

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE WASHINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2020**

At 9:00 a.m. Chairperson Jack Seward Jr. called to order in regular session a meeting of the Washington County Board of Supervisors which took place in the Washington County Courthouse. Items on the agenda included the following: approval of agenda; public comment related to agenda items; personnel change requests – Ambulance; personnel change request – Treasurer; personnel change requests – Sheriff; Washington County Recycling update; Washington County Conservation FY20 Annual Report; consideration of the possible sale of county property that adjoins the West Chester County Maintenance Shed; consideration of various options for rebuilding or vacating portions of Juniper Avenue north of Highway 22; Public Hearing scheduled for September 8, 2020 regarding proposed City of Wellman Annexation; SEIL Region Crisis Intervention Team quarterly report presented by CIT Coordinator Alan Brady; consideration of revised administrative leave request form; discussion and action regarding response to petition request for resurfacing of County Road W64 south of Crawfordsville; COVID-19 update; department head comment; adjourn. Supervisors Stan Stoops, Abe Miller, Richard Young and Bob Yoder were also in attendance.

Others attending were: Mary Zielinski, The News; Amber Day, Deputy Auditor; Anthony Janney, Asst. County Attorney; Shawn Ellingson, Chief Deputy Sheriff; Jacob Thorius, County Engineer; Zach Rozmus, County Conservation Director; Bobbie Wulf, County MHDS Director; Marissa Reisen, County Emergency Management Coordinator; Alan Brady, CIT Intervention Coordinator; Lynn Whaley, WEMIGA Waste Management; and citizen Shelly Gardner. Various other individuals listened and/or watched remotely by way of electronic means.

All motions were passed unanimously by those Supervisors in attendance unless noted otherwise.

On motion by Yoder, seconded by Miller, the Board voted to approve the agenda after the following agenda item was added: Jail Diversion Program update

There was no public comment related to agenda items.

On motion by Yoder, seconded by Miller, the Board voted to acknowledge, and authorize the Chairperson to sign, a personnel change request from Washington County Ambulance Services for Dixie Young whose last day of employment occurred August 19, 2020. The vote on the motion: Aye-Seward, Miller, Stoops, Yoder; Abstain-Young.

On motion by Miller, seconded by Yoder, the Board voted to acknowledge, and authorize the Chairperson to sign, a personnel change request from Washington County Ambulance Services for Conner Miller whose last day of employment occurred August 13, 2020.

On motion by Yoder, seconded by Stoops, the Board voted to acknowledge, and authorize the Chairperson to sign, a personnel change request from the Treasurer for Jolene Colthurst whose last day of employment occurred August 7, 2020. Treasurer Jeff Garrett noted that Colthurst was employed in the Washington County Treasurer's office for approximately 45 years.

On motion by Young, seconded by Miller, the Board voted to acknowledge, and authorize the Chairperson to sign, a personnel change request from the Sheriff for Aaron Gould whose bi-weekly rate of pay will change from \$2,444.01 to \$2,578.40 as a result of Gould's promotion to the rank of Sergeant. The effective date of the change is August 27, 2020.

On motion by Young, seconded by Yoder, the Board voted to acknowledge, and authorize the Chairperson to sign, a personnel change request from the Sheriff for Karen Witzenburg whose last day of employment occurred August 18, 2020.

Lynn Whaley, WEMIGA Waste Systems, presented a report that detailed WEMIGA activities for August 2020. During the month WEMIGA processed 96.04 landfill tons, 4.61 tons of paper, 0.00 tons of plastic, 5.32 tons of cardboard, 4.07 tons of tin and aluminum, 14.00 tons of recyclable material, 23 appliances, 15 televisions and other electronic devices, 6 tires, and no used oil. On motion by Stoops, seconded by Yoder, the Board voted to acknowledge the monthly report for the Washington County Recycling Center provided by Lynn Whaley of WEMIGA Waste Systems. The report is available for review in the Auditor's office.

