

WHITLEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

February 15, 2016

The Whitley County Commissioners met in regular session Monday, February 15, 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, Vice Chairman Don Amber, and Tom Rethlake. Others in attendance were Auditor Jana Schinbeckler, County Coordinator Pamela Smith, Randy Cokl from the Town of South Whitley, Mark Pepple from the Town of Churubusco, Community Corrections Director Paula Worden, Sheriff Gatton, Janelle Schmitt from the Sheriff's Department, EMA Director Amy Biggs, Treasurer Laurell Hodges, Scott Wagner from the Health Department, Jacob Archambault from the EDC, Nick Rupert from the Post and Mail, Viv Sade from the Churubusco News, and Highway Director Michael Barton.

Chairman Schrumpf opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

IN THE MATTER OF THE COUNTY ATTORNEY: In regard to the lawsuit that included the Recorder's Office between Fidler and LPS, there has been a decision and a preliminary preceding by the Federal court which does not completely put the blame on LPS. The outcome for all of the Recorder's Office's in the State that are involved is not looking for a decision to be made in their favor. Commissioner Schrumpf stated because of this decision, he does not see the need to continue to pursue the lawsuit. Dan stated that for the County, there will be no out of pocket loss. Commissioner Amber made a motion to no longer pursue the lawsuit, seconded by Rethlake, and passed with a 3/0 vote. Auditor Schinbeckler informed the Commissioners that Derek Peterson, from the Indiana Attorney General's office, contacted her in regard to a Fort Wayne based company that is being investigated by their office. The company utilizes multiple business entities including Asset Recovery Associates which has been involved in tax sales in Whitley County. Derek stated that he will be attending a hearing in Allen County in regard to this investigation and encouraged the Whitley County Attorney, the Auditor and possibly some Auditor's office staff to attend the hearing. The hearing will take place at the Allen County Courthouse on Monday, February 22, 2016 at 1:30 P.M. Attorney Sigler stated that he will be attending the hearing with Auditor Schinbeckler.

IN THE MATTER OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR PROPOSAL & DPC

APPOINTMENT: EMA Director Amy Biggs informed the Commissioners that she is postponing the Deputy Director proposal but she is going to request the DPC appointment. Amy stated that she would like to appoint Janelle Schmitt for the District 3 Planning Council. The appointment will remain in effect until it is rescinded by the Commissioners. Commissioner Rethlake made a motion to appoint Janelle Schmitt to the District Planning Council for Indiana Homeland Security District 3 with an updated letter, seconded by Commissioner Amber, and passed with a 3/0 vote.

IN THE MATTER OF THE EMS CONTRACT DISCUSSION: Commissioner Amber began the discussion for the EMS contract and stated that the current contract expires at the end of 2016. Commissioner Amber asked that the Commissioners discuss any concerns that they may have with the documents for requests for bids. The Commissioners discussed the system design summary. The coverage area would be ideal if they could keep the ambulances in service at all times. This would eliminate the transfers from Columbia City to Fort Wayne, for example a transfer from the hospital to a nursing home. Amber is requesting that they use a hospital ambulance for this instead of taking one of ours out of service for roughly a two hour period. There should also always be a Paramedic and an Advanced EMT on the ambulances at all times. It might happen one to two times per year. Amber suggested having an oversight committee and an EMS Director to ensure that things are done properly. Commissioner Amber would like to receive bids on the exact same thing from every bidder and then award the lowest bid. The only concern is would the quality of service be the same. Attorney Sigler stated that it may be better if

the document was a request for proposal rather than a request for bids. The Commissioners came to a consensus to table until the next meeting and to change the document from bid to proposal.

IN THE MATTER OF THE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT: Highway Director Michael Barton gave a small report on the Highway Department. He also gave some information to the Commissioners they had requested from a previous meeting.

