COMMISSIONER MEETING
APRIL 15, 2025
WASHINGTON COUNTY COURTHOUSE
99 PUBLIC SQUARE, SUITE 200
SALEM, INDIANA 47167

THE EXECUTIVE SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS WAS HELD AT 8:00 A.M. PRESENT WERE COMMISSIONER PHILLIP MARSHALL, COMMISSIONER TODD EWEN, COMMISSIONER TONY CARDWELL, ATTORNEY APRIL GELTMAKER, AND AUDITOR KYRA STEPHENSON. THE UNDERSIGNED CERTIFY THAT THE ONLY ITEMS DISCUSSED WERE I.C. 5-14-1.5-6.1(b)(2)(B) INITIATION OF LITIGATION OR LITIGATION THAT IS EITHER PENDING OR HAS BEEN THREATENED SPECIIFICALLY IN WRITING.

THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER BY COMMISSIONER MARSHALL.

CARDWELL LED THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE. COMMISSIONER EWEN GAVE THE PRAYER.

COMMISSIONER EWEN REQUESTED THE AGENDA BE AMENDED TO INCLUDE AN APPOINTMENT TO THE PLAN COMMISSION. COMMISSIONER EWEN MADE A MOTION TO AMEND THE AGENDA. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MARSHALL. MOTION PASSED.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- **JIM GRIFFITH – AMERICAN RED CROSS**
  THE RED CROSS HAS BEEN IN THE AREA WORKING FOLLOWING THE RECENT SEVERE STORMS. HE REPORTED THERE HAS BEEN APPROXIMATELY 716 HOUSEHOLDS AFFECTED BY THE SEVERE WEATHER OUTBREAK ACROSS THE STATE OF INDIANA. THEY HAVE HAD SHELTERS OPEN TO AID INDIVIDUALS NEEDING ASSISTANCE. IF ANYONE IS IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE THEY CAN CALL 1-800-733-2767. THEY ALSO HAVE A HERO CARE CENTER FOR VETERANS NEEDING ASSISTANCE AND THAT NUMBER IS 1-877-272-7337.

- **DENI STEMPOWSKI – RECENT WEATHER EVENTS**
  APRIL 2, 2025 SEVERE WEATHER BROKE OUT IN THE AREA WITH A TORNADO CAUSING DAMAGE IN THE EASTERN PART OF THE COUNTY. A DISASTER TEAM WENT OUT TO ASSESS THE DAMAGE IN THE FRANKLIN AND GIBSON TOWNSHIP AREA. APPROXIMATELY 41 HOUSEHOLDS WERE AFFECTED IN THE COUNTY. FLOOD DAMAGE ASSESSMENT IS TO START WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 2025. WASHINGTON COUNTY HAD NOT BEEN ON THE DISASTER LIST BUT THEY HAVE CONTACTED MS. STEMPOWSKI AND WASHINGTON COUNTY WILL BE ADDED TO THE LIST.

- **KEVIN AND LINDA BAIRD – ALTERNATIVE ENERGY**
  MR AND MRS BAIRD HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT COMMERCIAL ALTERNATIVE ENERGY PROJECTS. THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE A 2-YEAR MORATORIUM ON THESE ALTERNATIVE ENERGY PROJECTS. THEY BELIEVE THERE SHOULD BE GUIDELINES AND RESTRICTIONS FOR THESE TYPES OF PROJECTS. THE COUNTY CURRENTLY DOES NOT HAVE GUIDELINES OR RESTRICTIONS FOR THIS. THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE AN ORDINACE DRAFTED SETTING PARAMETERS FOR ALTERNATIVE ENERGY. COMMISSIONER MARSHALL WOULD LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE PROJECTS BEFORE PROCEEDING FURTHER.

- **LUCY BRENTON – COUNTY ISSUES**
  MS BRENTON CAME AGAIN TO COMPLAIN ABOUT THE PLAN COMMISSION AND THE COUNTY.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM APRIL 1, 2025**
  COMMISSIONER EWEN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE APRIL 1, 2025 COMMISSIONER MEETING. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY CARDWELL. MOTION PASSED.

