

Richland County Board

April 14, 2022

Convene

Chairman Dennis Graves called the meeting of the Richland County Board to order at 7:00 PM on April 14, 2022 at the Jail Meeting Room. The meeting was proclaimed open, the Pledge of Allegiance recited and Prayer/Moment of Silence was offered. Attendance: Dennis Graves, Present; Brian VanBlaricum, Present; Shawn Rose, Absent; Emily Blackford, Present; Morgan Henton, Present; Bill Clow, Present; Steven Schonert, Present. Board Member VanBlaricum attended per phone conference call.

Motion/Vote - Approval of Agenda

District 4 Emily Blackford made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of 5C. District 5 Morgan Henton seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Bill Clow (Yes), Brian VanBlaricum (Yes), Dennis Graves (Yes), Emily Blackford (Yes), Morgan Henton (Yes), Shawn Rose (Absent), Steven Schonert (Yes). Chairman Graves added 5C: FOP business.

Information, Meetings

The members announced their meetings to be held in the month. ETSB on April 27 and 708 Board on April 21.

Open - Village of Claremont

Ted Marshall, representing the Village of Claremont, described the sanitary sewer system within the Village. Installed in 1974 it is now aged and showing signs of issues. The Village would like to have the system inspected by video, to see what is required to fix the issues. The approximate cost is \$72,372. They are asking for ARPA funds from the County to help with the cost. Charleston Engineering has recommended a reliable company for the work. Mr. Schonert asked if the County was unable to fund the complete project if they would go ahead with the inspection. Mr. Marshall answered yes, but would need to borrow or sell bonds for funding. Mr. Schonert asked to discuss this under item #12.

Open - Village of Noble

Brad Kessler, Noble Village Mayor, addressed the Board. The Village has several intended projects. They will receive ARPA funds on their own, but are asking the Board for ARPA funds to upgrade the park restrooms. The present facility is old and not ADA accessible. The park is frequently used. The total cost for a pre-fab unit set on concrete is \$154,500. The funds will also be used for 30 amp electric installation. Mr. Schonert asked if a lesser amount is received, if Noble would still finish the project. Mr. Kessler responded yes, and they would be a permanent fixture. Chairman Graves also stated the Board will discuss this under #12.

Open - FOP Recognition of Deputy McCormick

Representatives from the Illinois FOP were present. They had special recognition for Deputy Kevin McCormick. He was nominated for saving the life of gentleman who had fallen into the lake and was struggling. Deputy McCormick jumped into the lake and rescued the gentleman. The Board members, FOP representatives and Sheriff Hires congratulated Deputy McCormick and praised him for his quick reaction.

Consent Agenda

District 5 Morgan Henton made a motion to approve all items under the Consent Agenda. District 6 Bill Clow seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Bill Clow (Yes), Brian VanBlaricum (Yes), Dennis Graves (Yes), Emily Blackford (Yes), Morgan Henton (Yes), Shawn Rose (Absent), Steven Schonert (Yes). Items approved were the minutes of March 10, 29, and April 4; the county officer reports; the Road and Bridge minutes of April 7; the Closure of Noble Avenue on May 7 and August 13; the low bid for rock; and, the bid for a ditch mower.

Motion/Vote - Finance Committee - Payment of Claims

District 6 Bill Clow made a motion to approve payment of all presented claims. District 5 Morgan Henton seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Bill Clow (Yes), Brian VanBlaricum (Yes), Dennis Graves (Yes), Emily Blackford (Yes), Morgan Henton (Yes), Shawn Rose (Absent), Steven Schonert (Yes). Total county general claims was \$132,966.71 with late claims of \$154.00. Non county general claims totaled \$263,108.37 with late claims in the amount of \$644.97. There was no other finance committee business.

State's Attorney

State's Attorney John Clark informed the members a plea was made by a prisoner, clearing up the jury trial schedule for the next month.

Animal Control

Mr. Henton stated he and Mr. Schonert have met with Mrs. Henton and Ms. Fehrenbacher, both members of the Olney City Council. They are working together to establish a more up to date animal control ordinance.

Highway Business

County Engineer Colwell noted all is in line for a \$25,000 grant.

