

WHITLEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

July 5, 2016

The Whitley County Commissioners met in regular session Tuesday, July 5, 2016 at 1:00 pm in the Commissioners' Room located on the first floor of the Whitley County Government Center. Commissioners in attendance were Chairman George Schrumpf and Vice Chairman Don Amber. Commissioner Tom Rethlake was absent. Others in attendance were Auditor Jana Schinbeckler, County Coordinator Pamela Smith, Noah Hilty, Sarah Hilty, Phil Valjack, EDC President Jon Myers, Mark Jesse from A & Z Engineering, Ty Murphy, Joan Null, Stanley Crum, Mary Hartman from the Peabody Public Library, Planning Director Nathan Bilger and GIS Coordinator Dan Weigold.

Chairman Schrumpf opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

IN THE MATTER OF THE REZONING PETITION: Planning Director Nathan Bilger presented a rezoning petition to the Commissioners that was considered at the Plan Commission meeting in June. The Plan Commission did give a favorable recommendation but it was not a unanimous vote. The proposal is to rezone an area of about 14 acres to the parks and recreation district. The intention for this is to allow for lodge use and to be used during the hunting season and camping during the off season. The petitioner was in attendance at the meeting in case the Commissioners had any questions for him. The purpose for rezoning the 14 acres is to have a total of 80 acres that will be fenced in by 10 foot high fence for people who are interested to pay to go hunting within the fenced in area. The parks and recreation intent is to provide land for parks, open space playgrounds and recreational areas. Permitted uses for a parks and recreation district are a public park/recreation center, nature center, nature preserve or a small park/playground. Business use would be considered ball fields, golf course, public docks or tennis courts. The special exemption uses does not include a hunting area. The campgrounds could be comparable to the hunting lodge but Commissioner Amber stated he disagrees. This lodge will not be open to the public. If the lodge is used to house hunters who are paying to shoot deer, then Commissioner Amber believes it is a business and not a PR designation. He stated that the entire 80 acres should be rezoned to business purpose as our agricultural district intent states it is intended for agriculture use while permitting residential development. Commissioner Amber stated that after reviewing the petition he does not believe the request to rezone the 14 acres qualifies as part of the parks and recreation district. Commissioner Amber made a motion to table until the next meeting and to get the County Attorney's opinion. Commissioner Schrumpf seconded the motion and the motion passed with a 2/0 vote.

IN THE MATTER OF THE 2017 EDC BUDGET REVIEW: EDC President Jon Myers presented his 2017 budget to the Commissioners. He sent the Commissioners the annual letter for his budget and the request is the same as 2016 in the amount of \$168,000 which includes the in-kind contribution of their rental space in the Government Center of \$31,200. Jon stated that there will be sufficient funding to cover the operations of the EDC. Jon informed the Commissioners that the Whitley County EDC is one of the oldest in Indiana. The EDC has been open 25 years as of January 2017. Jon went over the EDC mission statement which is, "To lead a comprehensive economic program that retains and expands employment opportunities for local residents and attracts business investment to Whitley County". The EDC also provides a cost benefit analysis to the County officials when a new business is interested in opening their business in Whitley County. Jon stated that the EDC is here to promote growth of the County and economic development within the County.

IN THE MATTER OF THE MEMORIAL AT THE COURTHOUSE FOR VIETNAM VETERANS: Ty Murphy presented a request to the Commissioners to place a Vietnam Memorial at the Courthouse. Ty does not want to proceed with the project until he gets the Commissioner's approval to proceed. His vision for the project is a larger black headstone of those who gave their lives in the Vietnam War. The project will cost around \$7,500 and Ty is looking into setting up a

fund with the Whitley County Community Foundation to have transparency and to make the transactions legitimate. He has spoken with maintenance supervisor Mark Sturtevant and they have an idea of where the memorial could potentially be placed on the Courthouse lawn. They are proposing the memorial to be placed at the corner of Chauncey and Van Buren Street and it will be put in professionally. Commissioner Amber made a motion to move forward with the request with potentially changing the placement of the memorial, seconded by Schrumpf and passed with a 2/0 vote.

IN THE MATTER OF THE PUBLIC CONCERN: Phil Valjack appeared before the Commissioners to express his concern over a complaint with the County.

