

WHITLEY COUNTY COUNCIL

March 5, 2019

The Whitley County Council met in regular session at 8:00 am on Tuesday, March 5, 2019 in the Commissioner's Room located on the first floor of the Whitley County Government Center. Members in attendance were Chairman Thor Hodges, Vice Chairman Chad Banks, Kim Wheeler, Thomas Warner, Timothy Kumfer, John Barrett and William Overdeer. Others in attendance were Commissioners Don Amber and Tom Western, Human Resource Director/County Coordinator Angela Campbell, Auditor Jana Schinbeckler, Financial Deputy Tiffany Forrester, Sheriff Gatton, Sean Martin from the Sheriff's Department, Amy Motter from Whitley County Probation, Paula Warden and Julie Jensen-Kelly from Whitley County Community Corrections, Rosemary Brown Whitley County Recorder, Tim Summers from Whitley County, Todd Geiger from Purdue Extension, Planning Director Nathan Bilger and County Treasurer Laurell Schroeder, others in attendance included Joe D'Italia, Drew Welborn, EDC President Jon Myers and Mary Hartman from Peabody Public Library.

Chairman Thor Hodges called the meeting to order and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

IN THE MATTER OF THE TAX ABATEMENT REQUEST: EDC President Jon Myers requested a real estate tax abatement for a building at Rail Connect. Jon provided a handout for the Council, adding that the unemployment rate is so low and this will be good for Whitley County. He also stated that this will bring jobs to Whitley County with competitive wages and benefits. Councilman Wheeler explained that the Redevelopment Committee gave a favorable pass to Council for this abatement. The question was asked if new machinery would be in the lease for this building, Jon stated he could not answer that as this abatement is just for the building itself. Councilman Wheeler made a motion to approve the 10 year tax abatement request per Resolution 2019-01, seconded by Councilman Banks and passed with a 7/0 vote.

IN THE MATTER OF THE ANNUAL JAIL REPORT: Sheriff Gatton presented the 2018 annual jail report for the Council. Sheriff Gatton started by saying that we have had an increase of intakes averaging 4.43 bookings per day. The average inmate population for 2018 is 124 daily. Sheriff Gatton then explained the details from the report, we have 19 officers currently with almost 4 officers on each shift. Sheriff Gatton brought up the need for a medical cell as well as a body scanner that would be able to detect non-metal objects for those entering the jail. He stated that there currently is not any space for the body scanner but it is something that they feel would benefit the County for safety measures. Councilman Hodges asked questions on the cost of a new machine and specifics with what it would be able to do. Other items discussed with the Sheriff include the mail for our inmates, age of our current jail and how it compares to other jails in the State. Sheriff Gatton indicated that he would like to have all divisions (Community Corrections, Probation, Work Release and Jail) in one building.

IN THE MATTER OF THE 19/20 GRANT APPLICATION: Paula Warden, Amy Motter and Julie Jensen-Kelly presented information on the Grant for 19/20, this is something that is done every year and they wanted to inform the new Council members of what it is and how it works. This grant is due March 31st to get the grant in April/May. Then a budget will be prepared and submitted to Council for approval. Probation will be asking for funding two positions as it has in the past, also asking for full salaries. Paula then explained that their fiscal year is different than the County as it starts July 1st not January 1st.

IN THE MATTER OF NATHAN BILGER BZA APPOINTMENT: Nathan provided applications for appointments to BZA to the council members to review in advance. He stated that there were several qualified candidates to fill the current opening as well as the option to appoint an alternate if the Council wished to. Councilman Wheeler nominated Sarah Lopez for the appointment, seconded by Bill Overdeer. Councilman Banks made a motion to close nominations. The appointment passed with a 7/0 vote to appoint Sarah Lopez. Councilman Banks then nominated Kelly Sheiss as the alternate. Councilman Banks made a motion, seconded by Councilman Warner with Councilman Wheeler closing on the nominations for alternate and passed with a 7/0 vote.

COMMISSIONERS REPORT AND SALARY ORDINANCE AMENDMENT REQUEST: Commissioner Western gave a report from the Commissioners meeting:

- Commissioner Western reported to the Council about Community Crossings Grant funding
- Bids were sent out for materials for asphalt paving, 6 bidders were over 30% higher than one year ago. Recommendations from Brandon Forrester will be made at the April meeting.
- The discussion began for the need of a Human Resources assistant. Councilman Overdeer stated that he is in favor of the position and knows that there is a need of a second person due to the high volume of

work. WIS wrote the job description for this position stated by Commissioner Amber. Commissioner Western stated that an area business has 350 employees and they have 5 HR personnel. It should be one HR employee for every eighty people employed. WIS used surrounding Counties and similar positions to come to come up with the job description. Commissioners are asking for salary base to be \$44,642/\$40,345, a PAT 310. Council would like to have the job description re-configured by WIS so that they can have it changed to a COMOT so they can get to a salary level they are comfortable with, \$35,000 range. After WIS re-evaluates the job description and make changes Council is asking for a special meeting to discuss and review the updated description. Council is in favor of the position but are more comfortable with the \$35,000 range. Council feels they are not able to make a decision at this time, Councilman Banks makes a motion to table the decision until WIS updates the job description, seconded by Councilman Warner and tabled with a 7/0 vote.

IN THE MATTER OF TODD GEIGER 4H UPDATE: Todd Geiger provided information on program updates, along with numbers from previous years. 811 children participated in the 4H program in 2018. 4H has started a new program called STEM Connection that has high schoolers teaching and working with students, they have 8 students currently in this program. There are currently 13 animal projects for Whitley County which is more than other area 4H programs. Whitley County is growing its 4H program.

IN THE MATTER OF MINUTES: The Council reviewed the February 27, 2019 joint Council/Commissioner meeting minutes. Council member Banks made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Wheeler and passed with a 6/0 vote. Councilman Barrett abstains. The Council also reviewed the March 5, 2019 regular meeting minutes, Councilman Kumfer made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Warner and passing with a 6/0 vote with Barrett abstaining.

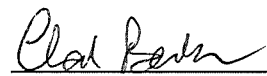
COMMISSIONERS REPORT: Commissioner Amber presented a quote from TCSI for upgrading the video system equipment for video sentencing for the Judges. Council is asking for additional information including another quote and a break down from TCSI as to what the charges are and what they cover. It was then discussed where the funds should be taken, County General was brought up. The information presented was more informational until more information can be gathered.

IN OTHER BUSINESS: Councilman Banks talked about a presentation from DLZ and explained that if anyone had any questions that they could speak with him upon their review.

There being no further business and no further questions or comments from the public, Chairman Hodges adjourned the meeting at 10:05 am.

WHITLEY COUNTY COUNCIL

Thor Hodges, Chairman



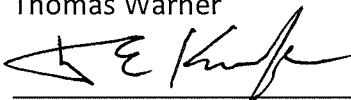
Chad Banks, Vice Chairman



Kim Wheeler



Thomas Warner



Timothy Kumfer

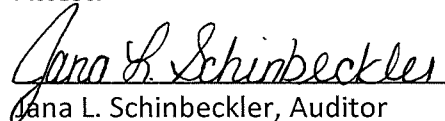


John Barrett



William Overdeer

Attest:


Jana L. Schinbeckler, Auditor