

Decatur County Council Meeting

Tuesday, April 19, 2022, Room 106

Present: Danny Peters, Bill Metz, Melanie Nobbe, Ashley Hungate, Deanna Burkart, Ernie Gauck and Kenny Hooten

President Peters called the April 19th Decatur County Council meeting to order. State Representative Randy Frye led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

(Meeting minutes and agendas are emailed to Council members the Friday before their Tuesday meeting)

Mrs Hungate made the motion to approve the March 15th minutes as corrected and Mrs Burkart seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0.

Sheriff Dave Durant told Council members a 2021 grant through the **Decatur County Community Foundation** helped fund hiring the Detention Center's Program Director. This was a 'one-time' grant, so Sheriff Durant will transfer \$53,497 of Commissary Funds to the Sheriff's budget in County General to continue paying Director David Burnett a salary of \$44,382 + FICA- \$3,395 + PERF- \$4,970 + \$750 to get grant out of the red. The Program Director's salary will be the only salary paid out of Commissary monies this year according to Sheriff Durant's plan. Mrs Hungate asked if there are any reports on the Commissary the Council could see. Sheriff Durant stated he is required, by statute, bi-yearly to give Council members reports on the Commissary Fund- he told Council they can have anything they want at any time, all they have to do is ask- he will give them a spreadsheet. Janet Hodson, MRT instructor for the female inmates is paid from County General's Jail part-time appropriation; also paid from that appropriation is administration and transportation. The Commissary fund should be able support the program director's position, but at some point, Sheriff Durant wants this position to be paid out of tax dollars. Mr Hooten moved to approve and Mrs Hungate seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0.

County Treasurer Diane Wenning told Council members the 'Treasurer's books' were not in balance on January 1, 2021 when she came into office. The **2019 Audit** by the **State Board of Accounts** showed a \$195,379.09 difference between the County Treasurer's cash book and the County Auditor's funds ledger. The \$195,379.09 was put in **Fund 1100- Excess Treasurer Cash Book** until the Treasurer and Auditor could balance on a daily basis. Mrs Wenning and her staff, working with software vendor LOW Associates, found and corrected some posting errors totaling \$137,471.13. Deputy Treasurer Danielle Holcomb told Council the two offices have been balancing daily for the past year. Mr Metz made a motion to follow through- allow the Auditor to 'show an expenditure' of \$137,471.13 from Fund 1100. Mrs Nobbe seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0.

Visitors, Recreation and Tourism Director Philip Deiwert answered Council's questions about some expenditures, overtime on a salaried position and certain members of his Board filing conflict of interest with the Commissioners. Mr Deiwert said he is not an elected official, he is hourly. Mr Deiwert said he cannot do his job on 35 hours a week.

Rick Anderson of Veregy presented information of guaranteed energy savings project for the Court Services Building and the Detention Center, using solar energy, LED lighting and replacing 2 furnaces at the Court Services Building.

Indiana Representative Randy Frye shared information on **Senate Bill 119- Taxation (Abatements) of Farm Property**, which Governor Holcomb has signed into law. Mr Frye stated SB 119 is a local decision for approving abatements, no more than 5 years per abatement, on new farm and manufacturing equipment as well as on developing unusable land. Council will continue to research and discuss this as they need to have an ordinance in place before July 1st when the bill takes effect.

Mr Gauck moved to approve the \$35,000 additional in **American Recovery Plan** funds for New Point’s stormwater study. Mrs Nobbe seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0.

Mr Hooten moved to approve the transfers as presented and Mrs Hungate seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0. Transfers included moving first-quarter monies from departments’ budgets to the Non-Reverting Health Insurance fund.

Council set their 2023 Budget Calendar: August 15th, beginning at 3:00 pm, Departments may present their budget requests; **August 16th**, regular meeting at 9:00 am, Budget workshop immediately afterwards; **September 13th**, Public Hearing on proposed 2023 Budgets during regular meeting; **October 18th**, 2023 Budget Adoption during regular meeting.

Economic Development Director Bryan Robbins suggested forming a committee to set out guidelines on the farm-related abatements, define projects and filing fees. Areas will need to be designated/defined for farmers who may apply for abatements. Mr Robbins told Council the **READI Grant Committee** is moving forward, the State is coming next week to review projects; also considering creating a Regional Development Authority- quasi government- which would need local approval.

Commissioner Mark Koors told Council the Commissioners have reached an agreement with **Decatur County Memorial Hospital** to purchase the Health Building at 801 North Lincoln Street, for \$650,000. Commissioners plan to invest \$150,000 with the **Community Foundation** as ‘seed money’ to build an Exhibition Hall replacing the current Community Building on the corner of the Fair Grounds. Mr Koors hopes the **Community Foundation** can secure some funding from **Eli Lilly and Company** and maybe local folks will want to donate some money.

The Council’s next meeting will be at 9:00 am on May 17th, in Room 106.

With nothing else to come before the Council, Mr Hooten moved to adjourn and Mr Metz seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned.

Danny Peters, President

Attest: _____

Date: _____