

**REGUGLAR MEETING OF THE JASPER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
DECEMBER 28,2023**

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The Jasper County Commissioners met this date at 8:15 A.M. C.S.T at 910 S Sparling, Rensselaer, Indiana with the following members present: Rein Bontreger, Jeffrey DeYoung, and James Walstra. Also present were Auditor, Donya Jordan, Deputy Auditor, Treasure Gilbert and Eric Beaver, the Attorney that represents the Commissioners. Those present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mr. Bontreger. There was a brief moment of silence following the Pledge.

MINUTES: Mr. Walstra motioned to approve the minutes from the joint session with the Council on November 21,2023 and the regular Commissioner's meeting on December 4,2023, Mr. DeYoung seconded, and the motion carried.

CLAIMS: Mr. DeYoung motioned to approve the claims, as presented, Mr. Walstra seconded, and the motion carried.

PAYROLL CLAIMS: Mr. Walstra motioned to approve the payroll claims from checks dated December 15,2023 and December 29,2023, Mr. DeYoung seconded, and the motion carried.

BURIED CABLES: Mr. Haberlin was not present at this time to mention any buried cables. Mr. Bristol, with REMC, was there to speak about their project in north and northeast of Wheatfield. He said the project is 180 bores under county roads and 6,300 feet under the roadways. He said there is 108 miles on poles and 27 miles underground. Mr. Bristol provided the Commissioners with a copy of the permit he sent to Mr. Haberlin. Mr. Bontreger asked when they are looking to get started. Mr. Bristol said they are looking to get started as soon as possible. He said they are working on finalizing a contract with one of their bidders. He said they are hoping to move forward in January.

Mr. Bontreger asked how long the project would take. Mr. Bristol said it would take about a year but, he is hoping to be done sooner. He said there's four stages to this project and he will be back for more permits. Mr. Bontreger asked when customers would get service. Mr. Bristol said that would be on the contractors but, they have set an aggressive schedule so they can provide service as quickly as possible. Mr. Haberlin arrived during this discussion. He told Mr. Bristol to work with the surveyor and get a map of the regulated drains. Mr. Walstra motioned to approve this buried cable permit, Mr. DeYoung seconded, and the motion carried.

KRISTEN LOUCK / MOU: Ms. Louck said they do a Memorandum of Understanding once a year with the county as far as the Fairgrounds and Fase Center. He said they would use these buildings if there was a public health emergency or a disaster. She said the MOU is that the Health Department would have first dibs on the Fairgrounds and Fase Center. She said during wedding season, they work well with them to make sure that they don't interfere. Mr. Bontreger said they need to have Attorney Beaver review the MOU. Mr. Bontreger asked Ms. Louck if she had anything else to share. Ms. Louck said in January, they will start getting Governor funding and they are working on some new programs to roll out. She said they are waiting to hear back from Titan to start their renovations. Mr. Walstra motioned to approve the MOU, pending legal review, Mr. DeYoung seconded, and the motion carried.

BURIED CABLES CONTINUED: Mr. Haberlin said he has three more buried cable permits. He said there are two simple bores. The first one is with Precision in Marion. The second is in Remington for a repair through BSM. The third one is with United Telephone/Brightspeed for fiber optics in Kankakee. Mr. DeYoung motioned to approve the buried cables with Brightspeed, Mr. Walstra seconded, and the motion carried. Mr. DeYoung motioned to approve the buried cable permit with BSM group, Mr. Walstra seconded, and the motion carried. Mr. Walstra motioned to approve the buried cable permit with Precision, Mr. DeYoung seconded, and the motion carried.

EXTENSTION OFFICE / MOU: Mr. Bontreger said they have an MOU for the Extension contractual services agreement between Purdue and Jasper County. He said this is the same contract they do every year. He said they will have Attorney Beaver take a look at it.

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JASPER COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD APPOINTMENT: Mr. Bontreger said he reached out to Ms. Kayla DeJong, whom used to work at the library and he would recommend she fill the vacancy on the Library Board. He said this is a four-year term. Mr. DeYoung motioned to approve appointing Ms. DeJong, Mr. Walstra seconded, and the motion carried. Mr. DeYoung said for the record, she is of no relation to him. Mr. Bontreger said her name is spelled differently than his.

