

November 26, 2024

MINUTES OF November 26th MEETING

All Commissioners were present. Staff and Commissioner elect 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:

V112-344	Minutes of November 21, 2024:
1 <sup>st</sup> -Rush	2 <sup>nd</sup> -Striker Roll Call: Crowe-yes, Striker-yes, Rush-yes
V112-345	Ditch Maintenance Bills
1 <sup>st</sup> -Striker	2 <sup>nd</sup> -Rush Roll Call: Rush-yes, Striker-yes, Crowe-yes
V112-346	Chairs to KPD from HHHC
1 <sup>st</sup> -Rush	2 <sup>nd</sup> -Striker Roll Call: Rush-yes, Striker-yes, Crowe-yes
V112-347	Additional Appropriation
1 <sup>st</sup> -Striker	2 <sup>nd</sup> -Rush Roll Call: Striker-yes, Crowe-yes, Rush-yes
V112-348	Bills
1 <sup>st</sup> -Rush	2 <sup>nd</sup> -Striker Roll Call: Rush-yes, Striker-yes, Crowe-yes
V112-349	Indigent Attorney Fees
1 <sup>st</sup> -Striker	2 <sup>nd</sup> -Rush Roll Call: Rush-yes, Striker-yes, Crowe-yes

**Sheriff Keith Everhart, Deputy Chief Dennis Burns, Lieutenant Scott Holbrook, and Angela Winegarner** with general updates and budget discussion: Haven't had any issues with the marc's radios. It was a great investment. 19 dogs at dog kennel as of today. Cody is doing well. New cage cleaner is working out so far. Sheriff and Commissioners agreed that the Sheriff will take over the dog pound permanently after the first of the year. Budget: pretty much everything stayed the same except salaries. What they want is to do away with percentage wages. They are looking at going away from percentages and doing straight rages for years of service. The top out pay will be higher than if they raise by percentages. We have not agreed on any of this. Keith- I need you to be aware that we are in negotiations and will be into the first quarter of the year. We will need to adjust accordingly when its time. The levy went down. We will try again in the spring.

**Keith Severns** EMA director with updates- several things since last meeting. Attended CORSA and EMA meetings, with nothing major to report. Getting our MOU ready to sign with the HAMM radio group. We went over expectations of what we may need from them. The state replaced our marcs radio in our office so we are up to date. Met with Chief Donnely about the HAZMAT team and funding for trainings that may be needed. Election process was uneventful. Attended fall conference, it was virtual, they shared new information and talked about our grants. I went out to visit the substation that had the fire. Two weeks ago the electric processor was still smoking on the inside. You can see the new substation going in right behind the old one. Since our last meeting there have been three semi rollovers. One on State Route 117 that spilled 20 gallons of fuel, It did not get into the river and the EPA was satisfied with cleanup. Another one on County Road 175, no reason for a cleanup crew. There was another on south 68 this morning but I did not receive a call about any spills. The dog warden has made some changes to the dog shelter. We will go out and do a new building inspection for CORSA. We are also working on an emergency evacuation plan for the dog shelter. One of the goals I have for my office is to have LEPC under EMA. If that happens then we can reach out together and get more Grants, we could also have more help with the hazmat team that is wanting to grow.

**State Rep. Jon Cross-** I wanted to stop by and have a final visit. I wanted to say thank you for your support over the last several years. It was nice to put Hardin County on the map. If you look back on the last 6 years Ohio is in a much better place than it was. We're a top ten business friendly state and we weren't ten years ago. We fought to bring those tax dollars back home. It is rewarding to see progress being made. We have about three weeks left. Overall, I am certainly happy with where we are. We danced around the solar project issues. I know those are challenging issues on your local end. It never got anywhere at the state level. I'm going to start a consulting business after this. Try to keep fighting for those dollars for our district. Lots of state resources are out there.

That's about all I have to report. It's been a great experience. I've loved every minute of it. I just finished a thank you letter to the constituents of the 83<sup>rd</sup> district. Roger, we've had a lot of fun together and I hope you enjoy your retirement. It's been a great honor and thank you for working together with us.

**Ohio Public Defender Elizabeth Miller**, along with Assistant Director Chase Carter, and Allen County Public Defender Ken Sturgill met with Judge Santo, Judge Christopher, Prosecutor Bradford W. Bailey, and Commissioners- Working on a three-county regional HUB. It's the first of its kind and we will pilot that program if it gets passed in the next general assembly. Allen County would serve as the physical "brick and mortar" location for the HUB. There would be a dedicated public defender for Hardin County and Putnam County that would work from Allen County. The agreement is that this will be funded by the state. Elizabeth, Chase and Ken answered the Judges and Prosecutors' questions to the best of their ability now. Everything is still up in the air, and this is just to let us know what has been submitted currently. We will know more after February 3.

