

CONTINUED MEETING OF THE JASPER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

SEPTMEBER 16,2024

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The Jasper County Commissioners met this date at 8:30 A.M. C.S.T at 910 S. Sparling, Rensselaer, Indiana with the following members present: Rein Bontreger, James Walstra and Jeffrey DeYoung. Also present were 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. Mr. Bontreger asked for a moment of silence to express their condolences for the family of Corporal Schreiber, the Newton County law enforcement and the whole community of Newton County.

EXTENSION OFFICE REQUEST FOR NEW SHED: Mr. Bontreger said the Extension Office had requested a new shed. Mr. DeYoung said he had stopped out there and they have a 10x14 wooden shed there. He said with a little organization, they could put shelving on one side and store their stuff in there. He said it is in good shape but, could use some stain on the outside and it also has a lockable door. Mr. Urbano also added that Ms. Fortney was able to get rid of the blocks she previously talked about.

CONFERENCE REQUEST / HR: There was a conference request from HR. Mr. DeYoung made a motion to approve HR going to the conference, Mr. Walstra supported and the motion carried.

ED CAIN / REQUEST TO REPLACE EMPLOYEE: Mr. Cain said they need to replace a Drag Operator and their part-time cleaning person. He said they have already had inquires for both positions. Mr. Walstra motioned to approve, Mr. DeYoung seconded and the motion carried.

HIGHWAY BARN QUOTES: Mr. Bontreger said Mr. DeYoung has been gathering information for the update on the Highway barn, where they are going to relocate the maintenance shop and have a finished area for the Surveyor and Highway Department. He said this building is just to the east of the Highway's main building. Mr. DeYoung said he had two quotes for the insulation from Three Tree Investments LLC. He said one was for \$34,003.56 for three-inch foam and six-inch foam on the roof. The second quote was for two-inch on the walls and four-inch on the ceiling for \$22,904.00. He said they recommend the two-inch and four-inch. Mr. DeYoung motioned to approve the quote for \$22,904.00, Mr. Walstra seconded and the motion carried.

Mr. DeYoung said he had a quote from Ziese Plumbing for \$5,660.00 for underground plumbing which includes a bathroom for the maintenance shop and a future stub for a bathroom on the Highway's side. He said this has to be done before the concrete and it does not include trench drains, only the piping to the drains. He said has to check the concrete bid to make sure the floor drains are included. Mr. DeYoung motioned to approve the Ziese quote for \$5,660.00, Mr. Walstra seconded and the motion carried.

Mr. DeYoung had a quote from Moore Electric for \$10,658.00 for led lighting, outlets and a wall heater for the 24x45 maintenance side. He said it was \$15,540.00 for the other side, which is 45x96 and includes lighting and outlets. Mr. Walstra motioned to approve the quotes from Moore Electric, Mr. DeYoung seconded and the motion carried. Mr. DeYoung said they need to talk about possibly finishing the interior package on the maintenance side. He said the Highway/Surveyor's side will stay foam on the inside of the walls but, there will be three walls on the maintenance side that need an interior package. He also said they need to talk about the heating and air. Mr. Urbano added that there's some boards rotting in the roof. Mr. DeYoung said they will address them.

ANDY BOERSMA / FEE SCHEDULE: Attorney Beaver said that Mr. Boersma delivered this fee schedule to him awhile ago. He said it lists different categories of payments for deputies. He said the Council had appropriated, in their revised salary ordinance, \$275.00 per run and \$125.00 for a transport officer. Attorney Beaver asked if the deputy also transports, if they get paid both amounts. Mr. Boersma said they get paid both amounts for use of their vehicle. Attorney Beaver said that would be for transporting a body. Mr. Boersma said it is for transporting a body and using their vehicle to take it back to the Morgue. He said they had asked for an increase in the transport fee from \$125.00 to \$175.00. He said this is for the use of their vehicle, fuel, tires and maintenance.

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ANDY BOERSMA / FEE SCHEDULE CONTINUED: Mr. Bontreger asked if they would use their personal vehicles less now that they have the Coroner's van. Mr. Boersma said the use of their vehicles would be less.