SHERIFF / REQUESTS TO FILL VACANCIES: Sheriff Williamson said they are losing their part-time custodian who has been with them awhile. He said she is retiring and he would like to replace her with her brother. He said he has a lot of experience in this kind of work. Mr. Walstra motioned to approve this replacement, Mr. DeYoung seconded, and the motion carried.

Sheriff Williamson said he also needs to replace a correctional officer. Mr. DeYoung motioned to approve, Mr. Walstra seconded, and the motion carried.

Sheriff Williamson said he sent an e-mail about the State Law regarding investments for 911. He said they can invest but, they have not done this since he has been in office. He said it hasn't been done for twenty years. He said this is something they might want to think about. He said they have some upgrades coming up. He said Attorney Beaver approved a contract for a software and hardware upgrade with INdigital. He said this was a lot cheaper than Motorola. He said they are updating the jail and work stations to the same product they already have. Sheriff Williamson said they should really think about the investments since they are generating a lot of money right now. He said it is over \$800,000.00. He said whether they invest \$150,000.00 to \$200,000.00, it could make them a lot of interest. Mr. Bontreger asked Ms. Jordan if this is a decision that the Board of Finance would make. Ms. Jordan said they wouldn't necessarily have to go through the Board of Finance but, they could meet with the Treasurer and the Sheriff to discuss it. Sheriff Williamson said he was told that the Treasurer would get bids from banks and then they would decide the length and interest rate to lock in. Mr. DeYoung motioned to approve proceeding with the process of investing, Mr. Walstra seconded, and the motion carried.

Sheriff Williamson said Mr. King is worried about getting the contract submitted to INdigital because, at the beginning of the year, rates will go up. Mr. DeYoung motioned to approve the software and hardware upgrade, pending legal review, Mr. Walstra seconded, and the motion carried.

Sheriff Williamson said Bonnie Veden is retiring affective December 31,2023. Mr. Bontreger said thanks to Bonnie for the many years of dedicated service. Sheriff Williamson said she has done a great job for the last 18 years. He said they will miss her because, she was not just a very good Matron but, she did so much else. He said Ms. Veden had a lot of wisdom and helped them with big events. He said she is still going to be in public service as the Kankakee Township Trustee. Mr. Bontreger said they thank her for her continued service.

Sheriff Williamson said they are wanting to replace one of their 2013 detective vehicles. He said they would like to encumber some money for next year. He said the vehicle has over 160,000 miles on it and is in rough shape. He said historically, the Council usually gives them about three cars a year but, it won't be enough to cover this vehicle. He said they would like to trade in this vehicle and he thinks they would get around \$3,000.00 for it. He said they have spotted a pickup truck at Fieldhouse Ford that has 50,000 miles on it and they are asking \$29,000.00 for it. He said he wasn't sure if they could trade in the old vehicle or if they could get permission to do so. Ms. Jordan said they will need to turn in an invoice with their encumber. Mr. Walstra motioned to approve trading in the vehicle, Mr. DeYoung seconded, and the motion carried.

Sheriff Williamson said they have talked with Mr. George with ARCEM about an IT backup. He said they would like to have a backup for Mr. King in the event that something happened to him. He said it would be a very monumental thing for someone to come in and try to figure out everything they do along with all the passwords and things. Mr. Bontreger said Mr. King has shouldered a lot on his own for a long time and they certainly aren't trying to replace him but, they

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SHERIFF CONTINUED: would like to try to ease his burden a little. Sheriff Williamson said Mr. King does not want a backup but, the Sheriff said he has a backup for everything. Mr. Bontreger said they should get together and brainstorm what this would look like.

R.E. DAVIS LOAN: Attorney Beaver provided the Commissioners with a resolution regarding a loan requested by the Drainage Board. He said this isn't the first time they have done this. He said this allows for financing of drainage projects that need to be done before money can be raised. He said this loan is a 1.5-million-dollar principle loan, secured by a 1-million-dollar CD of rainy-day monies. He said the County will receive interest on the CD and the loan will be calculated at the maturity date for the CD. He said it is an existing CD right now that he believes matures next November. He said the interest will reset on the line of credit to maintain a 2% spread so, the County will be responsible for paying interest 2% above the CD interest. He said it is a line of credit where withdraws can be taken as needed.

