

# Decatur County Council Meeting

Date & Time: 2025-8-19 9:00 A.M.

Location: Room 106

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

## Opening Remarks

- President Danny Peters called the meeting to order for the August session of the County Council.
- Pledge of Allegiance led by Clerk Janet Howell.
- Approval of Minutes:
  - Minutes were emailed prior to the meeting.
  - No additions or corrections noted.
  - Motion to approve the July 15<sup>th</sup> minutes made by Bill Metz, seconded by Deanna Burkart. Motion passes 6-0

## Community Organization Budget Requests

1. Bread of Life
  - Requested \$15,000 for its utility budget, noting over \$9,000 in electric costs.
  - Rescued 3 million pounds of food from landfills, preparing it into meals for the community.
  - Served 1,168 individuals last year; operations only close during severe weather when schools close.
  - Fundraising efforts contribute \$100,000, including events like the turkey dinner.
  - Runs a clothing ministry and relies on volunteers.
- Children's Advocacy Center (CAC)
  - Presented case statistics since opening, noting 66.6% of Decatur County cases involve sexual abuse.
  - Explained relationships between PCS, Advocates for Children, and CAC.
  - Requested \$9,000 for a standalone resource.
  - Office has operated independently for five years and is the most utilized in the county.
- Catch A Ride / Lifetime Resources
  - Provides public transportation, primarily serving older residents but available to all.
  - Served 131 residents with 7,800 rides in the last full year.
  - Decatur County budget for the service is \$368,000; requested \$10,000.
  - Funds help match the Section 5311 grant, which requires \$100,000.
  - Fares start at \$3 for up to 5 miles; contracted services include Medicaid, Medicare, and DSI.
  - No current contracts with Veterans Services for transportation outside the six-county area.

## 911 Billing Policy and Equipment Requests

1. 911 Service Billing Policy Change
  - The 911 center uses Motorola services, with bills currently split between city and county agencies, causing administrative difficulties.
  - Executive board voted for the county to pay the full bill and invoice the city for reimbursement, streamlining payments to Motorola.
  - Bills are issued twice a year, averaging \$32,000 every six months, with a total contract amount of \$132,000.
  - Council discussed the need for a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the county and city to formalize the new payment process.
  - Motion was made by Kenny Hooten, seconded by Rick Nobbe and approved 6-0 to proceed with the MOU, with the county paying first and the city reimbursing.
- Sheriff's Department Equipment Request
  - Unexpected need to replace a 360-degree surveillance camera in the sally port and parking lot area.
  - Replacement cost is \$10,424.60, with commissioners approving up to \$10,000 from jail tax funds.
  - Council approved the expenditure, pending confirmation of the final amount with Bill Mets making the motion, Deanna Burkart seconding, motion passes 6-0.

## Grant and Budget Approvals

CCMG grant for \$250,000 reviewed; it is an 80-20 matching grant.

If awarded, the grant would provide a total of \$500,000 in funding.

Motion made by Ernie Gauck to approve grant match, seconded by Bill Metz. Motion passes 6-0.

## Decatur County Taxing Units

Reuben Cummings presented the Department of Local Government Finance's 2025 estimated maximum levy and estimated property tax cap loss revenue for the non-binding review. Motion made by Ashley Hungate, seconded by Kenny Hooten to recommend submitting as presented. Motion passes 6-0.

## Jail and Maintenance Department Operations

### Radar Medical Detector Purchase for Jail Cells

- Proposal to purchase four radar medical detectors for inmate biometrics monitoring.
    - Hardwired, mounted above cell doors; no device required to be worn by inmates.
    - Alarms notify staff if abnormal biometrics are detected.
    - Technology used in similar facilities with positive feedback.
  - Quoted price for four units is \$29,000; \$900 per unit annual maintenance (\$3,600 total per year).
  - Maintenance costs paid from commissary funds; purchase funded by jail tax special purpose fund.
  - Intended to mitigate liability and improve safety in high-risk cells.
  - Motion to approve was made by Bill Metz, seconded by Deanna Burkart, motion passes 6-0.
- **Maintenance Department Staffing Changes**
  - Approval to promote Eric Ziegler to Maintenance One and Jack Dance to Maintenance Two.
  - New hire to fill Maintenance Three position.
  - Budget for these changes is already allocated for the year; board approval obtained.

