

Draft

Decatur County Council Meeting

Tuesday, February 18, 2020 Room 106

Present: Danny Peters, Larry Meyer, John Westhafter, Bill Metz, Deanna Burkart and Kenny Hooten

President Peters called the February 18, 2020 meeting of the Decatur County Council to order. He asked Councilman Larry Meyer to lead the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mr Metz moved to approve the January 21st meeting minutes and Mrs Burkart seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0.

Superior Court Judge Matt Bailey and Circuit Court Judge Tim Day shared the 2018 Weighted Caseload Measures by County-Severity of Need, which shows Decatur County is 1st out of 92 counties in caseload per Judge. Both Judges are requesting Council's support with a letter to the **Chairman of the Interim Study Committee on Courts and the Judiciary** asking for a **Magistrate Judge**. Commissioners signed a letter of support at their meeting yesterday. This position would be paid for by the State. The Magistrate Judge would need one Court Reporter (county employee), a courtroom, furniture and equipment. Judge Bailey believes the Law Library would suffice for a court room. Judge Day told Council members both Courts are swamped and the Magistrate would be the cheaper way to go. The Magistrate would use Debbie Schilling's old office. The earliest date a Magistrate could start would be July 1, 2021. Mr Meyer made a motion to move forward with this and Mr Westhafer seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0.

Michelle Guidice, Director of Catch A Ride thanked Council members for their financial support in the past and in 2020. Funds from counties are used as 'matching funds' required by the Federal grants program. In 2019, 233 riders were served in over 12,000 one-way trips; while 15% of those riders was for employment. The State implemented brokerage system ran by **Southeastern Transit** has improved their response time to requests for calls to ride. Vouchers may be purchased by a third-party at \$3.00 a piece to donate/give to anyone.

County Sheriff Dave Durant asked Council members for their approval to spend \$90,000 out of the Cumulative Capital Development Fund to purchase 3 pickup trucks. Sheriff Durant will be putting approximately \$20,000 back into the Cum Cap by selling the older sheriff cars instead of trading them in. Mr Metz moved to approve spending the \$90,000 out of Cum Cap and Mr Hooten seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0. Sheriff Durant asked for the Council's permission to apply for the **Cops Hiring Grant** which would give the Sheriff's Department funds to hire 2 road deputies. **Sergeant Rob Goodfellow** answered questions as he and Ashley Wilson are working on 3 separate grant applications. This grant would be \$125,000 per officer over a 3-year period only; those 2 deputies would then be paid by County funds. Sheriff Durant stated the County does not have to accept this grant should the Council think we can't sustain paying those 2 deputies after the 3 years. This \$250,000 does not include equipping these officers. He estimates \$194,000 would be needed for these 2 officers in the 3-year period. Mr Meyer moved to approve applying for the grant and Mrs Burkart seconded the motion. Motion passes 6 – 0. A reimbursable **Policing Grant** would provide up to \$30,000 to track sex offenders, which Decatur County has 66 that **Administrative Assistant Ashley Wilson and Lieutenant Chris Hellmich** have to track daily. Mrs Burkart moved to approve to apply for the \$30,000 grant and Mr Metz seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0. Sergeant Goodfellow hopes to apply for a \$15,000 grant through the **Decatur County Community Foundation** to go toward purchasing a **True Narc** testing device which can detect up to 490 substances. The total cost for the True Narc is \$28,000 and he is applying for other grants to make up the difference. The \$28,000 includes training officers on using this device. Mr Metz move to approve the applying for a grant through the Community Foundation. Mr Hooten seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0.

Jail Commander Dana Parker, Assistant Jail Commander Wakenda Doles and Sheriff Durant shared 'numbers for the new jail' and the need to move the PODS to the new detention center. Commanders Parker and Doles are 'assigning cells in the detention center' using required classifications and are

almost to the 80% capacity. Space needs to be preserved for recovery programs to give these folks some hope. The 246-bed rating for the new detention center doesn't mean it will house 246 inmates due to the configuration of the jail plus the security classifications. Upon moving in, the female day room will immediately have to be used; it was supposed to be used for recovery programs. As of today, there have been 60 arrested in 2020; of the 170 total inmates, 40 are housed at other out of county jails. A **RFID** system, hand held devices to scan wristbands, will be implemented to better monitor medications distributed to inmates plus other purposes.

There will be an open house for the public at the new detention center on March 3rd, 4:00 pm – 8:00 pm.

Teresa Ruble, Executive Director of the Speranza House, told Council members a recovery program for women started over a year ago in a house on Washington Street. The Speranza House offers faith-based programs in the 10-bed facility. Mrs Ruble stated 8 out of 10 women going through the program now have jobs, a house to live in and have their kids back living with them. She added that most of these ladies don't have basic life skills when they come to the program. The PODS are needed for programs that do make a difference. Several people told the Council about their struggles and consequences of bad decisions and how these faith-based recovery programs are the only thing that work- curbing recidivism. President Peters stated Council members are opened minded about moving the PODS. Commander Parker said he would not have to increase his staff by moving the PODS to the detention center. Mrs Ruble believes the PODS would allow more programs producing productive citizens, changing this generation- looking down the road a jail addition may not be needed.

Mr Metz moved to approve the request for \$2,000 additional monies for PERF in the Reassessment Fund and Mr Meyer seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0. Council tabled Animal Control's request for \$15,000 additional monies; will ask Animal Warden Ashley Hennen to come to their March 17th meeting to answer some concerns they have.

Mr Hooten moved to approve the transfers as read, requested by the Highway Superintendent and Mrs Burkart seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0.

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

The Council's next regular meeting is March 17th, 2020 at 9:00 am.

Danny Peters, President

Attest: _____

Date: _____