the job. Mayor Muryn, stated that in her discussions with other counties in working with the City, she has discovered that some area counties have waiting lists of potential employees who are interested in their type of employment, within Northwest Ohio. Sheriff Heldman asked for the list and the Mayor stated that it would be good to collaborate between sources. The Sheriff said that as recently as Friday, they have looked into a consulting firm to design a recruitment web page. However, that costs money and they didn't include that in their budget for 2022. Which means they will have to ask the Commissioners for more money. Jeff wanted to know if the Sheriff's Office has looked into outside agencies. He also mentioned the order that the Governor put in place in December 2020. Captain Kidwell stated that they are to be used for emergent purposes, like a COVID outbreak. They are not security staff. Sheriff Heldman stated that it takes 8 weeks, minimum to train staff. And there are state standards that apply. Bill Bateson requested that Sheriff Heldman explain the events of Thursday, February 10, 2022. Captain Kidwell then provided a detailed history of Thursday's events. Sheriff stated

that the average length of employment in the State of Ohio is 5 years. Correctional Officers do have not an easy job. Mayor Muryn stated that it's imperative that we work through this. The city can provide temporary support and be creative to use those trained in corrections. However, Captain Kidwell stated that they have reached out to Universities and through recruitment. This staffing issued didn't happen overnight. Captain Kidwell explained the collective bargaining agreements limit some cross training within the Sheriffs Office. Tim Bechtol inquired as to what is needed to be fully operations. Captain Kidwell stated that fully operational staff would be an additional 7 females and 3 males. The Mayor stressed the importance of communicating to the public whom we were elected to serve. The Mayor stated that the City would like to move forward with the Community Alternative Sentencing Center (CASC). The City would like to use the area on CR 140 for the CASC and would like to know if the Commissioners are in agreement with this. Mike stated that if a potential new jail is built in that area, he wants to make sure the Sheriff is on board. Sheriff Heldman stated that a committee should have been formed months and years ago to start the planning process. However, that is why David Bostwick is here to address the potential topic of a new jail. Furthermore, the Sheriff stated that he is not sure the intent of the Commissioners for the CR 140 land. There have been discussions of a Litter Landing expansion. Mike Pepple suggested that a meeting to be rescheduled with the Mayor, the Commissioners and the Sheriff to do some more collaboration. Bill Bateson inquired as to who is going to operate the CASC. The Mayor indicated that the City would run it. Dave Bostwick stated that when the PONY study was complete, it was recommended that a jail committee be formed with the Municipal Court Judges, Common Pleas Judges, the City, the Commissioners and members of the Social Services agencies. Issues such as the CASC could be discussed within the jail committee. Mike Pepple stated that the Commissioners are interested in the CASC as long as the Sheriff is interested. The Sheriff said they are on the same page. The Mayor and Mike Pepple will be in contact for the next meeting to discuss the CASC and forming a steering committee that David Bostwick was referring to. The Mayor stated that she has a more clear direction now and understands that the County is not opposed to a joint campus and the CR 140 property is still an option.

  
Lynn Taylor, Clerk

Reviewed and approved by:

  
Michael W. Pepple

  
William L. Bateson

  
Timothy K. Bechtol