Attorney Beaver said they have to be clear between expense reimbursement and compensation. He said the statute says, if the Commissioners authorize deputy coroners or the coroner to use their own personal vehicle then, they can submit a request for reimbursement at fifty cents per mile. He said if they pay more than that, it would be considered compensation, which would be a part of the salary ordinance. He said he didn't see the appropriation for a transport officer in the salary ordinance but, if they are getting paid to use their own vehicle then, that needs to be appropriated in the salary ordinance. He said the Commissioners can't, with an MOU, increase or pay beyond what has been appropriated by the Council because, the Council sets the compensation. He said the Commissioners can do a reimbursement but, only at fifty cents a mile. He suggested going the Council for an additional appropriation. Mr. Boersma said they don't currently submit mileage reimbursement; they submit for the \$125.00 transport fee.

Attorney Beaver said Mr. Boersma had requested \$25 for taking photographs and there's a reimbursement for film development. He asked Mr. Boersma if he was looking for compensation for anybody who takes pictures. Mr. Bontreger asked if they had an official Coroner's camera or if they are using their own personal devices. Mr. Boersma said they take the pictures with their personal device then, burn to a cd and put in a file. He said they're paid for the use of their camera, their time to download them, print them and then, file and mark them as evidence. Attorney Beaver asked if they had 2-3 people at the scene, if they would all take pictures. Mr. Boersma said no and if the police take pictures, they get copies of their pictures. He said they do take their pictures when they get back to the morgue. Attorney Beaver asked if this fee is above and beyond just responding to a call. Mr. Boersma said yes. Attorney Beaver said this might be another item to ask the Council for an appropriation for. Mr. Boersma said they already have it. Attorney Beaver said he's seen that there's film reimbursement. Mr. Boersma said years ago, they called it film reimbursement because, they used to go to CVS or Wal-Mart to buy the film and print them. He said now they allow digital films so, they call it "photos" on their fee schedule but, its paid out of the line "film and development". He asked if they could change that line item name. Attorney Beaver said this should probably go in the salary ordinance because, digital photography is zero expense, unless they're making hard copies. Mr. Boersma said its not zero expense because, someone has to buy the cd's. Mr. Bontreger said they might need to change the name to "photographic processing" or something. Attorney Beaver said whoever pays for the cd's should be reimbursed and he knows there is a lot of work involved, in terms of the photography. He said it sounds like Mr. Boersma doesn't believe it is fair compensation based on just responding to a call. Mr. Boersma said he doesn't because, they have to go to court to testify to taking the photos. Mr. Bontreger said there needs to be an additional line of compensation that the Council needs to add to the salary ordinance.

BUILDING COMMITTEE: Mr. DeYoung said they've been talking about a new forensic center and putting together a committee. Mr. Bontreger mentioned a previous building committee when they renovated the bank building. Mr. DeYoung said they were thinking about a five-chair committee. He said he would be willing until the end of the year and at that point, Mr. Craig Standish will take his spot. He said the committee will also include Mr. Boersma, Sheriff Williamson and one Council member. Mr. Boersma mentioned asking the Council tomorrow night.

SARA DEYOUNG / JASPER COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION PRESENTATION: Ms. DeYoung, Executive Director of JCEDO, provided an overview of what their organization does. She said they work closely with the County and local Elected Officials in all the towns. She said they are a nonprofit organization with a twenty-member board, registered 501C that was established in 1986. She said their board chair currently is Rodney Urbano, Mr. Bontreger serves as our vice chair, David Del Principe is the treasurer, John Cripe, the town manager from Remington, is their secretary and Jeremy Sheetland from Titan is the former ex officio board chair. She said they are also Jasper County Tourism and they have an MOU with the

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SARA DEYOUNG / JASPER COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION PRESENTATION CONTINUED: Tourism Commission to staff them, apply for grants for capital projects and events such as, Little Cousin Jasper. She said they work with them to make sure that not only are those events receiving grant funds but also, that they're being advertised that they're getting out there in the community. She said something they've spearheaded was Yodel, a community calendar.

Ms. DeYoung said she is the Executive Director and has been there since April of 2023. She said she is a graduate of Purdue University and her and her husband farm in Newton County. She said she has a background in community newspapers and wanted to find out how to better be a part of the community and get involved in making it a better place.

