

MINUTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BUTLER COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HELD ON April 27, 2021.

With social distancing guidelines being maintained at in-person meetings, an electronic participation option is made available. This complies with Iowa Code section 21.8 that outlines the guidelines to hold an electronic meeting when there are valid concerns that an in-person meeting is “impossible or impractical”.

Meeting called to order at 9:00 A.M. by Chairman Greg Barnett with members Rusty Eddy and Tom Heidenwirth present. Moved by Barnett, second by Heidenwirth to approve the agenda. All ayes. Motion carried.

Minutes of the previous meeting were read. Motioned by Barnett, second by Heidenwirth to approve the minutes as read. All ayes. Motion carried.

John Luhring, Parkersburg, IA, was present in-person to make the board aware of a company going door to door in Butler County and Grundy about a proposed industrial wind turbine farm. Luhring had been provided with the Butler County Wind Energy Systems ordinance that was put into place in 2013. Luhring felt we should review the current ordinance and look at other counties that have restricted wind turbines. Luhring feels wind turbines are not a good option for Butler County because they are not renewable or self-sufficient and replace valuable crop land. Jeff Kolb was present in-person and shared there had been a wind study done 10-15 years ago in Butler County and at that time there was not sufficient wind or power grid to support them; however, they are more sufficient today and the investment in the power grid has improved a lot in southern Butler County. Discussions were held regarding the environmental impacts on these wind turbines. Randy Williamson, Parkersburg, was present in-person and expressed concern with property values, noise, and the subsidies these wind turbine companies receive. Eddy stated he has been opposed to wind turbines in Butler County for several years and within the last year has learned old wind turbines can not be recycled so they are currently being stacked around or buried. Environmental Health Specialist & Zoning Administrator, Misty Day, was also present and explained the Board of Adjustments would review these applications, ensure standards with our current ordinance and have the approval authority for those applications. Day confirmed the Board of Adjustments process would include a public hearing and she would send a notice to all affected property owners within 500 feet of the proposed location. Day shared they have been in the process of updating the zoning ordinances, including wind energy standards, within the next year. The Board of Adjustments have briefly discussed utilizing moratoriums until the ordinances can be updated, but they are subject to litigation and she cautions on how to proceed moving forward when exploring those options. Day will continue to research options and confirmed to date there are no applications to put wind turbines in Butler County. Discussions were held regarding the Board of Adjustments authority to deny applications, easement ordinances, and the time frame involved in updating our existing ordinance.

Barnett shared the following COVID-19 updates: There have been 2 new cases, 1 recovery, no hospitalizations or deaths, and a positivity rate of 0.8%. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine was released last Friday and manufacturers have been rescheduled for this week and next week. After the manufacturers are done Public Health will schedule a public clinic for Johnson and Johnson vaccine. Interest in the vaccine clinics is slowing down and Public Health is currently are taking appointments for the next Moderna clinic on May 7th.

Tim Woods, New Hartford, was present in-person and shared that a thorough study has been done on T55 north out of New Hartford. Woods mentioned last fall County Engineer, John Riherd, mentioned this spring we could start implementing ideas and would like to get them underway. Riherd shared they discussed a potential speed study or traffic counts to determine if there is an issue with that and he will contact the DOT to help with those. Riherd also mentioned some additional signage and possible sidewalk project and crosswalk installed. Riherd mentioned if the city has a 35-mph sign that the county can place it in the area that was discussed.

Shawna Lebeck, Community Coordinator, was available in-person to discuss a possible contract with Community Partnerships for Protecting Children (CPPC) as she has taken over additional responsibilities due to a vacancy. Lebeck explained the Together 4 Families Governance Board is looking to see if Butler County would be willing to take on that contract since Lebeck is providing these services and we are her employer of record. Discussions were held regarding the contract expenses/claims, administrative fees and reimbursement process. County Auditor, Leslie Groen, explained they have checked with the state auditor who determined it would not be problem to handle this contract. Barnett clarified this contract is for reimbursed funds and the county would essentially be the fiscal agent. Motioned by Eddy, second by Heidenwirth to move forward with drawing up a contract with a 2% administrative fee. All ayes. Motion carried.

Jeff Kolb, Executive Director for Butler Grundy Development Alliance, was present in-person to provide a program update. Kolb began by sharing Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) has approved their incentives for Shell Rock Soy Processing LLC, so we can begin to update the Urban Renewal Area and then work on Butler County’s development agreement with Shell Rock Soy Processing LLC which should be completed by this fall. County Engineer, Riherd, explained the Urban Renewal Amendment will also include new, potential projects that would be eligible and also update to reflect projects that have been completed. Kolb also shared a major Butler Grundy Development Alliance initiative include focusing on workforce attraction to make people aware of employment opportunities through paid social media advertising and their Cedar Valley job board. Some additional initiatives include: day care availability, Home Base Iowa, housing availability, and downtown assessments for Aplington and Shell Rock. Veterans Affairs Director, Tom Heckman, explained Home Base Iowa is for veterans separating from service and recruiting them to Butler County for employment. An economic impact study has also been completed which Kolb has been reviewing with supervisors separately and will then make it public.

Moved by Barnett, second by Eddy to approve a utility permit for Butler County REC for underground service line at 32345 190th Street. All ayes. Motion carried.

Motioned by Barnett, second by Eddy to approve a utility permit for Butler County REC for overhead service line at 21520 310th Street. All ayes. Motion carried.

County Engineer, John Riherd, mentioned that construction season has begun. He also shared they will be hauling the millings to gravel roads around the county to increase stability of the gravel. In the future they hope to complete a stabilization project to inject chemical to bind that material and create a quasi-hard surface.

Motioned by Barnett, second by Heidenwirth to approve claims. All ayes. Motion carried.

Board acknowledged receipt of Manure Management Plan Annual Updates for RB/McCandless Finisher Farm, Lucky 7 Finisher Farm, and Tom Wiarda #1.

Motioned by Eddy, second by Heidenwirth to adjourn the regular meeting at 10:20 A.M. to May 4, 2021 at 9:00 A.M. Motion carried.

The above and foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes and proceedings of a regular adjourned meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Butler County, Iowa held on April 27, 2021.

Attest: _____
Butler County Auditor

Chairman of the Board of Supervisors