COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

October 24, 2022

The Bartholomew County Commissioners met on October 24, 2022, in the Commissioners Chambers of the Governmental Office Building, 440 Third Street, Columbus, Indiana. Commissioners Larry S. Kleinhenz, Carl H. Lienhoop and Tony London, County Administrator Tina Douglas and Attorney Grant Tucker were in attendance. Auditor Pia O'Connor attended via Zoom.

Commissioner Lienhoop opened the meeting.

Commissioner Kleinhenz gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The first item was the Approval of Minutes of October 17, 2022. Commissioner London motioned to Approve the Minutes as presented. Commissioner Kleinhenz seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The next item was the Approval of Claims. Commissioner Kleinhenz motioned to Approve the Claims as presented. Commissioner London seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The next items were the Weekly Permits Report as read by Commissioner Lienhoop:

Time frame	New permits	Fees	Value
10/17/22 to 10/21/22	16	\$7,826.00	\$15,839,137

Of note: \$14,913,395 - Parkside Elementary School Remodel (Maxwell Construction)

The next item was the Weekly Crew Report for County Highway as presented by County Engineer Danny Hollander (via Zoom) for last week as follows: side-winded on 700 E, 700 N & 350 E; replaced pipe on 1200 E & 900 E; ditched & added stone along 1150 E; picked up trash; and mowed in Jackson & Wayne Township.

The next item was a Proposal/Agreement with US Imaging, Inc. for the Recorder's Office as presented by Recorder Tami Hines as follows:

- Contract with US Imaging, Inc.
- For onsite scanning of 1822-1918 Land Record Books
- Onsite to protect & preserve the books

- o Stage 1
 - Scan 1822-1918 Land Record Books on site
 - 95 total books = 42 mechanical & 53 bound
- o Stage 2
 - *Image pre-processing & indexing*
- o Stage 3
 - *Quality control & deliverable of hard drive*
- o Stage 4
 - Incorporate scanned data into the CRS Program
- Once the Land Record Books data is scanned & stored on USB hard drives, the drives are to be shipped to Bartholomew County
- The IT Department will then work with CSI to make the data available for CSI to import into the main Recorder's Office program CRS

• Total Cost: \$33,899.00

Recorder Hines stated that they are required to keep everything on microfilm. They had stored it offsite at Iron Mountain, but asked to have it sent back as the State will store these for the County. Upon inventorying the items, they discovered they were missing these books on micro-film. The funds come from the Perpetuation Fund, not from taxpayer funds. Commissioner Kleinhenz motioned to Accept the Proposal in the amount of \$33,899 as presented. Commissioner London seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The next item was the Consideration of Extended Courthouse and Governmental Office Building Hours for Absentee Voting and Election Day as presented by Clerk Shari Lentz as follows:

- The Voter Registration and Election Office will need to be open for business on the 2 Saturdays prior to the election as required by State Statute
 - Courthouse (Nexus Park serves as the Office of the Clerk)
 - Of overnmental Office Building (GOB) (Serves as the satellite vote center location on the 2 Saturdays prior to election
 - \bullet 5:00 a.m. 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 29, 2022 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

• Saturday, November 5, 2022 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

• Tuesday, November 8, 2022 Election Day

• Bartholomew County Courthouse 5:00 a.m. until all votes are counted

Commissioner Lienhoop motioned to Approve the Extended Hours for the Courthouse and Governmental Office Building for Absentee voting and Election Day as presented. Commissioner Kleinhenz seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The next item was a Report regarding the American Rescue Plan Funds presented by Auditor Pia O'Connor as follows:

Description	Final Budgeted Projects	6/30/2022 Balance	Q3 2022 Project Revenue	Q3 2022 Project Expense	9/30/2022 Balance	Cumulative Revenue	Cumulative Expense
Countywide Broadband	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000			\$4,000,000	-	-
Sewer at Fairgrounds	\$500,000	\$400,630		\$6,651	\$393,979	-	\$106,021
Not For Profit Revenue Replacement	\$472,500	-				-	\$472,500
Jail HVAC	\$1,300,589	\$1,156,694		\$3,956	\$1,152,738	-	\$147,851
County Government Revenue Losses	\$10,000,000	\$6,972,334	\$27,860	\$843,716	\$6,156,478	\$65,902	\$3,909,424
Totals	\$16,273,089	\$12,529,658	\$27,860	\$854,323	\$11,703,195	\$65,902	\$4,635,796

Auditor O'Connor read the report. She discussed that the sewer project is moving forward. Commissioner Kleinhenz motioned to Accept the ARP Fund Q3 Report as presented. Commissioner London seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The next item was the Consideration of a Bill of Sale and a Parking Easement between the City of Columbus Redevelopment Commission and Bartholomew County as follows:

