

Hancock County Council Minutes

June 9, 2021

The County Council of Hancock County, Indiana met in the County Commissioner's Court in the Courthouse Annex located at 111 American Legion Place Greenfield, Indiana 46140 on the 9th day of June 2021 at the hour of 8:30 AM in accordance with the rules of the Council.

Councilmembers William Bolander, James Shelby, Kent Fisk, Jeannine Gray, Mary Noe, Robin Lowder, Keely Butrum, County Attorney Scott Benkie, Auditor Debra Carnes and Financial Administrator, Mary Bowmer were present.

President Bolander opened the meeting with the "Pledge of Allegiance" followed by a moment of silence.

Reeves Properties LLC Abatement Request

- Reeves Properties requested abatement.
- Councilmember Noe made a motion to approve Resolution 2121-6-2 determining that the qualifications for a tax abatement have been met. Councilmember Gray seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

PATCH SBI 2 LLC Abatement Request

- PATCH SBI 2 LLC requested real property abatement.
- Councilmember Fisk Introduced Resolution 2021-6-3 a resolution declaring that the qualifications for an economic revitalization area have been met and approving real property improvement tax abatement for PATCH SBI 2 LLC. Councilmember Shelby seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**
- Councilmember Bolander said the public hearing will be scheduled for July 21st at 8AM.

New Behavioral Health Court Case Manager Position

- Judge Davis requested New Behavioral Health Court Case Manager Position to start August 9th at a \$40,000 salary yearly and he would need \$15,384. Commissioners have given a favorable recommendation.
- Councilmember Lowder made a motion to approve a new Behavioral Health Court Case Manager position and all three courts can contribute. Councilmember Noe seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Coroner's Department

- Coroner Stillinger discussed budget needs.
- Councilmember Fisk made a motion to transfer \$10,000 to Deputies line item and \$10,000 to Autopsies line item from Food & Beverage line item. Councilmember Noe seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**
- Councilmember Fisk made a motion to transfer \$2,500 from Coroners Supply line to Coroners Deputy line. Councilmember Gray seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Planning Department

- Executive Director Mike Dale requested funding for a new Planner Position and updated Council on the Hancock County Comprehensive Plan.

- Councilmember Noe made a motion to fund the Planning Department's Comprehensive Plan in the amount of \$234,000 to be funded through Economic Development. Councilmember Gray seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**
- Councilmember Butrum made a motion to approve the Planning Department's position of Deputy Planner with a salary of \$40,000-\$54,999, with \$27,000 additional appropriation needed for the remainder of 2021 to be funded through Food & Beverage and added to the 2022 budget. Councilmember Fisk seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Public Hearing / Additional Appropriation Fund 1194

- Councilmember Bolander opened the public hearing at 9:32 AM for Fund 1194 Solid Waste Agency \$23,000. Councilmember Bolander asked for public comment; No comment. Councilmember Bolander closed the public hearing at 9:32 AM.
- Councilmember Fisk made a motion to appropriate \$23,000 for Fund 1194 for Solid Waste Agency. Councilmember Lowder seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Public Hearing / Additional Appropriation Fund 7201

- Councilmember Bolander opened the public hearing at 9:32 AM for Fund 7201 Food & Beverage \$100,000. Councilmember Bolander asked for public comment; No comment. Councilmember Bolander closed the public hearing at 9:32 AM.
- Councilmember Lowder made a motion to appropriate \$100,000 for Fund 7201 Food & Beverage. Councilmember Noe seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Public Hearing / Additional Appropriation Fund 8932

- Councilmember Bolander opened the public hearing at 9:33 AM for Fund 8932 Alcohol & Drug Court \$180. Councilmember Bolander asked for public comment; No comment. Councilmember Bolander closed the public hearing at 9:33 AM.
- Councilmember Fisk made a motion to appropriate \$180 for Fund 8932 Alcohol & Drug Court. Councilmember Butrum seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Public Hearing / Additional Appropriation Fund 9117

