

**WARRICK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING**  
REGULAR SESSION  
COMMISSIONERS MEETING ROOM  
107 W. Locust Street, Suite 303  
Boonville, Indiana  
January 1, 2025  
3:00 PM

The Warrick County Commissioners met in regular session with Commissioners Sarah Seaton, Stacey Franz, and Terry Phillippe.

Attorney Cliff Whitehead and Administrator Debbie Bennett-Stearsman were in attendance.

Auditor Michael Dietsch recorded the minutes.

Commissioner Meetings can be viewed via YouTube: Warrick County Meetings

Commissioner Terry Phillippe called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**INTRODUCTORY STATEMENTS BY COMMISSIONER'S PRESIDENT**

Commissioner Terry Phillippe welcomed the new Commissioners to the Board.

**ACTION AGENDA**

**TERMINATION OF CONTRACT WITH GRANT ADMINISTRATOR**

Next, the Board discussed the termination of the Contract with Grant Administrator Debbie Bennett-Stearsman. The date of termination was December 31, 2024. Ms. Bennett-Stearsman has been newly appointed as County Administrator. Commissioner Sarah Seaton made the motion to terminate the contract. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

**AGREEMENT FOR LEGAL SERVICES FOR WARRICK COUNTY WITH ZIEMER,  
STAYMAN, WEITZEL, & SHOULDERS**

County Attorney Cliff Whitehead presented the annual contract for his services. He talked briefly on the major points of the contract. This will be a one-year contract effective January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025. The monthly retainer fee is \$5,000.00. The contract will be with Ziemer, Stayman, Weitzel, and Shoulders with County Attorney Cliff Whitehead as primary. Commissioner Sarah Seaton made the motion to approve the contract. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

**APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT FOR LIMITED LEGAL SERVICES WITH FINE AND  
HATFIELD FOR RADON LITIGATION**

The Approval of Agreement for Limited Legal Services with Fine and Hatfield for Radon Litigation was presented. Attorney Whitehead reviewed the contract. He said it was for \$250.00 an hour and was only for the Radon Litigation. The rate was considered a reasonable and acceptable rate. Commissioner Stacey Franz made a motion to approve the contract. Commissioner Sarah Seaton seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

**2025 APPOINTMENTS  
COMMISSIONER OFFICERS  
PRESIDENT**

Commissioner Stacey Franz nominated Commissioner Sarah Seaton for President. Commissioner Terry Phillippe seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

**VICE PRESIDENT**

Commissioner Sarah Seaton nominated Commissioner Stacey Franz for Vice President. Commissioner Terry Phillippe seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

**HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT SUPERINTENDENT**

Commissioner Sarah Seaton made a motion to retain Bobby Howard as the Highway Department Superintendent. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY DIRECTOR**

Commissioner Stacey Franz made a motion to retain Matthew Goebel as the Emergency Management Agency Director. Commissioner Sarah Seaton seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Commissioner Sarah Seaton made a motion to retain Commissioner Terry Phillippe on the EMA Council. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

**WEIGHTS AND MEASURES INSPECTOR**

Commissioner Sarah Seaton made a motion to retain Michael Arnold as the Weights and Measures Inspector. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

**ALCOHOL BEVERAGE BOARD**

The current appointment is Gene Weisheit. After a brief discussion, Commissioner Sarah Seaton made the motion to table the appointment. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

There was a brief discussion with Counsel on what appointments were needed today. Commissioner Franz asked about contacting individuals that may be interested in the appointments. She had requested from HR a list of the appointments and information about those Boards and their meeting dates. She hasn't received it yet and would like the opportunity to get that information and speak to different individuals on the appointments. Attorney Whitehead said that they could postpone the appointments and it would just leave a vacancy on the Board.

There was also a brief discussion on the terms of the appointments and the accuracy of the appointments sheet. Attorney Whitehead felt this was the current list of vacancies and appointments that needed to be done. They don't need to be done today; however, they should be done by the next meeting.

Commissioner Phillippe said that he had talked with Economic Development Director Steve Roelle and he would like all the current appointments to remain. It is a very strong Board that is very engaged and everyone attends.

