

**COMMISSIONER MEETING
REGULAR SESSION
March 17, 2025
9:00 AM**

ATTENDANCE:

COMMISSIONERS:	Rick Woodall, President Tom Helmer, Vice President Andy Beck
ATTORNEY:	Jim Ensley
COUNCIL:	Stephanie Campbell, President
AUDITOR'S OFFICE	Kristina Berish
AUDIENCE:	24 Individuals

The Putnam County Board of Commissioners met on March 17, 2025, at 9:00 AM in regular session. The meeting was held at the Putnam County Courthouse. Woodall opened the meeting and the pledge to the flag was given.

Beck made the motion to add 911 Director position to the agenda. Woodall seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

VEHICLES FOR ADULT PROBATION DEPARTMENT

At the last meeting the board approved the department to receive opioid money. The department is purchasing two 2025 Ford Explorer police interceptor vehicles. These will be put in the Commissioners name. We need a motion by the board for the purchase. Woodall made the motion to purchase the two vehicles at a cost each of \$50,986.53. There will be documents that will need to be signed later upon purchase. Helmer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT – CREDIBLE MIND PROGRAM

Brian Williams said the program is an online platform designed to support mental health and well-being. Since the launch a couple of weeks ago they have had 393 users engaged and 475 sessions viewed.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT COVID VACCINE FUNDS

Brian Williams said the money they received for the COVID vaccine reimbursement is currently in a savings account. It is a reserve emergency fund.

After doing some research, they are looking to transfer the money to the Trust Indiana program through the State Treasurer's office. From what they found they would earn 20 times the interest revenue they are currently receiving. Beck cautioned them to do further research before they transferred their money. He had heard negative feedback.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT OFFICE SPACE

Brian Williams confirmed there was a meeting next week with the hospital board, Commissioner Beck and 5 of their board members who plan to attend to discuss additional space for their department at the hospital. Woodall said in the process there needs to be some kind of protection for the department if a change happens with the hospital.

PLANNING & ZONING DEPARTMENT

Lisa Zeine brought the following ordinances to the meeting:

Bainbridge Quarry - property located at the NW intersection of CR 50 E and CR 500 N (parcel#67-05-15-300-0103000-013). There was not any opposition at the Plan Commission meeting. Rezone from A1 to NR.

Woodall opened it up to comments from the audience. Chris South said he did not receive notification until Tuesday. He said it was due to the post office taking so long to get it delivered after he looked at the postmark date. The company is working the roads very hard and causing damage. They need to repair the damage they are causing.

South knew near the McFarland farm residents had mentioned they were using seismic devices to see how the blasting was affecting them. He felt this should be used in their area as well.

South was also concerned that there is a registered cemetery on the property. He would like to see the company put a fence around it and say that it should be maintained by them. It was located west of the property on the hill.

Helmer made the motion to table until their April 7th meeting to give time to talk to the quarry and address concerns. Beck seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Beck said he would talk with representatives of the quarry. Woodall cautioned we needed something specific regarding the maintenance of the road since in itself that is a broad statement.

Tyler Trent – property located on the east side of CR 600 W approximately .50 miles south of US 36 and approximately .25 miles north of CR 600 N (parcel#67-04-10-300-015.002-001). There were several people that had opposed the rezone of A1 to A2 at the meeting. Zeiner had attached documentation of the opposition in the paperwork she had submitted to the board prior to today's meeting. Plan Commission to give it a 6 to 1 favorable vote.

Woodall opened it up for comments from the audience. Trent came to the meeting to explain why they were requesting the rezone. They are looking to split it into four parcels: 1 lot @ 15 acres, 2 lots @ 8 acres, and 1 lot @ 6 acres. Woodall asked if the four parcels would meet the county's requirements. Zeiner replied they would. The first step is to rezone, then they would need to go through the plat process.

Susan Ponder said she lived across from the property. She is against it due to the preservation of farmland. She did not want to see it turn into a minor subdivision. They are an A1 zone area and would like to see it remain that way. Also did not feel it was safe to have four driveways by a hill. With additional housing they were also in fear of their well going dry.