- Pay structure: Maintenance One receives higher pay than Maintenance Two and Three; Maintenance Supervisor receives the highest.
- Motion to approve was made by Ashley Hungate, seconded by Kenny Hooten. Motion passes 6-0.

## **Salary Ordinance Amendments and Departmental Transfers**

### 1. Quarter One Amendment

- County Highway employee Darryl Self advanced after obtaining CDL Class B license.
- Pay increased from \$20.85 to \$21.30 per hour; position remains non-exempt.
- Bill Metz made motion to approve, Rick Nobbe seconded. Motion passed 6-0.

### • Quarter Two and Three Amendments

- Park department: staff moved up from Maintenance Two to Maintenance One, and Maintenance Three to Maintenance Two.
- Jail: staff moved from Deputy to Corporal.
- Courthouse Security: staff moved from Corporal to Transport Officer.
- Sheriff incentive pay for Merit Poll One.
- Salary ordinance amendments must be approved before pay changes are implemented; now a monthly process.
- Motion to approve made by Deanna Burkart, seconded by Rick Nobbe. Motion passes 6-0.

### • **Departmental Fund Transfers**

- Health Department: Transfer of \$191.88.
- Highway Department: Transfer of \$15,000 from trucks and road equipment to utilities.

### Utility Billing Correction and Impact

- County paid back \$15,000–\$17,000 due to a billing error involving an incorrect multiplier applied by REMC.
- Corrected billing has led to significantly higher monthly bills going forward.
- Kenny Hooten made motion to approve transfers, Ernie Gauck seconded. Motion passes 6-0.

### • **Committee Appointments and Foundation Selection**

- Lilly Selection Committee appointment discussed; Mary Lou Gauck was suggested to continue serving for the current year.
- Ashley Hungate made the motion to approve, seconded by Rick Nobbe. Motion passes 6-0.

Regular Council meeting adjourned with Kenny Hooten making the motion, Ernie Gauck seconded. Motion passes 6-0.

## **Budget Workshop**

### • **Legislative and Procedural Updates**

- New state law requires fire department funding requests to be submitted by the fiscal officer of the unit served.
- In 2027, all LIT rates will be re-adopted and consolidated, with annual re-adoption required starting in 2030.
- Future increases to the levy require adoption of an ordinance and a public meeting dedicated solely to that ordinance.

- Form 3 for tax reporting will be updated to include both rate and levy increases.
- If budgets are not properly adopted or submitted by September 1, the growth quotient for affected entities will be reduced to 80% of the standard rate.

**Budget Planning and Departmental Allocations**

- Departmental Budget Adjustments and Levy Transfers
  - Health, Park & Recreation, and Assessor departments contributed to budget stability by maintaining flat or reduced budgets.
  - Levy moved from Park to Reassessment to ensure all three departments are fully funded.
  - Reassessment fund's cash balance is low, prompting the levy transfer.
- Revenue Estimates and Budget Flow Concerns
  - LIT revenue estimates show a 6.6% increase over 2025, considered unusually high.
  - Skepticism about sustaining this growth rate; plan to review budget flow and actual spending over the past four to five years.
  - Addition of public safety and special purpose accounts has complicated tracking.
- Park Activity Fund and Self-Sustainability
  - Park activity fund's revenue has increased substantially; expected to become self-sustaining due to new turf and increased tournament activity.
  - Caution about potential declines if rentals slow down.
- Salary, FICA, PERF, and Overtime Allocations
  - Need to consolidate salary, FICA, PERF, and overtime allocations within the same fund for easier software management.
  - 3% salary increase planned for the next fiscal year.
  - Group insurance budgeted at 10% less than previous years; equipment and furniture budgets set to zero where not needed.
- Fund Transfers and Budget Line Adjustments
  - Several fund transfers discussed, including moving \$2,686,932 out of the detention center into special purpose funds.
  - County general fund's grand total is \$12,719,339 after adjustments.
  - Small budget lines may be zeroed out to simplify reports.
- Public Safety and Departmental Expenses
  - Public safety expenses discussed, including clothing, gas, oil, and vehicle maintenance.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Danny Peters, President

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

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

