

LAWRENCE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
PUBLIC MEETING
MINUTES OF Tuesday, December 31, 2024

The Lawrence County Commissioners' Meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag followed by a Moment of Silence.

The Lawrence County Commissioners' Meeting of Tuesday, December 31, 2024 was called to order by **Commissioner Daniel Vogler**, at 10:00 AM at the Lawrence County Commissioners Meeting Room. Deputy Chief Clerk, Vanessa Bayless called the roll. Those in attendance were **Commissioner Dan Kennedy, Commissioner Chris Sainato, County Administrator Joe Venasco, Chad Strobel and Debbie Wachter from the New Castle News**. It was stated for the record that the meeting is being taped. Those wishing to speak shall be given five minutes. If they need more time, they are to see the Deputy Chief Clerk at another time, and she will arrange for them to meet with the Commissioners. Those speaking are to state for the record their names, addresses and the nature of their business.

ROW OFFICERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS

None

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

FISCAL/CONTRACTUAL

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------|
| A. Repository Property: | None |
| B. Advertise for bids/proposals: | None |
| C. Receipt for bids/proposals: | None |
| D. Warrant Registers: | |
| 1. December 18, 2024 | |
| 2. December 20, 2024 | |
| 3. December 23, 2024 | |

Moved by Mr. Sainato, seconded by Mr. Kennedy to approve and file said warrant register(s). Motion carried 3-0.

MINUTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

- A. Approval of Minutes:
1. December 17, 2024

Moved by Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mr. Sainato to approve and file said minutes. Motion carried 3-0.

B. Presentation of Written Communications:

1. SA Recycling, LLC-State Only Operating Permit Renewal No. 37-00307
214rdner Avenue (City of New Castle)

2. APEX-Acts 67 ,68, 127 for Amerikohl Aggregates, Inc.
North and adjacent to their current active Welsh Quarry (Wampum Road
and Jockey Moore Road, Wayne Twp.)

Moved by Mr. Sainato, seconded by Mr. Kennedy to file written correspondence. Motion carried 3-0.

REPORTS

A. Staff Reports:

None

B. Commissioner Reports

CS, DV, DK

Mr. Sainato stated it has been 2 weeks since last meeting. A highlight of this year was a soft opening of BBQ place downtown. Should be a positive event for the area.

Mr. Vogler stated later in the meeting the Commissioners will be voting to hire an individual for the Director position, who is retiring January 3, 2025. Artishia, is retiring and the Commissioners wish her well and her value her years of service. Judge Motto's last day is today. He will be here part time as a Senior Judge on Thursdays for drug Court.

Mr. Kennedy stated it is hard to believe that it has been (1) year into his term. Judge Motto is retiring and Mr. Kennedy wishes him well. Mr. Kennedy is looking forward to the next 3 years of his term and beyond.

NEW BUSINESS RESOLUTIONS
RESOLUTION R-2024-385

ADOPTION OF THE 2025 LAWRENCE COUNTY BUDGET

WHEREAS, the fiscal year of the County begins on the first day of January; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of Lawrence County are required by County Code to adopt a budget by the end of the calendar year; and

WHEREAS, the County Code requires the proposed budget be available for public inspection at least twenty (20) days prior to its adoption; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners introduced the proposed 2025 budget on December 10, 2024 through Resolution R-2024-373; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, THAT: in accordance with *§1782 of the County Code*, the 2025 budget is hereby adopted.

The Commissioners thanked toe Venasco for all his hard work on the balanced 2025 Budget. There is no change to real estate taxes.

The Commissioners further thanked Albert Antonelli, the Controller, Dave Prestopine and the Dept. Heads/Row Officers for their fiscal responsibilities. Moving forward the commissioners hope to keep the budget in line and don't have to raise taxes in the future.

Joe thanked everyone for their hard work and specifically Albert Antonelli & Controller Prestopine. He appreciates everyone's support. A couple typos in the budget were fixed one was JPO's vehicles and elected officials cola was budgeted at 3.47% which has been approved at 3.5%.

Moved by Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mr. Sainato to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION R-2024-386

WHEREAS, the Lawrence County Board of Commissioners implemented a policy that requires employee contribution to healthcare costs; and

WHEREAS, the current employee contribution is significantly below both the public and private standards; and

WHEREAS, the Lawrence County Board of Commissioners desires to gradually increase the employee contribution for healthcare insurance to where it meets the public sector standards; and

WHEREAS, healthcare contribution costs, including health insurance, shall be a maximum of 6% of the premium cost of the policy, effective January 1, 2025 for non-union, management and County compensated elected officials.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, that healthcare contribution costs shall be set as stated above.

Moved by Mr. Sainato seconded by Mr. Kennedy to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION R-2024-387

WHEREAS, due to retirement, there is currently a full-time Tax Claim Director position vacancy; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS that;

1. Brian Burick be appointed as the Tax Claim Director; and
2. Effective January 6, 2025.

The Commissioners and the Human Resources Department received applications internally and externally for the Tax Claim Director position. Joe, Solicitor Medure and HR interviewed 3 candidates. The county received 7 applications. Of the 3, 2 were interviewed in person and (1) was interviewed by phone.

Moved by Mr. Sainato, seconded by Mr. Vogler to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 2-1.

RESOLUTION R-2024-388

WHEREAS, the County of Lawrence has entered into an agreement with Interstate Gas Supply, LLC (hereinafter the "CONTRACTOR" or "IGS Energy").