Attorney Beaver said in the past, the Commissioners passed a resolution that gave Dick Maxwell authority to make withdraws on the loan. He said that ended up with the Commissioners personally being responsible for going and drawing money from the line of credit when it was needed. He said the better course is to have the Treasurer do so because, the Treasurer is the custodian of County funds. Attorney Beaver said he drew up two resolutions for this matter. He said the bank prefers the Treasurer, being the person who signs all the documents, and the Statute requires the Board of Commissioners to be the signing party. He said the first resolution approves all of the loan documents, which are attached to the resolution. The resolution also designates Tammy McEwan as an agent of the Commissioners and authorizes her to execute those documents. He said it also allows certain parties access to the loan information such as, the Surveyor and the Deputy Surveyor. He said they will be able to access the loan to see what payments are upcoming, due or available for the line of credit.

The second resolution sets up these parts and, as well, withdraws will be made upon request of the Board of Commissioners, by way of a resolution. He said when monies are being paid through the claims process to cover the companies that are doing the work for the Drainage Board, then there should be a resolution of the Board of Commissioners making the request for the draw for whatever amount that might be that is approved by the Commissioners during the same meeting. He said this would be given to Ms. McEwan and she can go pick up the funds and have them deposited with the Auditor into the appropriate fund.

Mr. Bontreger asked Mr. Knezevic, with the Surveyor's Office, if he had any questions or comments. Mr. Knezevic said so no. He said the contractor started last week so, he doesn't expect any claims soon but, they will be coming. Mr. Bontreger said he wanted refreshed on this project and asked if it was around twenty-three miles. Mr. Knezevic said it was roughly twenty-three miles. Mr. Bontreger asked when they would expect completion. Mr. Knezevic said it will mostly depend on the weather but, the best-case scenario, in the next year.

Mr. DeYoung motioned to approve **Resolution No. 12-28-2023A**, Mr. Walstra seconded, and the motion carried.

Mr. Walstra motioned to approve **Resolution No. 12-28-2023B**, Mr. DeYoung seconded, and the motion carried.

JASPER COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY BOARD APPOINTMENT: Mr. Bontreger said they received information on a couple of applicants. He said one of which is Rensselaer Central High School Principal, AJ Jones. He said in talking with the Airport Authority, they would welcome him to their Board. Mr. Walstra motioned to approve Mr. Jones to the Jasper County Airport Authority Board, Mr. DeYoung seconded, and the motion carried. Mr. Bontreger said that Mr. Jones was looking forward to continuing the educational component of the High School interacting with the Airport so, he was excited to be on the Board.

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KERRY IRONS / ADVENTURE CYCLING ASSOCIATION: Mr. Kerry Irons joined via Zoom. Mr. Irons said he wanted to talk about a designated U.S. bicycle route that goes from Gary to Indianapolis. He said this is about providing a long-distance bicycle route for those interested. He said this is a growing national network of numbered and signed bicycle routes that is approve by ASHTO, the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials.

Mr. Irons said they are a 53,000-member, national non-profit. Their mission is to inspire, empower, and connect people to travel by bike. They have a mapped route network of 50,000 miles. He said they do national advocacy, have a magazine, as well as tours. He said their first routes were designated back in 1982. Mr. Irons explained the map presented to the Commissioners. He said they have an improved route identified in Jasper and White County. Mr. Cain said their proposed alternative is on McCoysburg Road as opposed to Highway 16. Mr. Irons said the original route went down 231 and across to 16 but, both of these have been recently assessed and have too much truck traffic and not enough shoulder. He said the new proposed route uses County roads north and south and jogs to the east to get around tough gravel sections. He said they would be east of Rensselaer and then cut across on McCoysburg Road into White County.

Mr. Irons said having this designated route, allows people to find a route from the Chicago area to Indianapolis. He said traveling cyclists spend about \$150 a day while traveling and they spread the word to others to visit the County. He said small communities would see the impact of restaurants, motels, campgrounds, etc. being used by the cyclists. Mr. DeYoung motioned to approve the proposed bicycle route, Mr. Walstra seconded, and the motion carried.

