

WHITLEY COUNTY COUNCIL

April 5, 2022

The Whitley County Council met in regular session at 8:00 am on Tuesday, April 5, 2022, in the Commissioner's Room located on the first floor of the Whitley County Government Center. Members in attendance were Chair Timothy Kumfer, Vice Chair Kim Wheeler, Thor Hodges, Thomas Warner, James Argerbright, and John Barrett. Councilwoman Western was absent. Others in attendance were Commissioner Chad Banks, Commissioner Green, Auditor Tiffany Deakins, Chief Deputy Auditor Tamela Tincher, Sheriff Marcus Gatton, Assessor Kim Erdly, Treasurer Kay Gatton, Community Corrections Director Paula Worden, Rob Schuman, Chad Nix from the Regional Sewer District and Steve Harsch from JPR.

Chairman Kumfer called the meeting to order and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

SHERIFF DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT: Sheriff Marcus Gatton presented the 2021 annual jail report to the Council. A few highlighted items included a total inmate count for 2021 to be 1,374, the number one booking offense for Whitley County was drug related, the confinement staff conducted 776 unannounced cell walk-throughs and other facts contained in the 2021 annual report. Sheriff Gatton also wanted to let the Council know that the jail is still understaffed with lack of being able to obtain employees. Once individuals learn of the shifts that they will most likely be working they do not wish to continue with the employment. Gatton also let the Council know that the County has been awarded a grant for body cameras for the Sheriff's Department. The only commitment that will need to be given will be \$3,800 towards the amount. Sheriff Gatton is also looking to get new computers for the squad cars but feels that he will have enough in his commissary account to cover that cost.

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS: Commissioner Banks came before Council with two additional appropriation requests. Councilman Hodges would like to make sure that the Commissioners keep the Council informed of expenses and share expenditures regularly.

LIT Corr/Rehab Facilities

Commissioner:

1233.35600.000.1233	Contracted Services	\$1,000,000.00
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Councilman Barrett made a motion to approve the additional as presented, seconded by Argerbright and carried with a 6/0 vote.

ARP Grant Fund

Commissioner:

8904.32500.000.0904	Bank Service Fees	\$1,500.00
8904.59000.000.0904	Misc Expense	\$498,500.00

Commissioners originally asked for \$350,000 and when advertised this amount was changed to \$500,000 to cover any additional invoices that may come in. Council felt that the request for \$350,000 was enough to cover the handheld radios for the Sheriffs Department and the invoices for BakerTilly. Commissioners can come back and ask for more funds if they need more appropriated in the future. Councilman Hodges made a motion to approve \$350,000 additional appropriation request, with a second by Wheeler and carried with a 6/0 vote.

CHURUBUSCO LIBRARY BOARD APPOINTMENT: Councilman Kumfer read the request from Rachel Eyermann to appoint Stacy Keener to the Churubusco Library Board of Trustees. Her term would be four years and would expire April of 2026. Councilman Hodges made a motion to appoint Stacy Keener to the Churubusco Library Board of Trustees, with a second by Barrett, passing with a 6/0 vote.

SALARY ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS: The salary ordinance was amended to reflect changes that were made in the Highway Department as well as changing an account number for the Sheriffs Department. Councilman Hodges made a motion to approve as presented, seconded by Warner, and passed with a 6/0 vote.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT ADDITIONAL REQUEST: Scott Wager from the Health Department was present to get the okay to allow for one of his grant funds to go negative until the Councils May meeting where he can get approval on an additional appropriation request. He was unable to be added to the April Council meeting so he will have to wait until May for the advertising requirements. Councilman Warner made a motion to allow for grant funds to be negative until the May meeting when the additional appropriation can be voted on. Seconded by Barrett, carrying with a 6/0 vote.