WHEREAS, the County and IGS Energy have entered into an Electricity Purchase Contract, attached hereto as Exhibit "A", whereby IGS Energy, supplier of electricity, is providing a 12-month fixed price to mitigate against future price increases.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS in consideration of their mutual promises, covenants, and agreements, the parties hereto intending to be legally bound, do hereby agree and consent for themselves, their successors and assigns as follows:

1. IGS Energy agrees to provide the electricity services to Lawrence County Department of Public Safety for a 12-month fixed rate as described in the Electricity Purchase Contract, attached hereto as Attachment "A".

Moved by Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mr. Sainato to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION R-2024-389

WHEREAS, the County of Lawrence has entered into a professional agreement with BearCom (hereinafter the "CONTRACTOR" or "BearCom") with its principal address of P.O. Box 670354, Dallas, TX 75267.

WHEREAS, the County and BearCom have entered into a Service Agreement, identified by County and BearCom as Contract 30150, attached hereto as Exhibit "A".

WHEREAS, BearCom agrees to provide a one (1) year Service Agreement in the amount of Seventy-two Thousand Six Hundred thirty-six (\$72,636.00) Dollars to be paid annually, commencing January 1, 2025 thru December 31, 2025. This agreement will not be construed to create a partnership, joint venture or employment relationship between BEARCOM and LAWRENCE. BEARCOM will not represent itself to be an employee or agent of LAWRENCE and cannot enter into any agreement on LAWRENCE's behalf or in LAWRENCE's name without express written authorization from a duly authorized representative of LAWRENCE to do so.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS that authorization is given to execute on behalf of the Lawrence County Department of Public Safety, all documents related to the BearCom service agreement. BearCom will provide a one (1) year Service Agreement in the amount of Seventy-two Thousand Six Hundred thirty-six (\$72,636.00) Dollars to be paid annually, commencing January 1, 2025 thru December 31, 2025. The Chairman of the Board of Commissioners is authorized to sign all documentation.

Dan V. thanked Chad Strobel for always keeping the Commissioners in the loop of emergency situations and everyday occurrences. He hopes 2025 is a safe year for everyone.

Moved by Mr. Sainato, seconded by Mr. Kennedy to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION

R-2024-390

WHEREAS, budgets cannot always anticipate every extraordinary, ordinary, or contingency situation which arises throughout the fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, Section 1784 of the County code permits the Commissioners by resolution to authorize budget transfers from any encumbered balance; and

WHEREAS, the need to provide additional appropriations to certain accounts now exists; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, that:

1. Authorization is hereby given to the appropriate administrative officials to transfer a total of \$233,800.00 described in detail on the attachment(s) designated as T-2024-32.

Moved by Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mr. Sainato to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 3-0.

TRANSFERS (Administrative)

- a. Planning from grants & programs to access/storage for \$150.00
- b. Assessment from contingency to travel & training for \$1,000.00
- c. Maintenance from employee insurance & benefits to internet for \$240.00
- d. DJ Amodie from postage to staples for \$1,000.00
- e. Prothonotary from travel & training to telephone for \$500.00
- f. Commissioners from temp/part time staff to contracted services for \$300.00
- g. Public Defender from contingency to staples for \$444.15
- h. District Attorney from maintenance & repairs to postage for \$150.00
- i. Prothonotary from materials & supplies to postage for \$300.00
- j. Maintenance from materials & supplies to maintenance & repairs form \$4,300.00
- k. Maintenance from gas to telephone & internet for \$500.00

Moved by Mr. Sainato, seconded by Mr. Kennedy to approve said transfers. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTIONS ON THE TABLE

- | | |
|---|------|
| A. Resolutions on the table: | None |
| B. Resolutions to be taken off the table: | None |

ORDINANCES

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------|
| A. Discussion: | None |
| B. On the Table: | None |
| C. For Introduction: | None |
| D. For Final Action: | None |

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. The next Commissioners' Meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 7, 2025 @ 10am in the Commissioners' Meeting Room.

B. The Annual Salary Board Meeting will be on Monday, January 6, 2025 @ 10am in the Commissioners' Meeting Room.

C. There will be a Lawrence County Opioid Advisory Board Meeting on Tuesday, January 7, 2025 @ 12:00 Noon in the Commissioners' Meeting Room.

D. The Courthouse will be closed on Wednesday, January 1, 2025 in observance of the New Years' Day holiday.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Debbie Wachter asked what will Brain Bunck's salary be and will he be receiving benefits?

Mr. Vogler stated \$65,000 for Department Heads in 2025 if the resolution is approved at the Annual Salary Board on Monday, January 6th. He will opt out of benefits.

She further asked what is his experience in Tax Claim is?

Mr. Vogler replied as Mr. Burick is a former Commissioner, the Tax Claim Director reported to him.

Mr. Sainato thanked Mr. Vogler for his advice & knowledge as a Commissioner during his first year. He also thanked Commissioner Kennedy and he feels the 3 have accomplished a lot together for the County in 2024. There are a lot of positive changes happening. He wished everyone a Happy New Year and looks forward to 2025.

Mr. Kennedy stated same to Mr. Sainato and Mr. Vogler. It's been a pleasure this year working with the both of them. He further thanked Mr. Venasco and Mrs. Bayless for all their hard work. He thanked everyone for supporting him this year during his health emergencies and is very thankful to be here.

Mr. Vogler stated he is grateful from a health standpoint that Commissioner Kennedy is here. Commissioners Sainato and Kennedy are 2 great Commissioners and he is looking forward to 2025.

The Commissioners thanked Debbie Wachter for her hardwork and all the articles she writes throughout the year.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mr. Sainato, seconded by Mr. Kennedy to adjourn the Lawrence County Commissioners' meeting dated Tuesday, December 31, 2024, at 10:58 am.