- **APPROVAL OF CLAIMS AND PAYROLL**
  DUE TO THE AUDITOR'S OFFICE BEING UNDERSTAFFED AND TAXPAYERS COMING IN WITH CONCERNS ABOUT THEIR TAX BILLS THE CLAIMS DOCKET DID NOT GET SENT TO THE COMMISSIONERS. AUDITOR STEPHENSON WILL CALL A SPECIAL MEETING FOR APPROVAL OF THE CLAIMS ON THURSDAY, APRIL 17, 2025.

- **KELLY SARGENT – RADIO EQUIPMENT**
  MR SARGENT WAS NOT ABLE TO ATTEND.

- **RBR ALLIANCE – SOUTHERN INDIANA TRANSIT SYSTEM**
  DID NOT ATTEND MEETING.

- **JOSH EVERHART – HEALTH DEPARTMENT ORDINANCE & FEE SCHEDULE**
  THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT HAS PROVIDED AN ORDINANCE THAT COVERS BOTH FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS AND BED AND BREAKFAST ESTABLISHMENTS. PRIIOR TO THIS ORDINANCE, THEY HAD SEPARATE ORDINANCE FOR BOTH, BUT THEY ARE WANTING TO COMBINE THEM IN TO ONE. THE ORDINANCE WAS PROVIDED FOR PUBLIC TO VIEW AND COMMISSIONERS WILL TAKE ACTION AT THE NEXT MEETING ON MAY 6, 2025.
  MR EVERHART DISCUSSED FOOD PERMIT FEES. THE STATE IS WANTING TO ALLOW STATE WIDE PERMITS FOR $450.00. OF THAT MONEY, THE COUNTY WOULD ONLY RECEIVE $200.00 AND THE STATE WOULD KEEP THE REMAINING $250.00 TO MAINTAIN THE DATA BASE. THE COUNTY WOULD LOSE MONEY ON FOOD TRUCKS GETTING PERMITS TO SET UP AT COUNTY FESTIVALS IF THE STATE-WIDE PERMITTING SYSTEM GOES IN TO EFFECT. IF THIS LEGISLATION PASSES, IT WOULD TAKE EFFECT IN 2027. MR EVERHART WILL BE RAISING THE COUNTY FOOD PERMITS $5.00 WHICH IS COMPARABLE TO SURROUNDING COUNTIES.

- **PLAN COMMISSION ALLEGATIONS**
  CARDWELL ONCE AGAIN BROUGHT UP THE ALLEGATION THE PLAN COMMISSION IS OPERATING ILLEGALLY. ATTORNEY LISA FLEMING ADDRESSED THE COMMISSIONERS STATING SHE HAS BEEN DOING A LOT OF RESEARCH AND FOUND A CASE LAW FOR JEFFERSON COUNTY THAT STATES THE PLAN COMMISSION IS NOT ILLEGAL JUST BECAUSE THEY HAVE NOT TAKEN AN OATH. IN THE CASE LAW IT REFERS TO THIS AS A TECHNICAL DEFAULT WHICH WOULD NOT MAKE ANY DECISIONS OR ACTION ILLEGAL. ATTORNEY FLEMING HAS WORKED ON GETTING THE PLAN COMMISSION THEIR OATHS AND HAS FIVE OF THEM RECORDED IN THE CLERKS OFFICE. ATTORNEY FLEMING STATED THERE IS NO NEED TO DISSOLVE OR REMOVE ANY MEMBERS OF THE BOARD. CARDWELL HAD PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED A RESOLUTION IN WHICH ATTORNEY FLEMING HIGHLY RECOMMENDED THE OTHER TWO COMMISSIONERS TO CAREFULLY READ OVER BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH A VOTE. CARDWELL ASKED FOR A MOTION TO PASS THE RESOLUTION BUT THERE WAS NO SECOND.

  COMMISSIONER EWEN HAS FOUND A REPLACEMENT FOR THE VACANT SEAT HELD BY ANDREW KATT. LOGAN DAVIDSON (D) IS INTERESTED IN FILLING THE VACANCY. COMMISSIONER EWEN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE LOGAN DAVIDSON TO THE PLAN COMMISSION. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MARSHALL. MOTION PASSED WITH CARDWELL OBSTAINING.

