

Hancock County Council Minutes May 12, 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 12th day of May 2021 at the hour of 8:31 AM in accordance with the rules of the Council.

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

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

Circuit Court

- Beth Ingle (Drug Court) requested funds for a field officer vehicle. The vehicle is a 2011 with 181,459 miles and having mechanical problems. A quote was received from Fletcher Chrysler for \$33,189 for a 2021 Dodge Durango Pursuit. The vehicle was a Community Corrections vehicle and not in the budget.
- Councilmember Shelby recommended the CCD Fund. Councilmember Bolander suggested advertising based on the Commissioners recommendation. Councilmembers agreed to advertise \$33,189 for Circuit Court CCD pending Commissioners approval.

Hancock County Fire Fighters Mutual Aide Association

- Dave Sutherlin representing the Hancock County Fire Fighters Mutual Aide Association notified Council he is making a LIT request for \$282,308 to cover insurance, workers comp and building for 2022 capital expenses. Dave presented Auditor Carnes with his LIT request representing six townships and will provide the other two townships next week for the June 1st deadline.
- Councilmember Butrum asked Dave to return June 9th to discuss further.

Council Minutes

Councilmember Fisk made a motion to approve the March 10, 2021 and March 16, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. Councilmember Lowder seconded the motion. **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.
- Councilmember Shelby discussed proposed budget instructions for 2022 budget procedures for RDC. He asked Councilmembers if they had objections or additions to the proposed procedures? He said basically Council is asking RDC to go before Commissioners with their list of projects, as Highway Department does and go through the projects to get approval and also give a 5 year forecast. This would be a communication link between RDC, Commissioners and Council. Allocations could be discussed. Councilmember Shelby said he would like this completed by June 15th

Additional Appropriation Request

- Councilmembers discussed Solid Waste Events Fund 1194 request to additionally appropriate \$23,000.

- Councilmembers agreed to advertise \$23,000 for Solid Waste Management Fund 1194.
- Councilmembers discussed IDEM Community Recycling Grand (SWMD) request to additionally appropriate \$6,250.
- Councilmembers agreed to advertise \$6,250 for IDEM Community Recycling Grand (SWMD).

ARP Update

Councilmember Shelby and Councilmember Butrum updated Councilmembers on ARP. The Feds came out with additional 100 pages of information on ARP. The Financial Consultant and Councilmember Butrum went through the document. Councilmember Shelby said it looked like a request will be submitted and funds are received on a draw basis. Not-for-profits were discussed and Talitha Koum could be a potential recipient for a second house. Infrastructure projects have been discussed and an initiative on mental health was discussed as well. Several taxing units have given bonuses to employees who worked through COVID. Councilmember Fisk added some date guidelines have changed and been extended.

Public Hearing / Additional Appropriation Fund 1235

- Councilmember Bolander opened the public hearing at 9:02 AM for Fund 1235 LIT PSAP \$51,154 for E911 CAD & Computer Maintenance. Councilmember Bolander asked for public comment. Councilmember Bolander closed the public hearing at 9:02 AM.
- Councilmember Fisk made a motion to appropriate \$51,154 for Fund 1235 for LIT PSAP. Councilmember Noe seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Public Hearing / Additional Appropriation Fund 1001

- Councilmember Bolander opened the public hearing at 9:03 AM for Fund 1001 Building \$30,000 for Contractual. Councilmember Bolander asked for public comment; no comment. Councilmember Bolander closed the public hearing at 9:03 AM.
- Councilmember Lowder made a motion to appropriate \$30,000 for Fund 1001 for Building. Councilmember Noe seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Public Hearing / Additional Appropriation Fund 1001

- Councilmember Bolander opened the public hearing at 9:04 AM for Fund 1001 Commissioners \$69,404.40 for Liability Insurance. Councilmember Bolander asked for public comment; no comment. Councilmember Bolander closed the public hearing at 9:04 AM.
- Councilmember Butrum made a motion to appropriate \$69,404.40 for Fund 1001 Commissioners. Councilmember Kent seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Public Hearing / Additional Appropriation Fund 1001

