

Decatur County Council Meeting

Tuesday, October 17, 2017, Room 106

Present: Ernie Gauck, Danny Peters, Judge John Westhafer, Kenny Owens, Bill Metz and Larry Meyer.

President Gauck called the meeting to order. Bob Barker led the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag.

After Council members reviewed the September 19th meeting minutes, Mr Metz moved to approve the minutes and Mr Meyer seconded the motion. Motion carried, 6 – 0.

County Sheriff Greg Allen would like to purchase three electronic tasers out of the **Firearms Training Fund**; and per State Board of Accounts rules he has to have Council's approval to use those funds. Mr Owens moved to approve the purchase of three tasers using monies in the **Firearms Training Fund**. Mr Westhafer seconded the motion, motion carried, 6 – 0.

Mr Gauck asked **Parks and Recreation Director Bob Barker** if he has removed \$30,000 from his 2018 Budget request. Mr Barker stated the **Parks Board** met again, they don't want to cut services nor lay off an employee. Mr Barker cited the 2009 tax monies received were about \$200,000 less than the amount of his approved budget. The Parks Board and Mr Barker are asking the Council to address this issue at this time. Mr Meyer asked Mr Barker if he has reduced his budget by \$30,000. Mr Barker replied there isn't any place to cut. He normally has a couple of appropriations which has excess to help cover pool costs, but those appropriations are now reduced to almost nothing. Mr Gauck asked **Tourism Director Gary Herbert** if **Tourism** could help the pool out. Mr Herbert wasn't sure if **Tourism** could, but **VDCI** maybe could. Deputy Auditor Christy Smiley suggested leaving the Parks budget as is, the State may approve it. Mr Herbert said if the State says Parks has to cut their budget, then **VDCI** would be more apt to support helping with a contribution.

Mr Herbert questioned why the Council hasn't raised the Tourism Director's salary what will be for two and a half years- counting 2018. There are funds available for a raise in the Director's salary. Council agrees they try to keep the pay for jobs with similar responsibilities within a certain pay range.

Mr Meyer moved to approve the **2018 Budgets** as presented. Mr Peters seconded the motion. A hand vote was held, **2018 Budgets** approved as presented, unanimous, 6 – 0.

Mr Metz moved to approve all requests to transfer monies with departments' budgets and Mr Owens seconded the motion. Motion carried, 6 - 0. Mr Herbert did email a request to transfer monies within his budget; since this transfer is "within series" the Council doesn't have to formally approve it.

Mr Gauck opened the floor for public comment as this is a public hearing for the proposed adoption of a special jail finance income tax of .60%; the public safety income tax of .25% and increasing the certified shares income tax to 1.27%. Matt Davis addressed Council members on his concerns of adopting a jail income tax at a rate which would produce excess funds for the new jail project and those operations. He stated he has requested additional information on budget costs of operating this new facility. Mr Davis has contacted Adams County officials for budget information on building a new jail and their costs to operate that new jail. He stated a tax rate of .30% would 'bring in' the required revenue of \$1.4 million annually; so why adopt a rate of .85% when only a .30% is needed? **Matt Eckerle of H J Umbaugh & Associates** presented information what construction costs a tax rate of .60%- \$24,4 million; .55%-\$22,4 million; .50%- \$20,3 million and .45%- \$18,3 million would support. There are additional costs for capitalized interest, underwriter's fees on bonds, contingencies, etc. Information on the impact to our taxpayers was also provided- taking the medium income level in Decatur County- a .60% special jail tax would cost a wage earner \$281 annually; .55% at \$257 annually; .50% at \$234 annually and the .45% at \$211 annually. The 'total and true cost of a new jail' will not be realized until the project is completed and has been in operation for some time. Council members need to have sufficient funding in place; then if and when funds are available they could decide to pay off the jail bonds early and reduce or rescind the special jail income tax. Mr Gauck asked if there was any further comment from the public, and hearing none, he closed the public hearing.

Mr Gauck read the **Resolution to Adopt Ordinance on Same Day and At Same Meeting**. Mr Metz moved to adopt this resolution and Mr Peters seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0.

Deputy Sheriff Rob Duckworth believes the additional \$23 a year per wage earner is not a big difference; so why not adopt a rate of .55% instead of the .50%. There are costs which few people think about such as having adequate equipment/protection for jailers' use to protect themselves as well as protecting inmates from themselves.

The special jail income tax will be collected for approximately two years before a bond payment would be due; so Council could opt to issue a lower bond amount since we would have some cash to pay some costs. Mr Gauck reminded the audience- "sometimes the lowest bid isn't always your best bid".

Mr Westhafer moved to amend the ordinance to provide for a special jail income tax rate of .55%, rather than the .60% that was advertised. His motion died due to 'lack of a second'. Mr Peters moved to amend the ordinance to provide for a .50% special jail income tax rate. Mr Owens seconded the motion. Motion carries, 4 – 2.

Mr Meyer moved to finally adopt **Ordinance 2017-18**, as amended, with a .50% special jail tax, .25% public safety income tax and increasing the certified shares income tax .27%. Mr Westhafer seconded the motion. Motion carries unanimously 6 – 0.

Mr Owens moved to approve the **Solid Waste Management 2018 Budget of \$522,000 with a .0275 tax levy**. Mr Peters seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 - 0.

Mr Gauck thanked everyone's input and interest on this jail project.

The Council's next meeting will be November 21st at 9:00 am.

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

Ernest Gauck, President

Attest: _____

Date: _____

