

May 27, 2015

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Council and meet in a regular session at 5:30PM in the Annex Building Meeting Room, Knox, Indiana, with Dave Pearman, Robert Sims, Bryan Cavender, Freddie Baker, Brad Hazelton, Jennifer Davis and Pam Stalbaum present, and the following proceedings were held to wit:

(This meeting was the re-scheduled meeting of May 18th.)

The meeting was called to order by Council President, Freddie Baker.

Councilman Cavender made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 20th meeting. Councilman Hazelton seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT TRANSFER REQUEST & AMENDMENT TO SALARY ORDINANCE

Highway Department Superintendent Rik Ritzler appeared before the Board to request an amendment to the 2015 Salary Ordinance noting an increase in the number of hours worked per week of the Administrative Assistant position, from seven hours per day to eight hours. He advised he had already submitted the request to the Board of Commissioners who approved the change. Councilman Hazelton made a motion to approve the change on the 2015 Salary Ordinance in the number of hours work for the position of Highway Department Administrative Assistant from seven hours per day to eight hours per day. Councilman Cavender seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes.

Superintendent Ritzler then requested a transfer of budget appropriations in the amount of \$2,374.50, an increase to 1176.10209.000.0530, Bookkeeper/Clerk budget line from the following: 1176.33600.000.0530, GASB Consultant, \$1,000.00; 1176.32007.000.0530, Safety Supplies, \$500.00; 1176.30500.000.0530 Telephone, \$500.00; and 1176.30600.000.0530, Utilities, \$374.50. Councilwoman Davis made a motion to approve the transfer request, seconded by Councilman Pearman. The motion passed with all ayes.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' REQUEST TO CREATE NEW EMPLOYMENT POSITION AND AMENDMENT TO THE 2015 SALARY ORDINANCE

Commissioner Norem appeared before the Board with a request to create a new employment position, that of Director of Maintenance and eliminate the position of Annex Building Custodian. She presented a newly created job description for the proposed position and stated the Board of Commissioners has agreed to promote the Annex Building Custodian, Jim Coad into that new position. She noted Jim will be the Custodian in charge of the Courthouse Custodian; he is the backup maintenance person at the new Jail; is the Annex Building Custodian; and will also supervise the maintenance to the old jail once the building is no longer occupied by the Sheriff's Department. She advised since Carl Goodrich, the Courthouse Custodian, is retiring as of June 4th, and a new employee, Mike Gerhart, has been hired but doesn't has the experience of working in the Courthouse, they would like to start out Carl's replacement at a lower salary rate. She noted Carl is now earning \$37,750.00 per year and she is proposing transferring \$2,000.00 from the Courthouse Custodian's budget line into that of the Director of Maintenance, thus making his annual salary, \$39,750.00. She advised their Board has proposed starting the new Courthouse Custodian at a \$33,750.00 annual pay with \$1,000.00 increases following favorable employee evaluations at the end of the 90day period, and also at the end of the first six month period, taking the pay to \$35,750.00 annually.

Councilman Sims made a motion to approve the creation of the Director of Maintenance. Councilman Hazelton seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes.

Councilman Pearman made a motion to approve the amendments to the 2015 Salary Ordinance, setting the pay of the Director of Maintenance at \$39,750.00, the pay of the new Courthouse Custodian, beginning at \$33,750.00, and the two separate \$1,000.00 pay increases. Councilwoman Davis seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes.

Councilman Pearman stated he would like to see a County policy created where all new hired positions would start off their employment earning a lesser amount and then earn any additional increases but not increase the pay so aggressively.

IN OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Norem advised the Commissioners are planning on an Open House/Retirement Party to honor Employee, Carl Goodrich on his retirement after working 40 plus years as the Courthouse Custodian. She advised there will be cake and punch and other appetizers furnished by the various County Departments. She noted the Commissioners are paying for the cake. Commissioner Norem stated Carl has kept a scrapbook on his years of employment and also found some of his old payroll records. She stated she hoped the media will do special stories on Carl. Both Mary of WKVI and MJ of The Leader stated they would.