There was a brief discussion on the meeting times. Attorney Whitehead said he was showing that they were held on the third Thursday at 3:00 PM at the Friedman Park Event Center once a month.

Commissioner Stacey Franz appointed Commissioner Sarah Seaton to the Board. Commissioner Terry Phillippe seconded the motion. After some discussion, she amended her motion to also include to retain the remaining Board members: Jerry Aigner, Brandon Hayes, Tony Aylsworth, Jenna Richardt, and Brad Pemberton. Commissioner Sarah Seaton seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

**JOINT DRAINAGE BOARDS  
GIBSON**

Commissioner Sarah Seaton made the motion to appoint Commissioner Stacey Franz. Commissioner Terry Phillippe seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Sarah Seaton made the motion to reappoint Commissioner Terry Phillippe . Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

**SPENCER**

Commissioner Sarah Seaton made the motion to appoint Commissioner Stacey Franz. Commissioner Terry Phillippe seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Stacey Franz made the motion to appoint Commissioner Sarah Seaton. Commissioner Terry Phillippe seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

**GIBSON/VANDEBURGH/WARRICK**

Commissioner Sarah Seaton made the motion to reappoint Commissioner Terry Phillippe. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Sarah Seaton made a motion to reappoint Steve Sherwood. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

**LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Commissioner Stacey Franz made the motion to reappoint Commissioner Terry Phillippe. Commissioner Sarah Seaton seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

**OHIO TOWNSHIP LIBRARY BOARD**

Commissioner Sarah Seaton made a motion to reappoint Susan McCool. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

**PARKS BOARD**

Commissioner Phillippe said that the current appointment, Tyler Neff, was stepping down. There was a discussion on when the meetings were held. Attorney Whitehead said that they met two times a month: the first Tuesday at 5:00 PM at a Scales Lake and the third Tuesday at 5:00 PM at Friedman Park Event Center. Commissioner Seaton asked what Tyler Neff's backgrounds was. Commissioner Phillippe said that he is a banker. Commissioner Seaton said that gave her an idea on what to look for. Commissioner Stacey Franz made a motion to table the appointment. Commissioner Sarah Seaton seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

### **PIGEON TOWNSHIP SEWER DISTRICT**

Mike Moesner is currently in the position. Commissioner Sarah Seaton made the motion to retain him in the position if he was willing. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

### **PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENT BOARD**

Currently on the Board are John Goth, Madolyn O'Neal, and Angela Wilder. None of them wish to remain on the Board. Two names were given as recommendations from the Assessor's Office: Paul Rudolph and Greg Tuck. Commissioner Seaton has spoken with the Assessor and knows that she feels strongly about the appointments and both these individuals are willing to serve. Commissioner Sarah Seaton made a motion to approve the appointment of Paul Rudolph and Greg Tuck. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Sarah Seaton made the motion to table the third appointment. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

### **REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

Commissioner Phillippe said that this was similar to the Economic Development Commission. He felt that they should keep that in tact as is. There was a brief discussion on Dr. Redmon as the appointment from the school board and continuing in that position. Attorney Whitehead agreed that she continue and would be willing. Commissioner Sarah Seaton made a motion to retain Jenna Richardt, Brad Pemberton, Brandon Hayes, Tony Aylsworth, and Dr. Abbie Redmon. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

### **SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT**

Commissioner Phillippe said that Tracee Matthews, with the Elberfeld Town Council, is currently serving as a Town Council member and is doing a great job. Commissioner Sarah Seaton made the motion to retain Tracee Matthews. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

### **SOUTHWESTERN INDIANA MENTAL HEALTH**

Commissioner Phillippe has asked them to come to a meeting soon and give a presentation. It has not been scheduled, but he would like to hear that before an appointment is made. Commissioner Sarah Seaton made a motion to table the appointment. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

### **SOUTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Currently, Evan Beck is serving and doing a good job. Commissioner Phillippe knows that Economic Development Director Steve Roelle would recommend he stay. Commissioner Sarah Seaton made a motion to retain Evan Beck. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