Conservation Director Zach Rozmus provided the Board with the Washington County Conservation Board (WCCB) Annual Report for FY20. For FY20 Rozmus reported project expenditures of \$128,169.12, administration expenses of \$437,674.19, maintenance and operation expenses of \$153,694.66, and recreational services expenses of \$5,551.33 for a total of \$725,089.30. Revenues totaled \$273,043.29 for the year. The report listed a property tax levy for FY20 of 46 cents per thousand dollars of assessed valuation compared to 48 cents for FY19. Rozmus highlighted a project completed during FY20 which included numerous updates and improvements to Fern Cliff Park which included removal of an old shelter, construction of a new shelter, installation of a metal safety fence, and installation of a new pre-cast latrine. Despite the challenges resulting from COVID-19 a total of 186 programs were presented to 3,583 students, along with another 28 programs presented to civic organizations, senior citizens, special needs groups, and youth groups. On motion by Yoder, seconded by

Young, the Board voted to acknowledge the Washington County Conservation Board's annual report for FY20 and for each Supervisor to sign the report. The complete report is available in the Auditor's office.

Discussion next occurred with regard to the possible sale of three lots, identified as Lots 6, 7, and 8, owned by the County and located north of West Chester near a County maintenance shed. County Engineer Jacob Thorius stated he had no plans for future use of the space. Discussion took place on the method of selling the property with Seward saying that he had conversed with Asst. County Attorney Anthony Janney who recommended the Board approve a resolution spelling out the sale process and terms of the sale. On motion by Seward, seconded by Yoder, the Board voted to authorize the County Auditor, the County Attorney, and the County Engineer to make preparations for the sale of Lots 6, 7, and 8 near the County maintenance shed near West Chester.

The Board took up discussion regarding an issue related to where Juniper Avenue goes north from Highway 22 west of Kalona. Landowners Joe and Shelly Gardner, who reside at 1210 Juniper Avenue, Kalona, have asked the County Engineer to vacate the portion of Juniper Avenue north of Highway 22 that runs through their property. Juniper Avenue is a Class A road for approximately the first 500 feet before turning into a Class B road for approximately the next 600 feet. This classification was done in 1988 by the Washington County Board of Supervisors. However, there is no record of any reclassification for the remaining approximately 1,000 feet of road that was historically platted in 1935. Seward outlined three possible options as follows:

1. Rebuild the road as it was originally platted in 1935. Although originally established in 1866, the 1935 plat resulted from the State of Iowa establishing Highway 22 at that time. The rebuilding of the road to its location in 1935 would require removing trees in the right of way and constructing the road and ditches from the base up. Also, reclassification of the road as either Level B or Level C for future maintenance would need to occur. Due to the close proximity to the English River, the possibility of flooding would exist which in turn would lead to flooding and the removal of silt from affected ditches. It is estimated that equipment and time cost for this option is approximately \$50,000.00.

2. Build the road as it presently exists in its use as a farm lane that also provides access to the northern landowner. With regard to flood damage the same concerns are present in this option as in option #1 but the cost for the reconstruction work would be less because there would not be a cost for removing trees that presently are encroaching on the road right-of-way. However, this option would require new easements from landowners. If landowners chose not to grant necessary easements it would then be likely that condemnation action would need to be completed in order to officially relocate the road to its present day location. As in option #1, reclassification of the road would still need to take place.

3. Vacate the road from the portion classified as Class B northward and offer to assist any affected landowners in the process of drafting an easement providing permanent easement access. By Iowa Code, landowners who lose access to a county road may file a claim for damages for those parcels that become landlocked or have an inhabited residence. This option would remove the continuing need for County maintenance and repair of flood damages.

Following discussion, on motion by Stoops, seconded by Miller, the Board voted to adopt option #3 as stated earlier in the meeting which involves vacating a portion of Juniper Avenue north of Highway 22.

