

WHITLEY COUNTY COUNCIL

July 2, 2019

The Whitley County Council met in regular session at 8:00 am on Tuesday, July 2, 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 Robert Bryan from the Bowen Center, EDC President Jon Myers, Brian More from Micropulse, Inc., Liane Rambo from Micropulse, Inc., Mista Lauber from the Bowen Center, Jay Baumgartner from the Bowen Center, Sheriff Gatton, Chief Deputy Sheriff Jason Spencer, Jail Commander Sean Martin, Scott Schmidt from the Sheriff's Department, Paula Reimers from Court Pretrial Services, Leslee Robinson from STAR Insurance, Paula Worden from Community Corrections, Tim Hartman from the Sheriff's Department, Judge Fahl, Theresa Green, Tim Summers from the Maintenance Department, Prosecutor DJ Sigler, Mary Hartman from the Peabody Public Library, Kennedy St. George from the EDC and Pone Vongphachanh.

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:** Sheriff Gatton first spoke regarding the local income tax being considered for corrections. Sheriff Gatton gave reason to the Council of why the Jail tax is needed and stated that it is time to protect himself and his staff from lawsuits. Since 2008, State of Indiana Department of Correction annual Jail inspection through 2018 Jail inspections, Whitley County has been continually written up. This is not due to staff failure but due to building design, structure and inadequacies. Since 2008, the County has been informed for 11 years that we do not have any negative air flow cells for medical segregation. With the increased medical issues with the inmates, they recently has to put four medical supervised inmates into a big holding cell. This in return causing holding new inmates in the facility a problem. The medical staff and Jail personnel work hard to get these inmates treatment and work with the other divisions of the criminal justice system to find alternative sentences or placements. They have also been told for 11 years that the Jail does not have adequate staffing. In 2014, a staffing study was completed and it stated at that time the department needed an additional 13 staff members/confinement officers. The Council has graciously added a few staff members/officers for the Sheriff's Department but they are still 11 short. Sheriff Gatton continued to state all of the issues with the Jail. Sheriff Gatton would also like to have a body scanner as well but they do not have the space at the Jail. Todd Samuelson from Baker Tilly also gave some additional information on the income tax. If the Council passed the ordinance to adopt the local income tax, it would generate \$1,700,000 per year and all of the funds would go only to the County. The local income tax proposed tax rate for correctional and rehabilitation facilities is 0.2000%. This would tax our expenditure rate for local income taxes from 1.4500% to 1.6500%. With no further public comments or questions, Chairman Hodges closed the public hearing.

**IN THE MATTER OF THE LOCAL INCOME TAX ORDINANCE ADOPTION:** Councilman Kumfer made a motion to approve Ordinance 2019-06 adopting the correctional and rehabilitation facilities income tax at 0.2000%, seconded by Overdeer and passed with a 5/2 vote with Banks and Wheeler against.

**IN THE MATTER OF THE ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION REQUEST:** Prosecutor DJ Sigler presented an additional appropriation request to Council. DJ informed them that a full time employee is transitioning to a new career and he would like to hire her part time to train her replacement. He is requesting that the part time funds to pay her be appropriated in the Infraction Deferral fund and will not have an impact on County General. The amount requested will cover the remainder of 2019 and DJ stated he will return in January of 2020 if the part time work and training is still needed.

2506.11700.000.0250	Part Time	\$11,120.00
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Council member Barrett made a motion to approve the additional appropriation request, seconded by Overdeer and carried with a 7/0 vote.

**IN THE MATTER OF THE PRETRIAL SERVICES GRANT:** Paula Reimers from Community Corrections, along with Judge Rentschler and Judge Fahl, were present to inform the Council that they received a Pretrial Services grant. Whitley County was paid \$94,168.00 for this grant and the courts are asking to utilize the funds. They are requesting the funds to be used for a full time salary of \$43,500 plus benefits. Councilman Overdeer made a motion to approve the request to utilize the grant funds, seconded by Kumfer and passed with a 7/0 vote.

**IN THE MATTER OF THE ABATEMENT RESOLUTION AMENDMENT:** EDC President Jon Myers presented a request from Micropulse for an abatement resolution amendment. The proposal included an investment of \$1,700,000 in real estate improvements, \$5,184,000 in new equipment and 25 new jobs to their current location on State Road 14. The project will add new machining and inspection capacity to its current facility for manufacturing medical implants and instrumentation. They are requesting the real estate abatement and personal property abatement for ten years. Councilman Wheeler made a motion to approve the Personal Property abatement per Resolution 2019-08 for ten years and the Real Estate abatement per Resolution 2019-09 for ten years, seconded by Banks and carried with a 7/0 vote.

**IN THE MATTER OF THE BOWEN CENTER UPDATE:** Mistia Lauber, Jay Baumgartner and Robert Ryan were present to give an update on the Bowen Center to the Council. They stated that the County contributed \$204,480 of County funds to assist in the Bowen Center's mission of providing quality, cost-effective services to Whitley County clients. Those dollars helped provide \$668,209 of free care to Whitley County residents. The Bowen Center's 48 Whitley County-based staff served 1,102 Whitley County residents. Those employees provided 37,869 services to those clients and families. Mistia then shared a success story with the Council and gave a list of all the services the Bowen Center provides, along with an After Care program.

**IN THE MATTER OF THE GROUP BENEFITS REVIEW:** Leslee Robinson from STAR Insurance was present to give an update to the Council for healthcare. Unified Group services is still the third party administrator and she stated that there has been some changes for the current plan due to this past plan year having much larger claims. This plan year, Leslee informed them that Specialists visits went from \$20 to \$40 copay, emergency room copay went up and there is a standalone RX Help Center.

**IN THE MATTER OF THE CHURUBUSCO LIBRARY APPOINTMENT:** Churubusco Library Director Rachel Eyermann sent a request for appointment to the Council for a new appointment. She is requesting that the Council appoint Heather Allis be appointed for a four year term. Council member Barrett made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Warner and passed with a 7/0 vote.

**COMMISSIONERS REPORT:** Commissioner Schrumptf gave a report from the Commissioners meeting:

- Commissioner Schrumptf informed the Council that the Commissioners are working on getting several quotes for different items such as medical insurance and copy machines/printers.
- Commissioner Schrumptf announced that our current HR Director, Angela Campbell, will be leaving and they will be getting ready for interviews.
- The Commissioners had two additional appropriation requests for Council.

- o County General: 1000.33005.000.0130
  - o CEDIT: 1112.42014.000.0433
  - o On & Off Site Improvements \$212,500
  - o Worker's Comp Insurance \$28,500
- Commissioners, seconded by Wheeler and carried with a 7/0 vote.

**IN THE MATTER OF MINUTES:** The Council reviewed the June 4, 2019 regular meeting minutes. Councilman Banks made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Wheeler and passed with a 7/0 vote.

**IN OTHER BUSINESS:** Sheriff Gattton presented the trust agreement for the Sheriff's Department to the Council. He explained the changes and updates to the agreement. Councilman Barrett made a motion for the Chairman to sign, seconded by Overdeer and passed with a 7/0 vote. Auditor Schinbeckler presented two CF-1 forms that were turned in late by SDI. Due to them being turned in late, the Council has the option whether to approve or deny their tax abatement for another year. Councilman Warner made a motion to approve the CF-1's for SDI, seconded by Banks 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 10:00 AM.

**WHITLEY COUNTY COUNCIL**

Thor Hodges, Chairman

Chad Banks, Vice Chairman

Kim Wheeler

Thomas Warner

Timothy Kummer

John Barrett

William Overdeer

Attest:  
Jana L. Schinbeckler, Auditor