

Decatur County Council Meeting

Tuesday, February 21, 2017, Room 106

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

Vice President Peters called the meeting to order and asked Sheriff Greg Allen to lead the group in the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag.

After Council members reviewed the January 17th meeting minutes, Mr Metz moved to approve the minutes and Mr Hooten seconded the motion. Motion carries, 5 – 0.

Wendy Blake, Director of Main Street Greensburg, presented her **2016 Annual Report** including information on events held on the square, the **Facade Grants**, the low interest revolving loan fund available to new businesses, all pointing to Tourism which ranks sixth in generated income in Indiana. An area needs ‘attractions’ to bring people to visit, locate here, work here, etc. **Main Street Greensburg** partners with several local groups, which benefits those groups and mostly our community.

Brittany Barnickle and Brenda Ballard of Assured Partners Neace Lukens updated Council members on the **Group Health Insurance** cost increases for Decatur County- the employer. She cited eight different carriers plus seventeen different stop-loss carriers either declined to quote or would only submit a quote for the administration of our insurance plan. The County’s current carrier, **Health Smart**, did submit a quote for renewal with a 19.7% increase on the maximum budget or an additional \$600,000. There is an increase of \$54,000 in fixed costs and a 21% increase on claims costs. The County Commissioners have decided for the 2018 health insurance to move the renewal date to January 1, 2018 in hopes of better rates plus it would help employees track their deductibles due to those being based on a calendar year. Since we are ‘partially self-funded’ the re-insurance carrier (**UME**) has ‘lasered’ six individuals whose ‘specific deductible’ is several thousand above the \$60,000 per employee. The specific deductible is what the County pays on each ‘covered individual’; the ‘stop loss carrier’ then pays any amount above the \$60,000. The laser stop-loss amounts could total \$2.65 million in addition to the regular insurance costs. Ms Ballard is continuing to evaluate the **Health Smart networks** hoping to get a lower rate by March 1st, 2017, our current renewal date.

Board of Health President Alice Hardebeck, Environmentalist Sean Durbin and Office Manager Carol Beck were present to discuss the **2017 Budget Order from the Department of Local Government Finance** reducing their budget from the submitted \$360,319 to \$307,403. Mr Durbin told the Council the State of Indiana mandates specific duties to be performed by any county Health Department. He stated three people can’t complete the mandated work/duties; he went on to say the current four employees may be able to do those for one year. In October, 2016, the **Board of Health** did adopt increases in their fees in hopes of adding much-needed cash revenues. Mr Durbin respectfully requested a loan of \$50,000, which the Health Department will pay back, to help get them through this year. He is working on a grant application to pay 10% of the department’s wages since the \$307,403 is not enough for the department’s annual wages. Several Council members asked questions about long term solutions and how would the Health Department repay a loan which by statute must be done before the end of this budget year. **Government Finance Consultant Kay Schwade** suggested the Council wait until July or August to see how the “financial picture” looks, (which is also the beginning of the 2018 budget cycle), then if revenues are up, maybe a loan won’t be needed.

Mr Owens moved to approve the five requests for transferring monies from one appropriation to another. Mr Metz seconded the motion. Motion carries, 5 – 0.

Decatur County Recorder Denise Zeigler answered the Council’s questions on the **Amended 144-** requesting salary increase for her part-time help. This employee has worked in the Recorder’s office almost five years. Ms Zeigler explained the part-time person is tasked with the same duties as the full-time person. The full-time employee has indicated she is planning to retire later this year; Denise

would like to 'pay both ladies the same hourly rate' in hopes the part-time employee will stay until her full-time person retires.

Mr Owens made a motion to appoint Ryan Kennelly to the **Area Plan Commission** as their second appointee. Mr Hooten seconded the motion. Motion carries 5 -0. The **Area Plan Commission** now has a full Board.

Mr Meyer moved to approve **Visitors and Tourism's** 'request for \$70,500 in additional monies' for health insurance, FICA and PERF. Mr Hooten seconded the motion. Mr Metz moved to approve another \$15,000 to be used for a grant to the **Decatur County Parks Department** and Mr Owens seconded the motion. Both motions carried, 5 – 0.

Mr Peters announced the Council would elect officers at their March meeting.

Eric Ratts of DLZ presented the Feasibility Study for Decatur County Sheriff's Office and Jail. The forty-six page report emphasized the County needs to plan for their needs in the year 2040, not the present. The next step is County officials and Sheriff's personnel need to define specifics, generate an awareness of needs and 'wants'. Mr Ratts added that staffing costs over a twenty-year period will be more than the construction costs, so we need to be 'staff efficient'. Another major topic is the Council will need to determine is our financial capabilities. Training of personnel and transitioning into the new facility must be given top priority-sufficient time in order to make this entire project a success. This project may take up to 2 ½ years to complete.

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

The next County Council meeting will be held at 9:00 a.m. on March 21st, 2017.

Ernest Gauck, President

Attest: _____

Date: _____