

## **Jasper County Board Minutes**

*COUNTY OF JASPER NEWTON, ILLINOIS*

County Office Building 204 W Washington St, Newton, IL 62448

July 18, 2024

### **FY2023 AUDIT REVIEW – 5:00 P.M.**

The meeting was called to order. Bollman, Geier, Heltsley, Judson, Pickens, Spiker, Warfel and Bigard, Blake, Treccia and Tarr were present. Heltsley moved to approve the agenda. Judson seconded the motion. Motion carried on a voice vote. As required by Illinois State Statutes, Jasper County has an independent audit completed annually and publishes the statements. This audit is prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles and according to government auditing standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Jasper County received these statements in an Annual Comprehensive Financial Report that also includes supplementary information, as required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board. The audit process took approximately six months to complete. AnneMarie Clark from Kemper CPA Group, LLP reviewed the audit for the year ending November 30, 2023 (FY2023). This was the first year for Kemper CPA Group, LLP under the new contract. During the April 2023 Jasper County Board meeting the County Board approved a new contract with Kemper CPA Group, LLP for FY2023, FY2024, and FY2025. Revenue is about level. Had a property tax overpayment. She went over the interfund loan and the list should go down significantly. She went over the Circuit Clerk financial statements. Pointed out schedule of accountability. The management letter spoke on outstanding checks remit to state if not able to find who the check goes to. We are lowering the IMRF account amount and need to find the right amount. Circuit Clerk and admin account need to have controls. Charitable contributions, the county should not be making donations. The treasurer's office has been keeping track of grant funds spent by the county, helping auditors not having to track grants down. Departments need to give grant applications they apply for to the treasurer's office, so they can track and the spending (copy of invoices) of the grant.

**Executive/Closed Session** - The board does have an executive session with action taken following the executive session during the 6:00 p.m. County Board meeting. The board will retire to the Board of Review Room for the executive session and will return for the regular County Board meeting at 6:00 p.m. Geier moved for the board to enter an executive session under the following exception: Vacancy in a Public Office (exception 3). Bollman seconded the motion. A Roll Call vote was taken with Bollman, Geier, Heltsley, Judson, Pickens, Spiker, and Warfel voting yes. Weddell was absent. The Board entered an Executive Session at 5:30 pm.

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July 18, 2024

The County Board met in regular session on Thursday, July 18, 2024. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by proclamation according to law by Sheriff Francis. Sheriff Francis led a moment in silence and the Pledge of Allegiance. Members present were Bollman, Geier, Heltsley, Judson, Pickens, Spiker, Weddell and Warfel.

On Monday, July 8, 2024, Adam Deckard resigned from his position on the Jasper County Board. Mr. Deckard resigned to accept a position with the Jasper County Sheriff's Office. The Illinois Attorney General's Office provides an "Index of Opinions on Compatibility of Offices." A County Board member cannot serve on the County Board and as a Deputy Sheriff and a County Board member cannot serve on the County Board and as a Sheriff's Employee. For this reason, as stated in his letter of resignation, Mr. Deckard had to resign his position on the Jasper County Board. Mr. Deckard has devoted his life to the service of others both in his capacity as a First Responder, Police Officer and as a member of this board in service to the citizens of Jasper County. "There is no greater purpose than service to others" and Adam lives his life in that manner. It has been an honor and a privilege to call him a colleague for the past 19 months and an even greater honor to call him a friend. Warfel thanked Adam for his dedicated service, and we wished him well on his new endeavor.

Adoption of the agenda. There was no objection, the agenda was adopted as distributed. Item E new business approve making Available an Additional Class B Liquor License in Jasper County will not be addressed this evening.