- Councilmember Bolander opened the public hearing at 9:04 AM for Fund 1001 Commissioners \$195,000 for the Ag Association. Councilmember Bolander asked for public comment. George Langston from Greenfield said when this came up, he asked for information; proof of the loss and was told there was none to be given. I have a hard time believing someone should be given \$195,000 without proof and transparency. Auditor Carnes clarified she had the information and was not aware the information had been requested. But we did not need to supply the information based on the requirements, because we did not pay it out of our funds. George said they should go through the process everyone had to go through. Auditor Carnes said the money has already been distributed to the General Fund. Councilmember Fisk explained the Ag Association was short due to COVID and CARES Act

money from General Fund is being used to reimburse the Ag Association so they can have a fair this year. Randy Harris from Fortville clarified our tax dollars are now open for private nonprofit support. Councilmember Noe clarified this not property tax dollars. Mr. Harris asked if it was public money, yes? Councilmember Noe said it is Federal. The Councilmember Bolander closed the public hearing at 9:14 AM.

- Councilmember Fisk made a motion to appropriate \$195,000 for Fund 1001 for Ag Association. Councilmember Noe seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Clerks Office

- Clerk Lofgreen requested a replacement employee.
- Councilmember Noe made a motion to allow the Clerk to replace an employee. Councilmember Lowder seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**
- Clerk Lofgreen requested to amend a salary ordinance contingent on approval from the Commissioners. She would like to move \$2,000 from perpetuation to another deputy.
- Councilmember Noe made a motion to approve the transfer of \$2,000 to another deputy position contingent on approval from the Commissioners. Councilmember Fisk seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Non Compliance (6687 W 350 N)

- Larry Siegler (Peterson Property Group) explained there was a mix-up on where the tax bills were mailed and the CF1 was not sent in. Council was notified these savings are passed on to tenants in the building.
- Councilmember Butrum made a motion to reinstate the abatement for 6687 W 350 N. Councilmember Lowder seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Grant/Scholarship \$180

- Kevin Minnick applied for a grant to pay for educational purposes and requested the money be appropriated.
- Councilmembers agreed to advertise \$180 for additional appropriation.

Surveyors Office

- Surveyor Bodkin requested a replacement employee.
- Councilmember Lowder made a motion to allow Surveyor Bodkin to replace an employee. Councilmember Butrum seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Transfer Funds

- Councilmember Shelby made a motion to transfer \$1M from General Fund to Rainy Day and \$500,000 to Fund 5901 Claims. Councilmember Lowder seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Public Hearing – Additional Appropriation

- Councilmember Bolander opened the Public Hearing at 9:31 AM for Additional Appropriation for the Red Rock Project. Randy Sorrell (Director of Hancock County Economic Development Council) explained this is Additional Appropriation for the Red Rock Project and adoption of Resolution that was introduced at the last meeting. Councilmember Noe clarified Forgivable Loan; the County has agreed to back \$1.5M in three increment payments of \$500,000. Red Rock will do the roadwork on Buck Creek Road between 200 and 300 and they will not receive any funding for the project as far as

reimbursement until the project is completed. If they stop for any reason, they will not be reimbursed and we will not be responsible for any of the money. If they finish the project and this is a three year expected time frame; the county will be reimbursed by TIF revenue to pay the county back for the loan given to Red Rock to do the project. Red Rock will front the money. Mr. Sorrell said Red Rock can build the road quicker and more economical than the county. Councilmember Bolander asked for public comment, no comment. Councilmember Bolander closed the Public Hearing at 9:37 AM.

