**MINUTES OF A BUILDING, GROUNDS, SAFETY, AND INSURANCE MEETING OF THE COUNTY OF HANCOCK, STATE OF ILLINOIS, HELD AT THE COUNTY COURTHOUSE, IN THE CITY OF CARTHAGE ON JULY 9, 2025**

The meeting was called to order by committee chair Mark Hanson at 6:30 p.m. Members in attendance included Michelle Merritt, Steve Finney, and Josh Turner. Tom Rodgers, Ryan Weeks, Lee Ann Lambert, and Mark Menn were absent. Visitors included Ryan Ramsey, Bobi James, Michelle Berry, Tim Murphy, Rex Johnson, and Dusty Walker.

Ms. James spoke about putting a notice in the paper regarding insurance bids and letting Ramsey Financial and IPRF know that we are putting insurance up for bid. Bid specs need to be turned in by the end of September to be able to go over at the October building and grounds meeting. There have been 2 building permits that have been submitted. She needs to get with Justin from Bellwether to see if he has a draft or proposal for the building permit. She is wondering who is in charge of the building permits. This will be discussed at this meeting. She left at 6:36 p.m.

Mr. Ramsey went over the insurance claims for 2025. He wants to make sure that the new EMS building has the correct coverage for the building and contents, and he needs to know the correct address. The building is currently covered for $204,700. The new EMS building address is 86 Buchanan.

Ms. Berry discussed the ground coverage for the solar farms. She has talked to different counties and has looked at different solar farms land thinks that cool-season grass would be the best ground cover with trees and shrubs as barriers. Cool-season grass contributes to organic matter, its easier to establish, and suppresses weeds. If the land is to be farmed again this is the best. Each solar farm will be on a case-by-case basis. If there are trees already present then none will need to be planted. Ms. Berry has an application that she has been working on since October. There will be a 5-year checkup included in the cost. She would like to know what happens if they are not maintaining the land, mowing, etc. Is this a breech of contract? Motion to do cool-season grass with trees and shrubs as a barrier and remove equivalent agency from the ordinance was made by Ms. Merritt, seconded by Mr. Finney. All members present voted aye.

Kayla Bair, veterans’ service officer, asked if there is a room in the building that she could use twice a month to assist veterans. Ms. Merritt moved to invite her to the full board meeting for consideration of a spot in the courthouse, Mr. Turner seconded. All members present voted aye.

Solar was discussed. Instead of asking for a bond there was discussion of asking for an escrow. There is a need for somebody to take care of the building permits. They would go out and inspect the sites and make sure that these are being done correctly and look at road usage permits. This can be paid for by the building permit funds that are collected. This person would work with Justin about what needed to be done. Mr. Finney moved to give permission to the county board chairman to talk to individuals to become the building permit go to person who will bring it to the next building and grounds meeting. Ms. Merritt seconded. All members present voted aye.

Ms. Merrit made a motion to have Bellwether amend the current ordinance to say $1,000,000 escrow for solar projects under 10 mw and $1,500,000 for anything over 10 mw instead of having a bond, with a possible increase in the application fee. Mr. Turner seconded the motion. All members present voted aye.

Motion to recess until August 12 at 6:30 was made by Mr. Turner, seconded by Ms. Merritt. All members present voted aye. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Hanson