IN THE MATTER OF THE PARCEL COMMITTEE ORDINANCE REQUEST: Planning Director Nathan Bilger presented an ordinance request to the Commissioners to establish the Parcel Committee. The ordinance establishes a committee to review proposed land transactions that either combine or divide tax parcels. The State law allows the Assessor's or Auditor's offices to require a survey. By local ordinance, the Commissioners can adopt additional regulations as well and establishing this committee would offer a means to have several different departments involved. The departments involved are Planning, Assessor, Auditor, Recorder, GIS and the County Engineer/Surveyor. The reason why many departments are involved is to ensure that their requirements for the survey are correct. The Committee would ensure that the legal description describes a real piece of land, describes a perimeter that closes, that the acreage is correct, etc. It is the intent that the Committee would meet weekly to review documents that were turned into the Auditor's office for review. After review by the Commissioners, Commissioner Amber made a motion to approve Ordinance 2016-05, seconded by Schrumpf and passed with a 2/0 vote.

IN THE MATTER OF THE COUNTY COORDINATOR: County Coordinator Pam Smith presented three requests to use County facilities. The first request was from Junior Achievement of Whitley County for their 15th Annual Car Show on the Square event. The event will take place on August 6, 2016 from 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Commissioner Amber made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Schrumpf and carried with a 2/0 vote. The second request was from Sharon Geiger for the Art in the Alley event on July 9, 2016 from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Commissioner Amber made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Schrumpf and passed with a 2/0 vote. The third request was from the Columbia City Main Street Association for the 2016 Movie on the Square event. The event will take place on August 26, 2016 from 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM. They will need to west side of the Courthouse Square and gazebo. Commissioner Amber made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Schrumpf and passed with a 2/0 vote. In regard to wages, Pam gave some overall statistics to the Commissioners. Whitley County Government's average wage for 2016 is \$35,545 but the entire County's average wage for 2015 was \$37,596. From January 2016 to June 2016, the County has had a total of 21 employment terminations for various reasons. The current turnover rate for the County is 8.4%. Pam is requesting an increase for every Whitley County employee of \$1,950. This is based on \$1 per hour raise for the whole year. The second option is a raise of \$1,853 for every Whitley County employee which is \$0.95 per hour raise for the whole year. The County Highway truck drivers are also behind in regard to their wages compared to other counties with the same population. She would like to see the truck drivers salaries increase in addition to the raise. Commissioner Amber made a motion for a favorable pass to Council for option 1, seconded by Schrumpf and carried with a 2/0 vote.

IN A MATTER OF MINUTES AND CLAIMS: The minutes from the June 20, 2016 meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Amber made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Schrumpf and passed with a 2/0 vote. The claims were reviewed by the Commissioners. Commissioner Amber made a motion to approve the claims, seconded by Schrumpf and carried with a 2/0 vote.

IN OTHER BUSINESS: The Commissioners reviewed a request by the South Whitley Community Public Library to appoint their recommendation Heidi Hull to the South Whitley Community Public Library Board. Commissioner Amber made a motion to approve Heidi Hull as

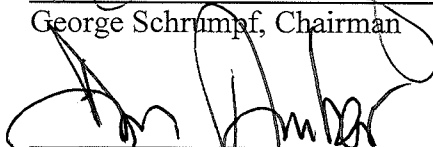
the appointment to the library board, seconded by Schrumpf and passed with a 2/0 vote. Auditor Schinbeckler presented two quotes to the Commissioners for an appraisal of all the County buildings. Commissioner Amber stated that he would like to speak with John LeFever before they approve any of the quotes. Amber made a motion to table the quotes for appraisals and find out how often they need appraised, seconded by Schrumpf and passed with a 2/0 vote. Commissioner Amber stated he will be attending the Council meeting and the Council will vote on the CEDIT plan for 2016/2017. Commissioner Schrumpf stated that the County's medical trust fund is up to \$270,000 after the payment to the transplant loan.

There being no further business and no further questions or comments from the public, Chairman Schrumpf adjourned the meeting at 2:10 PM.


WHITLEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS




George Schrumpf, Chairman



Don Amber, Vice Chairman



Tom Rethlake

Attest: 

Jana Schinbeckler, County Auditor

