

## **Hancock County Council Minutes August 11, 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 11<sup>th</sup> day of August 2021 at the hour of 8:30 AM in accordance with the rules of the Council.

Councilmembers William Bolander, James Shelby, Kent Fisk, Mary Noe, Robin Lowder, Keely Butrum, Auditor Debra Carnes, Financial Administrator, Mary Bowmer and County Attorney Scott Benkie were present. Councilmember Jeannine Gray was not present.

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

### **Pennsy Trail Update**

- Mary Ann Wietbrock, President Pennsy Trail project presented information on the DNR Next Level Trails Grant awarded to the County in March for \$670,802.50. A check has been issued to the county for \$153,878. Ms. Wietbrock will present to the Commissioners on August 17<sup>th</sup> and request to move forward.
- Councilmembers agreed to advertise additional appropriation for the next Council meeting scheduled September 8<sup>th</sup>. Councilmembers thanked Ms. Wietbrock for her dedication to the Pennsy Trail project.

### **Tsuda Non Compliance**

- Tsuda representatives requested a waiver for late filing of their personal property form.
- Councilmember Shelby made a motion to reinstate Tsuda tax abatement. Councilmember Fisk seconded the motion. **Motion carried 6-0.**

### **Council Minutes**

Councilmember Fisk made a motion to approve the July 21, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. Councilmember Lowder seconded the motion. **Motion carried 6-0.**

### **Sheriff's Department**

- Sheriff Burkhart explained this is a fund for the purchase of soda pop, candy etc. called a Commissary Fund. Based on Statute 36-8-10-21, anything the Sheriff and the Council agree to, we can spend it on. This is not tax money or budgeted money, just Commissary Funds. Sheriff Burkhart informed Council he is still experiencing issues hiring people. In another area, they have a referral program, where someone in county government refers a person, they are hired and they stay a year, they then will receive \$500.
- Councilmember Lowder made a motion to approve the Commissary Fund for a referral program to hire correctional officers. Councilmember Butrum seconded the motion. **Motion carried 6-0.**
- Sheriff Burkhart requested Council change the Care Trak Program to Project Lifesaver. The program is for devices to track people with dementia, Alzheimer's or autism.
- Councilmember Fisk made a motion to approve the Care Trak Program name changed to Project Lifesaver. Councilmember Butrum seconded the motion. **Motion carried 6-0.**
- Sheriff Burkhart requested when bringing in someone with experience that they start at Level 2. For 3 jail officers it would add \$6,000 to the budget.

### **Budget Meeting Update**

Councilmember Shelby reported the Budget Committee and County Council reviewed all the county fund balances and no problems were reported.

### **Additional Appropriation**

- Auditor Carnes explained Judge Davis found an item that was removed from the 2021 budget for furniture. He had it for 2018, 2019, 2020 and it is there for 2022 budget, but was missed for 2021. Judge Davis requested the \$3,000 for 2021.
- Councilmembers agreed \$3,000 from CCD would be advertised for the September 8<sup>th</sup> Council meeting.

### **Public Hearing: Additional Appropriations**

- Councilmember Bolander opened the public hearing at 9:00 AM for Resolution 2021-8-1 Fund 1001 County General Surveyor for \$50,000 for Contractual. Councilmember Bolander asked for any comments; with no comments; the public hearing closed the at 9:00 AM.
- Councilmember Lowder made a motion to pass Resolution 2021-8-1 to additionally appropriate \$50,000 for Fund 1001 County General Surveyor for \$50,000 for Contractual. Councilmember Noe seconded the motion. **Motion carried 6-0.**

### **Public Hearing: Additional Appropriations**

- Councilmember Bolander opened the public hearing at 9:00 AM for Resolution 2021-8-2 Fund 1233 LIT Correctional Facility for \$605,000 for BAN payment. Councilmember Bolander asked for any comments; with no comments; the public hearing closed the at 9:00 AM.
- Councilmember Shelby made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-8-2 Fund 1233 LIT Correctional Facility for \$605,000 for BAN payment. Councilmember Fisk seconded the motion. **Motion carried 6-0.**

### **Public Hearing: Additional Appropriations**

- Councilmember Bolander opened the public hearing at 9:01 AM for Resolution 2021-8-3 Fund 4616 TIF Allocation Area for \$1,600,000.00 for Highway. Councilmember Bolander asked for any comments; with no comments; the public hearing closed the at 9:01 AM.
- Councilmember Shelby made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-8-3 Fund 4616 TIF Allocation Area for \$1,600,000.00 for Highway. Councilmember Butrum seconded the motion. **Motion carried 6-0.**

### **Sherriff's Pension Discussed**

- Scott Wooldridge, President of the Sheriff's Merit Board updated Councilmembers on the Sheriff's Department Pension Plan. The Greenfield Bank Trustee Investment Manager updated Councilmembers on more details of the Sheriff's Pension Plan.
- Councilmember Shelby requested the Merit Board look at amending the benefits for deputies to remove overtime from that benefit. The actuary recommended this change.