### **TRI-CAP**

Currently serving is Shari Sherman. There was brief discussion on whether the appointment term was expired. Commissioner Phillippe asked if it could be reappointed to clear it up. Counsel said that it could. Commissioner Sarah Seaton made a motion to retain Shari Sherman. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

### **TOURISM COMMISSION**

There are two current members: Todd Glass and Beau Dial. Commissioner Franz said that she had someone interested in serving but didn't know when they met. She asked if it could be tabled. Shari Sherman who sits on the Board gave details on meeting times. There was then a discussion on whether the current members wish to serve. Commissioner Sarah Seaton made the motion to retain both Beau Dial and Todd Glass. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

### **VETERAN'S AFFAIRS**

Commissioner Seaton asked what he does. Commissioner Phillippe said that he takes care of the Veterans in the County including benefits. He regularly submits reports and has individuals that come in from other counties and states. They have received calls on the great job he does. Counsel stated that the position was a four-year term that would start this year. Commissioner Sarah Seaton made the motion to retain Dewayne Beadles. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

### **WCCC ADVISORY BOARD**

Mike Wilson is currently on the Board and must step down. Commissioner Phillippe presented Andrew Skinner as an appointment and that he is willing to serve. Commissioner Franz asked if this could be tabled. Counsel had concerns about this being a lucrative position which would keep Mr. Skinner from serving as he is also on the Warrick County School Board. Counsel, for that reason and for Mr. Skinner's benefit, would like to make sure that it is not a lucrative position that would jeopardize his School Board position. Commissioner Phillippe asked about appointing contingent upon checking that information. Counsel advised against it so that there would be no questions on forfeiting his elected position on the School Board. Commissioner Sarah Seaton made a motion to table the appointment. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

**WEED CONTROL BOARD**

The Commissioners have several questions about this Board. Commissioner Phillippe said it has been discussed in the past. They aren't aware that they meet. He asked if it was a statutory board. Counsel stated that it was but was unsure how often or when it needed to meet. Everyone will be checking into this to address at upcoming meetings. Commissioner Sarah Seaton made a motion to table. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

**BUILDING CORPORATION**

Commissioner Phillippe said that this appointment would have to be tabled and they don't have any names currently. There was a couple of questions on the Corporation. Commissioner Sarah Seaton made a motion to table. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

**COMMISSIONER ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

Commissioner Seaton wanted to know what positions were, prior to this, appointed out of tradition and not necessarily statute, and what their standings are now. Counsel stated that he had a list of those positions he could pull up and that those employees will just continue in those positions unless the Commissioners decide otherwise.

Commissioner Seaton asked if at this point they're treated as traditional employees, not Commissioner appointments. He said they were considered employees of Warrick County and that it was an extensive list. There was a brief discussion on how the current employees would continue going forward today as they were yesterday.

Attorney Whitehead went over some of the positions that are appointed even though there is no requirement that they are appointed. Commissioner Phillippe wanted to point out that some of those were simply employees that were hired and some of the appointments are titles of duties.

Commissioner Seaton said that with the change of the majority of the Board, there's always some uncertainty people have about whether they will continue in the positions they are in. She just wanted to alleviate any concerns that major decisions were going to be made to do other than that. She also feels it is important that people feel secure in their positions.

There was also a brief discussion on HR matters being handled by HR and then ultimately by the Commissioners and not necessarily in an open meeting, but in an executive session.

Commissioner Phillippe also welcomed both the new Commissioners and their new Administrator, Debbie Bennett-Stearsman.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The next Warrick County Commissioners' meeting will be held on Monday, January 13, 2025 in the Commissioners' meeting room at 4:00 PM. Commissioner Sarah Seaton made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Stacey Franz seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

Meeting adjourned at 3:47 P.M.

**WARRICK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

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**SARAH SEATON, PRESIDENT**

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**STACEY FRANZ, VICE PRESIDENT**

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**TERRY PHILLIPPE, MEMBER**

**ATTEST:**

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**MICHAEL J. DIETSCH, AUDITOR  
WARRICK COUNTY, INDIANA**