TORI NUEST / ANIMAL SHELTER / NEW SOFTWARE SYSTEM / 2ND PHONE LINE: Ms. Nuest said they are looking for approval to go forward with the new Shelter's software system. She said they are spending too much time with intake and medicals. She said it is taking one dog, around an hour to an hour and a half. After talking to other shelters and rescues, they are only taking about ten minutes per dog. She said the Shelter Boss software system is the best that she has found for the money's worth. She said it would cost \$2,400.00 annually with no contract. She said they could pay \$200.00 for a month to try it out. She said they would need to figure out where the funds would come from out of their budget. Mr. Bontreger referred to an e-mail from Ms. Brooke Scheurich, the Animal Control Board President, and she mentioned the funds coming out of their donation fund. Ms. Jordan said they would usually use the LIT Economic Development Fund for technology purchases. Mr. Bontreger said they can approve them going forward but, they will need to go to the Council to get the money appropriated out of that fund.

Ms. Nuest said they only have one phone line at the shelter, which is causing issues. She said they have five phones that are all connected to the same line so, when one person is on the phone for an extended period of time, it causes issues. She said they have been receiving complaints on Facebook and at their meetings. She said they are requesting to add another phone line to dissolve these issues. Mr. DeYoung asked who the phone provider was. Ms. Nuest said Brightspeed. Mr. DeYoung asked how much they pay. Ms. Jordan said they don't pay it themselves, it goes through the Auditor's Office. Mr. Bontreger said he imagines that some of their conversations can be lengthy so, they do not want the phone line to be tied up. Mr. DeYoung motioned to approve a second phone line, Mr. Walstra seconded, and the motion carried. Ms. Nuest said that the IT department said they have the hardware to install the second line. Mr. Bontreger said the consensus is that they will approve the Shelter Boss software but, she needs to provide them a letter for approval at the next meeting. He said they should also get on the Council agenda.

Ms. Nuest said the Low Cost Spay/Neuter bus usually comes monthly on the second Tuesday. She said with the weather, they will only be coming in January and they won't be back until April. She said she is worried about the cars coming and backing up the EMS exit. Mr. Bontreger said he would donate her some more signs to direct traffic to the Animal Shelter.

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ANDY BOERSMA: Mr. Boersma joined via Zoom. He said he sent a master sheet that was approved back in the day when Dr. Spicer was there that had film rates listed. He said they were requested to provide a receipt for development but, they don't have one since they went digital. He said the gentleman use their own devices to capture images, then print the image, and put on a cd. He said they can't produce a receipt but, they use the sheet. Mr. Bontreger said to forward the sheet to Attorney Beaver so he can review it and craft a MOU that would satisfy the needs of the Auditor's Office. Mr. Boersma said he will make an appointment with Attorney Beaver to discuss this. Mr. Boersma asked if he needs to encumber the money due to the deputies this year. Ms. Jordan said yes.

Mr. Boersma said that the MOU at the Annex, for the Health Department, he took money from his equipment fund to have electric installed outside of the building for the Health Department to plug their trailer in, instead of running off of a generator. Mr. Bontreger thanked him for doing that.

Mr. Boersma asked if they had a chance to look at his request for Motorola radios. Mr. Bontreger said he looked at it but, he thinks Attorney Beaver needs to review it. Mr. Boersma said he will have to encumber money for this as well.

Mr. DeYoung said he reached out to some car dealerships and found a 2018 Grand Caravan for the Coroner to use. It has 50,000 miles and they are asking \$16,900.00 for it. Mr. Boersma said that would work and they should find somewhere to keep it inside.