There was a discussion by the Board in regard to the 2016 Departmental budgets. Councilman Pearman noted the majority of budgets will only increase by the state's growth rate, since the County's levy is at its maximum and the Net Assessed Values only slightly increased over last year. Councilwoman Davis inquired if the Council shouldn't meet with some of the inexperienced Department Heads, who have not yet prepared a budget, to see if they need any assistance. She noted her concern is for the Clerk's Department, EMS and the Sheriff's Department. Auditor Chaffins advised the first proposed Departmental budgets will be due to her office by the end of June. She noted the DLGF has scheduled the County's budget workshop for the end of July. Then the Council will hold their budget workshop, review the budgets and make modifications to them.

Then was also a brief discussion in regard to the unknown expense facing the Sheriff's jail budget after moving into the new facility. Commissioner Norem stated if jail budget lines are totally expended then some of the extra budget expenses could be paid out of the Jail CREDIT Fund. Commissioner Norem advised as of this time the only Jail expense appropriated out of that Fund has been for the Part Time Maintenance Person.

Councilman Pearman stated he heard a rumor in regard to the Sheriff asking for additional funding in order to purchase the second K-9 for his department as his total donations are short of what is needed. Commissioner Norem stated she is not aware of that.

Councilman Pearman noted he had also heard the Sheriff is planning on hiring a lot of new employees in order to staff the new jail facility. He advised the County purposely went with the jail plan they did so they would be able to staff the facility with the minimum number of employees. Commissioner Norem stated the only reason the Sheriff would need additional staff would be if the State goes ahead with holding their treatment program in the Starke County Jail. She noted the County would be receiving a fee per inmate, per day, and will cover the cost of the additional staffing.

She also noted if the Council wants to look at extra expenses they may want to look at the amount of overtime associated with the Sheriff's Department's drug dog.

Councilman Pearman inquired as to the status of the 911/Dispatcher Committee. He stated the last he heard the Knox Mayor felt that the amount of 911 fees the County receives would pay for their portion of a Dispatcher. They reviewed who on the Council are on that Committee: Councilmen Sims, Cavender, Baker and Auditor Chaffins. Councilman Pearman stated he would also like to sit in on those meetings and Attorney Lucas advised as long as it is a posted, public meeting it would be alright for a majority of the Council to meet. They also discussed the fact the Mayor of Knox would be changing at the first of the year. Councilman Pearman stated he would speak with the Dave Kesvornas with the Town of Hamlet, and President Baker stated he would talk to the Town of North Judson in regard to their share of Dispatcher costs.

Councilwoman Davis stated Commissioner Norem should be commended for the great work she did in putting the jail project all together and also for the great jail dedication program. Commissioner Norem noted Marilyn Folkers had assisted with the dedication. MJ Bendt stated she had never seen that magnitude of a public project reach total completion as it did with little or no problems. Councilwoman Davis noted at every meeting the representatives from Skillman and DLZ would always state the project was "on time and on budget".

PUBLIC COMMENT

Fred Boyer, a member of the CVC Board advised the CVC Board has been holding special meetings in an attempt to get the collection of Innkeeper's Tax organized. He stated at a previous meeting he had proposed sending out a mass mailing to attempt to locate those smaller lake innkeepers but they have decided instead to target the innkeepers who are advertising rental cottages. He also noted there is a motel in North Judson who has not been submitting the innkeeper's tax. He inquired as to the status of the letter the Council had previously discussed. Attorney Lucas stated the letter had previously been approved by the Board and the Treasurer would have a copy of the letter as she is the collector of that tax in the County.

With there being no further business, Councilman Hazelton made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilwoman Sims. The motion passed with all ayes and the meeting adjourned at 6:23PM.

May 27, 2015

Freddie Baker, President

Dave Pearman

Bryan Cavender

Pam Stalbaum

Jennifer Davis

Robert Sims

Brad Hazelton

Katherine Chaffins, Starke County Auditor and
Secretary to the County Council