

WHITLEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FEBRUARY 16, 2010

The Whitley County Commissioners met in regular session Tuesday February 16 due to President's Day being on Monday. The meeting was held in the Commissioner's Room located on the first floor of the Whitley County Government Center. In attendance was Chairman Michael D. Schrader, Vice Chairman Don Amber and member Tom Rethlake. Also in attendance for all or part of the meeting were Auditor Linda Gerig, County Coordinator Amy Crickmore, County Attorney Dan Sigler, Highway Supervisor Michael Barton, Engineer Brandon Forrester, Steve and Cathy Heaston, Patty Smith, Gene Heckman, Richard Eckert, Louis Wuellner and Post and Mail reporter Chris Meyers. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Schrader at 1:00 p.m.

IN THE MATTER OF PREVIOUS MINUTES AND VENDOR CLAIMS: The minutes of February 1 and February 10 and vendor claims for February 16 were approved as presented.

IN THE MATTER OF COUNTY ATTORNEY REPORT: Dan Sigler reported there are on-going litigations on various matters, but no new claims have been filed. Conversation was held on the county receiving land from the Department of Natural Resources. (See minutes of March 17, 2008). Sigler was directed to send a letter to the Department stating the county's acceptance of these properties. Sigler explained that an appointment needed to be made to an Appeals Board for the Tri Lakes Sewer District. The District is attempting to raise rates and the Board would hear appeals from participants. Tom Rethlake nominated Steve Heaston and Vice Chairman Don Amber made the second. The motion passed 3/0. Steve Heaston then stated that he would not be able to serve as he was already involved in other ways regarding the rate increase. Rethlake moved to withdraw the nomination and Amber withdrew his second. The motion passed 3/0. A new name will be submitted for consideration for the appointment. The matter of reinstatement of a suspended employee was discussed. An executive session was held on the matter on February 10 at which time no decision was made. Amber moved, seconded by Schrader, to terminate the employee and to have Attorney Sigler prepare the letter. The motion passed 3/0.

IN THE MATTER OF TRANSPORT VEHICLE: Whitley County Community Corrections submitted a request for a used vehicle to be used for community checks and transporting juveniles to and from the Youth Improvement Center. There is a vehicle being rotated out the sheriff's fleet and could be transferred. Amber moved, seconded by Rethlake, to allow the transfer of the vehicle. The motion passed 3/0.

IN THE MATTER OF ENGINEERING SERVICES CONTRACT: Highway Supervisor Michael Barton and Patty Smith of Beam, Longest and Neff were present to discuss a contract for Engineering Services with Beam, Longest and Neff, consulting engineers. This contract is for as needed engineering services for Whitley County. Rethlake moved, seconded by Amber, to approve and sign the contract for professional services for County Line Road. The vote was 3/0.

IN THE MATTER OF MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS: Chairman Schrader explained that Stimulus Projects have been submitted to Region III-A. New treads are being ordered for the interior courthouse steps. A request was received from Michael Barton, Highway Supervisor, for the county to pay part of his costs for his personal Blackberry phone. Barton has passed his county cell phone to another supervisor and uses his Blackberry. Discussion was held on the basic minimum charge that the county is billed. Amber moved, seconded by Rethlake, to reimburse Barton \$27.00/month upon submission of a copy of his personal cell phone bill to the auditor. The motion further stated that when use of the Blackberry stops, Barton will switch back to a county provided cell phone. The motion passed 3/0.

IN THE MATTER OF UTILITY SAVINGS: Mark Sturtevant and Dennis Fenker were present to discuss possible utility savings for the county. It was explained that work crews from Community Corrections pick up cardboard boxes, etc. and take them to the Recycling Center. We currently pay an outside vendor to do this. Sturtevant noted that this service could be discontinued. Amber moved, seconded by Rethlake, to have county attorney Sigler compose a letter to Serv-All Recycling terminating their service. Sturtevant went on to explain that he has done an energy study on the electrical costs. He has found that the transformer installed during the construction of the Government Center exceeds the actual needs for the facility. He has contacted the Columbia City Electric Department and investigated changing out the transformer for a smaller size. There is no cost to switch the transformers except for the labor costs. This smaller sized transformer could result in a \$22,000 savings per year. The commissioners were appreciative of this information and ask Sturtevant to verify the size of the transformer for certain.

IN THE MATTER OF COMPENSATORY TIME: The commissioners have been discussing the current policy in place regarding using compensatory time before vacation and/or sick time. (Sec. 3.12.01 pg. 24 of Policy Manual) Concerns have been voiced by some department managers. After

further discussion, Amber moved to change that section regarding the requirement of using compensatory time before using vacation and/or sick time. The motion was seconded by Rethlake and passed with a 3/0 vote. The policy change will be effective March 7, 2010.

IN THE MATTER OF ASSOCIATION OF INDIANA COUNTIES DIPLOMA PROGRAM:

Engineer Brandon Forrester was present to explain that he and Dan Weigold have been invited by Egov Strategies to participate in a Technology in the Workplace Diploma Class on March 19. They will be talking on the creation of the new Whitley County Website. Amber moved, seconded by Rethlake, to allow Forrester and Weigold to attend. The motion passed 3/0.

There being no further business or public comment, the meeting was adjourned.

WHITLEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Michael D. Schrader, Chairman

Don Amber, Vice Chairman

Tom Rethlake, Member

Attest:

Linda J. Gerig, Auditor