**APPOINTMENT TO FILL COUNTY BOARD VACANCY – DISTRICT 1.-** According to (10 ILCS 5/25-11) of the Illinois Compiled Statutes when a vacancy occurs on the County Board the Chairman is to notify the established political party within 3 days of the vacancy. Warfel notified the Republican Central Committee Chair Judy Burnell on July 9, 2024, of the vacancy. The vacancy must be filled within 60 days by appointment of the Chair of the County Board with an individual from District 1 (Crooked Creek, Grandville, Hunt City, Wade #4, and Willow Hill) who is of the same political party as Mr. Deckard (Republican). After careful consideration, as Chairman of the Board, Warfel appointed Jessica Schackmann to fill the County Board vacancy for the remainder of the term expiring on November 30, 2024. Jessica and her husband Scott reside in northern Wade Township with their two children Wade and Halle. Jessica has devoted her professional career to shaping young minds in the field of education and currently serves as a 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher in the Teutopolis School District. I thank Jessica for her willingness to accept this position, and Warfel thanked her family for giving her time and hope that her appointment will have the full support of the board. Geier moved to approve the appointment of Jessica Schackmann to fill the County Board District 1 Vacancy for the remainder of the term expiring on November 30, 2024. Bollman seconded the motion. A Roll Call vote was taken with Bollman, Geier, Heltsley, Judson, Pickens, Spiker, Weddell and Warfel voting yes. Jessica Schackmann was appointed to the Jasper County Board. Warfel asked Schackmann to please come take your seat on the board. Judge Miller, our County Resident Judge was present to swear Schackmann in. Warfel thanked Judge Miller. Congratulations Mrs. Schackmann, Warfel noted that in the 193-year history of the County of Jasper, Jessica becomes only the 2<sup>nd</sup> woman to serve on the County Board and becomes our youngest member, a title that I have held for the past 8 years.

## **Energy Transition Public/Stakeholders Meeting & Comments**

The State of Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) administers the Energy Transition Community Grant. As part of the yearly process, community input and consultation with a diverse set of stakeholders is required. To meet the requirements of the grant process for 2024 a meeting regarding the 2024 Jasper County Energy Transition Community Grant was held at the beginning of our County Board meeting to allow the public and stakeholders to offer input. The County of Jasper has been selected to receive an Energy Transition Community Grant in the amount of \$876,316 from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO). Applicants such as the County of Jasper that have received funding allocation will undergo a required stakeholder engagement process and prepare a project narrative and budget that includes specifics on their intended use of the grant award. The deadline for applications will be July 31, 2024. Energy Transition Community Grants must be used to plan for or address the economic and social impact on the community or region of plant or mine retirement or transition. Eligible uses of grant funds include public infrastructure investment as well as many others. The County of Jasper in Year 1 of the Energy Transition Grant was awarded \$565,615 which was allocated towards the Jasper County Courthouse Project. Board Member Michael Geier has worked as the board leader on this grant in both year 1 and year 2. All those in attendance are asked to please sign the sign-in sheet to acknowledge your attendance at this Public Meeting in accordance with the guidelines of the energy transition grant.

Public comments: Libby Moeller on behalf of CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) approached the board. When a family is experiencing crisis and becomes involved in the child welfare system, a Court Appointed Special Advocate volunteer may be appointed by a judge to advocate for the best interest of the child. This highly trained volunteer is someone from the child's community. Their responsibility is to get to know the child, their parents, their family, and everyone else involved in the case. A volunteer will advocate for the child's safety, permanency, and well-being while in foster care. A video was shared. CASA of Effingham is merging with other counties and expanding to counties. Judge Koester started CASA in Effingham County. Currently there are 68 children in foster care in Jasper County. Asking for the counties support financially. Judge Miller does support CASA, office space has been made available in the courthouse. Public Defender has a fund, and the fund has been saving money in other areas. In Juvenile cases, CASA has the same person representing the child offering consistency while case workers can be different individuals. CASA advocates are educated and trained. Something the board needs to consider when working with the upcoming budget.

Reports:

County Departments:

**Ambulance Department** – June Run numbers: 911 – 60; Refusal/no patient contact – 18; Transfers – 28; Discharges – 4; Event & Fire standbys – 8; Mutual Aid – 25 Total: 143

**Highway Department** – The Electronic Recycling Collection Event is scheduled for Saturday, August 24, 2024. Wade Township is requesting the County Highway to go half on (1) 66" Arch X 40' pipe with the cost being to the County Bridge Fund for \$3,368.25. This location is on 1000N, approximately .25 miles east of 800E. The Bridge Aid Petition will be presented to the Full Board for approval. We have the approval from IDOT to proceed with the pavement preservation oiling project. The first mowing of the right of way along the county highways has been completed.

**Health Department** – Building breakers are scheduled to be installed. The Cancer Support group will meet Aug 8<sup>th</sup>, 5-6 pm. The next board of health meeting will be Monday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 5:30 pm

County Positions/Services:

**Building Maintenance** –June 21 – Ceiling tiles fell in Circuit Clerk’s Office. June 24 – Pickens called Martinsville Roofing and James Judson called an air quality expert. July 11 – Martinsville Roofing inspected the courthouse roof. They prepared an estimate for minimal repairs to stop the leaking in the circuit clerk’s office of \$9,020.

**Information Technology Consultant** – Going to have to shut down offices to run fiber in August. Courthouse will figure out days that could work.