- **COMMUNITY CROSSINGS PAVING BIDS**
  TWO BIDS WERE PRESENTED FOR THE COMMUNITY CROSSINGS PAVING. ATTORNEY GELTMAKER OPENED THE SEALED BIDS FROM TEMPLE AND TEMPLE, AND C & R CONSTRUCTION.

  TEMPLE & TEMPLE - $1,977,853.00
  C & R CONSTRUCITON - &1,899,757.00

  SUPERINTENDENT RICK VOYLES RECOMMENDED ACCEPTING ALL BIDS FOR REVIEW. COMMISSIONER EWEN MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT ALL BIDS FOR REVIEW. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY CARDWELL. MOTION PASSED.

- **SELECTION COMMITTEE FOR 4-H PROJECT**
  COMMISSIONER EWEN HAS BEEN WORKING WITH ANGIE BUCHANAN WHO IS THE PROJECT LEAD, TO GET A SELECTION COMMITTEE TOGETHER FOR THE 4-H PROJECT. THOSE ON THE COMMITTEE WILL BE ANGIE BUCHANAN, TODD EWEN, GERALD FLEMING, ANDREW DAVISSON, AND TODD ARMSTRONG. THEY SHOULD START ACCEPTING BIDS IN THE NEXT 2-3 WEEKS. COMMISSIONER MARSHALL MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE ABOVE MENTIONED INDIVIDUALS FOR THE SELECTION COMMITTEE. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY CARDWELL. MOTION PASSED.

REPORTS

- **HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT PROJECT UPDATE**
  TEMPLES HAS BEEN DOING SIGHT WORK AND EROSION CONTROL MAINTENANCE. ADVANTAGE ELECTRIC IS TO FINISH THE SIGN SHED AND START ON THE TRUCK LEAN-TO. THEY WILL BE IN COMMUNICATION WITH DUKE TO GET THE METER CABINET INSTALLED. PARKS PLUMBING WILL BE THERE THURSDAY TO START THE PLUMBING

ON THE MECHANICS GARAGE. THEY SHOULD HAVE THE FINAL APPROVAL OF THE MECHANICS GARAGE BY THE END OF APRIL. THE SEPTIC PERMIT HAS BEEN SENT TO THE STATE AND THEY HAVE UNTIL MAY 2, 2025 TO APPROVE. WORK WILL BEGIN ON THE MIXED SALT BUILDING THIS WEEK. THE OFFICE BUILDING IS COMPLETE AND WILL BE INSPECTED SOON. FIBER FROM JACKSON COUNTY REMC HAS BEEN RAN AND WAITING TO CONNECT. MIDWEST GAS WILL BE STARTING ON RUNNING THE GAS LINE UP THE WEST SIDE OF THE HIGHWAY.

- **HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT**
  THE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN WORKING ON CLEANING UP THE STORM DEBRIS FROM THE RECENT STORMS. THEY HAVE STARTED SPRAYING POISON HEMLOCK. THERE WILL BE A BID OPENING AT THE MAY 20, 2025 COMMISSIONER MEETING FOR A STRUCTURE REPLACEMENT AT GARRISON HOLLOW ROAD AND OLIVE BRANCH ROAD.

BOARD COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

- COMMISSIONER EWEN TOOK A MINUTE TO ASSURE CITIZENS OF THE COUNTY THAT CONTRARY TO WHAT IS BEING SAID AND POSTED ON SOCIAL MEDIA BY SOME ELECTED OFFICIALS, THERE WILL BE A FAIR THIS YEAR IN JUNE.

WITH THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS AT HAND COMMISSIONER EWEN MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY CARDWELL. MOTION PASSED.

COMMISSIONER PHILLIP MARSHALL

Todd M. Ewen
COMMISSIONER TODD EWEN

COMMISSIONER TONY CARDWELL

ATTEST: Kyra Stephenson
AUDITOR, KYRA STEPHENSON