### **Surveyor**

- Surveyor Bodkin updated Councilmembers on the watershed study needed in the vicinity of 200 North and 400 West through Christopher Burke Engineering, LLC for \$58,000.
- Councilmember Fisk made a motion to allow the watershed study with Christopher Burke Engineering, LLC for \$58,000 to be paid from Economic Development fund. Councilmember Noe seconded the motion. **Motion carried 6-0.**

### **Highway Department**

- Gary Pool, Highway Engineer discussed with Councilmembers lost truck drivers due to the county's hourly rates; he requested an adjustment to be more competitive and match INDOT's hourly rates.
- Councilmember Lowder made a motion to approve Ordinance 2021-8B amending the salary for hourly employee's base plus additional positions. Councilmember Noe seconded the motion. **Motion carried 6-0.**

### **E-911 Department**

- John Jokantas, Director of E-911 requested additional appropriation of \$60,000 for group insurance for the next Council meeting scheduled September 8<sup>th</sup>.
- Councilmembers agreed to advertise \$60,000 additional appropriation for group insurance.
- Director Jokantas requested to hire an employee one month early.
- Councilmember Shelby made a motion to approve the hire of a new dispatcher. Councilmember Lowder seconded the motion. **Motion carried 6-0.**

### **Property Tax Matter**

- Patricia Beaty, a property owner in Hancock County presented Council with information on a property tax concern with the current Assessor.
- Councilmembers recommended Ms. Beaty go to the Property Tax Assessment Board of Appeals (PTABOA).

### **Review Current Economic Development Opportunities**

- Michael Frischkorn with Hancock Economic Development Council reviewed current economic development opportunities. HEDC has received many requests for information, to date they have responded to 50 possible projects.
- Commissioners President Jessup suggested HEDC may be turning down some smaller business that may be of interest to the county. Some of the facilities being built are some of the highest tech facilities in the United States. Comments were made that we are on a runaway train and we are not; we planned for this 15 years ago. While we did miss the mark with public safety, those are problems that can be easily resolved. Commissioner Jessup did not feel Hancock County was on the wrong track.

### **Abatement Procedures**

- Auditor Carnes discussed the abatement procedures and making the abatement application available online through the Hancock County Website under the Auditor's tab to simplify the process. Councilmember Noe said she was currently working on updates for the application.
- Councilmembers agreed to review and discuss at the next Budget meeting.

### **GDI Abatement Request**

- A representative for GDI requested abatement for GDI Holdings, LLC. Councilmembers asked questions.
- Councilmember Butrum made a motion to pass Declaratory Resolution 2021-8-4 qualifying that area for tax abatement for GDI Holdings, LLC. Councilmember Shelby seconded the motion. **Motion carried 6-0.** The final Resolution will be presented at the September 8, 2021 Council meeting.
- Commissioners President Jessup clarified there are issues with early abatements; without questions being addressed before going through Tech Committee; buildings could change from original plans. The benefit with the west allocation area that has been a driving force for us, is if abatements take place within a TIF area does the Board of Commissioners have final

approval to approve the abatement. If this would get out of hand, the Board of Commissioners can revoke abatements.

**Budget Changes**

- Councilmember Fisk made a motion to transfer \$25,000 from F&B Miscellaneous account to Soldier Burial account. Councilmember Noe seconded. **Motion carried 6-0.**
- Councilmember Shelby made a motion to increase the 2022 Soldier Burial \$55,000. Councilmember Fisk seconded. **Motion carried 6-0.**
- Councilmember Shelby made a motion to appropriate the \$7.5M American Rescue Plan money for 2022. Councilmember Fisk seconded. **Motion carried 6-0.**
- Councilmember Shelby made a motion to appropriate \$204,000 for Sheriff’s equipment for six new deputies for 2022. Councilmember Butrum seconded. **Motion carried 6-0.**
- Councilmember Butrum made a motion to appropriate \$20,000 into General Consulting for RDC for 2022. Councilmember Fisk seconded. **Motion carried 6-0.**
- Councilmember Shelby made a motion to appropriate \$75,000 for Highway Consulting for 2022. Councilmember Fisk seconded. **Motion carried 6-0.**
- Councilmember Noe made a motion to transfer \$47,500 for legal services to Economic Development for 2022. Councilmember Lowder seconded. **Motion carried 6-0.**

**Salary Ordinance Amendment**

Councilmember Fisk made a motion to approve Ordinance 2021-8D a salary ordinance amendment for the Clerk’s office. Councilmember Shelby seconded. **Motion carried 6-0.**

**Public Hearing to Adopt 2022 Budgets**

- September 29, 2021 at 8:30 AM is scheduled for Public Hearing to adopt 2022 budgets.

**RDC Appointment**

Councilmember Noe made a motion to appoint Kent Fisk to the RDC Board. Councilmember Butrum seconded. **Motion carried 5-1.**

**Adjourned 11:40 PM**

Councilmember Fisk made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Noe seconded. **Motion carried 6-0.**

**Approved this day:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
William Bolander

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Mary Noe

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James Shelby

\_\_\_\_\_  
Robin Lowder

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kent Fisk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keely Butrum

\_\_\_\_\_  
Absent  
Jeannine Gray

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Debra Carnes, Hancock County Auditor