- Bill of Sale and Parking Easement with Columbus Redevelopment
- Between the City of Columbus Redevelopment Commission & Bartholomew County
 - o Overall Cost of Project
 - **\$3,905,281.50**
 - o Redevelopment Commissions Cost of Construction
 - **\$1,500,000.00**
 - o Remainder Amount County Pays to Columbus Redevelopment Commission
 - **\$2,405,381.50**
 - County Council agreed to pay

- **\$2,200,000.00**
- Commissioner will pay remainder from CEDIT
 - **\$205,381.50**
- Upon Completion of Parking Garage, the County will be entitled to utilize 100 spaces of the parking garage between the hours of 7:00 a.m. & 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday
- The Commission will provide notice of construction commencement at least 60 days in advance to allow the County and its employee's sufficient time to secure other parking.

Commissioner Lienhoop stated that this Bill of Sale pertains to the new Court Services Center, the current County employee parking lot and the new parking garage spaces. Commissioner Kleinhenz stated that the County will also receive title to 2 parking lots that are currently owned by the City. Commissioner London stated that being able to get the new building without any debt is wonderful. Commissioner London motioned to Accept the Bill of Sale and Parking Easement as presented. Commissioner Kleinhenz seconded the motion. Commissioner Lienhoop stated that they were going to originally incur the debt and make 15 years of payments out of the CEDIT Fund. They spoke with the Council regarding the interest that would have been paid versus the return that we have been receiving on our investments. He thanked the County Council in taking \$2,200,000 out of County General to pay this debt. The interest saved is around \$600,000. The vote was called for and passed unanimously.

Recorder Hines stated that the earlier request for \$33,899 was incorrect. The amount should be \$43,799. Commissioner Kleinhenz amended his previous motion regarding US Imaging, Inc. to state the correct amount of \$43,799. Commissioner London seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The next item was the Consideration on Second Reading of an Ordinance Amending the Columbus & Bartholomew County Zoning Ordinance for the Jurisdiction of Bartholomew County as presented by Plan Director Jeff Bergman as follows:

- Plan Commission Passed Resolution No. 2022-01
- Approving Amending the Ordinance Regulating Solar Farms

- Intent: The purpose of the Commercial Solar Energy System Standards is to establish reasonable requirements for the development, operation, and decommissioning of commercial solar energy systems and to minimize conflict between these developments and surrounding land uses
- Bartholomew County Zoning Ordinance Revisions for Commercial Solar Energy Systems (CSES's) Exhibit "A" List Details:
 - Zoning Ordinance Section 3.5(B): Agriculture: Preferred (AP)
 - o Zoning Ordinance Section 3.6(B): Agriculture: General Rural (AG)
 - o Zoning Ordinance Article 3: Zoning Districts
 - o Zoning Ordinance Chapter 6.10: Commercial Solar Energy Systems
 - o Zoning Ordinance Chapter 12.9: Improvement Location Permits
 - o Zoning Ordinance Chapter 14.2: Definitions

Plan Director Jeff Bergman stated that the proposed Ordinance deals with Commercial Solar Facilities, not the small scale homeowner/business items. Currently, these Commercial Facilities would be allowed with the in-place Ordinances. They would not have any restrictions regarding set-backs and de-commissioning as this Ordinance does address. The Plan Commission only looked at land use, not a judgement on Solar Energy. There are a couple of facilities being planned within the County. The Ordinance is not aimed at these, but rather establishing the rules for which they will be allowed. The staff had over 8 hours of public testimony (25 members of the public). The vote from the Commission was 7-1 in favor of the Ordinance.

Commissioner Kleinhenz asked about Exhibit A on page 4 regarding the ground clearance height. They had much discussion regarding the minimum height at the last meeting. His copy shows 1'. Mr. Bergman pointed to page 3, item 4. It was determined that the version of the Commissioners copy states 1' where his copy, the "working" original shows 3'. They will act on this based on a 3' minimum.

There will be a 3 minute time limit. Those in person will speak first followed by those on Zoom. It was passed last week on First Reading.

The Public Hearing was opened.

