

Decatur County Council Meeting

Tuesday, September 19th, 2023, Room 106

Present: Danny Peters, Bill Metz, Melanie Nobbe, Ashley Hungate, Deanna Burkart, Ernie Gauck and Kenny Hooten.

President Peters welcomed everyone to the Council's September 19th meeting; he then asked Judge Tim Day to lead the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mr Peters opened the **Public Hearing for the 2024 Budgets**. Superior Court Judge Matthew Bailey requested Council to consider Assistant Court Reporter Pam Nobbe's interrupted 22 years of county employment regarding the one-time stipend for non-elected employees. Council said no to Judge Bailey's request. Mr Peters highlighted Financial Consultant Reuben Cummings' recommendations: County General budgets as they are now could be sustained, but he cautioned approving requests for additional monies on in emergencies; Parks and Rec could proceed with their 2024 capital projects but will have to reduce 2025 budget and Tourism is sustainable. The stipend topic was discussed among Council members, elected officials/department heads. Ms Burkart stated the stipend is a stepping stone for employees until Waggoner, Irwin and Scheele issue their salary recommendations to the Salary Committee. Mrs Hungate made a motion to leave the stipend recommendations as is, minus the elected officials, with the 2% raise plus the .5% per service year. Mr Hooten seconded the motion. Ayes- Mrs Hungate, Mrs Nobbe, Mrs Burkart and Mr Hooten; Nays- Mr Gauck and Mr Metz. Motion passes, 4 -- 2.

Director of Court Services Matt Hoeing asked Council to reconsider his request for monies for fringes (health insurance) for 2024. In a prior meeting Mr Hoeing agreed he should have enough funds for 2024, but probably not for 2025. Mr Peters asked him to wait until Community Corrections is in a bind and to continue applying for grants.

Mr Hooten moved to close the **Public Hearing for the 2024 Budgets**, Mr Metz seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0.

(Meeting minutes and agendas are emailed to Council members the Friday before their Tuesday meeting)

Mrs Hungate made a motion to approve the August 15th meeting minutes and Mr Metz seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0.

County Sheriff Bill Meyerrose told Council members he is working on an ordinance to increase the Sheriff's fees for foreclosure sales, from \$125 to \$200; also, working on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Court Services for part of the fees paid by participants for a work release program.

Mr Metz moved to allow Mr Hoeing's request to pay \$25 an hour for the part time person(s) replacing Mike Burnett and Mrs Burkart seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0.

EDC Director Bryan Robbins presented Resolution 2023-22- the first step in establishing an economic revitalization/development area for the battery energy storage facility in Adams Township. **Tim Oaks with Ice Miller and Ian Evans with Fletcher Power Project** were on hand to answer any questions Council might have about the incentive agreement regarding Fletcher Power paying to Decatur County monies in lieu of paying personal property tax dollars. The ten-year abatement would be at 100% each year. One concern Council has is what happens if the City of Greensburg annexes this property, but Mr Robbins said that won't happen since there isn't any contiguous Greensburg City limits. Mrs Hungate moved to approve **Resolution 2023-22** and Mrs Burkart seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0. The tax abatement is not included with this Resolution since Council has to decide how much if any abatement is approved.

County Treasurer Diane Wenning gave the investment reports: **Trust Indiana**, as of September 18th is pay 5.34% interest; interest received in August was \$134,643.14, year-to-date is \$978,032.52; interest received for a CD at **Napoleon State Bank** was \$114,000; 5.35 APR for a CD was the highest quote from 4 banks; there are several laddered CDs with **Ameriprise's Matt Westhafer** Mrs Wenning told Council she has gotten a quote \$4,223 from Jane with **The Office Shop** for desks for her office.

Mr Hooten moved to approve the Health Department's request for \$4,616.25 in additional monies for flu vaccines and \$8,435 for new carpet in the 2 environmental offices and Mr Gauck seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0.

Mr Metz moved to approve the \$110,000 of ARPA funds for Superior Court's Wellness Court and Mrs Hungate seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0.

Communications Director Erike Free speaking on behalf of **Public Safety personnel** (911, Sheriff, Jail and Coroner) requested mental health/wellness services be offered/available to help these folks deal/cope with cumulative PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). **Former Boone County Sheriff Mike Nielson**, shared information about recognizing and de-stigmatizing mental health by having peer support teams help with whatever a person needs. Mrs Free will have the scope of services offered by Pathway to Healing which is a confidential program for the Commissioners' October 2nd meeting. Mrs Hungate moved to approve \$100,000 of ARPA funds for Public Safety Mental Health and Mr Metz seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0.

Mr Hooten moved to approve the requests for transfers and Mrs Nobbe seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0. (Transfers are on a separate report)

Parks and Recreation Director Teresa Kovacich spoke on behalf of the **proposed Aquatic Center** to be partially funded by the **proposed Food and Beverage Tax of 1%**. A committee is working with Rick Hall of Barnes and Thornburg in adopting this tax. Food Establishments are invited to a meeting on October 2nd at 2:00 pm at Greensburg City Hall to learn more about the Food and Beverage Tax. There will be a public hearing on November 1st in the evening on funding the Aquatic Center through selling bonds. Baker Tilly will be overseeing the funding side of this project. The Department of Local Government Finance estimates the 1% Food and Beverage Tax would collect \$500,000 annually. The Indiana Department of Revenue would enforce collections of this tax. The 1st reading for the proposed Food and Beverage Tax will be at the Council's regular meeting on October 17th; 2nd reading is scheduled for their November 21st meeting.

The next Council meeting will be October 17th, 2023 at 9:00 am. This is also the official adoption of the proposed 2024 Budgets.

With nothing else to come before the Council, Mr Hooten made a motion to adjourn and Mrs Hungate seconded the motion. Council's regular meeting is adjourned.

Danny Peters, President

Attest: _____

Date: _____