**Tyler and Jack with Invenergy**- Jack and I bounced around last night- talked with the fire chief about safety equipment. Jack attended McDonald township meeting last night. We talked about road repairs, but also all the other ones we need to repair. Spring 2025 we need to hit the ground running. We are anticipating Hardin solar II commercial operation for middle of December. Q1 Hardin III. We have site reclamation, making sure all the sites are brought up to states standards at the end of June. More people in and out of facilities to the end of June. We went from about 400 people to 100 right now. As they hit commercial operation that number of workers will be further reduced. Not a whole lot has changed since the last update. Operation dates are still on track. Rez and Invenergy will have presence until next summer to make sure everything is cleaned up. With a majority of the physical work that needs done. We will turn over a lot of ownership and responsibilities to our operations team who will be on site. Commissioner Rush- your operations team will be Invenergy? Tyler- yes they are Invenergy employees they will be on site day in and day out. Jack- as of late last week we finalized our emergency operation plans. We have the addresses for our entrances. My request is if there are any local fire/Ems that would need information that we know. Commissioner Rush- is there a need for Ems if there are panels that go down. Any issues related to chemicals that would leak out on the ground? Tyler- There is nothing toxic in these panels. They are 98% silicone. If they crack, they spiderweb out. Even if it falls, or is cracked, there is no contamination of the soil. Commissioner Rush- Thank you.

**Lynn, Dudley, and Cessna Township** residents met with Commissioners in Vet's Hall to discuss their concerns and opposition to Solar in their townships. Commissioner Crowe addressed the crowd starting the meeting at 1:30. Leanne Matthews set up the appointment, so she acts as spokesperson. Commissioner Crowe addressed the crowd before hearing the speakers. I think you're all here because you're concerned about solar in your townships. It has long been the position of the Hardin County Commissioners, that until a township came to the commissioners and requested that we make their township a non-solar township that we would not do anything. But when the townships submit a request to us in the form of a township resolution, that we will abide by their request because township trustees know their townships a lot better than the commissioners do. It is our position that if the township requests that we pass a resolution that they not allow solar in their township we will honor that request and pass a resolution. If you are concerned whether we are going to support that in your township, and you're behind what the township trustees submit to us, I don't think you have concerns. You are more than welcome to still speak. I did want to lay those concerns aside and it may make the meeting a little easier for us. Leanne if you want to open with your comments then we have someone who wants to speak first .  
Leanne Matthews-you sort of wiped some of my concerns off my list. Thank you for allowing us to be here. We apologize for the disruptions of last week. Our purpose of being here is to formally let you know that we don't want to see anymore solar developments in Hardin County. We know the approved projects will move forward.

Throughout the coming weeks you may be receiving resolutions from various townships per SB52 to set public meetings and designate restrictions on solar. Which you said you'd be willing to do. We implore you to do everything in your power as commissioners to restrict the construction boundaries in order for the solar projects to be the least intrusive on our community as possible. Often we've heard it said that no one came in opposition to the solar projects. So here we are, just a fraction of us coming together as one to say no more solar.

Tony Siebenck- on behalf of several hundred of the citizens of Dudley Township we wanted to officially apologize for last Thursday. That is not how we like to do business. A formal apology to you folks that you wont ever see that again. We look forward to a hearing hopefully in January. Ron Seitz- you have already confirmed what we came here to talk about today. We need to quit losing farmland. These solar panels are not for our township. Jocelyn Anderson Kavanagh- I've been around this before I am a resident of Logan County and landowner in Logan County. Our township trustees did not have to ask commissioners permission to pass a resolution. I'm also a landowner in Hardin County. I am here to protect our farmland. Solar is the worst of the worst of the worst. Read a letter that was sent to the Ohio Power Siting Board. Left the attachment and letter with the commissioners. Tony Sherman- is there a timeline from when a property is signed up to the program and construction starts? Is there a deadline or point where it progresses too far and we can't stop it with a resolution? Commissioner Crowe- the way I understand it once that project applies to the Ohio power siting board they can move forward. There are various timelines that it takes to get to that point. Once they reach that point, they are grandfathered into the county. They have a lot of information and steps to get in line first. Commissioner Striker- a lot of the time people have contracts and agreements before we even know about it here. It is hard to close a whole county to solar. We need to give each township an opportunity. Commissioner Crowe- we must advertise 30 days before we have our meeting before we consider the resolution. Then we act on it, it doesn't take effect for another 30 days. For 30 days there is a chance for a referendum to be put on. If that happens it goes to vote, then the entire county gets to decide for our township, and we don't think that is right. We would like to do all three townships at the same meeting. Each one will be approved separately. Commissioner Rush- I think it will save a lot of confusion considering we are doing three separate townships. We are trying to streamline the process. Commissioner Striker- it's even more confusing if you get a referendum. Bob White- They can't go ahead and do anything once we start this process? Does it stop them from doing anything until the process is done.? Commissioner Crowe- I don't think so. It would be once our resolution has passed. Commissioner Striker- there is time for the resolution to happen. There are a lot of steps they must get through, it's not a quick process. We want the township trustees to speak for their townships. We don't want to tell farmers what to do with the land, or townships what to do either.

Roll call resulted as follows:

\_\_\_\_\_, YES/NO  
 President of the Board-Roger E. Crowe

\_\_\_\_\_, YES/NO  
 Fred M. Rush

\_\_\_\_\_, YES/NO  
 Timothy L. Striker

Attest \_\_\_\_\_  
 Clerk of the Board