Comments from those in Physical Attendance

- Phil Weichman few points that need to be discussed 1st need 500' minimum from property line no matter amount of land owned by neighbor; 2nd how does taking 1,000 acres of good farm ground serve the common good of the County & its residents; 3rd what happens to cash renters; 4th solar companies are "bribing" and using hush money for their corporate greed
- Becky Bechtel Indiana Land & Liberty Organization travels the State discussing this lives in Marion County advocating for the private property rights of their members and seeing that they are not encroached upon want to grow crops or farm the sun, then they should be allowed to Commissioner London asked if she is saying that there should be no standards she stated there should be some he stated that she had said no she agreed there should be a compromise she stated statistics from a poll done in the State common sense setbacks are appropriate
- Commissioner London asked that the speakers state whether they live in the County or not
- Jeni Smith the proposed setbacks are confusing as they vary greatly greater clarity to revise and place setbacks at 500' from all property lines denies the neighbors their property rights not heard one impartial landowner disagree with the 500' setbacks, only those in contracts increase the setbacks to 500' as recommended by Mr. Bergman after 2 years of study
- Andrew Magner Hamilton County EDP Renewables sent 83 page document on Friday to the Commissioners born in Indiana developed over 1,800 megawatts in solar energy issues of property setbacks & property values setbacks should be from dwelling, not property lines maintain the setbacks as proposed have provided additional information regarding larger setbacks that causes more land to be used for solar farms information that 250' setbacks do not harm property values excessive high setbacks have a reverse affect by increasing the number of neighbors
- **Stephanie Wells** Marion County Hoosiers for Renewables a significant amount of farmland is being used for energy farm land being used for ethanol 14,900,000 acres in farmland and 11,500,000 considered prime 6,326 mega-watt in projects –

- even if all were built on prime farmland it would only utilize 53,000 acres consider it comparable to set aside some land to rest
- Tom Finke Bartholomew County President of the Bartholomew County Plan Commission lone vote against asking to reinstate the original 500' setback the Ordinance is very simple and easy to follow the waiver is available to any adjoining property owner Commissioner Kleinhenz asked him to explain the waiver Mr. Finke stated that the adjacent owner can sign a waiver with or without compensation for a lesser setback property values close setbacks result in lower property values 500' can be farmed after development loss of revenue can't happen if you haven't had it what better buffer than corn or soybeans between the adjacent owners and the development CAFO's have 500' setback 200' to 250' is just too small residences could be surrounded on all sides
- Skip Taylor Bartholomew County last couple of times he has discussed what is going on in surrounding counties our peers did a little research Shelby County setback is 660'; Hamilton County is 300' from the dwelling but states "no use of prime farm ground" & specifies the quality of materials if our Ordinance stated "no use of prime farm ground", we wouldn't be having these discussions 500' setback is a compromise new technologies will come about must have the 500'
- Jarrod Pitts Tenaska Project Developer does not live in Bartholomew County would like Ordinance passed as is Setbacks are the one issue project would accommodate 300' from neighboring homes Commissioner London asked "you'd be willing" Mr. Pitts stated it would not "zone out" the project small parcels going from 200' to 250' maximum height from 3' ground clearance to 1' and max height from 20' to 18' proposed setbacks would allow solar to go forward in Bartholomew County
- Mary Solada Marion County supplement what Jarod stated involvement of the Board of Zoning Appeals finding of facts have to be created best question with property values and all are for the Board of Zoning Appeals as well as all the setbacks 500' setback, if achievable, would disperse the project with a less concise footprint the setbacks for comparable use gravel pit requires 100' from property line; heavy industry requires 40' from property line

- **Josh Chavez** does not live in Bartholomew County project manager minimum height of 3' no issues with vegetation growth at 1' minimum height would be required by IDEM to assure no long term run off 3' ground clearance elevates the working platform and may create safety issues
- Kathy Bush Bartholomew County part of the area in possible contract Columbus is Different by Design and also innovative in for running progress not like Texas who determines who gets power and for how long need to look forward for electric needs have not stopped industry found out solar on 2 sides of her much rather have solar than a housing addition
- Marlene Dow Bartholomew County 32 years one that would be faced with solar farms on North & South of property paper stated she is against solar and find them unsightly for anything that can reduce carbon asphalt pushes for the right place canopies over parking lots provide shading and provide energy go with the 500' setbacks spoke to a farmer that there is no reason productive farming could be done with 500' setbacks
- Commissioner London she has suggested other locations the Commissioners are not looking for locations they are setting the rules for the projects to use Commissioner Kleinhenz would love to learn more why they can't better use a parking lot than putting neighbors against neighbors
- Peter Gray passed
- Jeff Hilycord lifetime Bartholomew County resident as a Real Estate Broker wants people to be able to use their land as they want listed several "good neighbor" policies in other counties where the good neighbor agreements included monetary amounts if neighbors were not negatively affected then solar companies would not be paying them the original proposal was 500' the 200' to 250' setback is unreasonable use the 500' and let the companies use their "good neighbor" policy and compensate the neighbors if nothing else, compromise with 300' from property line Commissioner London stated that if they were neighbors and he wanted to paint his house neon green would it affect property values Mr. Hilycord stated it would Commissioner London asked if there should be an Ordinance regulating the color of homes in Bartholomew County Mr. Hilycord stated no

