

October 19, 2023

MINUTES OF OCTOBER 19<sup>th</sup> 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:

V110-294 Minutes of October 17, 2023:

1<sup>st</sup>-Crowe 2<sup>nd</sup>-Striker Roll call: Crowe-yes, Rush-absent, Striker-yes

V110-295 Reallocation: Common Pleas payroll

1<sup>st</sup>-Rush 2<sup>nd</sup>-Crowe Roll call: Crowe-yes, Striker-yes, Rush-yes

V110-296 Additional Appropriation: Sheriff, Hardin Hills, Job & Family Services

1<sup>st</sup>-Crowe 2<sup>nd</sup>-Rush Roll call: Rush-yes, Striker-yes, Crowe-yes

V110-297 Payment of Bills CDBG

1<sup>st</sup>-Rush 2<sup>nd</sup>-Crowe Roll call: Crowe-yes, Rush-yes, Striker-yes

V110-298 Bills

1<sup>st</sup>-Crowe 2<sup>nd</sup>-Rush Roll call Rush-yes, Striker-yes, Crowe-yes

Signed: JFS & Morgan Tudor Agreement Scanning Services 10/16/23-6/30.24,  
\$20,000

1<sup>st</sup>-Striker 2<sup>nd</sup>-Crowe Roll call: Rush-yes, Striker-yes, Crowe-yes

Prosecutor Bradford W. Bailey, Katey Henson, Austin, Judge Steve Christopher, Judge Greg Grimslid and Judge Maria Santo met to discuss the local attorney decline. 389 graduated from ONU last year. Not all will pass the bar, stay in the area or even practice law. The Prosecutor suggested offering independent contracts for x number of dollars, they would work here doing all courts, criminal, Job & Family, all. They would live in Hardin County with a 2-3 year commitment. Doctors have done this type of contract. Two Law Clerks he currently employs would like to stay in Hardin County. It doesn't look as if any firms will hire. Judge Christopher-this is a dire situation and we should care. The AG office is sending people up to Wyandot and Allen County. We are going to be competing with other counties. The market will eventually fix itself maybe in 20 years. They will take our courts out of the county and move to a bigger court or use a Supervisor. Once we lose, there will be no local Hardin County people serving as local Prosecutors or Judges. Then the consolidation starts. We need a package and money to do an independent contract. Prosecutor-part of your school loan can be waived if you work in a rural place. State and Federal offers. Judge Christopher-You could at least eat and live for a few years until you can start your practice. Shortly there will be no one in Hardin County to do Divorce Law. This will be an opening to get someone.

Prosecutor- will get some of the investment back into your community. Once the contract is up it will be hard for them to leave once they are settled here. Judge Christopher-They changed qualifications for what you get reimbursement for under Indigent. It was a goal to eliminate Indigent Defense-they want a Public Defender in each county. Then you will pay that fund. Judge Grimslid-if I retire and go under the indigent list, I cannot come into the courts until I start as one and work up. Judge Christopher-by doing this we will have one attorney to train. We need to get them here and figure out a way to get them experienced. Judge Santo-this has happened in Hancock County. They have a PD. When co-defendants, the PD only defends one you still have to pay indigent. They found they did not save money. We need 3 to 5 attorneys to go thru the same system for some cases. We have one attorney here to do. Judge Christopher-these attorneys we all use and they covering a big area as other counties are using. We get less and less out of our small pool. Prosecutor-Poaching is now happening. All of my attorneys have been approached. Everyone is down lawyers. We have an advantage with ONU next door. Commissioner Rush-the poaching is a good point. Could you put a clause in there regarding? Prosecutor-we have to. Judge Christopher-a commitment to Hardin County's court. Negotiate cost and pay raises. Be creative. We need ideas to keep an independent court system in Hardin County. No reimbursement from the state for these programs. Judge Grimslid-in my court, my attorney does most of their practice out of the county. I have to work around their schedules. I have no one local. Commissioner Striker-cost for one person? Prosecutor-make it attractive, base on what I start assistants. They need to be doing trial work. Be in front of the bench. Judge Santo would like to see what other counties are paying. Coming out of law school they have not experience and will depend on us to

mentor. I'm not opposed. Judge Grimslid-make sure this contract includes Municipal Court. Prosecutor-yes, all courts. Commissioner Crowe-we remember this is Hardin County and can't afford to match other counties. Judge Grimslid-if we don't it will end up like the City, I have two clerks, did have five. They leave for more money. Judge Santo-most clerks have high school diplomas vs. a law clerk with a college degree. Commissioner Crowe-we see a lot of raises out of line. All see other salaries and want more. Prosecutor-opportunities here. They will see once invested in our communities. Judge Christopher-we don't need to do this for us. We hear you guys. Look at this to make an investment in the community for the future. We won't see the fruits while we are in office, but will see down the road. Commissioner Striker-cost? we are in budgets? From Prosecutor's budget? Prosecutor-No, set up separate line item. Salaries, no benefits. Who hires? Informal ad hoc committee. Commissioners will contract with the hire. Are the Commissioners sold on the concept? Then you set up account and budget, then committee meets to move forward. Commissioners will take under advisement.

Sharon Huston, **Hardin Hills** Administrator, Hardin Hills is now a three star rating. Revenue \$410,058. Expenses \$563,93. Loss \$153,916 with year to date loss of \$166,332. Ending balance of \$1,417,625. Census is at 64. Flu vaccines for all residents and staff is completed. Residents will be offered the next COVID once the pharmacy receives. RSV vaccines will also be offered to residents in November. Two Positive Covid for residents, three for staff. At 10:24 Commissioner Crowe moved to enter Executive Session with Sharon Huston regarding ORC 121.22 (G)(2). Commissioner Rush second. Roll call: Striker-yes, Rush-yes, Crowe-yes. At 10:54 Commissioner Striker announced the end of Executive Session.

The Engineer held the **Material Storage Building** bid opening with the following bids opened:

- 1. Charles Construction Services \$423,400.00 BB
- 2. Central Structures LLC \$320,515.00 BB

Commissioner Crowe moved to take under the advisement of Luke Underwood to be awarded at a later time. Commissioner Rush second. Roll call: Crowe-yes, Rush-yes, Striker-yes. Estimate is \$450,000. **V110-299**

At 11:34 Commissioner Crowe moved to enter **Executive Session** with invited guest Sharon Huston, Katey Henson, Mike Bacon and Prosecutor Bradford W. Bailey per ORC 121.22(G)(2). Commissioner Rush second. Roll call: Striker-yes, Rush-yes, Crowe-yes. At 12:09 Commissioner Striker announced the end of Executive Session.

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