

The Rush County Council met in regular session on Wednesday, February 8, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. with Gerald Mohr, Warren Norris, Charles Smith, Janet Kile, Marvin Hedrick, Scott Barnes, Steve McCorkle, Jodi Harr, Auditor and Leigh Morning attorney in attendance.

Gerald Mohr called the meeting to order.

Minutes of the regular meeting of January 11, 2017 were approved on a motion by Scott Barnes and seconded by Charles Smith. Motion carried. Minutes of the Special Joint Session with the Rush County Commissioners were approved on a motion by Steve McCorkle and seconded by Warren Norris. Motion carried.

COURTHOUSE

Chairman Gerald Mohr asked if the council members were interested in purchasing one of the three foot by six foot banners that has all of the courthouses in Indiana on it. It was decided that each commissioner and council person will donate to cover the cost of the banner.

DRAINAGE BOARD

Marvin Rees presented A Resolution Authorizing Loans for Reconstruction that was approved by the Drainage Board for the James Alexander Tile. He is hoping to not have to take out a loan but would like the council's approval in case the need arises. Marvin Hedrick made the motion to approve the request. Steve McCorkle seconded. Motion carried.

EMS RADIO SYSTEM

Councilman Marvin Hedrick and Councilman Warren Norris explained that they had attended a meeting in Milroy regarding EMS communications. It was learned some departments are trading in radios and purchasing new ones. In 2015 the county purchased E911 equipment. Warren wants to make sure that everyone is on the same page as to what direction we are taking on the purchasing of new radios and equipment. Sheriff Jim Cowan explained that his department did encumber money from their 2016 budget for an invoice to ECS to purchase Kenwood radios. That was done to give the commissioners more time to make a decision on which direction to go. He did not realize the ECS claim had been paid and takes full responsibility but it was not his intent to actual purchase until the final decision was made.

Bob Gerrod and Matt Alexander from ERS who sales Motorola equipment gave an overview of the ERS Company. Alexander gave an overview of their proposal of the project for the receiver/repeater portion of the county communications system. Plans and equipment are in place to accommodate digital communications in our county. Matt presented a handout that has the history, current situation, coverage map, why the commissioners should chose Motorola and a summary. Quantity discounts are available. Once the number of radios needed is determined, he will give a quote. Craig Custer asked if the new tower being put up needs to be that high. ERS is basing coverage on current tower. It probably does not need to be that high but he

would want to run coverage checks to be sure. Custer stated maybe this would save the county some money. Alexander thinks the savings would be minimal.

Michael Dyer from ECS who provides Kenwood equipment was next to speak. He gave a brief history of his company stating all of his employees, including sales, are technicians. They offer benefits of cutting edge technology. He displayed some of their radios and explained the advanced features and technology. Their radios are compatible with Motorola equipment. Motorola is proposing three tower sites. ECS is proposing an additional fourth tower be installed in the Glenwood area. Councilman Charles Smith asked if his system is compatible with the equipment we currently have. Dyers said the radios are; however, the technology is not. He estimates the county could recoup an estimated sixty percent of what we have spent by trading in the Motorola Turbo System. Councilman Marvin Hedrick asked how many systems ECS has operating in the state of Indiana. He commented approximately two hundred. Councilman Hedrick asked if the county can recoup the money paid to ECS for radios in January. Dyer said he would write us a check. He is that confident that ECS is the best option. Councilman Steve McCorkle asked how does the county move past one vendor saying when a problem arises that it is the other vendor's problem to fix. Dyer stated his staff is available 365 days 24 hours a day and would probably know there is a problem before we knew it here. Smith asked if the radios only operated in digital mode. Dyer said they operate in analog and digital modes. Matt Alexander stated the Motorola radios operate in analog and digital modes.

Councilman Mohr asked if the commissioners intend to take bids for the purchase of this equipment. Commissioner Mark Bacon was present and said the commissioners need to know how many radios are needed. They want to make sure responders can talk anywhere in the county. He feels like the best product for the money and that it will be compatible with all of the current equipment is what the commissioners are looking for. He also feels like it should be the sheriff and the fire departments making the recommendation to the commissioners. Sheriff Jim Cowan agrees.

Nick White from the County Fire Chiefs Association stated they have a meeting February 16, 2017. They will be putting a plan together in order for both companies to quote apples to apples. Once those are received, they will bring a recommendation to the commissioners. Fire chiefs are hoping that fire departments can buy their radios and the county will buy the other equipment. Chuck Kemker stated this is a project that has been on-going for two years and does not feel a need for the vendors to attend the fire chiefs meeting.

