

Commissioner Chairman, Brian Hauptert, called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M. with all members present. Minutes of the 12/6 meeting were approved as written, moved by Lester Templin, second by Darle Dawes, and passed. Commissioners reviewed and signed the Payroll Claim & Allowance Docket and the Payroll Check Register. They reviewed the November Financial Report, the Weights & Measures Monthly Report and the Clerk's November Report. They took a quote under advisement from Dave's Painting, to prepare and paint the Law Library. Commissioners will talk with the Co. Surveyor, who will occupy the room, before proceeding. Commissioner Attorney, Tom Mattern, reports a contract renewal with Maximus, Inc. for a cost allocation study, is exactly the same as the current contract, except for an added paragraph that limits Maximus' liability. Tom will contact Maximus, and ask them to eliminate that paragraph. Commissioners will wait for a response before renewing their agreement with Maximus. Mattern presented a draft of an ordinance to set up user fees for ambulance services. He didn't include an amount. Commissioners will review the proposal. Brian said they are looking for options, having received no help from state legislators. He said the county can't continue to deplete CEDIT funds. Jeff Buckley, Wabash County Hospital CEO, suggested the county hire a firm to do an assessment of both services, seeking possible areas of improvement. Buckley gave Commissioners the names of two firms. Les will contact both companies to learn more, and ask for quotes. Following review of last week's proposal from Jay Harvey of Strategic Health Services, Les moved to hire them to consult for the county regarding medical insurance coverage, second by Darle and passed. David Young, chairperson of Against Alcohol, Controlled substances & Tobacco In Our Neighborhoods (AACTION), presented their proposals for 2005 grants. Representatives of possible recipients attended, to answer questions about their programs. Available funds, totaling \$29,341.64, would be divided among 11 groups. Funded dollars are down about \$3,000.00 for next year, and they had to make some cuts. No money will be used for operations in 2005. Manchester College and Tribal Trails Girl Scout Council will receive funds for the first time next year. Requests will be presented to County Council for approval in January, and Commissioners support that plan. Animal Control Board attorney, Robert McCallen, discussed a proposed supplement to the existing Animal Control Ordinance. It addresses cruelty to animals, and is a step towards humane treatment. He will revise the proposal, leaving the penalty amount blank, allowing Commissioners to set a maximum, with the understanding that a judge would set the fee on a case by case basis. He also will change some verbiage from city and county to county only. Commissioners will address the revised supplement next week. McCallen said he will be leaving his board attorney position, and has asked attorney Emily Guenin-Hodson to assume the job, which is primarily a community service post. A contingent of Co. Jail employees asked Commissioners to grant another holiday for Christmas, which falls on Saturday this year. In response to employee, Beth Hayslett's question, Commissioners said they hadn't taken away the January 1st holiday. The jail is a 24/7 facility, and employees feel they have lost a holiday. Sheriff Striker noted his department's policy allows for a "comp" day, sometime within 3 months of the holiday, and he adopted the policy already in place, when he took office. Les said Commissioners followed the county employee manual, when setting the holidays for 2004, and they have nothing to do with work schedules for the jail. In response to the comment that county policy indicates time and one half for holiday duty, Sheriff Striker noted the Jail policy doesn't stipulate extra pay for holidays, and his budgets aren't sufficiently funded to pay overtime rates. Jail employees work a four day on and two day off schedule. Sheriff Striker says he knows he can't give employees unauthorized time off. All three Commissioners agreed they need to follow set policy, and stay with the schedule set last year, for 2004.

Larry Rice, Co. Highway Dept.: He has moved the dirt from the lower parking level, and Commissioners thanked him. The "punch list" is done for both Phase III of Old Rd. 15 S and the retaining wall at Treaty Creek on Old 15 S. The ribbon cutting ceremony will be at 11:30 today at Matlock Cemetery. Since the final inspection went well, Commissioners signed the final estimate and progress report for the retaining wall. Larry will bill SEMA for reimbursement of the repair costs. Les moved to have United Consultants Engineers proceed with seeking "enhancement funds" to repair the covered bridge in North Manchester, second by Darle, and passed. Larry said both SPRINT requests to bury cable look okay, and Commissioners signed. (1) On CR 400 N, starts at 4383 W and goes west for 465 feet to 4392 W, D & H Hog Farm. (2) Extends existing cable beginning at 3500 N 100 E, and going south on CR 100 E for 170 feet, then boring under the road. Commissioners talked with Mike Garrett again, about water problems around his home on CR 200 N. Commissioners say the county responsibility is to keep water off the roads, and they can't do anything for one party that adversely affects another party. They weren't aware his neighbor wasn't opposed to work on their side of the road, but feel a ditch on the south side of the road would have to be at least three feet deep and that could resent a road hazard. Brian would like to research the history of a culvert in the area that drains under the road, and Commissioners recognized Garrett's efforts to alleviate the problem by adding trees and a earthen levy. They understand a water problem in the area pre dates Mike's home. They will investigate options further, and get back to Garrett. Their original assessment was that Garrett should increase the size of the drain under his driveway. Toby Steffan with Butler, Fairman & Seufert Engineers (BF&S), updated on Old Rd. 15 S Phase II progress. Not all right-of-way has been settled, and bids can't be let prior to settlement, or filing of condemnation procedures. Commissioners think condemnation plans should move forward, so bidding isn't delayed. Toby will talk with Matt Bobay, site manager on Phase III of Old 15 S, and they will decide about re-installing mail and newspaper boxes along the project. On the DNR project on CR 950 S and CR 300 W, Herman Myers has asked for a 5 to 1 slope and two field entrances, as part of his settlement. Commissioners will have to decide if they stand with the offered settlement, and allow Myers may make alterations as he wants, or have the work done for him, and deduct the cost from his compensation. Commissioners signed a Basis for Just Compensation Report on the Jeff Ravenscroft property, as part of that DNR project. Toby says cost increases to proposed plans for Bridge # 13, came about after the failure of a similar bridge in another state. Engineers then revised their plans. BF&S will respond to the state inquiry. Commissioners want a scenic railing on the bridge, and Toby will make certain that's in the plans.

Leroy Striker, Sheriff: There are 98 in jail this morning. He said he has some violations of the "no smoking" policy, within the jail, and was told by deputy Prosecutor, David Magley, that the County Attorney should pursue prosecution. Magley is reluctant to prosecute the county ordinance. Attorney Mattern agreed he would go after violators, but only infractions that post date the ordinance. With no further business, the meeting recessed.

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Brian K. Hauptert, Chairman

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Darle V. Dawes

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Lester D. Templin

ATTEST:\_\_\_\_\_

Carol Stefanatos, Auditor