Laura Scott said she sat on the board of zoning appeals for the county. She had opposed this rezone at the meeting. With the new UDO there is stress to preserve the farmland. The county had made a consolation of building on A1 on small lots but felt these were too large. The largest ag field in the county is right across from this property. The bulk of the land they are looking to rezone is very good farmland. The proposal does not have a shared driveway for the parcels, put the parcels to the back of the property and preserve the farmland upfront.

Trent stated he had looked at the year 2024 records and there had been seven applications from A1 to A2. And all had been approved. And under the current UDO.

Steven Truax has property by this one. They have an easement on the property. What happens to it. Ensley said if it is a recorded easement it goes with the property. He asked who would be maintaining the easement, he does currently. Ensley said if someone else would be utilizing the easement that is something that would need to be figured out if it went to a shared easement.

Craig Wood said the property could be divided into three parcels instead and due to the size of the parcels they would not need to go through the rezone process. And this would most likely cause there to be three driveways.

Beck said he was on the Plan Commission board, and he had opposed it. The rules were set to preserve the farmland. There has been a history of property being wasted because they will put the home on acreage and let the rest of it will become overgrown because they do not want to maintain it. And he felt it was dangerous to have four driveways on that hill.

Zeiner said if approved today they would then have to submit a plat to the tech review committee. They could do the 10 acres with 250 sq. ft. road frontage and not have to go before the boards for approval. It meets the current requirements.

Laura Scott said the applications that they had approved last year that Trent had referred to were in areas that made sense for the county for future growth. It was not in prime farmland.

Helmer is a firm believer of preserving farmland. He said that this is a lot of land for limited houses. Woodall said today they are looking at only the rezone from A1 to A2. Woodall felt if you look at UDO it meets the requirements. They can also do this in a different way without coming before them, only having 3 parcels instead of 4. Woodall made the motion to approve. The motion died from lack of second.

Beck made the motion to deny the request. Helmer seconded. Woodall opposed. The motion carried. Zeiner said it will remain as A1. They can split it into 3 parcels. Trent said that is exactly what their intent will be to do.

JD Grove – property located at 438 S CR 300 W (aka Walker Lane) (parcel#67-10-13-100-003.901-011). They are wanting to create an RV Airbnb. There were several at the meeting opposing the request. The reasoning had been included in the packet given to the board prior to the meeting. The board did not make a motion of recommendation to the Commissioners.

Woodall opened it up for comments from the audience. Bruce Zink said currently the land is idle and includes roughly 60 acres of classified forest. The part not in the classified forest they had set aside for tourism. They currently have three vintage campers, and the idea would not exceed nine campers. These would be stationary and not movable. They are small and have been renovated to be used for Airbnb. The plan would include a firepit and outdoor space for the campers to enjoy. It already had a driveway. They have been in touch with the health department regarding water and waste and were looking into getting power.

Woodall asked if this would be a multiple step process. First is to move to A2. Site plan next would go before tech review committee per Zeiner. This is adjacent to A2 and residential properties.

Beck said at the meeting he had made the motion to deny. It was voted down. Then a motion was made to approve but it was voted down.

Helmer said he had issues with the safety of the property and keeping people on the property vs adjacent properties. The property would be marked so people knew where the boundaries were.

Woodall made the motion to approve ordinance 2025-3-17-1. Helmer seconded. Beck opposed. The motion passed.

Zeiner submitted an ordinance to amend the unified development ordinance. No opposition at the meeting. Plan Commission met on March 10, 2025 and gave a favorable recommendation. This would allow for automotive services, heavy as a special exception in rural preservation A1 and agricultural A2. It would also allow for automotive services, light as a special exception in rural preservation A1 and agricultural A2. Beck made the motion to approve ordinance 2025-3-17-2. Helmer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

BZA appointments – Ensley said the county still needed to do their appointments. IC talks about how the makeup of the boards needed to be done. It has taken awhile to figure out the new process. After some discussion, Beck made the motion to appoint Jenna Nees and Laura Scott as the Commissioners representatives for BZA. Helmer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

DRAINAGE ISSUE

Darrel and Teena Strohl live at 122 Lincoln Hills Coatesville in Heritage Lake. They explained they have been having a water issue in their crawl space ever since a neighbor built their home. They spoke with several people and were advised to come before the Commissioners.