IN THE MATTER OF THE COUNTY COORDINATOR: County Coordinator Pamela Smith has requested the County's liability agreement from John LeFever and hopes to have the agreement within the next week. She also discussed with the Commissioners that there have been six candidates to apply for the Highway Director position. There is an executive session scheduled on March 7, 2016 at 9:00 am to discuss the candidates. The Commissioners would like to extend the deadline for the cut off to accept applications because the position was not posted on the Association of Indiana Counties' website. Commissioner Amber made a motion to extend the deadline to February 23, 2016, seconded by Rethlake, and carried with a 3/0 vote.

IN A MATTER OF MINUTES AND CLAIMS: The minutes from the February 1, 2016 meeting were reviewed. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Rethlake, Commissioner Amber seconded the motion and passed with a 3/0 vote. The claim distributions were reviewed by the Commissioners. A motion to approve the claims was made by Commissioner Rethlake, seconded by Commissioner Amber, and passed with a 3/0 vote.

IN OTHER BUSINESS: Jill Snyder, the Whitley County Drug Free Indiana Coordinator, presented the 2015 annual budget to the Commissioners. The funds available for distribution in 2014 totaled \$40,365.51 to be disbursed among prevention/education, treatment, justice, and administrative costs. The final distribution of recommendations was approved by voting members of the Whitley County Drug Free Indiana and is now being submitted for the Commissioners and Council final approval. The total amount requested for 2015 was \$56,061.75 and the finance committee recommended \$40,365.51. After review, Commissioner Rethlake made a favorable pass for approval to Council, seconded by Amber, and passed with a 3/0 vote. Commissioner Rethlake gave the Commissioners an update for SES Environmental who handles the landfill. He also stated that the Wheeler property is contaminated and asked how the Commissioners would like to handle it. Commissioner Amber asked if there was any type of agreement that they could come to with the Wheeler property. There was discussion to take away the penalties and just to pay the property taxes so the property could be put back on the tax roll. Community Corrections Director Paula Worden presented a policy change to the Commissioners. Under Current Policy, it states, "Paid time off for holidays will be counted as hours worked for the purposes of calculating overtime". The revised policy states, "Paid time off for holidays will be counted as hours worked for the purposes of calculating overtime. (NOTE: Time off for holidays will not be counted as hours worked for the purpose of calculating overtime for eligible Community Corrections personnel.)" Commissioner Amber made a motion to approve the policy change, seconded by Rethlake, and carried with a 3/0 vote. Commissioner Schrumpf reported that the County has sold the 2001 Jeep Cherokee Sport and the 2000 Ford Crown Victoria for a total of \$2,155.00. The County did not have to pay the premium to Gov Deals, the buyer does. In regard to the Personnel Committee meeting and the survey sent out, salaries were one of the biggest concerns in the offices within the County. Commissioner Schrumpf would also like to start having monthly department head meetings to discuss issues or concerns with department heads. County Coordinator Pam Smith also reviewed the benefits that Whitley County offers to its employees compared to other places such as the City of Columbia City, Huntington County, Wabash County, etc. In her research, Whitley County does not offer as many benefits as other places and she would like to address the issue. The Commissioners also discussed switching to paid time off rather than sick and vacation days for employees. Auditor Schinbeckler presented a report from Paige Sansone from UMBAUGH showing our year end 2016 balances in each of our funds associated with the DLGF. She also discussed the solid waste request for administrative fees for the County. There are currently 14,166 households in Whitley County and our current charge overall is \$12,000 for administrative fees. The Commissioners

stated that they would like to see a certain dollar figure per household rather than a flat fee. They will be taking it to the solid waste board to discuss the fee.

There being no further business and no further questions or comments from the public, Chairman Schrumpf adjourned the meeting at 3:30 pm.

WHITLEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

George Schrumpf, Chairman

Don Amber, Vice Chairman

Tom Rethlake

Attest: Jana Schinbeckler
Jana Schinbeckler, County Auditor