**Animal Control** – Group wanted to meet July 16<sup>th</sup>, thought Austin was doing a great job but offered services to adopt the dogs out. If Austin could write citations, Treccia would investigate this. Countywide registering your animals with chips and fee. A secondary call is needed when Austin is not available. If there was an emergency the sheriff’s department would respond. Any dogs released should be up to date on shots, chipped and spay or neutered.

Elected Officials:

*Elected Officials*

**Treasurer-** Reports from Bigard were sent in the board packet. The total income for June was \$213,041.58. The expenses for June were \$297,236.69. Total income less expenses for June a net loss of \$84,195.11. Year to Date income was \$1,846,264.64. Less Expenses were \$2,155,409.50 with a net loss of \$309,144.86.

**Other Elected Officials/Offices** – Received the annual jail inspection report overall looks good but recommendations on staffing. Corrections have only one on per shift but recommendations of two staff per shift.

**Consent agenda.** The following items were on the consent agenda this evening: Approval of County Board June 20, 2024, Minutes; Adoption of Jasper County Trustee for Taxing Districts Resolutions – Delinquent Taxes Real Estate Program; Adoption of Bridge Aid Petition Resolution - Wade Township; Reappointment of Jeff Yoder to a Five-Year Term as Trustee for North Fork Conservancy District; File County Reports and Allow Claims. There was no objection, the Consent Agenda was adopted.

**Old Business**

**County Of Jasper/City of Newton Website** - ImagineThis! has completed a website prototype. This prototype has been distributed to offices and departments for review. Once both the County and City have signed off on the final version the website will go live. Warfel emphasized to any office or department that hasn’t already completed a review of their section of the website they need to do so as soon as possible.

**2024 Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program Courthouse Square Streetscape**

**Improvements** - At the March 21, 2024, meeting the board voted unanimously to proceed forward with a grant that would upgrade the street lighting and sidewalks on the county property of the courthouse square to look like the city property around the square. Applications for the grant are accepted starting later this year. The timing of the grant would coincide with any plans for the courthouse, and most likely take place after work on the building had been completed.

**Jasper County Courthouse** - At the February 15, 2024, meeting the board voted unanimously to proceed forward with the demolition and new construction of the Jasper County Courthouse on the

current site. At the March 21, 2024, meeting, the board voted unanimously to select Architecture & Design Group, LTD. (ADG) and Stone & Waggoner Consulting Engineers as the Architectural & Engineering firm for the project. At the April 18, 2024, meeting the board voted unanimously to enter into an agreement for Architectural & Engineering services with ADG and Stone & Waggoner. At the May 16, 2024, meeting the board voted unanimously to move forward with a direct replacement of the Courthouse meaning the judicial offices only. ADG and Stone & Waggoner provided the County with a "Cost Considerations." The calculated cost of a new courthouse was \$5,299,800 with 10% contingencies being \$529,980 for a total budget consideration of \$5,829,780. Also at the May 16, 2024, meeting the board approved the formation of a Special Courthouse Design Committee. This committee has been established to work with ADG and Stone & Waggoner on designing the New Jasper County Courthouse. This process will take a few months. Once a design has been selected and approved by the County Board it will take some time to draw up the actual plans. Once plans have been drawn up the project will then go for bid. At the current timeline, no demolition/construction would start until late 2025/early 2026. Geier said rough design should be completed and the design committee will have another meeting.

### **New Business:**

#### **Approval Of Energy Transition Community Year 2 Grant Proposed Use – Jasper County**

**Courthouse** - Phase 2 of the Energy Transition Community Grant is due July 31, 2024. This agenda item would be the formal vote of the Jasper County Board to approve the application prepared by South Central Illinois Regional Planning and Development Commission (SCIRPDC). This motion would also approve the \$876,316 in Grant Monies for FY2024 to be allocated toward the replacement of the Jasper County Courthouse. Geier moved to approve the Energy Transition Community Year 2 Grant Phase 2 Application and the Proposed Use towards the Jasper County Courthouse Project. Spiker seconded the motion. Motion carried on a voice vote. The Energy Transition Community Year 2 Grant Phase 2 Application and Proposed Use has been approved.