Councilman Scott Barnes and Councilman Charles Smith questioned whether the invoice already paid to ECS should have been paid since we do not have the equipment. The radios are being stored at ECS. Sheriff Cowan stated this was a matter of miscommunication at the Sheriff's department. County Attorney Leigh Morning stated the county does need to be refunded for the payment made on January 23, 2017 in the amount of \$57,493.50. ECS will get that refunded right away.

Verlin Custer commented there was always trouble when mixing communication systems. He advises the county to stay with the Motorola System. Custer encourage the council to find a way to fund and keep Motorola. He advised them to not trade in their current Motorola equipment.

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

Judge Brian Hill and Community Corrections Director Ashley Stevens requested permission to transfer \$5,000.00 in her User Fee Fund from equipment leasing to misc. supplies. The Community Corrections board has approved the request. Marvin Hedrick made the motion to approve and Charles Smith seconded. Motion carried.

They also requested three changes to the 2017 Salary Ordinance. The first two changes are for the Deputy Director and Community Supervision Manager. They both of have anniversary dates coming up. The request is that their pay will need to increase to the state pay amount on their anniversary date. Marvin Hedrick made the motion to approve these two request as presented. Steve McCorkle seconded. Motion carried.

The third request for the 2017 Salary Ordinance change is to the Community Corrections User Fee Fund – Administrative Assistant. She is going from a 64 hour per two week position to a 70 hour per two week position. It is requested that the ordinance be changed to reflect 70 hours worked, Bi-weekly rate of \$1,279.00, Annual Rate \$33,254.00 and hourly rate of \$18.27. Ashley stated because of the new employee's prior experience, she did not think it fair to ask her to work more hours for the same pay. Councilman Hedrick stated he does not have a problem with the request but the council also needs to address and adjust the pay for correction officers and dispatchers at the jail who are working 80 hours for the same pay as employees working 64 hours. Judge Hill agrees this is not fair but the council has never addressed this in the past. Treasurer Cindra Humphrey asked that if this is allowed can she give her staff the option to work 64 hours or to work 80 hours and get more pay. Councilman Smith agrees with Cindra and Marvin. County Attorney Leigh Morning commented that since she is in a non-exempt position, the county has to pay her for her hours worked. Councilman Scott Barnes stated the commissioners should be involved in this conversation. Treasurer Humphrey commented we do not have funding to pay more. Stevens noted that the position in her office did not get to choose whether to work 64 or 70 hours. It is mandated at 70 hours. Councilman Barnes asked how the advisory board came up with 70 hours. Stevens said due to the workflow in their office, they need her at all times that the courthouse is open. Judge Hill also stated that the salaries set in this office are based on probation salaries, how other community corrections offices pay, and mandates by the state. Marvin Hedrick made the motion to approve the request with the understanding we also fund increase in pay for jail employees. Councilman Smith asked how the county would fund this. There is no funding. Hedrick withdrew his motion. Smith stated no one else got raises for 2017. Community Correction employees get raises. He realized they have state mandates and that they also have the funds to give raises. Discussion was held on paying 64 hours and having a part time person for the other six hours. Councilman Barnes commented there is not much of a pay difference in doing this. Scott Barnes made the motion to approve the request as presented. Steve McCorkle seconded. Marvin Hedrick and Charles Smith voted no. Warren Norris, Janet Kile, Scott Barnes and Steve McCorkle voted yes. Motion carried.

SUPERIOR COURT

Judge Hill notified the council that his administrative assistant will be retiring in June 2017. He would like to go ahead and get permission to fill this position and have the replacement work for three weeks prior to his assistant leaving. Councilman Smith asked if the person could work part time during those three weeks. Judge Hill stated he will look at the figures in his budget and see if that is possible.