- Lois Bonnell provided handout heard same arguments with the CAFO's shared a list of properties within 1 ¼ miles of the CAFO values have continued to increase did not decrease with the CAFO and no proof property values will decrease with solar very small number of people that will be affected by solar farms pass as written
- Brian Bush property rights in support of property rights right to add solar to his farm ground friends have asked him to go to CAFO meetings in support of property rights eroding property rights of farmers to farm their land if they make a change to the Ordinance then make a change in the decommissioning payments to owner not County CAFO's will crash property values in and around the area property values have increased Commissioner Kleinhenz stated that it is a vague statement all property values have gone up compare the percentage of the increases around the CAFO to other increases within the County Mr. Bush CAFO property value decreases were feared setbacks pick a county that they want to be comparable to us today he chose Delaware and Monroe a lot of corn goes to energy production for ethanol solar is direct energy production
- Justin Gelfius passed
- Greg Daily Bartholomew County 5th generation farmer farmers have lost rights people complain about farming dust, fertilization and asthma from pollen setbacks organic farming could be out due to the odor of the fertilizer CAFO opponents stated decreased values were the issue same issue with solar now but information is coming from Rhode Island establish less stringent setbacks decommissioning money should go to the land owner to return the land to its original condition plan for future generations Commissioner London finds it interesting that

people complaining about farming are living in homes that were on farm ground – unintended consequences of farmer land being sold – sometimes in order to keep the farm

- Commissioner Kleinhenz found the comment about painting a house interesting and the response from Mr. Hilycord that it would affect his value but we should not have an Ordinance regarding house colors
- Tim McNealy Lifetime resident of Bartholomew County Mr. Bergman was correct with his original proposal if not, then a 350' compromise is his recommendation addresses the comments by Commissioners Kleinhenz & Lienhoop at last meeting all setbacks should be set to the property line so it is fair to everyone if "good neighbor" is rejected by neighboring land owner then it was judicial process
- Peter Gray passed again
- Justin –passed again

Zoom Comments

- Cassie Finkel Otte 5th generation Bartholomew County land owner lives in Hendricks County participating in solar allows them to help with the future after many discussions with her father and sisters, they came to the conclusion to participate in solar appreciates Plan Commission time in creating this Ordinance Planning Commission passed with the current information please pass as approved
- **Dena Hasler** was a Wetzler has lived on 450 N all of her life except time at Purdue not being held to high standards of architecture fence and razor wire will look like Shawshank Redemption kept quite due to friends and neighbors are signed up for it hates to see solar on farm ground doesn't know how we got from 500' to 200' and even 30' 30' is nothing please listen to us the people for this don't live here put the setbacks at 500'
- Julie Low lives in Bartholomew County someone said before her that we should think of what we are leaving for future generations pass as is so that can begin to be part of the solution, not the problem with energy

- Lynn Finkel encourages to adopt the Ordinance as proposed compared to heavy industry that only requires a 20' setback more than adequate for solar Plan Department and Commission spent much time on this accept as proposed
- *Mrs. Finkel* setback is 2.5 times the State recommendation
- Adam Wade asked what the Commissioners see Bartholomew gaining from Solar Commissioner Lienhoop no comment Commissioner London not what we are dealing with here it is a land issue dig a 200' hole and fill with pudding on your property is your right Commissioner Kleinhenz easy answer gain revenue in tax dollars though he believes tax abatement will be asked for and denied by the County Council then the companies will not come in Commissioner London stated that with the work on the Broadband, he came to understand how utilities pay personal property taxes if he buys \$100,000 piece of equipment but it cost \$150,000 to install only pays on \$100,000 a Utility has to pay on the entire "installed" price that is why abatements are so important for those projects if they are contingent on abatements then he doubts it will happen in this county Mr. Wade if windfall for owners then they have the right to sell their property and move Commissioner London personal opinion is that solar is coming a regulated utility does not have to comply with the standards they put in place Mr. Wade would like to see a common compromise of 300' to 350' for all setbacks

There was no one else on Zoom that wanted to comment

There were a few people in the audience that wanted to speak

- Jemma King set the record straight to the comment about good neighbor agreements the Posey County solar project she worked on that project for several years original setback was 250' with good neighbor agreement moved to 300' without good neighbor component
- Cheryl Carothers does the energy produced here stay here Yes goes to closest user/purchaser (Duke/REMC)
- Kathy Bush 500' is extensive and just a silent way to kill solar in Bartholomew County

