

## Decatur County Council

### Special Meeting

Tuesday, October 31, 2019, Room 106

**Present:** Danny Peters, Larry Meyer, John Westhafter, Bill Metz, Deanna Burkart, Kenny Hooten and Council's financial consultant Reuben Cummings.

Vice President Danny Peters called the Special County Council meeting to order and the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag was recited.

A "Notice to Taxpayers on Hearing on Proposed Local Income Tax Ordinance 2019-11" was legally advertised on October 15, 2019.

Mr Peters opened the floor for discussion on proposed increase to the Special Purpose Jail Income Tax from .50% to .65%. Mr Metz cited for the last three years healthcare costs have hit the county hard. Mr Peters plans to look at other areas of the county's budgets each year in hopes of balancing income and expenses. Mr Cummings stated there isn't enough cash to cover the shortfall in 2020 and the Special Purpose Jail tax can only be used for the jail and jail operations. Sheriff Dave Durant stated for the last 5 years Decatur County has failed the jail standards' inspections, mostly due to overcrowding. He added sadly that government often operates in crisis management and Decatur County is no different when it comes to confronting the drugs and related drug issues. Jail Commander Dana Parker told the public there are currently 27 jailers and due to the design of the new jail additional jailers will not be required. Several people voiced their frustration with the lack of transparency and not being heard by the Council. Council members shared their frustrations as well because this many people haven't attended regular council meetings in the last two years. Greensburg Mayor Dan Manus reminded everyone this is a county tax, not a city tax because he's received several phone calls. He stated his council is not in favor of this increase. Bryan Robbins told Council these stats make it harder to sell our community; he also asked what about funding rehab services-special services??

Mr Meyer moved to raise the Special Purpose Jail tax to 0.65% and Mr Westhafer seconded the motion. Mrs Burkart stated she'd feel better if the increase was 0.10% instead of 0.15%. Mr Metz, Mr Meyer and Mr Westhafter and Mr Peters voted yes. Mrs Burkart and Mr Hooten voted no. Motion carries, 4 – 2.

Local resident Nathan Harmon expressed his disappointment in the lack of the Council's discussion and Mr Metz said there have been lots of discussions on the budgets/taxes.

Mr Metz moved to approve the Decatur County Solid Waste Management 2020 Budget. Mr Meyer seconded the motion. Motion passes, 5 – 0. Mr Hooten abstained as he serves on the Solid Waste Management Board.

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

The Council's next regular meeting is November 19<sup>th</sup> 2019 at 9:00 am.

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Ernest Gauck, President

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Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_