

Decatur County Council Meeting

Tuesday, February 26, 2019, Room 106

Present: Ernie Gauck, Danny Peters, John Westhafer, Larry Meyer, Bill Metz, Deanna Burkart and Kenny Hooten

President Gauck called the meeting to order and asked **County Treasurer Brenda Dwenger** to lead the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag.

After reviewing the January 15th meeting minutes, Mr Hooten moved to approve the minutes, Mr Metz seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0.

Highway Superintendent Mark Mohr asked for the Council's preapproval to proceed to purchase three tandem dump trucks at a cost of \$213,133.55 each. He will submit an official request for additional monies to the Auditor's office for legally advertising so Council members may act upon at their March 19th meeting. There are four trucks (1991, 1994 & 2- 1997) to trade-in or auction. He did consider leasing the three trucks, but it seems right to pay cash. The trucks will be purchased through the local international dealer- **Shirk's**. Mr Metz moved to approve the purchase of trucks and Mr Meyer seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0.

As requested by **County Sheriff David Durant**, Mr Meyer moved to approve changing the Trustee of the Pension/Retirement from **Hilliard Lyons to First Merchants Private Wealth Advisors**. Mr Peters seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0.

Sheriff Durant informed Council the School Resource Officer position held by Rob Duckworth was not 'renewed' by the **Decatur County Schools**. **DCCS Superintendent Jarod Burns** told Sheriff Durant they are creating a **Director of Safety and Security** position and will hire a SRO as their employee; so an additional hire is needed as a full-time Deputy for \$44,000. He had emailed Council members salary information for surrounding counties' sheriffs' employees. The inmate population on February 25th was 139. Sheriff Durant believes Decatur County is not a competitive employer when it comes to salaries and benefits which is evident in the high employee turnover. He feels like we're in a 'catch up' phase, so asked Council members for funds to increase the 15 road deputies' salaries by \$2,500 = \$37,500; 27 jailers' salaries by \$1,000 = \$27,000; increase the 3 Court deputies' hours to 8 hour days at \$18 per hour = \$3,570; Senior Administrative Officer's salary increase at \$2,500, for a grand total ask of \$70,570. Mr Gauck told the Sheriff the Council will look in how to fund these two requests for a total of \$114,570.

Mrs Burkart moved to increase the dollar amount in the Treasurer's cash drawers as requested by **County Treasurer Brenda Dwenger**. Mr Westhafer seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0.

Philip Deiwert, Director of Visitors Recreation and Tourism withdrew his request for \$36,000 in additional monies as new appropriations are only approved at budget time. Mr Deiwert explained the **Visitors of Decatur County Inc group** is not a branch of **Tourism**; it is now an independent entity with approximately \$150,000 in a bank account. **Tourism** has not paid the **VDCI** any funds since 2016. He contacted the **State Tourism office** who encouraged him to keep the **VDCI** since they are a **501C3** who can pay for remodeling, that type of flexibility to spend funds. Roy Middendorf, Karen Cyman and Tom Batterton make up the **VDCI Board**.

Mr Peters moved to approve the Amended 144 increasing Mr Deiwert's 2019 salary from \$38,000 to \$42,000. Mr Metz seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0.

911 Communications Center Director Erika Free requested the hourly pay rate for part-time workers in the dispatch center be increased from \$12.50 to \$14.00 as it had been in 2018. Part-time help is paid out of the **Statewide 911** funds. Mr Metz moved to increase the hourly rate to \$14.00 for the part-time help in dispatch, retroactive to January 1, 2019. Mr Peters seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0.

Ms Free spoke on behalf of all **Public Safety departments** when she related a recent event on loosing connectivity as they are operating on outdated software and hardware. Their biggest fear is a catastrophic network failure during an emergency. Five agencies- **Communications, Sheriff, EMA, Greensburg's Police and Fire departments and the Commissioners**- met to put together recommendations to prepare for and prevent any system failure. The current contracts are failing us. Currently there isn't a plan for scheduled preventative maintenance on the public safety software and hardware nor is there a 3 or 5 year plan on replacing that equipment. The group strongly believes hiring a full-time network engineer with a minimum of five year experience is the only solution. Running computers in squad cars, bodycams, fire, ambulance- every public safety entity depends on computers. Council offered to address this at budget time in August; mean while gather information from neighboring counties how they handle this 'computer-digital age'. Ms Free stated the top 3 things to fix now are: core network, security of infrastructure of data back-up maintained and preventative maintenance; she added the 'band-aid' will not work anymore. One solution may be have one full-time network engineer who would serve both the Greensburg and Decatur County Public Safety groups who would share the costs on that individual. Ms Burkart believes having the network engineer as our employee is more secure.

Mr Meyer moved to approve various departments' requests to transfer monies within their budgets and Mr Hooten seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0.

The Auditor's office received confirmation from Wendy Barbee of **Decatur County Memorial Hospital** the County's portion of the **2002 Hospital Lease** is paid in full. There is \$641,388.60 left in our county **Hospital Bond Fund** which may be transferred to **County General** per IC 36-1-8-5. Mr Westhafer moved to transfer the \$641,388.60 to County General and Ms Burkart seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0.

Council members discussed how much money to transfer out of **County General Fund** to the **Public Safety Fund** to 'catch up' and keep an eye/plan for the future. Mr Hooten made a motion to take \$300,000 out of the **County General Fund** and transfer it to the **Public Safety Fund**. His motion died for lack of a second. Mr Peters moved to approve a transfer of \$43,800 from **County General Fund** to the **Public Safety Fund** for a new deputy position. Mr Metz seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0. Mr Hooten moved to approve the additional to fund the new Sheriff Deputy's position in Public Safety Fund. Ms Burkart seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0.

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

The Council's next meeting is March 19th, 2019 at 9:00 am.

