

Decatur County Council Budget Meeting

Tuesday, August 16, 2016, Room 106

Present: Ernie Gauck, Larry Meyer, Bill Metz, Kenny Owens, Danny Peters and Kenny Hooten
Government Finance Consultant Kay Schwade was also present to answer any questions or concerns Council members might have.

President Gauck called the meeting to order. He asked members if they were in agreement on reappointing Mary Lou Gauck to the **Decatur County Community Foundation Scholarship Committee**- all five were in agreement.

Ms Schwade told Council members the projected **Cumulative Bridge Fund** balance will be approximately \$3,000,000, which is considered 'healthy'. Council members do have the option to reduce the tax rate for **Cum Bridge** and shift that amount to **County General**.

After contacting Highway Superintendent Mark Mohr about future bridge projects, Council members decided to reduce the **Cumulative Bridge tax rate** beginning in 2017. Mr Hooten moved to reduce the **Cum Bridge rate to 2.83 cents and move 2 cents to the County General tax rate**. Mr Meyer seconded the motion. Motion carried, 6-0. The revenue generated by moving the two cents should net about \$251,000 for County General which should be 'for emergencies only'; otherwise 'saved back' to help build cash reserves for 2018's Budget. Council members also agreed to transfer \$600,000 of **EDIT funds** to the **County General Fund** to help fund the **2017 Budget**. They stated this will not become an annual transfer; just until cash reserves can be built up in **County General**.

The next item for discussion was whether to give raises for County Employees (includes Department Heads) and Elected Officials. Council decided to give \$600 to Elected Officials and \$400 to County Employees. They also agreed not to give any raise to part-time employees since the current hourly rate is \$11.80.

County General departments' budget requests were reviewed- some requested dollar amounts were reduced while others were approved as requested. **Denise Zeigler, County Recorder**, had requested adding another full-time employee and not hiring any part-time help. After some discussion, Council decided not to approve the additional full-time employee. Since the **Recorder** had 'zeroed out' the Clerical appropriation (1000.10300.000.0004), Mr Peters moved to increase that appropriation to the current 2016 amount of \$16,995. Mr Metz seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

One option for the Sheriff's salary, by State Statute, is to be sixty-four percent of the Prosecutor's salary paid by the **State Court Administration**. Since the County does not have a contract with **Sheriff Greg Allen**, his salary increases for 2018 per the July 1, 2017 raise received by Prosecutors state-wide.

The **2017 Visitor, Recreation and Tourism Budget** request did not include health insurance, FICA, PERF or workman's comp; so Mr Metz moved to increase the budget for those line items. Mr Owens seconded the motion. Motion carried, 6-0.

The requested 2017 Budget- \$426,034- submitted by the **Board of Health** is twenty-two percent more than the **2016 Health Fund** approved budget (\$359,067). **Health Department Office Manager Carol Beck** was asked to come to the Courthouse to answer questions Council members have. The recommendation from **GFC** is Council should approve a budget for the **Health Department** at or near \$315,200. Mr Gauck told Mrs Beck the Council can't approve the requested budget where it's at now. Mrs Beck asked for suggestions/recommendations on what appropriations to reduce. After some discussion, Mr Gauck instructed Mrs Beck to discuss reducing the 2017 Budget request with the **Board of Health members** and submit an **amended 2017 Budget request** in a couple of weeks.

The **2017 County General Fund** ending balance stands at \$9,198,858 after Council members reviewed the Departments requested budgets. **GFC** recommends adopting a budget at or near \$9,114,300. The

Council will review projected revenues before their next meeting on September 20th and decide whether to further reduce the 2017 Budget or adopt it as it now stands.

Ms Schwade told Council she still strongly recommends their consideration in adopting the **Public Safety Local Income Tax** in 2017. She stated the revenues from that tax would be approximately \$500,000 which would greatly help relieve the funding burden on County General.

After some discussion on the new requirement for the **2017 Budget Cycle**, **Mr Peters moved to recommend to the County's Taxing Units: Decatur County; Adams Township Trustee; Clay Township Trustee; Clinton Township Trustee; Fugit Township Trustee; Jackson Township Trustee; Marion Township Trustee; Saltcreek Township Trustee; Sandcreek Township Trustee; Washington Township Trustee; Greensburg Civil City; Millhousen Civil City; New Point Civil Town; St Paul Civil Town; Westport Civil Town; Decatur County Community School Corp; Decatur County Contractual Library and Decatur County Solid Waste Management to be aware of your 2017 Estimated Property Tax Cap Impact Report as stated by the Department of Local Government Finance and not to exceed the maximum levy which may create a loss in revenues. Mr Hooten seconded the motion. Motion carried, 6-0.**

The next County Council meeting will be held at 9:00 a.m. on September 20th, 2016. The **Public Hearing for the proposed 2017 Budgets will also be held during this meeting.**

Mr Gauck thanked everyone on the Council for doing a good job in this **2017 Budget process**. Mr Hooten added the Departments have done a good job in keeping their budget requests close to their current 2016 Budgets.

Ernest Gauck, President

Attest: _____

Date: _____