OTHER BUSINESS

COURTHOUSE WINDOW CLEANING: Mr. DeYoung said at a Department Head meeting, it was mentioned to get the Courthouse windows clean. He said a County employee reached out to Troy Davis, with KV Window Cleaning, for a price. Mr. Davis sent Mr. DeYoung a quote to clean the Courthouse windows. He said for the Courthouse windows, inside and out, it would be \$3,200.00. He said he is also willing to go out to the new EMS building to clean those windows, inside and out, for \$50.00, the Health Department windows, inside and out, for \$175.00, the Surveyor's Office windows, inside and out, for \$255.00, and the Probation Office, all windows, for \$375.00. Mr. Bontreger said they can decide on this at the January meeting. He asked Ms. Jordan when the windows were last cleaned. Ms. Jordan said probably when they were put in. Mr. DeYoung said that Mr. Davis said he cleaned the windows about twenty years ago. Ms. Jordan said the windows weren't that old. Mr. Bontreger suggested they get them cleaned once a year. Ms. Jordan said the windows on the west entrance have a bad glare coming through. Mr. Bontreger said they would probably have to get those windows tinted.

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS KITCHEN: Mr. DeYoung said a contractor reached out to him about the Community Corrections kitchen. He said he has the stainless-steel cabinets and countertops figured out. He said he will provide Mr. DeYoung with a blue print to make sure everything fits and the Health Department needs it as well. Mr. DeYoung said this is going to cost roughly \$17,000.00 for the stainless-steel items, including a hand-washing sink. He said they are going to reuse their triple sanitization sink. He said they also need a new fridge. He said they are also getting a new stove. Mr. DeYoung said the \$17,000.00 includes everything but the fridge. Mr. Bontreger said they should see if Community Corrections can pay for the fridge out of one of their funds.

ANNEX ROOF: Mr. DeYoung said Mr. Vinson, with T.R. Hodges was there to talk about his proposal for the roof at the Prosecutor's Office. Mr. Vinson said they have a spray-foam applied roofing system. He said their proposal is to come in and leave the existing rubber up there and remove wet insulation. He said they can go over top with a four-pound density structural spray-foam and topcoat it with a rubberized spray silicone. He said this eliminates the need to full tear-off in the future. He said this includes a twenty-year warranty.

Mr. Vinson said the white topcoat reflects the sun and will help with utilities. He said they will go up the wall about two feet to the metal flashing. Mr. DeYoung said he is also wanting to use a vac-

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ANNEX ROOF CONTINUED: truck to vacuum the aggregate off of the building. He said they will need a dump site and asked Mr. Cain if they had a spot for them. Mr. Cain said they can figure something out.

Mr. Bontreger asked what they would do if something needs replaced on the roof. Mr. Vinson said that things can be replaced with minimal tear-off and cutting. Mr. Bontreger asked if he could come in if a gap needed filled after repairs. Mr. Vinson said yes, they can do patch-repair. Mr. DeYoung said he likes that they are offering a twenty-year warranty and if needed, in twenty years, they can come and respray. Mr. Vinson said as long as there is no serious mechanical damage, they can just do patch-repair.

Mr. Bontreger said it looks cheaper than some of the other options. Mr. DeYoung said he was happy with the number. Mr. Vinson said it's because the work is less labor-intensive and less landfill waste. Mr. DeYoung added that Mr. Vinson has done a fabulous job to the Courthouse basement. He said the basement is 99% drier than its ever been and it should stay like that for some time. Mr. Vinson said the material is temperature-sensitive so, they like to see at least 45-50-degree weather so, they are probably looking around April or May to start. Mr. Bontreger said the total is \$80,610.00, which is about \$18,000.00 cheaper than the previous bids. Mr. Vinson said the price includes putting the protective silicone coating on the duct work that is already wrapped with rubber. Mr. Cain asked if they have their own vac-truck to remove the stone. Mr. Vinson said no but, they do have access to a couple of rental companies.

Mr. Bontreger asked if they wanted to make a preliminary approval of this proposal, pending legal review of the official contract. Mr. DeYoung motioned to approve, pending legal review, Mr. Walstra seconded, and the motion carried.

EXTENSION OFFICE / MOU CONTINUED: Ms. Fortney, with the Extension Office, said the MOU is a contractual service agreement between the County and Purdue University. The contract covers the \$128,805.00 that was approved during budgets.

KIRPC BOARD APPOINTMENT: Mr. Walstra said he would be willing to be on the Board again. Mr. DeYoung motioned to reappoint Mr. Walstra to the KIRPC Board, Mr. Bontreger seconded, and the motion carried.