Board Committee Reports

(none at this time)

Old Business - ARPA Funds

Board Member Schonert referred to the ARPA Fund expense worksheet sent out earlier. He noted governments have been warned with the national and world issues there could be a chance the second tranche (or payment) be delayed or stopped. He would like to hold off approving any future requests until the funds have been received. A request for a mower of \$26,000; Noble waterline for \$195,000 a sewer lagoon, restroom, electrical work windows at the courthouse, the fair board water line, grandstand lights, sewer inspection, health office request, animal control improvements, dog park, all could be from the second half of funds. He is suggesting the board approve the \$26,000 for the county mower. Parkersburg and Calhoun Villages received county funds equal to 110% of their own receipts. This same formula would allow \$96,000 for the Village of Noble and \$25,500 for the Village of Claremont. Mr. Clow talked about the lights in front of the arena at the fair grandstand. The lights are old and do not provide much light. The service panels need replacing. The water lines to the barns are inadequate, not providing enough water for the barns. The fair board would like to hook on to a line by the old pool then run up to the barns. These would be hook-ups that can be removed during winter months. The courthouse windows need replacing due to rotting sashes. This is estimated at \$179,000. Mr. Schonert noted there are other items to consider and may need to re-consider some.

ARPA Funds

District 7 Steven Schonert made a motion to recommend and approve ARPA Fund payments. District 4 Emily Blackford seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Bill Clow (Yes), Brian VanBlaricum (Yes), Dennis Graves (Yes), Emily Blackford (Yes), Morgan Henton (Yes), Shawn Rose (Absent), Steven Schonert (Yes). Expenses approved for payment include \$26,000 for a county mower, \$96,000 to the Village of Noble, \$183,000 for courthouse windows, \$12,000 and \$31,000 for the Fair Board and \$25,500 to the Village of Claremont. This leaves \$23,000 remaining for the first half of the funds.

New Business - Officials' Salaries

Salaries for the officials' positions up for election this year must be set by June 1. The board members discussed amounts for raises and amounts for employees. Inflation is high and the county will most likely be under financial pressure. The first two years of the county clerk and treasurer salaries will be the same as the last two years of the circuit clerk and assessor. This will keep those officials on the same pay scale.

Motion/Vote - Official's Salaries

District 6 Bill Clow made a motion to approve the officers' salaries. District 4 Emily Blackford seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Bill Clow (Yes), Brian VanBlaricum (Yes), Dennis Graves (Yes), Emily Blackford (Yes), Morgan Henton (Yes), Shawn Rose (Absent), Steven Schonert (Yes). The first two years will follow the set schedule, with the last two years increasing \$2000 each year. The sheriff's salary will increase by \$2000 each year, with respect to any legislation passed for this purpose. The county board salary shall remain at \$6000 annually for members and \$8000 annually for the board chairman.

New Business - Human Resources

Board Member Henton discussed the position of a county manager or an HR manager. An HR manager can work remote, handle HR issues and payroll, taxes and insurance. There was discussion about the expense of a county manager or an HR company. State's Attorney Clark noted past discussion has been a broader discussion of duties. Mr. Henton said HR could handle questions and issues in the future. Mr. Clark suggested also including management and grant writing. Mr. Henton will continue researching.

Motion/Vote - Executive Session

District 6 Bill Clow made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss personnel, negotiations and litigation. District 5 Morgan Henton seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Bill Clow (Yes), Brian VanBlaricum (Yes), Dennis Graves (Yes), Emily Blackford (Yes), Morgan Henton (Yes), Shawn Rose (Absent), Steven Schonert (Yes). The members entered Executive Session at 7:47 pm.

Return to Open Session

District 6 Bill Clow made a motion to return to Open Session. District 5 Morgan Henton seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Bill Clow (Yes), Brian VanBlaricum (Yes), Dennis Graves (Yes), Emily Blackford (Yes), Morgan Henton (Yes), Shawn Rose (Absent), Steven Schonert (Yes). The members returned to Open Session at 8:44 p.m. Chairman Graves stated no action was taken.

Animal Control Administrator

Chairman Graves appointed Sheriff Hires as Animal Control Administrator. This will provide a contact person able to make decisions while the committee is reviewing/amending the animal control ordinance.

Adjournment

With nothing further to discuss, Chairman Graves entertained a motion to adjourn from Mr. Clow. This was seconded by Ms. Blackford. The meeting adjourned at 8:46 pm.

Alice Mullinax
County Clerk

Dennis R. Graves
County Board Chairman