

WHITLEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

June 6, 2016

The Whitley County Commissioners met in regular session Monday, June 6, 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 Commissioner Tom Rethlake. Others in attendance were Auditor Jana Schinbeckler, County Coordinator Pamela Smith, Jon Woodmansee from Purdue Extension, Mark Jesse, Sheriff Marc Gatten and Jody Hollenbaugh from the Sheriff's department, EMA Director Amy Biggs, Stanley Crum from Wood Land Lakes, Lucas Grammon from EDC, Heidi Darley and Leslee Derbeck from STAR Insurance, County Treasurer Laurell Hodges, Planning Director Nathan Bilger, Vincent Simmers, Mary Hartman from the Peabody Public Library, Ted Nitza from BCS Management and Highway Director/Engineer Brandon Forrester.

Chairman Schrumpf opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

IN THE MATTER OF THE COUNTY ATTORNEY: Attorney Sigler reported to the Commissioners that the EMS Contract is still in transit but there have been no disputes from Parkview. In regard to a tort claim filed against the County for an EMS run, Sigler has spoken to the Attorney and informed him that we no longer have the exposure or the liability for the EMS runs. Attorney Sigler stated that he has reviewed the Spillman Technologies contract for the CAD System and he approves the contract. In regard to the bond issue for Restoration Medical Polymers, the final approval will be sometime this month.

IN THE MATTER OF THE EXTENSION OFFICE: John Woodmansee gave the Commissioners an update on the different programs that benefit the County. John has been involved in the Master Gardner Program, Field Days Help Local Farmers and Conserving Nature on your Land. In 2015, Whitley County Master Gardeners reported volunteering 1901 hours in the community and received 575 additional education hours. The second program consists of two field days at Northeast Purdue Ag Center (NEPAC). Commercial applicators and certified crop advisors gained knowledge on topics of corn and soybean pest updates, nutrient management, nematodes, sprayer clean out, etc. The third, Conserving Nature on your Land, is when the Purdue Extension hosted this unique event for rural landowners with small acreages. The owners gained knowledge on natural resources management, invasive species management, tree identification, etc. 94% of the participants stated that it will help them meet their natural resource goals and 76% of them stated that they expect to change their land use practices. All of the programs John is involved in are: General and Traditional Ag Programs, Commercial Horticulture/Small farm Programs, Master Gardeners, Forestry/Natural Resources and other Professional programs such as assist with the County 4-H Fairs.

IN THE MATTER OF BCS MANAGEMENT: Ted Nitza from BSC Management stated that the County has been in the process of establishing a County wide sewer district for the areas that are not served currently. There are many benefits to this including an environmental benefit and an economic development benefit. Commissioner Amber stated that he would like for the Chairman to go to Council to request funding for this project. There are roughly 10 to 13 areas around the County that are currently not part of a sewer district. There are opportunities for the Commissioners to partner with other service providers such as other cities and towns. BCS collaborates with the neighborhoods themselves and then if majority rules that they want the service, they move forward with the process. The first step in this entire process would be to gather a group of individuals who would want to serve on the board for the sewer district. With these individuals, they would reach out to the different areas to see if they are interested. The startup funding needed for the project is around \$30,000 and eventually could be fully supported by rates. The board would be able to search for funding and when they are ready, the unincorporated areas who want the service would sign a petition, they would be presented with the benefits of the service

and get the estimate of what the service would cost to them. The Commissioners agreed to present the information to Council.

IN THE MATTER OF HIGHWAY ENGINEERING: Highway Director/Engineer Brandon Forrester presented the plan for chip and sealing the roads to the Commissioners. They are going to start at 200 E and move counterclockwise around the County. He stated it would take about one month to finish all of the chip and sealing roads and then they will continue onto single sealing if there is funding available. At this point in time, the Highway Department is still using the durapatcher and mowing around the roadways. They have also worked on milled roads and have replaced a few culverts in the last three weeks. Brandon stated that he has met with oil suppliers and is working with them to optimize efficiency. There are two letters of understanding that the Commissioners received from INDOT for alternative routes while they have road construction in Whitley County. Brandon is overseeing the County Road 600 E Project and he is also doing the same for the utility locates. He would like to send the businesses around the area a letter in regard to road closures for the project.