Lisa Zeiner stated the builder had agreed to install a drainage swale to help with the issue. However, Mr. Strohl had refused to allow the installation that would be 3' on his property. Mr. Strohl confirmed his refusal of that option.

Ensley said the county did not have a legal drain in this situation. This is a civil matter between Strohl's and their neighbor. He advised them to hire an attorney since they have not been able to resolve the matter between themselves.

COUNTY ROAD 100 EAST – POSTED SPEED LIMIT

Beck said he recently did a traffic count on this road. There is a minimum of 50 trucks but some days there are over 100 dump trucks. Beck made a call to the Bainbridge Town Marshal. The Marshal clocked a truck going 62 mph. There is not a speed limit posted so it is currently 45 mph. Beck proposed 30 mph. Ensley said a traffic study would need to be done. Statute states perform engineering traffic study.

Sheriff Baugh said he had a meeting with the Prosecutor later today to talk about speed limits on roads. He felt if there was no signage it would help a lot if there was some put up. Baugh said they write tickets for what is posted on the signs. Ensley said if they post at 35 mph they meet requirements and would not need to do a study. Beck made the motion to put up speed limits signs and for it to be set at 35 mph. This would be north of CR 100E and south of CR 50 E. The road runs between CR 500 N and Highway 36. Helmer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

E911 DIRECTOR POSITION

Woodall said their current director is retiring. The applications submitted had been narrowed down to three, held interviews. Beck made the motion to hire David Clodfelter. Woodall seconded. Helmer opposed. The motion passed. The Commissioners would be changing the job description for the new director. The salary would change accordingly. The Commissioners suggested a salary of \$67,500. This would have to go before the Council.

HIGHWAY REPORT

Highway Supt. Clint Maddox reported the following:

- 1) Phase II bridge inspection is taking place now. Started in northern part of the county and working down.
- 2) Bridge 78 had a critical finding during the bridge inspection. A guardrail loose, they have 30 days to fix, said it would be done this week.

- 3) Card reader – Gasoline bid of \$19,702 and Midwest bid of \$18,053.51. Identical equipment in the bids. Woodall made the motion to accept the bid from Midwest. Helmer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- 4) Woodall requested a sign that lit up for the 90-degree corner on airport road. There has been a lot of accidents taking out the property owner’s mailbox, telephone poles and damage to guardrail. Maddox had researched and the signs range from \$900 to 3K. Woodall said let’s start with the \$900 sign.
- 5) Paver – it is currently being worked on. As soon as they get it, they will start working on the roads.

MINUTES

March 3, 2025 – Helmer had a correction under the Town of Roachdale, the name needed to be corrected to *Adrian Lepine*. Beck said the verbiage regarding the cemetery requesting a mower needed to be revised as well. They approved the mower to be purchased. Huffman did not have to talk to the trustees before the purchase but afterwards. Helmer made the motion to approve with the corrections. Beck seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

ORDINANCE FREEZE/THAW

This was tabled from the last meeting. Since the weather is no longer so cold the board stated it was no longer needed. They do want it to be advertised for the second meeting in December for the next winter freeze/thaw.

SOLAR FARM

Ensley said when it was denied by BZA Cold Springs filed paperwork with the court. The court date is tomorrow, and he plans to be there. The plaintiff, Cold Spring since they filed in November they did not proceed with any further paperwork. Because of this, the trial court should put it on the 41E list where it may move forward or be dismissed.

KEIGHTLY ROAD

Woodall said they are still waiting for the legal process to be done.

ANNEX

Woodall meeting on March 20th with a cost estimate. April 2 he would like to have a joint executive meeting with the Council and invite Envoy, Baker Tilly and Ice Miller.

MAIL

The Commissioners acknowledged their mail.

ADJOURN

Helmer made the motion to adjourn. Beck seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Rick Woodall, President

Tom Helmer, Vice President

Andy Beck

Attest: Auditor's Office
Kristina Berish