

**WHITLEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
**FEBRUARY 2, 2009**

The Whitley County Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, February 2 in the Commissioner's Room located on the first floor of the Whitley County Government Center. In attendance were Chairman Tom Rethlake, Vice Chairman Michael D. Schrader and Don Amber. Also in attendance for all or part of the meeting was Auditor Linda Gerig, County Attorney Dan Sigler, County Coordinator Amy Crickmore, Sheriff Mark Hodges, Community Corrections Coordinator Paula Worden, Julie Jensen-Kelley, Planning Director David Sewell, Maintenance Supervisor Charles Bevington, Barry Yeakle, County Sanitarian Scott Wagner, Kim Wheeler, Phyllis Wheeler, County Assessor Angela Adams, Ron Smith and Post and Mail reporter TJ Hemlinger. Chairman Rethlake called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

**IN THE MATTER OF MINUTES AND VENDOR PAYABLES:** The minutes of January 20 and the vendor payables for February 2, 2009 were approved as presented.

**IN THE MATTER OF GPS UNIT:** Sanitarian Scott Wagner was present to inform the Board that he was able to obtain only one quote for a new handheld GPS unit needed to locate septic systems. As noted in previous minutes, the current model is outdated and can no longer be used. Wagner is trying to negotiate a trade-in price which should lower the quoted price of \$5935.00. Vice Chairman Schrader moved, seconded by Amber, to take the request of \$5935.00 from cum cap funds to county council on Tuesday, February 3, 2009. The motion passed 3/0.

**IN THE MATTER OF ASSESSING PROPOSALS:** Assessor Angela Adams was present to make her recommendations on proposals received on January 20 for New Construction and Annual Adjustments. Bids were received from Indiana Assessment Service and Accurate Assessments. Indiana Assessment Service proposed for 2009 New Construction, \$10,461.50 calculated at \$17.15 per parcels based on estimated parcel permits. 2009 Annual Adjustments proposed at \$27,287 calculated at \$1.70 per parcel based on 16,110 parcels. The per parcel cost of \$1.70 is for analyzing sales data to determine a trending factor and conduct a ratio study on the sale properties based upon the established trending factor. If additional analysis is required, there would be an additional daily fee of \$300.00. The cost to assist with appeals would be \$500.00/day. Accurate Assessments proposed for 2009 New Construction, \$15,000 up to a maximum of 500 parcels. Over 500 parcels, \$30/per parcel would be charged. The cost for assisting with appeals would be \$500/day. 2009 Annual Adjustments fee proposed was \$32,000. Adams stated that Accurate Assessments was the most responsive proposal and she would recommend that their proposal be accepted. Amber moved, seconded by Vice Chairman Schrader, that Accurate Assessments' proposals for 2009 New Construction and 2009 Annual Adjustments are accepted. The motion carried 3/0.

**IN THE MATTER COUNTY ATTORNEY REPORT:** Dan Sigler reported that the problem with NIPSCO permits has been taken care of and he has learned of a contact person if problems arise in the future. Discussion was held on the parcels of ground in Union and Smith Townships pertaining to acquiring the parcels for the Friends of the Eel River Bike Trail. Amber states that he has discussed the issue with most of the adjoining land owners and was told they are not in favor of the county acquiring the parcels. Amber then moved, seconded by Vice Chairman Schrader, to decline in the acceptance of the parcels from the State of Indiana. The motion passed 3/0.

**IN THE MATTER OF SHERIFF REQUEST:** Sheriff Mark Hodges was present to ask for support to use \$2300 in cum cap funds to purchase a new 3 door freezer for the jail. The sheriff stated that a used freezer has been located, but he will need help with funding. Amber moved, seconded by Schrader, to have Chairman Rethlake take the request to county council. The motion carried 3/0.

**IN THE MATTER OF CONGRESSIONAL SCHOOL FUNDS:** Auditor Gerig explained that if a county should elect, the funds currently held for the Congressional School Fund could be transferred to the State for future distributions. An updated Certificate was presented for signing.