IN THE MATTER OF THE PLANNING & BUILDING FEE SCHEDULE: Planning Director Nathan Bilger presented a proposed joint ordinance to the Commissioners regarding a new fees schedule for planning and building. The joint ordinance is between the Commissioners and the City of Columbia City Common Council. In reviewing the Planning and Building Department's revenues and expenditures, the fees that were collected covered 31% of the department's overall budget and ideally it should be around 50%. With the fee increases, it will bring them closer to the 50%. Comparing old fees to new fees, the existing family dwelling is 7¢ per square foot plus a minimum of \$40 which is being changed to a \$70 base fee plus 8¢ per square foot. Industrial is currently 7¢ per square foot which is being changed to 8¢ per square foot up to 20,000 sf and then it goes to 3¢ per sf. There were a few fees added to the permit applications. Public swimming pools was added for \$105 plus 8¢ per square foot. Missed Inspection fee has also been added in case a contractor completely misses the inspection which results in the department requesting an affidavit plus \$40. The affidavit would state that the contractor did everything they were supposed to and they can proceed. Failed inspection/re-inspection is a \$20 fee that the department currently has but now on the first failed inspection it is \$0, second is \$40 and every one after that is \$105. Another new fee is a permit issued after the construction started and it would only apply to new construction. The fee amount would be two times the base fee. Planning petition fees for the planning and building petition are going up due to the cost of the review and running the meeting. Development plan review/amendment to approved plan would go from \$50 to \$150 which is the largest percentage increase out of all of them. Special exception petitions would go from \$100 to \$150, subdivisions \$75 plus \$10 per lot to \$150 plus \$10 per lot and also added in a planned unit development. In regard to the planning and building services to other jurisdictions, the fees are currently \$2,400 and for 2017 they will go up to \$3,600 and for 2018 they will be \$6,000. Commissioner Rethlake made a motion to approve the joint ordinance, seconded by Amber and passed with a 3/0 vote.

IN THE MATTER OF THE WOOD LAND LAKES UPDATE: Stanley Crum from Wood Land Lakes gave an update to the Commissioners from their meeting on Thursday, May 13, 2016. Stanley reviewed the 2017 budget with the Commissioners and the two main changes were for Lisa Ledgerwood's hourly rate to be raised and a \$100 increase request for the money they receive from the Counties to pay for the hourly rate increase. Stanley then remarked on the Apollo Landfill which due to a purchase by the adjoining land owner, it is now privately owned. Wood Land Lakes is also involved with the maintenance of one of the very few ceramic tile round barns anywhere in the Nation. Stanley is hoping that the round barn can become part of the County's historical society. In regard to Phair Farm, a rental agreement for the farm has been prepared by Mike Yoder and sent to the renter. There has been no response at this time. Pertaining to Conservation easement items, the NIPSCO Eminent Domain, there was a settlement of \$13,780 and the Council will determine the best use for the funds. Stanley also provided the Commissioners with the Wood Land Lakes packets for additional information.

IN THE MATTER OF THE COUNTY COORDINATOR: County Coordinator Pam Smith presented a request to the Commissioners in regard to the active duty enlistment policy. At the last meeting, the Commissioners added sick time for the person to accrue while they are on active duty. The policy change was made effective May 1, 2016, however, there is an employee that used sick time prior to the May 1st date. Pam is requesting that this individual get back those 25 hours of sick time that were used because he was training for active duty during this time period. There were three days April 28, 29 and 30th. Commissioner Amber made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Rethlake and passed with a 3/0 vote. Pam also presented two requests to use County facilities to the Commissioners. The first request was from Downtown Business Alliance for Art in the Alley on Saturday, June 11, 2016. Commissioner Rethlake made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Amber and carried with a 3/0 vote. The second request was for a wedding ceremony that will be held on August 2, 2016 to utilize the gazebo from 7:30 to 8:45 PM. Commissioner Amber made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Rethlake and passed with a 3/0 vote.

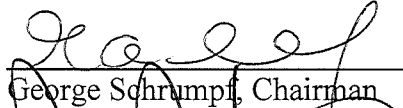
IN A MATTER OF MINUTES AND CLAIMS: The minutes from the May 16, 2016 meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Rethlake made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Amber and passed with a 3/0 vote. The claims were reviewed by the Commissioners. Commissioner Amber made a motion to approve the claims, seconded by Rethlake and carried with a 3/0 vote.