**Jasper County Courthouse Roof** - On June 21, 2024, ceiling tiles fell in the Circuit Clerk's office located in the Jasper County Courthouse. Following inspection Martinsville Roofing was contacted to assess the roof, which was initially identified as the possible source of the problem. Courtice Grason Environmental Contracting and Consulting was contacted to do an air quality assessment. The Air Quality Assessment was conducted on Wednesday, July 10, 2024, with results from the test pending. Martinsville Roofing has been in contact with A.C. Pickens spoke of the minimal amount of work to be completed, \$9,020. Rotting wood and insulation, water is getting in, buckets of water and getting on items. If must evacuate the building with air quality report coming back with issues. Judson moved to repair the courthouse roof pending air quality report for \$9,020. Weddell seconded the motion. Motion carried on a voice vote.

**Appointment Of Judges of Election for Jasper County Precincts** - The County Board is required in July of each even-numbered year to select in each election precinct in the county election judges. (10 ILCS 5/13-2). Our County Election Authority (County Clerk) has submitted the list of names that are included in the board packet and given proper notification to the established political parties in our County. The County Board will need to take action to approve these Election Judges. Spiker moved for the Appointment of Judges of Election for Jasper County Precincts as submitted in the board packet Pickens seconded the motion. Motion carried on a voice vote. Judges of Election for Jasper County Precincts have been appointed.

**Jasper County Hotel/Motel Operators' Occupation Tax** - The Jasper County Board on January 8, 2004, passed an ordinance imposing a hotel/motel operator's occupation tax and providing for the

administration and enforcement of the tax and for the collection thereof. It has come to the attention of the County that certain entities that might be required to pay this tax have not. This agenda item serves as an information item and notice to all entities. Additionally, letters will be sent to any identified entity that this ordinance applies to that isn't currently paying the tax. Warfel asked the State's Attorney to review the current ordinance. He reviewed and there is not any issue with it.

Approval to keep closed session minutes confidential and Approval to destroy verbatim recordings of closed sessions prior to January 2023 will be taken up after the executive session.

**Board Comments:** None

**Chairman's Comments:**

Upcoming Dates: UCCI -Annual Conference: July 21-23, 2024, Eagle Ridge Resort Galena, Illinois; Hope Trust – Health Options for Public Entities 2024 Annual Meeting & Conference - Thursday, Aug. 1<sup>st</sup> – Friday, Aug. 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ameristar Hotel & Conference Center in St. Charles, MO; FY2025 Budget Work - FY2025 County Budget will begin over the next few weeks and months.; First Responders Appreciation Day 2024 Saturday, August 17<sup>th</sup> 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.; Local Officials Appreciation Picnic Saturday, August 17<sup>th</sup> Noon – 2:00 p.m. Illinois State Fair in Springfield, IL; Electronic Recycling Event Saturday, August 24, 2024, from 7:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Unless trailer is filled before at Jasper County Highway Department; Chamber Cruise Night Aug. 9<sup>th</sup>

Executive/Closed Session - The board does have an executive session with action taken following the executive session on Item E "Approval to Keep Closed Session Minutes Confidential" and Item F "Approval to Destroy Verbatim Recordings of Closed Session Prior to January 2023".

Heltsley moved for the board to enter an executive session under the following exceptions: Personnel (exception 1) and Discussion of Minutes of Meetings Lawfully Closed (exception 21). Geier seconded the motion. A Roll Call vote was taken with Bollman, Geier, Heltsley, Judson, Pickens, Spiker, Weddell and Warfel voting yes. Schackmann voted present. The Board entered an Executive Session at 7:14 pm.

Came out of executive session at 7:51 pm.

**Approval To Keep Closed Session Minutes Confidential** - The County Board is required semi-annually to meet to review the minutes of all closed session meetings and determine if confidentiality still exists or if the minutes or portions are no longer required to remain confidential. The County Board must declare these findings in an open session.

Spiker moved to Keep Closed Session Minutes Confidential. Heltsley seconded the motion. Motion carried on a voice vote. Previous Closed Session Minutes will remain confidential.

**Approval To Destroy Verbatim Recordings of Closed Sessions Prior To January 2023** - After 18 months assuming a written copy is kept, the County Board can order the destruction of the verbatim record of the closed session meetings. The County Board did this last in October 2023 and thus all verbatim records have been destroyed before April 2022. Another action this month would allow all records to be destroyed before January 2023. This motion must be done in an open session. Bollman moved to destroy Verbatim Recordings of Closed Sessions Prior to January 2023. Pickens seconded the motion. Motion carried on a voice vote. Verbatim Closed Session Recordings prior to January 2023 will be destroyed.

With no further business to come before the board, Schackmann moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 pm. Geier seconded the motion. Motion carried on a voice vote. The meeting was adjourned.

The Next Board Meeting will be on Thursday, August 15, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

Amy Tarr, Jasper County Clerk