Ms. DeYoung said they are a 2.5-person office. She said they have an office administrator and a tourism/community development coordinator, which is Angelica Potts. She said JCEDO's mission is to strengthen and diversify local economy, attract quality jobs and encourage entrepreneurial growth to create opportunities for Jasper County and its residents. She said they have five areas that they focus on; business retention and expansion, workforce development, small business development, community engagement and tourism. She said her goals since she's started are improving their site information and the number of sites; that's data and photos. She said a site is basically a property owner that will come to them to list their property for development. She said site collectors are like realtors in a way. She said they work with companies and larger corporations to find sites such as, what they have listed. She said they currently have thirty listed and she's going through and auditing a lot of them.

Ms. DeYoung said they do have a lot of assets in the community such as, I-65 access, land, water, quality schools, small towns, arts and parks. She said her role is to better leverage and put the message out there about what they have to offer and work with local communities to strengthen what they have. She said Remington has done a lot with their parks because, they have a park plan. She said they were able to get DNR grants that allow them to put in their splash pad and walking trail. She said they've been working with Rensselaer and Wheatfield to do the same.

Ms. DeYoung said when a site selector comes, they do not tell them the company but, they might tell them the industry. Mr. Bontreger asked how long it takes to pull of the resources together and have a response back to the prospect. Ms. DeYoung said they used to give them up to a week but, now its 3-5 days. She said once they submit it, they might be interested in a site visit or they are no longer interested.

Ms. DeYoung said she reached out to the Indiana Municipal Power, which is where Rensselaer gets their power from. She said they have a secret shopper site selector program where they would work with them if they were to visit their location. She said she worked with them to see where their holes were as far as information or where they can do better. She said their areas to improve, as far as their website are they need a geographical reference to where Jasper County is in the State and Country. She said they need a geographical overlay of their transportation assets, as well as information about the schools, childcare and housing.

Mr. Bontreger said Ms. DeYoung has been working with him and the Jasper Foundation to put together a leadership summit within the county to distill some of the desires, as far as the type of development they want to have. He said they can present the county as a whole and not surprise anyone or force feed development in an area where the locals aren't necessarily going to want it. Ms. DeYoung said the site selectors noted that they need to highlight target industries that they're going after. She said this would probably be food processing, cold storage and possibly data centers. She said data centers are looking for locations that are close to renewable energy.

Ms. DeYoung said they have a lot of sites along the 114 east to west corridor going to I65 and they need more listed on State Road 10 and I-65 because, there is sewer and water there. She said there's another program they can work through with site selectors to identify ones that have more

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SARA DEYOUNG / JASPER COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION PRESENTATION CONTINUED: potential. Mr. Bontreger asked if exit 205 could be a potential. Ms. DeYoung said that would be a stretch for Remington and they would need a golden goose. She said Remington would need more infrastructural investment to attract housing and to attract more employees for the industries they already have. She said her recommendation would be that exit 205 would be a second or third priority. She said it would need a golden goose of a company to come in and make it possible.

Ms. DeYoung said she wanted to touch on TIF districts. She said TIF stands for tax increment financing. She said it captures the future gains in real estate to value, to fund new projects. She said the intent is for the improved property to increase the value of an existing property and encourage new development. She said the advantages are: its funded by new taxes that would not have been created without the TIF, it only uses new tax dollars, its highly flexible and locally controlled. She said Remington is a great example of this because, they took TIF funds from their I-65 and 24 corridors to invest in their downtown; this includes the new rail depot, sidewalks and infrastructure. Mr. Bontreger asked if they have a specified duration or if they go into perpetuity. Ms. DeYoung said she thought it was twenty years.

Ms. DeYoung said they helped with the READI 1.0 that funded the ag strategy, which was a \$500,000.00 grant to promote more of local ag producers. She said they have consultants working with them and five other counties to flush out the strategy. She said one thing that they will recommend is a right to farm policy. She said it would be an ordinance that would state that if you build a house here, you understand it's a farming community so, there might be tractors on the road. She said they would like people to see this before they sign the paperwork on their house.