- Councilmember Bolander opened the public hearing at 9:33 AM for Fund 9117 IDEM Community Recycling Grant \$6,250. Councilmember Bolander asked for public comment; No comment. Councilmember Bolander closed the public hearing at 9:33 AM.
- Councilmember Noe made a motion to appropriate \$6,250 for Fund 9117 IDEM Community Recycling Grant. Councilmember Fisk seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Prosecutors Office

- Prosecutor Eaton requested \$5,000 for an incentive fund to reward employees who perform outstanding. Councilmembers reminded Prosecutor Eaton that Councilmembers were not in favor of an incentive fund. Councilmember Noe informed council she looked into this and found; there were employees with comp time that were exempt from over-time. Councilmember Noe said the Prosecutors Director of Operations was to discuss with the Payroll Administrator moving the exempt employees to non-exempt so they could be paid for over-time. Prosecutor Eaton said there was not a formal vote on the merit based incentive and he was asked to table this until the next meeting. Councilmember Butrum asked what the Commissioners said. Prosecutor Eaton said Commissioners were open to his proposal and recognized each department should be able to manage their employees in the manner they saw fit as long as things were transparent. Councilmembers agreed this decision would have

to be initiated through the Commissioners and there was still no guarantee Councilmembers would pass this request.

- Prosecutor Eaton requested a replacement employee.
- Councilmember Fisk made a motion to allow the Prosecutor to replace an employee. Councilmember Butrum seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**
- Prosecutor Eaton requested a new STOP paralegal position.
- Councilmember Fisk suggested discussing at the budget meeting next month to verify funding for 2022.
- Prosecutor Eaton asked about the Prosecutor's Building. Councilmember Bolander said the Commissioners are considering a study to see the best use of the building.
- Councilmember Fisk made a motion to authorize up to \$15,000 for a study from Food & Beverage into the best use of the Prosecutors Office. Councilmember Shelby seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Request for Replacement Employees Discussion

- Councilmembers discussed Elected Officials and Department Heads requesting to replace employees and was it still necessary. Councilmembers would like a quarterly report on replacement employees. Auditor Carnes offered to do a quarterly report on replacement employees.
- Councilmember Noe made a motion starting today, going forward departments do not need to come to Council to replace an existing employee as long as that position is being funded through the existing salary left within that line item and the Auditor's office will quarterly give Councilmembers an attrition report to update us on how many have left and been replaced. Councilmember Gray seconded the motion. **Motion carried 6-1.** Councilmember Shelby objected.

Approve CF-1's (Abatement Applications)

- Randy Sorrell (Director of Hancock County Economic Development Council) and Nicole Byerley (Settlement Deputy) discussed CF-1 approvals. SPECTRA was the only questionable application and did not meet deadlines. Director Sorrell informed Council they filed Chapter 11 Bankruptcy.
- Councilmember Shelby made a motion to withdraw SPECTRA's CF-1 application. Councilmember Gray seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**
- Councilmember Shelby made a motion to approve the Tsuda real property abatement. Councilmember Fisk seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**
- Nicole Byerley (Settlement Deputy) notified Council she had 31 abatements turned in without problems.
- Councilmember Shelby made a motion to approve 31 CF-1 abatement applications. Councilmember Fisk seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Community Corrections

- Director Wade Kennedy reminded Council he had a position where he reallocated job duties and asked permission to give employees raises. The money will not come from the General Fund, it comes from project income. Council asked him to go to Commissioners as a courtesy and they said no. Director Kennedy said please help explain, I understand Council fixes the salaries for the county. I am not going to replace an employee. Councilmember Shelby said Commissioners have administrative responsibility for all employees of the county. Council has the fiscal responsibility; usually Council gets a recommendation from Commissioners.

- Councilmember Fisk said if we agreed to it, the Commissioners have the right to not agree then this request will not be completed. Councilmember Lowder verified the Commissioners give a recommendation and Council agrees to fund.
- Commissioner Jessup said Commissioners would like to wait until the Salary Committee was complete so raises will not be compounded.