- Councilmember Fisk made a motion to pass Ordinance 2021-4A an ordinance authorizing Hancock County to fund its “taxable economic development revenue notes, series 2021 (Red Rock) and approving and authorizing other actions in respect thereto. Councilmember Butrum seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**
- Councilmember Shelby made a motion to suspend the rules and adopt on day of introduction Ordinance 2021-5B Appropriation Ordinance of the Hancock County Council. Councilmember Fisk seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**
- Councilmember Noe made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2021-5B. Councilmember Bolander read the Ordinance into the minutes. Councilmember Shelby seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Sheriff's Department

- Sheriff Burkhart requested Council move forward on salary increases for deputies. He expressed concern with deputies leaving and deputies looking elsewhere for better salaries. Sheriff Burkhart discussed taxpayer's concerned with response times. Sheriff Burkhart learned the city will get pay raises plus cost of living raise. Councilmember Shelby asked Sheriff Burkhart to give a forecast with the expected growth he predicts is needed. Councilmember Noe said this makes her rethink the growth and what these businesses can do to help out.
- Councilmember Butrum updated Council on the salary request and the financial consultants' recommendations. Councilmember Noe expressed she would like everyone in the county to get what they need; as long as the county can afford it. Councilmember Gray said she had conversations with Sheriff Burkhart and Major Campbell talking about the impact the westside has had and if it continues to grow; bottom line is we give tax abatements away like free candy. If this continues, we will not be able to sustain.
- Councilmember Butrum made a motion County Council intends for public safety employees to receive an additional \$253,854 and nonpublic safety employees an additional of \$335,610 effective July 1, 2021;subject to public hearings, advertising and approval from the Board of Commissioners. Councilmember Shelby seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Abatement Application – Tsuda USA Corporation

- Randy Sorrell (Director of Hancock County Economic Development Council) requested tax abatement for Tsuda. Tsuda is an auto parts manufacturer in the Mt Comfort area and opened operations in 2014. Within two years, they expanded operations and are ready to grow further. Councilmember Noe asked for clarification of equipment to be replacement. He clarified it is new equipment for new business. Councilmember Noe said she has a problem supporting personal property abatement because it depreciates quickly. She would support a 5 year abatement, but not a 10 year abatement.
- Councilmember Shelby made a motion to approve the tax abatement for Tsuda as written. Councilmember Fisk seconded the motion. **Motion carried 5-2.**
- Mary Bowmer, Financial Administrator scheduled the advertised public hearing for 9:00 AM on June 9.

Planning Commission

- Mike Dale (Executive Director Planning Commission) informed Council that the Planning Commission signed a resolution in support of another Planner. He read the Resolution into the minutes. Councilmembers were in support of the Resolution. The salary for the Planner position \$45,000-\$54,999, effective April 27, 2021. Councilmember Noe asked if this new position would assist with the Comprehensive Plan? Director Dale replied the Planning Commission was in the process of hiring a Consultant for this project with contract negotiations in progress. Councilmember Lowder asked if a consultant had been discussed. Director Dale replied yes; hourly rate ranges \$75-\$125 an hour; for a full-time would cost \$40,000-\$80,000. Councilmember Butrum said she was in favor of adding a person with experience and credentialing to assist with the growth in Hancock County.
- Councilmembers were in support of the new Planner position based on the Resolution provided by the Planning Commission with the salary range provided in the Planning Commission Resolution.
- Director Dale will present the new recommended Planner position to Commissioners and return to Council on June 9th.
- Tom Nigh (President of Planning Commission) said this is an exciting time for Hancock County with a lot of growth in progress. He expressed this is a much needed position for the Planning Department and said the Planning Commission strongly appreciates Council consideration.