Seward noted that at 5:30 p.m. on September 8, 2020 a public hearing will take place at the Wellman City Hall regarding the City of Wellman's plan to conduct a voluntary annexation of territory presently within Washington County and located at the southeast corner of 1st Avenue and 6th Street in Wellman. The proposed annexation territory includes property owned by Dollar General. The annexation would include the continuation or establishment of zoning districts for the annexed properties at the time of annexation. The Board took no formal action.

The lack of mental health crisis services across the U.S. has resulted in law enforcement officers serving as first responders to most crises. CIT Coordinator Alan Brady provided a report on the local Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) whose overall purpose is to provide an innovative, community-based approach for the purpose of improving the outcomes of crisis-related encounters. CIT is a part of the Southeast Iowa Link (SEIL) program which services eight counties to make up the region. CIT trainees consist of first responders, trained medical staff, law enforcement officers and anyone who comes into contact with anyone in crisis and will potentially need to alleviate a situation. The program was started in Memphis, Tenn., in 1988 and has since spread all over the United States. According to Brady CIT programs create connections between CIT trainees and individuals with mental illness and their family members. Through collaborative community partnerships and intensive training, CIT strives to improve communication, identify mental health resources for those in crisis, and ensure community safety. Brady presented data collected April 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020 related to substance use, exhibited behaviors, mental health history, transportation or on-scene handling, arrests, and use of force. The Board took no formal action. The complete report is available in the Auditor's office.

Transition Link Program Director Sarah Berndt provided an overview of the jail diversion program. She stated that throughout FY20 the program provided services to a total of 99 females and 282 males in six counties including Washington County. The total cost of the program was \$258,568.93. The Board took no formal action. The complete report is available in the Auditor's office.

On motion by Miller, seconded by Young, the Board vote to approve a revised administrative leave request form.

The Board next focused on a response to a petition signed by approximately 150 citizens in favor of resurfacing a portion of roadway from 107 North Main Street to 400 South Main Street in Crawfordsville as well as Vine Avenue south of Crawfordsville for approximately two miles. The petition requested a commitment as to when the work would take place with a preference of the 2020 or 2021 calendar year. Stoops acknowledged the concerns of those who signed the petition but he also reminded that citizens, primarily those in the southern part of the county, had been waiting for many years for completion of a project in Clay Township that would involve grading and paving a portion of Dogwood Avenue, the rehabilitation of a railroad crossing, and improvements to a bridge over the Skunk River. In response to Stoops, Thorius estimated the total cost of such a project would be approximately \$6 million which would be 100%, or nearly 100%, of the total annual construction budget. Thorius opined that the roadway described in the petition was somewhere near the middle of the priority list of future County road projects and added that the list was subject however to change depending on several factors which include funding and natural disasters. He added that there are gravel roads in the county that experience more traffic than Vine Avenue and there are paved roads in the county that are in worse condition than Vine Avenue. Thorius deferred when asked for a specific date as to when a project involving the resurfacing of Vine Avenue would occur. With regard to an estimated cost of \$200,000.00 for the project Miller stated that he failed to see why funding for the project could not be found somewhere in the County budget. After more discussion it was informally determined that Miller and Seward would compose a draft letter of response to the petition for Board consideration at its meeting on September 1, 2020. The Board took no formal action.

Washington County Public Health Administrator Danielle Pettit-Majewski shared she is trying to determine an accurate number of positive tests for COVID -19 in Washington County. Presently the number of COVID-19 tests conducted includes antigen testing but the total number of positive tests does not include positive antigen tests. With the opening of schools Public Health staff is providing support and answering questions posed by school administrators and staff related to COVID-19. A total of 11 deaths in Washington County have been attributed to COVID-19. The Board took no formal action.

There was no comment from department heads.

At 10:58 a.m. on motion by Stoops, seconded by Young, the Board voted to adjourn.

ATTEST:
August 25, 2020

JACK SEWARD JR.
Chairperson, Board of Supervisors

DANIEL L. WIDMER
County Auditor