

Decatur County Council

May 21, 2013 7:00 P.M.

Present: Ernie Gauck, Larry Meyer, Bill Metz, Kenny Owens, Danny Peters, Kenny Hooten

Auditor Tami Wenning was asked to lead the Pledge. Minutes from the March meeting were read and approved as submitted with Mr. Kenny Hooten moving to approve and Mr. Danny Peters seconding the motion.

A Treasurer's Report was submitted for the Council's approval. The Council was appreciative of the format it was provided in.

The Council set the budget hearing date for 9:00 a.m. on August 20th. The meeting will be followed by the council holding a budget workshop.

Auditor Tami Wenning discussed an abatement held by One Solution Logistics and explained the difference in how city and county abatements have been handled in the past. The OSL personal property return was filed incorrectly and Wenning discussed what changes the council would like to see prior to correcting the return. The original abatement was granted during under direction from the state and was a ten year abatement. Normally, abatements for personal property are for 3 – 5 years. After discussion of the abatement process, Mr. Danny Peters moved that new equipment will require a new abatement and that future abatements be granted for 3 – 5 years. Mr. Bill Metz seconded the motion. The motion carried.

There was discussion of the change at the state level concerning road funding and the wheel tax. Wenning shared information that she received at the Auditor's Conference that said that counties could expect to receive an average of 35% more starting in August.

Andrea Ingmire, Greensburg-Decatur County Library, came before the board to request an additional of \$75,000 from the library's excess contractual monies collected in the operating fund but not budgeted for. The requested money would be put into accounts that will be used to fund the newly acquired bookmobile. After some discussion of the three levies currently applied and a discussion of when the library debt levy would be retired, Mr. Owens moved to approve the resolution giving Ms. Ingmire permission to request the additional through the Department of Local Government Finance. Mr. Hooten seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Russell Wilson, Gail Snyder, Bryan Gatewood and others representing the Westport area appeared before the board to voice their concerns over the proposed vote centers. Ms. Snyder presented a list of concerns she had including questions on the costs claimed by the Clerk's office and the fact that no study committee was formed at the beginning of the process. She noted that the vote center must be approved unanimously by the County Election Board and by a majority of the Commissioners and Council.

Bryan Gatewood, President of the Westport Town Council echoed Ms. Snyder's concerns and pointed out that at the second public hearing on the vote center issue (being held at the same time as this meeting), the focus had shifted from financial savings to the inability to provide enough pollworkers and Mr. Gatewood noted that the facts were appearing sort of "fuzzy" to him. He was concerned that there wasn't any output generated by a study committee and he was told at the public meeting earlier this same evening that there hadn't been a study committee. He also mentioned that only 5 of 92 counties had opted to try vote centers and one county (Fayette) was already going to change back to the original format. After more comments and discussion, Mr. Gatewood thanked the board for choosing to wait until more public comment before taking

action.

Mr. Wilson reiterated some of the earlier comments and added that he thought maybe a hybrid system would work and allow the advantages of both systems while not discouraging voters. Sylvia England, Westport Town Clerk-Treasurer, voiced her concern for the elderly and their abilities to make it to their polling sites. Mr. Owens mentioned that he had spoken with the Fayette County Clerk and her experience with vote centers. Mr. Gauck stated that he doesn't think that cost savings should come into consideration when it comes to making sure local voters have ready access to a polling location. After more comments, it was determined that there is still a public comment period and that the vote center issue is by no means considered a "done deal", the council thanked the Westport residents for their input and said they will continue to listen to public input.

Ms. Wenning read a memo from Frank Cummings concerning the cum cap rate. She is to forward that e-mail to the council members for closer inspection.

Ms. Wenning requested that the board allow her to purchase a new copier/scanner/fax machine for the office because the current machine has parts that no longer function. After some discussion of the two quotes presented, Mr. Metz moved that Ms. Wenning should purchase the machine from Toshiba and pay for it out of the Plat Book Maintenance account. Mr. Meyer seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Ms. Wenning read a memo from the Indiana Public Retirement System notifying the council what the PERF rate would be for employer contributions in 2014. The Council needs to be aware of the rate in order to budget for it.

Ms. Wenning gave a copy of the Sheriff's Annual Report to the Council for their review.

Ms. Wenning mentioned that she had called Chairman Gauck earlier in the month to get his permission to correct payroll errors that had been taking place since January 1st, 2009. Employees hired after that point were being paid incorrectly due to misinterpretation of a county ordinance. Wenning also mentioned that corrections had to be made for several elected officials due to misunderstanding of PERF in past years. A final accounting of those corrections will be presented to the council when all of the corrections are made.

Mr. Danny Peters moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Kenny Hooten seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Ernie Gauck, President

Attest: _____

Date: _____