Probation Department

- Josh Sipes (Chief Probation Officer) requested a salary ordinance correction.
- Councilmember Shelby made a motion to approve the salary Ordinance 2021-5C correction. Councilmember Kent seconded the motion. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Pennsy Trails

- Mary Ann Wietbrock with Pennsy Trails updated Council on Pennsy Trails progress. Currently, Pennsy Trails are actively purchasing property to complete trails to Ellenberger Park. There are trail rules to protect the farmers on the trails approved by Commissioners. Mary Ann requested an additional \$13,418 money to be appropriated. She explained when this is complete, DNR will reimburse the County for \$109,400 for this property to buy more Pennsy Trails through Heritage Trust. Also, the DNR awarded Hancock County the Next Level Trails Grant is ready to provide funding of \$670,802.50 for construction and they are currently asking for design and the contract. Councilmembers discussed paying from Food & Beverage. Councilmember Fisk said at the next meeting Council can pay from Food & Beverage on June 9th. Councilmember Bolander agreed Food & Beverage needed to be advertised.
- Councilmembers agreed once Commissioners approve, they will approve at the next meeting. Mary Ann thanked Council and said she will return June 9th.

Salary Study Discussion

- Surveyor Bodkin thanked the group that helped with the Salary Study Committee with a lot of time and hours; Councilmember Mary Noe, Councilmember Robin Lowder, Auditor Debra Carnes, Treasurer Jane Klemme and Clerk Lisa Lofgreen.
- Surveyor Susan told Council they were able to use the job descriptions provided by a previous consulting company; then they used other counties information and came up with four categories. The four categories are as follows;
1) Professional, Administrative & Technology

- 2) Computer, Office, Machine, Operation & Technician
- 3) Protective Occupation & Law Enforcement
- 4) Labor, Trades & Crafts

The Committee concentrated on the first two; we let Probation and the Prosecutors Office work on Protective Occupation & Law Enforcement; Highway worked on Labor, Trades & Crafts. We did not want to diminish areas we were not familiar with. Pay ranges were setup; Level 1, 2 & 3 for each category. We asked each office holder to tag each employee based on their job description category 1) or 2) and what level they should be paid at. Then we took those and met again. We asked what percentage of raise to get the employees in the level they needed to be and what would that increase look like. We took the job descriptions and put them in the categories, set the levels and then averaged request for increases. The request for increases averaged 7%.

- Surveyor Bodkin said office holder and department head salaries are not set intentionally, because we wanted Council to do this. Councilmember Lowder said the Salary Study is customized specifically for our County.

Councilmember Fisk said this Committee is a project Council has been working on for a long time and stressed the importance of getting Commissioners input and approval. He said we really need to decipher who goes to Commissioners first before they come to Council.

Councilmember Noe said we have had a discussion and it was when there was a hiring freeze that everyone was required to go before Commissioners before they could hire a replacement employee. The only way the Commissioners are involved is if there is a salary amendment change. If it stays within their budget and they are just rearranging their funds they should not go before the Commissioners. Councilmember Lowder said we need to find out if the Commissioners want to see request for replacement employees. Councilmember Bolander said they don't have to request from either one if it is in their budget, if you come down to it. Surveyor Bodkin said this is the confusion when there was a hiring freeze you were expected to go and make the request to both. The question is do department heads need to continue that process? Councilmember Shelby said we have asked you to come to Council as a courtesy; you will have to ask Commissioners for their preference. Councilmember Butrum said so legally we can make it where don't have ask at all for replacement employees as long as it is in their budget and it is not changing. Councilmember Shelby said it was to force the Department Heads to come in before Council and justify the position. Councilmember Lowder added we had a hiring freeze at that time. Councilmember Noe said I have to give the Department Head the competence that they are running the office to the best of their ability and if they need to replace an employee, I am not going to say "no your not"; as long as the money is in their budget, do what you need to do for your office.

Food & Beverage Transfer

- Councilmember Fisk suggested advertising an additional appropriation of \$100,000 to Food & Beverage.
- Councilmembers agreed 7-0 to advertise for the next meeting

Council Minutes

Councilmember Shelby made a motion to approve the April 20, 2021 Commissioner and Council meeting minutes as presented. Councilmember Fisk seconded the motion. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Adjourned 11:39 AM

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