Ms. DeYoung said murals are something that Jasper County Tourism is trying to leverage more as far as having QR codes to bring people further into the community. She said that when people click on the QR code for a mural to find out more about the artist, it would connect them to local restaurants and events.

Ms. DeYoung said that they receive funding not only from Jasper County but from Wheatfield, Remington, DeMotte, Rensselaer, business contributions and they also do fundraising events. She said how they receive their funds is diverse and they also have done grant administration that has brought in a little bit of funding. She said JCEDO is always open to companies that are interested in their communities and the sites they have to offer. She said they work with those communities throughout the county and the region to better leverage their assets. She said it's an ongoing process and the more information they have about what a community or the county, as a whole, wants to be, the better able they are to our work.

BAKER TILLY / COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL PLAN: Mr. Bontreger said Ms. DeYoung also helped with the Baker Tilly comprehensive financial plan. He said they are also going to talk about an MOU with Nipsco, who is willing to cover the cost of doing an analysis of what a possible abatement and economic development package could be for their peaker unit. Attorney Beaver said the comprehensive financial plan would include the following funds: County General, Public Health Commission, LIT County Share, LIT Economic Development, LIT Special Purpose, Public Safety, LIT Emergency Services, Cumulative Bridge, Cumulative Capital Development, Cumulative Capital Improvement, Emergency Medical Services, Local Road & Street, Motor Vehicle Highway and Restricted Funds, Rainy Day, Statewide 911, Reassessment and ARP Coronavirus Recovery Fund. He said using those funds, there would be a long-term financial plan based upon receipts, disbursements and historical performance of those funds. He said the county would supply two years of financial statements and Baker Tilly would come back with their preliminary financial report. He said they would provide recommended minimum fund balances and identify any shortfalls in revenues that may happen down the road. He said they would then, develop a longer-term plan.

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BAKER TILLY / COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL PLAN CONTINUED: Attorney Beaver said for the first financial plan, they would bill hourly with a cap not to exceed \$30,000.00 and the time and expense for the capital plan would be a cap of \$20,000.00. He said if the Commissioners decide they want to move forward then there could be an oral resolution to accept and have Mr. Bontreger e-sign. Mr. Bontreger asked if there was a motion to approve going forward with the two analysis proposals from Baker Tilly.

Councilman, Mr. Arnold, said he would take a pause with allowing a corporate entity to help fund in this part. He said they need the study. Mr. Bontreger said the only thing they are helping to fund is the analysis of the peaker unit abatement and EDA. Mr. Arnold said he wanted to put it on record that he thinks they need to be careful when allowing any corporate entity to help fund something because, its like a fox being in the hen house. He said he would like for them to carefully consider that. Mr. Bontreger said part of the reason they asked for Nipsco to help fund the analysis of how that potential would affect those townships is because, Council members would like to see real numbers before they make a decision. He said he appreciates Mr. Arnold's concern but, it is separate than the overall analysis, which is just for them, internally. He said Nipsco was willing to cover the cost, whether it goes through or not.

Mr. Bontreger said they took a lot of input from the Assessor, who is also very concerned, to make sure that if they do come up with an agreement, its not going to adversely affect the taxpayers in those townships and in other words, make sure the AV is protected before they extract too much EDA money. He said they have tried to consider all of these concerns. He thanked Mr. Arnold for his questions so they had a chance to explain the nuance of it. Mr. DeYoung motioned to approve the not to exceed \$50,000.00 for the two analysis, Mr. Walstra seconded and the motion carried.

NIPSCO COST SHARING AGREEMENT / BAKER TILLY: Mr. Bontreger said the cost sharing agreement is a separate analysis. He said Nipsco has proposed a project; a peaker natural gas generation, which bridges the gap between wind and solar, as they phase down their coal, and make sure that power is consistent. He said it is regulated by MISO, which is the organization that manages the power in the region. He said Nipsco has to prove that they can generate power reliably. He said they asked Nipsco for the analysis because of the potential impacts and the unknown. He said Baker Tilly is able to take the data and give them some closer realistic numbers. He said Nipsco is willing to cover the cost, no matter the outcome of the final decision.

