

WHITLEY COUNTY COUNCIL

February 7, 2017

The Whitley County Council met in regular session at 8:00 am on Tuesday, February 7, 2017 in the Commissioner's Room located on the first floor of the Whitley County Government Center. Members in attendance were Vice Chairman William Overdeer, James Bayman, Glen LaRue, Kim Wheeler, Thor Hodges and Chad Banks. Absent was Chairman John Barrett. Others in attendance were Auditor Jana Schinbeckler, Commissioner George Schrupf, Mary Hartman from the Peabody Public Library, Todd Geiger and Cindy Barnett from the Extension Office, Maintenance Manager Mark Sturtevant, Dean Avey from Metronet, Jon Kissinger from Kissinger Electric, Linda Thomson from the Post and Mail, Jason Meyer from Passages and Highway Engineer Brandon Forrester.

Vice Chairman William Overdeer called the meeting to order and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

IN THE MATTER OF THE KISSINGER ELECTRIC ABATEMENT REQUEST AND THE BROADBAND INTERNET ABATEMENT REQUEST: The first abatement request is from Kissinger Electric which is a family-owned business located in Whitley County. The company currently has 14 employees but they would like to expand to meet the growing needs of their customers. They are considering building a new facility on Lot 36 in the Park 30 Business Park at a cost of approximately \$500,000.00. The new building would allow the company to hire 8 new employees with an average hourly wage of \$21.85 per hour. The company is requesting a tax abatement on the real estate improvements phased over a ten year period. Since this project is within the County's TIF District, the Redevelopment Commission reviewed the project at its first meeting in January and has recommended that the Council approve the abatement as presented. Council member Wheeler made a motion to approve the 10 year tax abatement per Resolution 2017-02, seconded by Hodges and motion passed with a 6/0 vote. The second abatement request was from Metronet. This abatement would allow the County to build out the infrastructure initially along the E 30 Corridor and within the City. The other possibility that was discussed was to create a new TIF district for the fiber optic infrastructure. After some discussions with the company, they realized it would be more efficient and cost effective to get 100% ten year tax abatement rather than create a TIF District. The schools will also be able to utilize this internet and they hope to have it reach the rest of the County. The Redevelopment Commission has committed, subject to an agreement being reached, contributing \$100,000.00 for two years. The County has committed another \$50,000.00 for two years subject to the agreement being reached as well. There are not any jobs created with this abatement. Metronet, is working with Northeastern REMC to use their poles for pole attachments. They will run the fiber starting in the southern part of the County and move their way north. REMC is hoping to work with Metronet to take the fiber throughout the entire County to be able to reach every residence within the County. The current speeds available with the current providers have 5 to 25 megabits per second and Metronet will allow a gigabyte per second. This is important particularly to the County's manufacturing and logistics industries because they are becoming more dependent on the internet to run their businesses. Council member Bayman made a motion to approve the abatement for Metronet and Resolution 2017-03 subject to the approval of Columbia City, seconded by Banks and passed with a 5/1 vote with LaRue voting against.

IN THE MATTER OF THE PASSAGES, INC. UPDATE: Jason Meyer from Passages, Inc. gave an update to the Commissioners. Passages currently has twelve vehicles, six are mini vans, three are cargo vans, one maintenance van and two cars. They have continued to partner with Whitley County Transit to help with their transportation needs. Passages operates on about a 5.5 million dollar budget. They currently have 130 employees and they serve 200 individuals with either intellectual or developmental disabilities. Passages has many upcoming events that Jason spoke to the Commissioners about. The first event is called "Getting to know Passages" and there are two dates for this held on Thursday, January 19, 2017 and Thursday, March 23, 2017. Thursday, March 9, 2017 is the Passages Annual Art Show and Silent Auction at the Eagle Glen Event Center. Saturday, April 15, 2017 is the Passages Annual Spring 5K at Morsches Park. Jason also provided the 2016 annual report to the Commissioners. The Commissioners thanked Jason for his time and encouraged everyone to visit Passages.

IN THE MATTER OF REPLACING THE COURTHOUSE HEAT PUMPS: Maintenance Manager Mark Sturtevant presented a request for \$45,000.00 to replace five heat pumps at the Courthouse. There were eighteen heat pumps installed in 1991 so they are 26 years old. In 2015, the maintenance department added one for a total of nineteen. Originally in 2014, Mark discussed with the Council replacing two heat pumps each year. The problem is they are starting to fail and require much more maintenance. There are two that will not make it through

the summer and Mark is requesting that five be replaced a year instead of two. Council member Overdeer stated that the heat pumps can be paid for out of Cumulative Capital Development. So far, there have been six pumps replaced which means there are still thirteen that need replaced. Commissioner Schrupf informed the Council that the Commissioners gave a favorable pass. Council member Wheeler made a motion to approve the request for \$45,000.00 out of Cumulative Capital Development to pay for the new heat pumps, seconded by LaRue and passed with a 6/0 vote.