IN THE MATTER OF THE ELECTION STIPEND: Auditor Deakins explained to Council that she spoke with State Board of Accounts and there were two options to pay Jessica for the election stipend, one of which would be through accounts payable, and she would receive a 1099 at the end of the year, or to pay her through

payroll. Councilman Argerbright made a motion to have Jessica be paid through payroll, seconded by Warner and carried with a 6/0 vote.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS: Councilman Warner let Council know that HR is requesting that part time wages get looked at for the 2023 budget year and thinks that we need to pay them as WIS recommended. Councilman Hodges stated that there will need to be a discussion on this as he thinks it should be up to the department heads to set those rates. Councilman Warner presented a favorable recommendation to Council to approve taking a part time position from the Treasurer and Auditors offices and making it a full-time position that would work in both offices effective April 3, 2022. Council wanted to make clear that with them approving this the offices will not be able to fill anymore part time positions. Councilman Warner made a motion to approve the two part-time positions to a full-time position. Seconded by Wheeler and carried with a 6/0 vote.

RESOLUTION APPROVAL: Councilman Kumfer presented a Resolution that would need to be adopted by County Council for the process of the jail construction. Councilman Hodges made a motion to approve Resolution number 2022-05 as presented, seconded by Wheeler, passing with a 6/0 vote.

REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT: Regional Sewer District President Chad Nix was present with Steve Harsch from JPR to request Council to use ARP funds to help with a sewer project that will be impacting Stable Acres, Coesse, Dunfee and County Line Rd. They are requesting that Council pay \$500,000 so that the Regional Sewer District does not have to go into debt for this project. They received a 5-million-dollar grant but will be needing additional funding, and they do not want to make the consumers pay around \$120/month to carry a debt. Council would like a solid number from the Regional Sewer District. Once bids are opened the Regional Sewer District will need to come back to Council with a specific number. Scott Wagner from the Health Department answered a few questions in relation to this topic as well. Councilman Hodges made a motion to table until specific numbers are presented, seconded by Wheeler, the motion to table passed with a 6/0 vote.

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMMISSIONER'S REPORT: Commissioner Banks wanted to let Council know that at their May meeting there will be an ordinance that will need to be approved for the process of the jail construction. Banks stated that he attended a meeting with BakerTilly on the county's comprehensive financial plan and stated that BakerTilly will be at the May meeting to share the report. Commissioner Banks also let Council know about the First Amendment Audit that happened at the government center a few weeks ago and stated that he felt the county handled it well and that the employee's safety is his main concern. He also stated that there were two trainings that Amy Biggs and Sheriff Gatton put on for over 100 employees.

IN THE MATTER OF MINUTES: The Council reviewed the March 8, 2022 regular meeting minutes, Councilman Hodges made a motion to approve with a second by Barrett. Passing with a 6/0 vote.

IN THE MATTER OF OTHER BUSINESS: Councilman Argerbright gave a brief recap of a meeting that he was a part of with BakerTilly for the counties comprehensive financial plan and stated that they will be at the May meeting to share the report. There was a lot of great information in the report, and he stated that we should have it updated every year so we will know how we are trending. Councilman Warner wanted to let Council know that at personnel committee HR presented that they feel the county should have WIS preform a wage and salary analysis so that we can ensure the county is still where they should be for competitive wages.

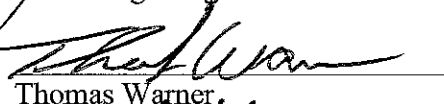
There being no further business and no further questions or comments from the public, Chair Kumfer adjourned the meeting at 9:11 AM.

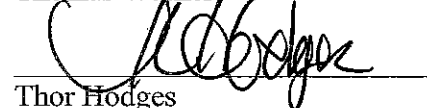
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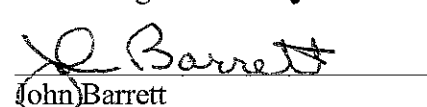

Chair Timothy Kumfer


Vice Chair Kim Wheeler


James Argerbright


Thomas Warner


Thor Hodges


John Barrett

Joan Western

Attest:


Tiffany Deakins, Auditor