Attorney Beaver said when the parties sign this agreement, the county will work to engage a competent company and to prepare a financial analysis of the project and Nipsco would be obligated to share whatever data is requested. He said if there's anything confidential then, they will work it out to keep it confidential. He said once they get the report, both parties will have access to it and then, there would be a 90-day period for the Commissioners to gauge the county's interest and share the report internally. He said they can pull the Council for an executive session. He said after 90 days, the Commissioners would pass a resolution of interest, saying yes or no, the county is interested. He said if the county is interested then, the parties would proceed with negotiations but, if the county is not interested then, the county will just send the bills to cover the financial and attorney fees.

Attorney Beaver said Baker Tilly has given a quote for not to exceed \$17,500.00. He said the Commissioners don't want to sign the agreement until Nipsco signs their side. He said the Commissioners can approve, contingent on Nipsco approving the cost and information sharing agreement. He said the idea behind this is so that they don't find themselves in a situation where the county has incurred professional expenses. Mr. DeYoung motioned to approve the cost sharing agreement with Nipsco, pending Nipsco's final approval, Mr. Walstra seconded and the motion carried.

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MASON DAUMAS / EDP RENEWABLES / AMENDMENT TO ROAD USE AGREEMENT:
EDP Renewables representative, Mason Daumas, said they are the parent company of the Carpenter Wind Farm that is currently being developed in Carpenter Township. He said back in 2022, the company's name at the time was Meadow Lake Wind Farm 8. He said they had signed the Economic Development Agreement, Decommissioning and Road-Use Agreements with Jasper County. He said they have since changed the name of the project to Carpenter Wind LLC so, they are asking for an assignment of those agreements to Carpenter Wind LLC. He said when they signed the Road-Use Agreement in 2022, they did not have a detailed design for the project; where the infrastructure might go and which public roads may be intended to be used. He said the intention with that agreement was once they got to a more significant level of design, they would attach appendices that would indicate where those things were likely to be installed and seek approval for those specific locations.

Mr. Daumas said in addition to the assignments, they are also looking to amend the Road-Use Agreement to attach appendix A, A1, B, C and D. He said these are essentially the map of the public roads that they intend to use for the project. He said those are the roads that would be cement stabilized, so the subgrade would be improved and then later they would pay for the resurfacing after their use, once the project is constructed. He said the A1 appendix is the map of the crane pads, where they intend to potentially walk cranes as they move from turbine to turbine. He said they would need to cross the public road infrastructure to do that. He said appendix B is a general map of the installation, appendix C is the map of driveways and entrances where they anticipate access roads and private access roads where the turbines would be installed and appendix D is the drain location map. He said he wanted to be clear that although they are addressing the rights to use the public rights of way, it does not mean they are currently seeking the approval for driveway or drainage permits. He said those are two wholly separate items that they are still working on.

Mr. Daumas said those were just the attachments of the appendices to indicate where they would intend to use the public rights of way. He said there's also a few clarifications in the language that was proposed in the RUA which included: the addition of additional time for the county to review specific items within the RUA if changes are proposed in the future, the covering of additional legal fees on behalf of the county and inflation calculations. He said they had agreed to a specific number on how much they are going to pay for the reimbursement of the public road resurfacing back in 2022 so, they are clarifying how that inflation will be calculated. He said again, the RUA does not constitute approval for the driveway permits or the drainage permits. He said everything has been reviewed by BF&S; the engineer that was hired by the county to review all agreements, permits and applications. Mr. Bontreger said that construction compliance monitor is the term they use.

Mr. Bontreger said that BF&S representative, Mr. Phil Gralik, has worked hard to make sure the inventories match up. Mr. Gralik said they have matched the two lists up from the county and EDP. He said EDP asked for a map of the differences so, they are working on getting that to them. Mr. Bontreger said they appreciate all the hours they have put in and he hopes it'll make the process smoother going forward. Mr. DeYoung asked Mr. Cain and Mr. Urbano if they have been happy with BF&S. Mr. Cain said they are doing a great job. He said they have a bunch to do on their own so, this helps tremendously. Mr. Urbano said as far as drainage goes, Mr. Gralik is wanting to discuss some things that aren't really related to this but, they've been working really hard for them. Mr. Bontreger said the whole point is that the county or EDP can run their concerns through BF&S. Attorney Beaver said he appreciates this process of employing experts because, the county doesn't have the resources to handle large projects and day-to-day business. Mr. Bontreger asked if Ms. Scheurich was online and if she had any comments. Ms. Scheurich said she gets left out of a lot of e-mails. Mr. Bontreger said to make sure she gets included in the e-mails.

