

## JENNINGS COUNTY COMMISSIONER MEETING

May 8, 2025, 9:00 A.M.

Annex Building

Matt Sporleder, Alex Zimmerman, Shane Boswell, and Charlie St. John were present. Matt opened the meeting at 9:00 am with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Brad Bender, Mayor of Vernon came before the commissioners to give an update on some exciting things happening in Vernon. The new trails start at the Commons, then run to the soccer field, over to the overlook, and then all the way down to Jackson Street. Then it turns into the hiking trail all the way to Vinegar Mill at the county park. The restrooms still need to be completed, and the overlook is being delivered next week. There are beacons installed at the crossing on the highway. Vernon has also partnered with the library and opened a classroom at the Vernon Gym. Big things are happening with the Vernon Gym in hopes of building a true community center here in Vernon. The commissioners told Brad that they are proud of the work that he has been doing.

HR discusses the open positions within the county. The Auditors office and the election office have open positions. There is also a part-time custodial position open. These positions are posted on the county website.

HR also has travel requests that need to be approved. The first is for Probation to attend the 2025 conference. Any fees associated with this conference will be paid from Probation User Fees. Shane made a motion to approve, Charlie seconded the motion, passed unanimously. Next, the Prosecutors' Office is requesting to attend the IPAC summer conference. There will be three employees attending this conference. Any fees associated will be paid out of the Prosecutor funds. Shane made a motion to approve the request, Charlie seconded the motion, passed unanimously. The last thing presented by HR is two letters of engagement. The first is Lewis Brisbois and it is a one-year contract for a fixed fee of \$4500-\$6000. The second is from Purple Cyber Solutions for \$4,250.00. The county attorney has reviewed both engagement letters. These engagement letters are for cyber maintenance for our cyber insurance. Shane made a motion to sign the engagement letters, Charlie seconded the motion, passed unanimously.

The Assessor presented an extension of contract from Tyler Technologies. Tyler Technologies will be performing the reassessments. The county attorney has asked for this to be tabled because he did not get the contract to review beforehand. Shane made a motion to table, Charlie seconded the motion, passed unanimously.

The jail commander came before the commissioners to discuss direct ACH payments to Prairie Farms for milk. The milk is currently purchased from Kelwell and has been coming in expired, so they must purchase the milk elsewhere. Currently the jail spends \$1500.00 on cartons of milk and if they go back to the gallons, they will only spend \$968.00 per month. The commissioners said that they do not need approval from the commissioners if there is not a contract to review. The county attorney said that his understanding was that they were asking for a line of credit. The jail commander said that her understanding was that it is an ACH payment instead of a check. Shane made a motion to allow the jail to pay for the milk via ACH, Charlie seconded the motion, passed unanimously.

Rob Stein presented some documentation about Vialytics. Vialytics is a road management system that allows you to easily record the conditions of roads via smartphone. With Vialytics you can capture road conditions and inventory while driving. This system will automatically photograph the road surface every 10 feet complete with GPS tracking and timestamps. With this system you can save time, money and get objective data. The annual cost for Vialytics is \$36,700 annually. Vialytics and USI have joined forces. Derek with USI says that a workorder could come directly to him and he would be able to get to the problem immediately. With everything being time stamped, it would help protect any type of future liability possibilities. Derek says that it is a small investment that may pay off bigger down the road. The commissioners would be able to see the road conditions from an app on their phone. Shane made a motion to table until Alex had a chance to review the contract, and the commissioners had a chance to determine if this would be beneficial to the county. Charlie seconded the motion, passed unanimously.

Sherri with the county highway discuss Scipio Covered Bridge with the commissioners. Matt told Sherri to get some estimates for repairs. It is suggested to close the bridge and only allow pedestrian traffic. Matt says that they will need to look back and look at the original INDOT agreement to look at the verbiage. He is almost certain that they signed something stating that the bridge would never be closed to automobile traffic. The new bridge and the rehab were all lumped together as one project. In the agreement there may be a timeframe for the bridge to remain open.

Next, Sherri discusses the bridge on Old US 50 and the bridge on North Base Road. When the Old 50 bridge was transferred from INDOT to the city and county, it was agreed that no funds would transfer along with that portion of the road. This bridge is so unique that it should be listed as two separate bridges because you have the old original open span of arch on the south side and then the newer post tension box on the north side. They are an inch apart from that gap and the joint, and that joint is causing all kinds of issues. When water and salt get down to the steel, it is causing it to deteriorate. This is a historic bridge so you cannot do anything other than rehab.

The bridge on Base Road has a crack but it is not a structural crack. This bridge is beyond its design service. The commissioners asked USI to bring a cost back for the temporary barrier and hopefully we can get on the federal aid list quickly.

The current language in the employee handbook states that an employee cannot accrue more than 80 hours of compensatory time and the commissioners are suggesting removing that cap. This was suggested by the Department of Labor. Shane made a motion to approve the changes, Charlie seconded the motion, passed unanimously. The county attorney will make the necessary changes.

The clerk made the commissioners aware that the county must change their precinct lines to match the city's precinct lines. The city was required to change their district lines to comply with the state's requirements of the population mediation of less than 10% between each district.

The decision on the Cross Creek Subdivision Road is that it did not meet the county highway standards. Matt explained that does not mean the county would not take it back over, the homeowners would just have to do a few things before the county could consider it. There will need to be six 12x20 culvert pipes installed and the road will need to be ditched. Matt said as soon as these items were completed, the homeowners could come back with a new petition. Matt explains that the highway department cannot install the culverts because it is private property, not county owned property. The county attorney says that if the county and the property owners wanted to make some kind of agreement for a fee for remuneration to the county, he would be comfortable

with that. The county attorney suggested that the homeowners reach out to O'Mara and leave the county out of it.

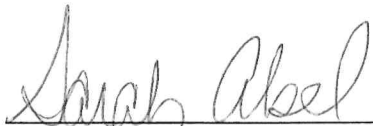
The gentleman that was protesting outside the courthouse came before the commissioners to voice his concerns. Someone in the last commissioners meeting called him a "little man", and he does not like to be belittled. He says that it is the same as belittling all the taxpayers who had the same issue he was protesting. Matt asked the gentleman what his name was, and he responded little man. Matt said that he wanted to refer and acknowledge him by his god given name. Derek, he said. Derek Huntington Matt replies?

Matt refers to some of Derek's Facebook posts and said that respect is a two-way street. Matt said that if he wants respect, he needs to show some respect for his country, his county, and the commissioners, and they will show him respect back. The county attorney tells Derek that the little man comment came from someone in the crowd, not anyone on the board. Matt tells Derek that he will help him in any way. Derek leaves and says that there is nothing left to say.

Charlie made a motion to approve payroll and claims, Shane seconded the motion, passed unanimously. Shane made a motion to approve prior minutes, Charlie seconded the motion, passed unanimously.

The commissioners discussed with the Assessor the assessment that came out for 2025 and the increases. The assessor said that he is willing to look over the assessments and if you personally have issues with yours to come to his office and talk to him. The Auditor asked the assessor if he had ever thought about having a meeting for taxpayers to discuss all upcoming changes so that they would have some understanding. The assessor said that he feels like it would be a no-win situation.

Charlie made a motion to adjourn, Shane seconded the motion, passed unanimously.



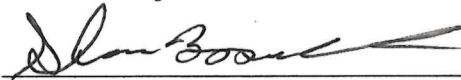
Sarah J. Abel, Auditor



Charlie St. John



Matt Sporleder, President



Shane Boswell