

## **Decatur County Council Meeting**

Tuesday, August 22, 2017, Room 106

**Present:** Ernie Gauck, Danny Peters, Judge John Westhafer, Kenny Owens, Bill Metz, Larry Meyer and Kenny Hooten.

**President Gauck** called the meeting to order. Merrill Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag.

After Council members reviewed the June 27th meeting minutes, Mr Metz moved to approve the minutes and Mr Peters seconded the motion. Motion carried, 6 – 0.

**Greensburg Community Bread of Life spokesman Merrill Smith** invited Council members to stop by their kitchen and enjoy a meal and tour their facilities. He told Council members there are approximately three hundred volunteers a week who work to prepare eight hundred to a thousand meals and deliver some of those meals on Mondays and Wednesdays. Mr Smith thanked the people of Decatur County for caring so much.

Mr Gauck read the Council's letter of support for **Greensburg's Stellar Community Grant** application. Mr Hooten moved to sign the letter to be included in the **Stellar Grant** application. Mr Westhafer seconded the motion. Motion carried 6 – 0.

Mr Gauck announced as of today there are no verbal contracts for any kind of jail project. The Council has been given the option to adopt an additional local income tax rate to provide adequate jail capacity; thus maintaining low property tax rates essential to economic development. Mr Metz suggested tabling any action on this for a month since the Council doesn't want to adopt two amounts of LIT (Local Income Tax) for jail construction and daily operations of a jail. **Matt Eckerle of Umbaugh and Associates** stated the proposed rate of sixty-five hundredth percent (0.65%) is based on a \$25,000,000 jail project. **Rick Hall of Barnes and Thornburg** stated the County Commissioners need to know the Council is on board before moving forward with architects and contractors. Mr Gauck stated the Council needs to know what size building/jail (number of beds) the Commissioners believe the County needs for the next twenty plus years. County Commissioner Rick Nobbe would like for the jail planning committee to include Centerstone and Decatur County Memorial Hospital in discussions on what space is needed for mental health as well as medical. Council members agreed they should send a resolution to the County Commissioners supporting the construction of a new jail, building what is needed-- 200 up to 250 beds. **Prosecutor Nate Harter** suggested the Council 'open the public hearing' on the income tax ordinance, then table their vote until the Council's September meeting. Mr Gauck opened the public hearing by asking if any of the audience would like to speak. Matt Davis stated he is concerned the elected officials may be making a hasty decision before vetting or seeing details/information on the projected costs and funding. He is not objecting to the construction of a new jail- he and Decatur County residents need to understand the construction costs and the ongoing operations of a new jail. Mr Gauck is pretty sure architects have a few 'shelf plans for different sizes and designs of jail projects' Decatur County could use for estimates on costs. **Mike Gouloff of Elevatus Architecture** said he has one plan for a jail that was built two years ago, so the costs wouldn't be exact. **Pete Peterson of RQAW Architects and Engineers** echoed Mr Gouloff's statement they could get within a 'rough range of costs'. **Andrew Lanum of George K Baum** cautioned Council members the LIT income may drop with the recent announcement of **Main Source Bank** merging with **First Financial Bank**. Council members agreed to send a resolution to the Commissioners supporting construction of a new jail and the Council will adopt an income tax to fund this project. The resolution would allow the Commissioners to contact architects to get an idea of 'where we want to be'. The Commissioners may adopt a resolution to reimburse county monies used now for engaging engineers/architects to select a jail design, size and projected costs with some of the bond monies once this project is moving forward. In conclusion of the jail project discussion, Mr Westhafer moved to send a resolution to the Commissioners asking them to find 'closer numbers' for design, size and operating costs and the Council will adopt an income tax at their next meeting. Mr Meyer seconded the motion. Motion carried, 6 – 0.

**Visitor, Recreation and Tourism Director Gary Herbert** gave updates on various grants awarded to local groups. Currently he is working with **County Treasurer Brenda Dwenger** on steps to collect late fees from local hotels not paying their ‘innkeeper’s tax’ before the twentieth of each month.

**Main Street Greensburg Director Wendy Blake** presented her mid-year report: \$6,200 in facade grants have been awarded; purchased new street banners to display around downtown and she’s been working with the **Greensburg Stellar Community Grant** committee.

Mr Metz moved to approve all requests to transfer monies with departments’ budgets and Mr Owens seconded the motion. Motion carried 6 - 0.

**Mr Owens 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 2018 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 revenue. Mr Peters seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0.** Copies of this meeting’s minutes, after they are approved, will be sent to each of the above named taxing units for their records, as required by IC 6-1.1-17-3.6.

**Decatur County Environmental Health Specialist Sean Durbin** reported the miscellaneous revenues for the Health Department are up due to the increased fees implemented on January 1, 2017. He stated their department is being fiscally responsible. Council members approved Mr Durbin’s request for the pay he receives through **Public Health Preparedness Grant** be ‘ran through payroll’. The Auditor’s office recently learned a county employee should not receive a W2 and a 1099 for contractual job/grants.

**Decatur County Denise Zeigler** asked the Council to waive the ‘new hire salary beginning four percent less than the current pay for an employee with three or more years of service. Her part-time person, Dottie Robbins, has worked in the Recorder’s office for five years before replacing Barbara Lee as a fulltime Deputy Recorder. Mr Metz moved to allow Ms Zeigler to pay Ms Robbins at the full deputy’s salary and Mr Westhafer seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0.

Council members agreed to appoint Mary Lou Gauck as their representation to the **Decatur County Community Foundation**.

The Council’s next meeting will be September 19<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am. The Council will conduct a Public Hearing for the proposed 2018 county budgets.

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

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Ernest Gauck, President

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Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_