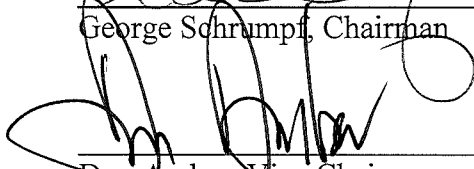
IN OTHER BUSINESS: Sheriff Gatton and Jody Hollenbaugh from the Sheriff's department came before the Commissioners to request their approval for an increase in wages. The increases would affect jailers, sheriff deputies, sheriff deputy sergeants and detectives, the chief deputy sheriff and the dispatch director. Sheriff Gatton stated that the current jail turnover rate for confinement officers is 53% which includes full time and part time. He gave different examples of the wage difference between Whitley County and the surrounding Counties or Counties that are similar in population. Confinement officer's base wage in Whitley County is \$34,230 but in Jasper County it is \$36,662, White County is \$34,640 and Allen County is \$44,945. Based on the data collected, the proposed wage for Whitley County confinement officers is \$38,056. Sheriff Deputies in Whitley County make \$43,318 and the proposed wage is \$48,600. Sheriff Deputies/Detectives make \$46,565 and the proposed wage is \$51,286. Chief Deputy Sheriff makes \$50,282 as a base and the proposed wage is \$57,128. The last wage for the Dispatch Director is a base of \$44,184 and the proposed wage is \$46,392. The changes would be shown on the second payroll date in July and run through December 31st. There will be \$29,052 additional funds needed in LOIT to cover the increases through the end of the year and \$21,145 needed for County General. Between the hours of training and schooling that each person needs to be put through at the Jail and Sheriff's department, the County is losing money with the turnover. Commissioner Amber also suggested to Sheriff Gatton to speed up the process when they are hiring someone new. With no further comment, Commissioner Rethlake made a motion for a favorable pass to Council, seconded by Amber and passed with a 3/0 vote. Commissioner Schrumpf reviewed the insurance policy with the other Commissioners. As of today, the current policy costs the County \$1,760,575.17. A renewal with the exact same plan without any changes would be \$1,772,206.29. There are two proposed plans that STAR Insurance has prepared for the Commissioners. The first proposed plan would eliminate the Commissioners, Council, the EDC, Solid Waste, the Coroner, WIC and the County Attorney. The co-pays and the deductibles would go up but the deductibles would go up by \$250 for each plan and the overall cost to the County would be \$1,553,307.33. The second proposed option is to keep the co-pays and the deductibles the same but remove all of the same departments as the last plan. This plan cost for the County would be \$1,603,629.68. After reviewing these options, Commissioner Amber made a motion to approve the plan that costs \$1,603,629.68 to the County. Commissioner Schrumpf seconded the motion and the motion passed with a 2/0 vote with Rethlake abstaining. Commissioner Schrumpf also made a recommendation to the Commissioners to use some of the funding in the trust fund for the County's medical insurance to put towards the loan the County has. He is recommending that \$100,000 be put towards the loan. Commissioner Amber made a motion to put \$100,000 towards the loan and to

make a favorable pass to Council, seconded by Rethlake and passed with a 3/0 vote. Commissioner Rethlake reported that there are 69 participants at Community Corrections and 108 in the Jail. There are some waiting to be moved over to Community Corrections but the Judge has to approve the transfer. Commissioner Amber reminded the Commissioners on the time management program and would like to still request funding from the Council. Commissioner Schrumpf stated that there is a new law put into place with the Department of Labor. In regard to overtime, the salary threshold for exempt employees to receive without being required to pay them overtime has been raised to \$47,476 per year. This new rule will affect five individuals in the County and it becomes effective December 1, 2016. Schrumpf also reported that Agriculture AV is going to continuously decreased over the next few years resulting in farm owners taxes being decreased. The Commissioners are requesting to compensate the interim Foreman at the Highway Department. Schrumpf will present the request to the Council. The personnel committee also refactored a position in the Prosecutor's Office and the salary ordinance amendment request will be presented to Council as well for their approval. EMA Director Amy Biggs gave an update to the Commissioners for the emergency management department. There have been five incidents over the course of three weeks and the first was a minor hazardous materials spill at Ohio and Collins followed by the train derailment in South Whitley. These were followed by the US 30 vehicle fire, a second accident on US 30 and an anhydrous ammonia leak at Churubusco Ag Plus. Amy stated that the responders have done a tremendous job during these past three weeks. Amy has consulted with everyone affected from the incidents and debriefed them on the situation. She hopes that the train cars will be picked up soon and she is there every day monitoring the situation. A member up the public asked the Commissioners who is in charge of the smaller sewer districts within the County. The Commissioners stated the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) oversees them and he needs to contact them with any questions.

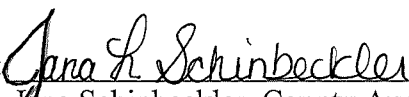
There being no further business and no further questions or comments from the public, Chairman Schrumpf adjourned the meeting at 3:05 PM.

WHITLEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


George Schrumpf, Chairman


Don Amber, Vice Chairman


Tom Rethlake

Attest: 
Jana Schinbeckler, County Auditor