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MASON DAUMAS / EDP RENEWABLES / AMENDMENT TO ROAD USE AGREEMENT CONTINUED: Mr. Bontreger said the construction compliance monitor has reviewed it, the company has reviewed it and they have reviewed it internally. He asked if there was a motion to approve the assignments. Mr. Walstra motioned to approve the Road-Use Agreement with EDP, Mr. DeYoung seconded and the motion carried. A member from the public, Ms. MaryAnn Mahlen, asked what the motion was. Mr. Bontreger said they've updated the appendices to the original Road-Use Agreement from 2022 to include the concerns of the Highway and Surveyor Departments and they have had it reviewed by an independent engineering firm that the developer paid for but, the county hired. He said it will establish the infrastructure that's going to be affected and how it will be taken care of. He said the RUA states which roads will be cement stabilized and approved. He said the assignments change was just the fact that they changed the name of the project from Meadow Lake Wind 8 to Carpenter Wind LLC. He said this is what they are approving today. He said they still have other permits they need to go forward but, this is another step for them to get through. Attorney Beaver added that after an agreement is signed, it is publicly available.

PUBLIC COMMENT


CRAIG STANDISH / SHOOTING RANGE: Mr. Standish said its been some time since they've talked about the shooting range for 4-H shooting sports. He said Attorney Beaver had mentioned some paperwork and getting on an agenda with the City. Attorney Beaver said they will need to have a site plan with specs. He said he will e-mail Mr. Standish and Mr. Urbano the Federal standard for fire range design. He said they will need a site plan and application then, have a public hearing with the City.

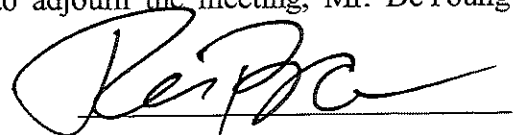
BRETT MAHLEN / ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER: DeMotte resident, Mr. Mahlen, provided the Commissioners with a handout about Robert's Rule. He said his thesis is Jasper County Board of Commissioner meetings ought to seek to reform its practices in order to serve the county better, according to Robert's Rules of Order. He said he thought it would be good for the Board and listeners to see a little bit more rigor in its keeping of the rules of order. He said the Board often makes motions improperly, often confusing verbs and nouns. He said they will say "I make a motion" but, it should be "I move that". He encouraged the moderator to regularly repeat the motion. He said the motion, as it is exactly and precisely worded, should go into the minutes.

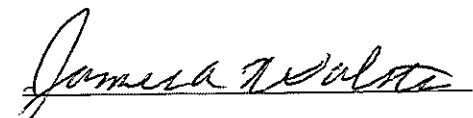
DOREEN RAY: Ms. Ray asked if there was an update on the co2 ordinances. Attorney Beaver said he has been monitoring the litigation in Iowa. He said that BP is not considering any action this year. Mr. Bontreger said they could throw something out there but, if the litigation nullifies what they do then, it's a waste of time. He said the project pacing has been backed off, which gives them breathing room to make sure what they do, is done correctly. He said it's their intention to stay on course and get something in place.

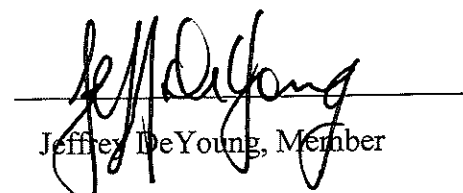
There being no further business, Mr. Walstra moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. DeYoung seconded the motion and the motion carried.

ATTEST:


Donya G. Jordan, Auditor of Jasper County


Rein Bontreger, President


James A. Walstra, Vice President


Jeffrey DeYoung, Member