

WHITLEY COUNTY COUNCIL

June 4, 2019

The Whitley County Council met in regular session at 8:00 am on Tuesday, June 4, 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 County Recorder Rosemary Brown, Dr. Russ Gilliom, Chief Probation Officer Amy Motter, Paula Worden from Community Corrections, EDC President Jon Myers, Dane Drew from Whitley County Farm Bureau, Mark Sturtevant from the Maintenance Department, Columbia City Mayor Ryan Daniel, Jason Spencer from the Sheriff's Department, Bill Brice from the Sheriff's Department, Sheriff Gatton, Jail Commander Sean Martin, County Assessor Kim Erdly, County Prosecutor DJ Sigler, John Woodmansee from the Extension Office, Mary Hartman from the Peabody Public Library, Dennis Shively from Alliance Feed and Tim Summers from the Maintenance Department.

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

PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE LOCAL INCOME TAX ORDINANCE: Chairman Hodges called the public hearing for the local income tax ordinance to order. Carlee LaRue from the Health Department was the first to speak on the matter. Her main concern is the overcrowding of the Jail and she stated that in 2017, the Jail capacity was at 115%. The Jail capacity is only intended to be a max of 80%. Sheriff Gatton stated that he does support the Jail income tax because something needs to be done. The Jail is understaffed by 9 people per the State. Prosecutor DJ Sigler stated he also supports the Jail income tax and the Jail Task Force continues to do studies and try to decide what is best for Whitley County. Mayor Daniel wanted to ensure that if the Jail income tax is adopted that it would not change the amount of income tax funds the City receives and it would not change. After hearing all of the public's comments, the majority of Council members stated they would like more time to review this and would like to table it until their next meeting. Attorney Shipman stated that he will have the ordinance re-advertised for the public. Council member Kumfer made a motion to table the local income tax ordinance adoption until the next meeting, seconded by Banks and carried with a 7/0 vote.

IN THE MATTER OF THE ABATEMENT REQUEST: EDC President Jon Myers presented a new abatement request to Council for Alliance Feed, LLC. The company is proposing to invest in real estate improvements, new equipment and to create 14 new jobs at a facility to be built in the County's TIF District on 600 east. The company is requesting a tax abatement on both the real estate improvements and new equipment, phased in over a ten-year period. The Redevelopment Commission gave a favorable pass to Council for approval. Council member Wheeler made a motion to approve Resolution 2019-05 for real estate improvements for 5 years and Resolution 2016-06 for personal property/equipment for 10 years. Seconded by Barrett and passed with a 7/0 vote. Jon also introduced the new Marketing Director in the EDC, Kennedy St. George.

IN THE MATTER OF THE COURTHOUSE SIDEWALKS: Maintenance Supervisor Mark Sturtevant gave an update to the Council for the sidewalks around the Courthouse. According to our County Attorney, which spoke with the City Attorney, the County is financially responsible for the sidewalks around the perimeter of the Courthouse. Mark recommended that the Council wait to replace the sidewalks until the City makes a decision on their lighting around downtown. He stated they will keep fixing the sidewalks as needed but will work with the City when they are ready to replace the lighting.

IN THE MATTER OF THE FIDLAR BASTION PROPOSAL: County Recorder Rosemary Brown presented the AVID Hosting Proposal (Basion) to the Council. The Recorder's information and documents will be kept on an off-site server, which will help keep their records safe, help protect against malware and free up the County's server. Preferred IT is aware of this proposal and is in favor of it. Councilman Overdeer made a motion to approve the proposal, seconded by Wheeler and passed with a 7/0 vote.

IN THE MATTER OF THE EXTENSION OFFICE: John Woodmansee from the Extension Office gave an update to the Council. John went over various programs that the Extension Office is involved in. In regard to agriculture, the Extension Office was part of the 2019 Fort Wayne Farm Show, which had a total attendance of 30,282. They also have private applicator recertification programs, pork producers, Northeast Purdue Ag Center field days, Indiana Beef Cattle Association and Succession Planning Workshop. The Extension Office has a group called Master Gardeners and there was a total of 2,779 volunteer hours, 942 education hours and 7,333 contacts in 2017-2018. They also have to Whitley County MG Symposium which had 157 attendees plus 27 vendors. John has started something new involving forestry and natural resources, which is a venison processing workshop. The Extension Office still sends out weekly news articles and bi-monthly newsletters.

IN THE MATTER OF THE ORDINANCE TO ADOPT JOB DESCRIPTIONS: In regards to the ordinance to adopt job descriptions, Councilman Banks has concerns over whether the job descriptions are inflated. Waggoner Irwin Scheele insured that the job descriptions are not inflated by speaking to employees, department heads and comparing our job description to other entities. All County employees will need to sign the new job description after the ordinance is adopted. The ordinance allows the Council to fix the number of officers, deputies and other employees, describe and classify positions and services, adopt schedules of compensation and hire or contract with persons to assist in the development of compensation. Council member Banks made a motion to approve Ordinance 2019-07 adopting the Whitley County job descriptions, seconded by Kumfer and carried with a 7/0 vote.

COMMISSIONERS REPORT: Commissioner Schruppf gave a report from the Commissioners meeting:

- Commissioner Schruppf stated that the Commissioners are working on their budgets for 2020.
- He informed the Council that the Commissioners are currently receiving quotes for the print management systems throughout the County.
- There are also three businesses that are providing quotes to the Commissioners for IT services.
- In regards to health insurance, there are a few increases for charges that employees have to pay for co-pays. There are also changes with the way specialty drugs are handled.
 - o Emergency Room visits: \$150 to \$300 per visit
 - o Specialist Visit: \$20 to \$40 per visit
 - o Specialty drugs will also be excluded from the program.
- Commissioner Schruppf introduced the new Commissioner's Assistant, Jennifer Shinabery.

IN THE MATTER OF MINUTES: The Council reviewed the May 7, 2019 regular meeting minutes. Councilman Warner made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Overdeer and passed with a 6/0 vote with Barrett abstaining.

IN OTHER BUSINESS: In regards to the spreadsheets provided by Waggoner Irwin Scheele, there have been department heads requesting them for the proposed wages. Councilman Barrett made a motion to send all of the spreadsheets out to all department heads, seconded by Overdeer and passed with a 7/0 vote. Chief Deputy Auditor Tiffany Forrester stated she had the abatements for real property and personal property for businesses within Whitley County have been reviewed by the Auditor. She recommends that the Council approve the abatements and give the Chairman permission to sign the abatements. They are available in the Auditor's Office for anyone's review. Council member Barrett made a motion to allow the Chairman to review, approve and sign the abatements, seconded by Warner and passed with a 7/0 vote.

There being no further business and no further questions or comments from the public, Chairman Hodges adjourned the meeting at 9:45 AM.

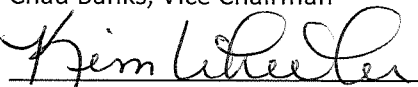
WHITLEY COUNTY COUNCIL



Thor Hodges, Chairman



Chad Banks, Vice Chairman




Kim Wheeler




Thomas Warner




Timothy Kumfer



John Barrett



William Overdeer

Attest:


Jana L. Schinbeckler, Auditor