

## WHITLEY COUNTY COUNCIL

August 8, 2023

The Whitley County Council met in regular session at 8:00 am on Tuesday, August 8, 2023, in the Commissioner's Room located on the first floor of the Whitley County Government Center. Members in attendance were Chair James Argerbright, Vice-Chair Kim Wheeler, Thomas Warner, Thor Hodges, Joan Western, Nicholas Brewer, and John Barrett. Others in attendance were Commissioners Chad Banks, Theresa Baysinger and Rob Schuman, Auditor Tiffany Deakins, Deputy Auditor Tamela Tincher, Commissioners' Assistant Cami Hippenhammer, HR Director Jennifer Shinabery, Treasurer Kay Gatton, Assessor Kim Erdly, Chief Deputy Clerk Debbie Beers, Health Director Scott Wagner, Dale Buuck from the EDC, Ed Scott Deputy EMA Director, Sheriff Jason Spencer, Todd Cook, Billy Maddox, and Jody Hollenbaugh from the Sheriff's Department, Highway Director Ryan Getts and Tim Summers.

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

**SHERIFF/COMMISSARY TRANSFER REQUESTS:** Jody Hollenbaugh from the Sheriffs Department was present to seek Council approval for the appropriation of funds that had been collected from restitution payments. There were several amounts that were receipted into county general that were paid out of the Sheriffs department budgets and body cameras were purchased from commissary funds. The hopes were to allow for the funds to be appropriated back to reimburse for purchases. Councilman Brewer made a motion to approve all of the requests as presented, seconded by Barrett and passed with a 7/0 vote.

**HEALTH BOARD APPOINTMENT:** Health Director Scott Wagner was present to get the final health board member appointed. Commissioners chose 6 members at their meeting on Monday the 7<sup>th</sup> leaving the final appointment to come from Council. Scott would like to see Amy Sadler stay on the board. Councilman Warner made a motion to keep Dr. Amy Sadler on the health board, seconded by Western and passed with a 7/0 vote.

**APPROPRIATION REQUEST:** The Engineer Brad Allen was not able to be at the meeting, however Auditor Deakins stated that his request was to appropriate the money that was reimbursed to EMA for an insurance check. The total amount is \$1,022.24 for overtime and mileage that was sustained from a spill that required for the Drain Supervisor to work. Councilman Hodges made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Brewer and passed with a 7/0 vote.

**APPROPRIATION DISCUSSION:** Highway Director Ryan Getts was present to seek approval for \$80,000 for calcium chloride that was cut from the 2023 budget. The work was completed already at the request of the Commissioners, the funds just need to be appropriated. Council gave a favorable pass and will sign the paperwork at their September meeting after the appropriation has been advertised.

**ELECTION STIPEND REQUEST:** Deputy Clerk Debbie Beers was present on behalf of Clerk Cindy Doolittle to seek approval for the Election Supervisor Jessica Hockemeyer to receive a stipend for creating the data base and programing the voting machines instead of paying Microvote. The request is for \$750 for the upcoming general election. Councilman Hodges made a motion to approve the stipend request, seconded by Warner and passed with a 7/0 vote.

**ABATEMENT REQUEST:** Dale Buuck from the EDC was present with Red Star Manufacturing to seek Council approval for a 10 year real and personal property tax abatement. This would allow for a 24,000 square foot addition and 50 new employees to be hired. Red Star is a medical device contract manager that makes approximately 30,000 components a month. Councilman Wheeler made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-13 allowing for the 10 year real and personal property tax abatement. Seconded by Western and carried with a 7/0 vote.

**REVIEW OF ESTIMATED PROPERTY TAX LEVY LIMITS AND ESTIMATED REDUCTIONS DUE TO CIRCUIT BREAKERS AND 2024 MAXIMUM LEVY AMOUNTS:** The Council reviewed the max levies and circuit breaker credits for each taxing unit within the County and the County Levy amounts. After review, Council member Western made a motion to not make any recommendations or changes seconded by Wheeler and passed with a 6/1 vote with Councilman Brewer voting against.

**COMMISSIONER REPORT:** Commissioner Banks gave the Commissioner's report.

- Commissioners signed off on the approved \$50,000 matching grant for the Thomas Marshall home for the Museum to be able to help with repairs.
- Commissioners awarded E & B Paving the bid for the Community Crossings Grant.
- Commissioners approved and signed agreements/contracts for JAVS, BakerTilly and Peterson Consulting.

- Commissioners received a letter stating that they will be receiving \$26,104.75 in restricted funds and \$8,859.25 in unrestricted funds for the opioid settlement.
- The Commissioners voted to move forward with obtaining two appraisals for land acquisition to acquire a second drive for the new jail location.
- Commissioners and Council had a discussion on the possibility of renewing the bond that is currently in place and set to be paid off in February for the Government Center.
- Commissioner Banks gave a brief update of the progress being made at the new jail location.

**IN THE MATTER OF MINUTES:** The Council reviewed two sets of minutes. The June 28<sup>th</sup> executive session minutes, Councilman Warner made a motion to approve, seconded by Wheeler and passed with a 7/0 vote. The July 5, 2023, regular meeting minutes, Councilman Brewer made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Wheeler and passed with a 5/2 vote with Barrett and Warner abstaining.

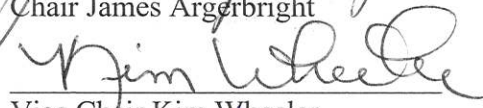
**INT THE MATTER OF OTHER BUSINESS:**

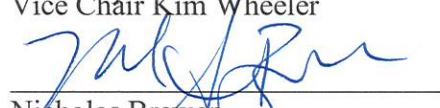
- Health Director Scott Wagner wanted to let Council know that he has been suggesting for a few years with Auditor Deakins it might be a good time to see about making the Courthouse and Museum a 503C not for profit to allow for maintenance costs to no longer fall on the County. Council collectively thinks this is great to check into and thanked Scott for taking this on and seeing if it can become possible.
- Councilman Brewer wanted to let the constituents know that the Broadband Committee is asking that everyone take an internet speed test so that we can show as a county that we are under served with broadband. There are flyers posted at both entrances so you can also use your phone, or it is also on the county website.

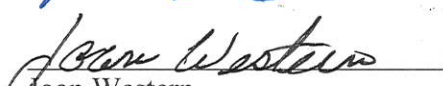
There being no further business and no further questions or comments from the public, Chair Argerbright adjourned the meeting at 8:51 a.m. •

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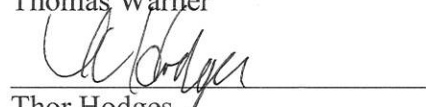
  
Chair James Argerbright

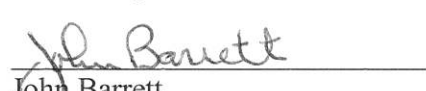
  
Vice Chair Kim Wheeler

  
Nicholas Brewer

  
Joan Western

  
Thomas Warner

  
Thor Hodges

  
John Barrett

Attest:

  
Tiffany Deakins, Auditor