**IN THE MATTER OF COUNTY COORDINATOR REPORT:** Amy Crickmore presented a request from the Whitley County Salvation Army to hold a candle light vigil in front of the courthouse on April 20, 2009 from 7:00p to 9:00p. The vigil is held in April observing Child Abuse Prevention Month. Amber moved, seconded by Vice Chairman Schrader, to allow the request. The motion carried 3/0. Crickmore presented a FMLA and Short-Term Disability request for a county employee. The short-term disability would be for 10 days at \$50/day. Amber moved, seconded by Vice Chairman Schrader, to allow the request. The motion carried 3/0.

**IN THE MATTER OF PLANNING/BUILDING:** Director David Sewell presented a request for a used sheriff vehicle when one becomes available. Sewell then presented and discussed the 2008 Annual Report for the Columbia City/Whitley County Planning and Building Department. A copy of the report would be available in the Planning/Building office for inspection. Sewell explained further that he is going to be updating the current Comprehensive Plan which has not been done since 1993. He has contacted Region III-A for a quotation on helping with the project.

**IN THE MATTER OF COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS:** Coordinator Paula Worden was present along with Julie Jensen-Kelley to explain the merging of the Superior Court Drug and Alcohol Program into Community Corrections. It was found that some services were being duplicated and that by merging the two both participates and staff could make better use of resources provided. The program is fee based and those fees are paid by the offenders. Jensen-Kelly spoke on the program in its current structure and explained the merge occurred at a time when Worden could include it in her grant request.

**IN THE MATTER OF BUILDING REPAIR REQUESTS:** Dennis Fenker explained that the carpet in circuit and superior court is getting worn and needs replaced. Fenker had obtained one quote for replacement. Discussion was held pertaining to funding and it was noted the areas most needing replaced are circuit court and adjoining office. Chairman Rethlake will take the request to county council. Fenker also stated that the roof is leaking in one of the jury rooms and dome work is needed. The cost of those repairs could be between \$6,000 and \$7,000.

**IN THE MATTER OF COMMISSIONER REPORTS:** Chairman Rethlake referenced the Prosecutor's Annual Report for 2008 and gave recognition to Matt Rentschler for being first in the state for recovering back payments of support. A letter is to be sent to Rentschler commending him on this achievement. Rethlake reported that the Government Center computer server is getting to the age of replacement. Three quotes have been received ranging from \$8900 to \$10,060 including labor. The matter will be taken to county council. Quotes for surveying services were received from Bonar Group, Walker and Associates and Anderson Surveying. All three will be used. Interviews were held for a new county engineer. After discussion of the matter, Vice Chairman Schrader moved to hire Brandon Forrester. Chairman Rethlake seconded the motion and the vote was 2/1 with Amber casting the No vote. Forrester will be notified that he was selected to fill the vacancy.

**IN THE MATTER OF HEALTH INSURANCE:** After months of discussing the issue of employee contribution towards health insurance, the Board made the following recommendation to become effective August 1, 2009. The following payroll deductions will apply per payroll:

- Employee Only \$20.00
- Employee & Children 52.72
- Employee & Spouse 64.53
- Employee & Family 96.49

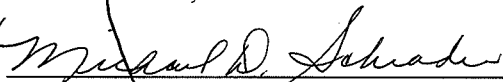
Commissioners will meet with all elected officials and department heads on February 6, 2009 to explain the change.


**IN THE MATTER OF PAY OUT OF SICK DAYS:** Effective March 31, 2009 all sick time that has been earned up to this date will be frozen, along with the rate of hourly pay on the same date. Upon leaving county employment, only the amount that has been earned as of March 31, 2009 will be "paid out." The pay will be based on the rate of hourly pay on March 31, 2009. Employees will be allowed to continue to build sick time up to 60 days.

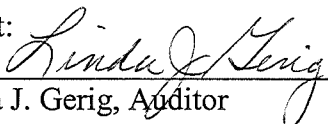
There being no further business or public comment, the meeting was adjourned.

**WHITLEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

  
Tom Rethlake, Chairman

  
Michael D. Schrader, Vice Chairman

  
Don Amber, Member

Attest:   
Linda J. Gerig, Auditor