

December 14, 2023

MINUTES OF DECEMBER 14th MEETING

Commissioners were all present. Staff and Commissioner Candidate Joe Sherman recited the pledge at 9:00. Purchase orders and bills were reviewed and signed. Pending issues were discussed with the following resolutions approved and signed:

V110-402 Minutes of December 12, 2023:
1st-Rush 2nd-Crowe Roll call: Crowe-yes, Striker-yes, Rush-yes
V110-403 Bills
1st-Crowe 2nd-Rush Roll call: Rush-yes, Striker-yes, Crowe-yes
V110-404 Reallocation: Sheriff, Domestic Relations
1st-Rush 2nd-Crowe Roll call: Crowe-yes, Rush-yes, Striker-yes
V110-405 Release of Funds: FCFC Service Coordination
1st-Crowe 2nd-Rush Roll call: Crowe-yes, Rush-yes, Striker-yes
V110-406 Authorize Waibel Energy Systems to Replace VFD at Annex #3997
1st-Rush 2nd-Crowe Roll call: Striker-yes, Crowe-yes, Rush-yes

The receiving of credit card payments at the Dog & Kennel will be suspended for the time being. The Auditor is doing an audit.

Chris Griffith, **iTech Solutions**, MFA is over half way to comply with CORSA. The Affidavit can be signed so the 2024 discount will apply. 75% of users are doing the tokens the 25% with a cell phone. A question came up regarding use of cell phones. The personal use is different than being used to log onto a county computer. The Health Departments asked Chris to oversee their office as he does other county offices. He did a preliminary walk thru. They are way off from where the other offices are. Old phone system, old email is not compliant, no end point protection on the 2020 computers. Commissioner Rush attended a Board meeting on Tuesday and noted they need an update. Commissioner Crowe-whatever they want is on them. They can bring their services over to meet the security requirements. The Coroner has informed him of a new Coroner as of 12/31/23. Dr Kuk will be staying on in some capacity. Chris-I have two users but only one email license? Chris should speak with the new coroner after January 1 and explain to see how long they need two licenses due to cost. March 1 the new contract is up. The eSet licenses expires Feb. 28. A slight price increase, that he has yet to see.

The **Lowe Ditch #1133** was held in Veterans Hall.

Commissioner Striker called the hearing to order. Striker: read the rules for the hearing and gave the floor to Trent Bass, Engineers office, to go over the Preliminary Report (**V110-407a**) on the Lowe Open Ditch. There are 3910 acres in the Watershed and the rate per acre will fluctuate upon improvement typically \$4 per acre. Placing on maintenance. There has been no filing for damages. The work to be performed will bring the ditch up to standards for maintenance, \$11,200.00 plus additional cost for advertising, mailings...will bring the total cost to \$15,745.75. Two letters opposing the improvement were read by Commissioner Crowe: Joe Bookmeyer: tax assessments and Chris and Carrie Preston: no proof of benefit. Others opposing, hand-written letters, those present were given the opportunity to read their letters. Those with letters opposing are: Chris & Carrie Preston, Joe Bookmyer, Emma Jordan, Lori Harp, George & Victoria Collins. Lori Harp asked about the sprays used on the brush. Trent: only if it's put on maintenance. Luke Underwood, Engineer, typically spray yearly and dip if necessary. Commissioner Striker opened the floor to those who want to speak at 3 minutes each. Vickie Collins: Financial hardship. \$4 per acre average some higher some lower depending on where you live in the watershed per Luke Underwood this will be determined at the final hearing if the Commissioners move to approve. Ed. Kearns: won't help him. He lives across the road, a 4" tile won't drain anything. Lori Harp: organic farm-too many chemicals, UPA certified, can't sell as organic. Luke; aquatic approved spray on the ground. Lori will lose part of the grain (Land). Emma Jordan: (2) letters opposing increased cost on taxes, no benefit Chemicals, also organic Chemical run off, drinking water affected, animals etc. better way, good steward, toxic soup, more frightening every year. Summing up

her letters- Please vote no. Commissioners Crowe asked Luke/Trent if there is any other way to control brush etc.. Luke -yes, more expensive, can look into mowing, spray is cheaper. Commissioner Crowe-will you prepare separate estimates for the final hearing. Luke yes. Zach McMillon; way up stream- what's the benefit? Sharon Sams: for future maintenance, we spent lots of money to get cleaned, would like to have it on maintenance to keep it up. Larry Phillips: just maintenance on one of the sections. Luke-yes. Jeff Dawson-Maintenance item, let them (Sams) pay for maintenance. Breinne Sullivan for property to drain properly it continues to cost, not in favor. Commissioner Crowe-is it 3% estimate for maintenance common? Trent yes. Striker: any further questions-? Nothing else? Commissioner Crowe motion to move forward to the next step, believe there are benefits to getting a final cost. Commissioner Rush second. Roll call: Commissioner Striker -yes, Commissioner Crowe- yes, Commissioner Rush-yes. Final Hearing will be set at a later date. **V110-407** Submitted by Deputy Clerk Debra Madison

The Commissioners and Staff were guest of Sharon Huston, Hardin Hills Administrator for a luncheon at 101 Smokehouse.

Judge Christopher and Gina Messmer discussed the 2024 budget for Common Pleas and Probate Court. Judge noted the real estate tax is going up 30 to 40% next year. 3% comes to the county? Common Pleas budget is flat and is going up. Probate is going up due to state regulations. There is a bill pending in the state for paying jurors. He has no room in the budget. The criminal docket next year, if it's this big the budget will go up. Salaries-small increases. Commissioner Crowe-true if you want to hire you have to pay but Hardin County only has so much money to pay, it has to stop sometime. We can't keep sustaining. We have to let you know where we are coming from. 2 to 3 years down the road there won't be anything to give. Comfortable now thanks to years of others. Judge Christopher-great ideas at state level and they dump on us with no pay. Commissioner Crowe-the court restructure has cost the county a lot of money. Judge Christopher-not in my courts.

Sheriff Keith Everhart submitted a quote for a fence around the Safety Center area, \$11,028.40. Concrete blocks to place around the perimeter. Commissioners will consider after the first of the year. Discussion on a trial period to assume management of the Dog & Kennel. He would model after other counties using the current budget. He will get a copy of another county's MOU.

Two interviews were held for the position of Clerk to the Board.

Roll call resulted as follows:

_____, YES/NO
President of the Board-Timothy L. Striker

_____, YES/NO
Roger E. Crowe

_____, YES/NO
Fred M. Rush

Attest _____
Clerk of the Board