E-911 Department

- E-911 Director John Jokantas discussed the need for an E-911 revenue bond.
- Councilmembers discussed the need for a GO Bond. County Attorney Benkie said Commissioners were working on a Resolution of Need. Councilmember Shelby said this will need input from the Financial Consultant.

Council Minutes

Councilmember Gray made a motion to approve the May 12, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. Councilmember Lowder seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Separation Sick Pay

- Councilmembers discussed additional appropriation of \$30,000 for Separation Sick Pay. Commissioner Jessup said every year this line item runs out of money.
- Councilmember Shelby made a motion to transfer \$30,000 from Food & Beverage to Separation Sick Pay. Councilmember Butrum seconded. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Budget Meeting Update

- Councilmember Shelby reported the Budget Committee and County Council reviewed all the county fund balances and no problems were reported.
- Auditor Carnes asked for clarification on Mike Dale's \$234,000 for Economic Development.
- Councilmember agreed to advertise \$200,000 for Economic Development.
- Councilmember Butrum asked if Council wanted to appropriate more money to Food & Beverage next month. Council agreed to advertise \$100,000 to Food & Beverage.
- October 6th Budget meeting to meet at E-911 center.
- Councilmembers discussed RDC staff using HEDC staff for work and now the HEDC staff is overworked. This is an opportunity for a county employee to work out of the Auditor's office for RDC and assist.

Salary Study Discussion

- Councilmember Shelby reported the Financial Consultant initial suggestion for sustainability was 3½ % & 12% with no new deputies; then Commissioners came back with 7% & 24% and 9 new deputies. Councilmember Shelby suggested the initial motion be rescinded.
- Councilmember Noe made a motion to rescind the May 12th motion and start fresh with information from the Financial Consultant. Councilmember Butrum said her vote would be no to rescinding unless contingent upon still committing those dollars to employees. Councilmember Gray agreed. Councilmember Lowder seconded. **Motion carried 5-2.** Councilmember Butrum and Gray voted No.
- Councilmembers discussed the Commissioners recommendation.
- Councilmember Noe made recommendation to Commissioners to present guidance to the departments for a 7% raise for all non-merit deputies and 18% raise for merit deputies. This will be a lump sum for the department head to disperse as they see fit. Also discussed was \$1,500 for Board of Commissioners and County Council; and \$4,200 for Elected and Non-

Elected Department Heads. Auditor Carnes clarified Elected Officials and Departments Heads were not added in the figures for the Salary Committee.

- Commissioner Jessup clarified all non-elected Department Heads fall under the Board of Commissioners.
- Councilmembers discussed funding additional deputies for the Sheriff’s Department
- Councilmember Fisk made a motion to allow the Sheriff for 2021 to hire 3 merit deputies as soon as possible to be funded through Rainey Day and budget merit deputies for 2022 out of Rainy Day. Councilmember Gray seconded the motion. **Motion carried 6-1.** Councilmember Shelby voted No.
- Councilmember Fisk recommends to Commissioners to hire 3 merit deputies for 2022 and fund through Rainy Day.
- Commissioner Jessup questioned the Financial Consultant’s sustainability analysis that Council is basing decisions on. He asked why the Commissioners budget grows one half million dollars every year from \$22M to \$25M and why does the Sheriff’s budget grow one half million dollars every year and hits sustainability every year without new hires and increases. My point being is these assuming zero growth and assuming that Council is going to increase the Commissioners budget by half million dollars a year and because of that we can’t afford public safety. I would delve into the financial numbers being provided.
- Councilmember Fisk said he is asking to define budget increases.

Adjourned 12:08 PM

Councilmember Shelby made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Fisk seconded. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Approved this day:

_____ William Bolander	_____ Mary Noe
_____ James Shelby	_____ Robin Lowder
_____ Kent Fisk	_____ Keely Butrum
_____ Jeannine Gray	

Attest: _____
Debra Carnes, Hancock County Auditor