- Marlene Dow met with solar reps at Donner Park would like to hear from someone that lives near a solar project of this magnitude Commissioner London had talked about that at the First Reading in regards to his trip to Randolph County her other concern is the 8' fencing Ordinance did not include the barb wire and hopes that stays that way the fencing is just too industrial looking it is more than just the solar arrays there are other parts to it eco system will see the effects in 30 years and heaven help us Commissioner London allows for animal friendly but it is an option only
- Arnold Haskell questions are they looking at same set as passed by Plan Commission Mr. Bergman stated that the one that Commissioner Kleinhenz had was an attachment from someone (Mary) not the one passed by the Plan Commission had made proposed changes on the document aware of actual Ordinance a lot have made an assumption that since initial recommendation was 500', that is what it should be like to hear why they had that and then changed it to lesser amounts Mr. Bergman property values was in the discussion but they are not experts on that looked at range of setbacks of other communities considered a range of just setbacks and buffers such as vegetation set aside vegetation for the most part as how to maintain and creates false expectations 500' initially based on those factors what to expect in a rural setting up to the Commissioners to determine what is correct
- Tim McNealy 5,800 acres under contract new company seeking 800 acres around Hope
- Jean Lawson lived in Bartholomew County drive over 625 that crosses over I-65

 it is great she benefits from it most don't get involved she doesn't care how many farms they create if this were on the election ballot, she believes it would get overwhelming support from those paying the taxes

Closed the Public Hearing comment portion of the meeting

Commissioner Kleinhenz stated that he liked a couple of the points made by Tom Finke. There is a difference in farm ground and prime farm ground. A 500' setback will be farmed. The smaller participants fear that they will get kicked out with larger setbacks but they can be used as part of the

outside buffers. All very good comments from the people today. Commissioner London stated this has been a long process and he has been involved the entire way. This has been the most challenging issue to come before him. The editorial yesterday stated that this should be an easy issue. That is not true. He has lost sleep as he is dealing with family, friends and co-workers. We are dealing with property rights issues, but there has to be balance. We are a strong and caring community, but we are not a commune. We own our property privately. We want to enjoy our property privately. We don't want to harm our neighbors. This is not an easy decision and the editorial was 100% wrong on that issue. Commissioner Lienhoop stated they were criticized and that is okay. You try to make the best decisions with the information you have. The State setbacks are minimum except Shelby County is 660'. Commissioner London stated no matter the decision, they have spent many hours working on this and gathering information. They have taken this very seriously. Commissioner London stated that the setbacks are confusing.

Commissioner London motioned to Approve the Ordinance on Second Reading with the following changes:

- 1. Equipment height ground clearance reduced from 3' to 1';
- 2. All parcels considered the same for distances with variances allowed setting 200' from the property line and 500' from the existing dwelling wall of all non-participating residents with no exceptions unless negotiated between the company and the adjacent neighbor
- 3. All other conditions as currently listed

Commissioner Kleinhenz seconded the motion.

Mr. Bergman asked for clarification to be certain he takes the correct information back to the Plan Commission for their Approval/Changes. If they agree with the changes, then the process is complete. If they do not agree, then they would make their recommendations and send it back to the Commissioners for a final reading.

Clarifications as follows:

- 50' setback of thoroughfare, is that to be changed as well correct, measuring from the property line or dwelling that is across the road.
- No change for the substation setbacks. correct

Half a mile setback to other municipalities to remain – correct - Commissioner
 Kleinhenz considered striking that but it will be put in at some point so leaving it cleans

it up for all parties.

• No separate listing for community functions (schools, churches and such) – correct

• Commercial should be 200' – correct

Mary Sullivan asked for further clarification on the setbacks – is it that they must meet both 200' &

500' or do they have to meet the greater of them. It would be the greater of the two. Residential is

500' from the outer wall. Commissioner Lienhoop stated that normally he would reread the motion

but he is not going to on this occasion. Commissioner Kleinhenz stated that the point of moving from

the 3' ground clearance to 1' ground clearance would prohibit growing of certain vegetation.

The vote was called for and passed 3-0.

Mr. Bergman stated that the next Plan Commission Meeting is November 9, 2022 but he is uncertain

if this will be on the agenda or if they will hold a special meeting.

The next Commissioner's Meeting will be Monday, October 31, 2022.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

BARTHOLOMEW COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

CARL H. LIENHOOP, CHAIRMAN

LARRY S. KLEINHENZ, MEMBER

TONY LONDON, MEMBER

14

ATTEST:	
PIA O'CONNOR	