ARROW HEAD COUNTY RC&D GRANT: Ms. Jordan said she thinks Arrow Head is offering a grant. Mr. Bontreger referred to the paper he was looking at and he said it is an application for the funding from the Arrow Head Country Resource Conservation and Development Area. Ms. Jordan said they get one of these every year. Mr. Bontreger asked if this was something they have filled out in the past. Mr. Walstra said no. Mr. Bontreger said they will table this until the next meeting so they can look into it.

Mr. Bontreger asked if there was any other business. Attorney Beaver said the MOUs for the Health Department and Extension Office look fine. Mr. Walstra motioned to approve the MOU for the Extension Office, Mr. DeYoung seconded, and the motion carried.

ED CAIN: Mr. Cain said the City of Rensselaer is running sewage out past the Highway Department and they have until April to get tied into it. He said he doesn't know any prices yet. He asked if the Commissioners would pay for this upgrade. Mr. Cain thanked the Commissioners for the resources they provided to do their improvements at the garage and the north lot. He said he will have a quote next meeting to get insulation blown into the ceiling and heating. Mr. DeYoung motioned to approve the sewer tap, Mr. Walstra seconded, and the motion carried.

Mr. Cain said he would like to send four employees to a training to get registered as technicians for spraying. He said it is a one-day class in Lafayette and costs \$75.00 a person. Mr. Walstra motioned to approve, Mr. DeYoung seconded, and the motion carried.

Mr. Cain said he has an employee that started on December 4,2023 and according to the handbook, they aren't eligible for insurance benefits until the first day of the month, after their sixtieth day.

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He said this person's sixtieth day is February 1, 2024 and payroll is saying they aren't eligible until March 1, 2024. Mr. Cain asked if the Commissioners could amend that to start February 1, 2024. Ms. Jordan said that is what is in the handbook but, it's the Commissioners' prerogative. Mr. Walstra motioned to make an exception, Mr. DeYoung seconded, and the motion carried.

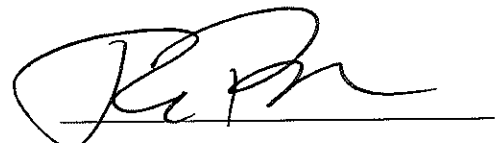
PUBLIC COMMENT

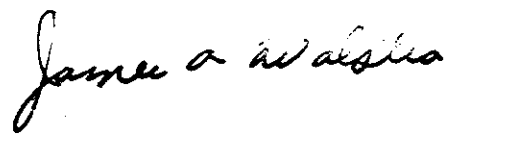
COUNCILMAN PAUL NORWINE: Mr. Norwine said he appreciates the good working relationship between the Commissioners and Council.

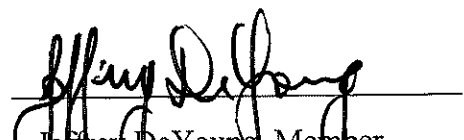
REBECCA DEARDORFF: Ms. Deardorff said she was at the last meeting to ask about trimming trees on Tefft Road. She said they have been trimmed since and you can see around them better. She said a combine might have a hard time seeing around them. Mr. Cain said he plans to trim more but, they are still working with the land owner on that.

Mr. Bontreger thanked everyone for working with them and giving them a little bit of grace. He said they have had an interesting first year as Commissioners. He said they have a lot to get accomplished the first quarter of the year regarding solar, batteries and carbon sequestration. He said they are in discussions in doing research on how they can come up with a way to put the County in the best position. He said they have not been talking a lot about it in public as they are still gathering information. He said they plan on having some community-engagement dates to get feedback from the public on these topics. He said thank you to those who take the time to e-mail them and doing research. He said some people send them articles and they do read them. He said these are all huge, daunting issues and he gives thanks for the understanding as they are trying to learn right alongside everyone else.

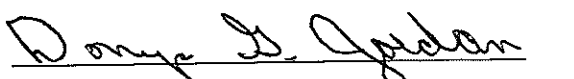
Mr. DeYoung motioned to adjourn, Mr. Walstra seconded, and the motion carried. This meeting stands in recess until the next meeting on Tuesday, January 2, 2024.


Rein Bontreger, President


James A. Walstra, Vice President


Jeffrey DeYoung, Member

ATTEST:


Donya G. Jordan, Auditor of Jasper County