IN THE MATTER OF THE WHITLEY COUNTY 4-H PROGRAM UPDATE: Todd Geiger gave an update to the Council for the 4-H Program. The Whitley County 4-H Program is available to all kids in 3rd grade through 12th grade. There are nearly fifty kids who live outside of Whitley County and a handful of kids that live outside the State of Indiana that are enrolled in the County's 4-H program. There were 748 kids that participated in the 4-H program in 2015-2016 which 631 were in traditional programs and 117 were part of the mini programs. There were also 189 adult volunteers that helped during the week of the fair or assisted in the different clubs. There are a total of 36 clubs and there were 56 different projects that kids could participate in. Of the 56 projects, only 11 of them are livestock related. For the 2016-2017 4-H year, there are new projects and clubs added. New non-traditional clubs include Junior Beekeepers, Growing Gardeners, Whitley County Jr. Barnstormers and Robotics. In the traditional 4-H program BBQ Grilling, Recycling, Aquatic Science and Shooting Sports: BB/Rifle have been added. There is a new program in place as well called the 4-H Stem Connection. This program allows for the Junior Leaders in the 4-H youth, who are trained as "teens as teachers" and they lead the activities with the kids in the schools. They are teaching different things to 2nd graders and up. Todd stated that he is excited about all of the new programs and projects they are able to offer in the coming year. The Council thanked Todd for the update and his time.

IN THE MATTER OF THE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT: County Highway Engineer Brandon Forrester informed the Council that the Commissioners opened one bid for the new chip spreader. The bid was from Southeastern Equipment and it met all of the specifications. The Commissioners approved the bid per Brandon's recommendation. The cost of the chip spreader is \$267,008.00 and Brandon stated that he will be able to do a transfer within his budget to cover the cost. He is hoping that the new chip spreader will be delivered the first week of June. In regard to the new bucket truck that the Highway Department purchased last year, someone has to be certified to operate the truck. A truck driver has been certified as an operator of the bucket truck. Brandon would like to amend the salary ordinance for the truck driver position to be amended as an operator salary. There is already a job description in place for an Operator and again, the position will primarily be to operate the bucket truck but this person will also be able to operate other equipment. Council member Hodges made a motion to approve the salary ordinance amendment to begin the next pay period, seconded by Bayman and passed with a 6/0 vote.

IN THE MATTER OF TRANSFERS:

Auditor:

4905.59007.000.0000 to 1000.03941.000.0000	\$553.25
5900.59007.000.0000 to 1000.03941.000.0000	\$5,529.18
8617.59007.000.0000 to 1000.03941.000.0000	\$11.66

Auditor Schinbeckler stated that she is currently completing the County's 2016 Annual Financial Report. There are three dormant funds that she is requesting the remaining funds to be transferred to County General. She stated that she has already spoken with State Board of Accounts and has their approval for the transfers. Council member Bayman made a motion to approve all three transfers, seconded by Banks and passed with a 6/0 vote.

IN THE MATTER OF MINUTES: The minutes from the January 4, 2017 meeting were reviewed. Council member LaRue made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Hodges and passed with a 5/0 vote with Wheeler abstaining.

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

- Commissioner Schrupf gave an update to the Council on the diesel tank follow up. Sheriff Gatton has contacted four different contractors for this project and three out of the four are not able to perform the job properly. Gasoline Services is the contractor chosen to complete the job and they have already ordered the tank and plan for it to be installed in March.
- Sheriff Gatton came before the Commissioners for permission to trade vehicles for the Drug Task Force every year and a half, possibly before they are compromised. When they trade the vehicles in, if there is

a difference, the difference will be paid out of Commissary funds. The Commissioners approved the request for the Sheriff.

- Commissioner Schrupf stated that Jessica Grossman from
- Region IIIA came before the Commissioners to give an update. The charge for Region IIIA for 2017 is \$12,444.00 and Jessica stated that these are not dues, it is the County's matching funds for the grants. Schrupf stated that Jessica will be coming to the Council to make a presentation. Council member Bayman made a motion to not pay the amount due to Region IIIA and to not be a part of Region IIIA, seconded by Wheeler and passed with a 5/0 vote with Hodges abstaining.

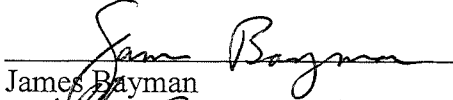
There being no further business or public comment, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 AM.

WHITLEY COUNTY COUNCIL

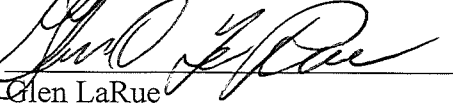
John Barrett, Chairman



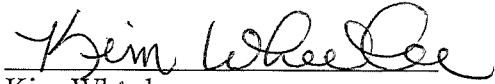
William Overdeer, Vice Chairman




James Bayman



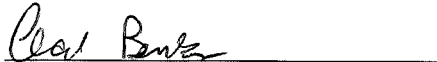
Glen LaRue



Kim Wheeler

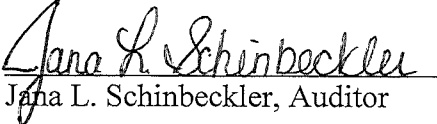


Thor Hodges



Chad Banks

Attest:



Jana L. Schinbeckler, Auditor