HIGHWAY

County Highway Superintendent Jerry Sitton requested permission to advertise for the following additional appropriations:

- Fund 9107 Community Crossings Grant \$276,860.00. Bridge #170 project. Charles Smith made motion to approve. Steve McCorkle seconded. Motion carried.
- Fund 1229 Special LOIT \$138,430.00. Bridge #170 project. Marvin Hedrick made the motion to approve. Steve McCorkle seconded. Motion carried.
- Fund 1135 Cumulative Bridge \$156,500.00. Bridge Inspections. Charles Smith made the motion to approve. Steve McCorkle seconded. Motion carried.
- Fund 1176 Highway \$220,000.00. This will be used to purchase a new distributor. Warren Norris made the motion to approve. Janet Kile seconded. Motion carried.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Marge Amos Supervisor Nurse of the Health department asked permission to advertise an additional appropriation in the Local Health Maintenance Grant fund in order to purchase a new health department vehicle. Marvin Hedrick motion to allow and Steve McCorkle seconded. Motion carried.

EXTENSION OFFICE

Gracie Marlatt invited the council members to the Purdue Extension Office and Rush County Soil & Water annual dinner to be held on February 23, 2017.

Their office also has the 2016 Purdue Extension Annual Report. Our local extension office is the connection to all of the programs listed in the report.

Purdue is paying for our local extension office to have a part time temporary employee. She will be here February, March and April.

ASSESSOR

County Attorney Leigh Morning presented Amended Ordinance 2015-10 regarding Business Personal Property Taxation to pay a local fee. At the last council meeting it was agreed to change the fee from \$50.00 to \$25.00. Charles Smith made the motion to approve. Steve McCorkle seconded. Motion carried.

SHERIFF

Sheriff Jim Cowan reported the employee his department was training for the open dispatch position has accepted a position at the Rushville City Police Department effective March 1, 2017. He needs to advertise and a hire full time 40 hour per week dispatcher. Scott Barnes if there was anyway the dispatcher position could be turned into a part time position. Discussion was had as to the difficulty of finding qualified people to dispatch part time. It was noted that the jail currently have four part time dispatchers but all have full time jobs.

JAIL CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

County Attorney Leigh Morning let the council know there is a meeting with Umbaugh and DSL next week regarding the budget of the project. Sheriff Cowan noted that approximately \$1.25 million has already been dropped in design and soft cost expenses. Barnes commented it appears that \$18 million will probably be the lowest amount they can get the bond to. He explained the Jail Study Committee approved the basic jail building. It is the jail expansion area that has increased the cost. The commissioners will be provided with a list of the changes. Barnes also stated they have very positive meetings regarding the project.

COURTHOUSE SECURITY

Sheriff Cowan updated the council on the recently held courthouse security meeting. He did receive guidance and is going to hire another part time security officer with funds that are already appropriated on the courthouse security officer line item in the sheriff budget. Hedrick noted the commissioners have been asked to get a quote on securing the four sets of exterior doors of the courthouse with one of them having a metal detector with one person to man it. Swipe cards would be put on the other three doors may be another option. Commissioner Mark Bacon noted that because the courthouse is listed on the National Register of Historic Buildings, you have to consider the historical factor of the doors.

AUDITOR

County Auditor Jodi Harr requested permission to replace the vacant full time claims deputy in her office with a part time person. Scott Barnes made the motion to approve. Charles Smith seconded. Motion carried. Harr recommended all department heads evaluate vacant positions to determine if any of that work can be absorbed by other staff.

Harr then asked to transfer \$14,394.00 from the Deputy 2 position in the auditor budget to part time. Warren Norris made the motion to approve. Scott Barnes seconded. Motion carried. The remaining \$16,000.00 from the Deputy 2 position to contract services was also asked to be transferred. Warren Norris made the motion to approve. Charles Smith seconded. Motion carried. This amount will be used to pay the contract with Waggoner Irwin Scheele and Associates for the county job descriptions.

Harr asked permission to advertise the following additional appropriations:

- Fund 2000 Adult Probation User Fees \$2,000.00 for FICA and \$20,462.00 for Adult Probation Officer Salary. A motion was made by Marvin Hedrick and seconded by Scott Barnes to approve. Motion carried.

- Fund 1216 Auditor Ineligible Homestead \$3,123.92. This will be used to purchase secure filing cabinets for the auditor's office. Steve McCorkle made the motion and Warren Norris seconded to approve request. Motion carried,
- Fund 2502 Pre-Trial Diversion \$3,000.00 for Law Enforcement and \$2,000.00 for contracted services. Charles Smith made the motion to approve request with Warren Norris seconding. Motion carried.
- Fund 7109 K-9 Contribution Fund –amount will be determined at the time of advertising. Donations are still being gathered. Scott Barnes made the motion to approve request and Marvin Hedrick seconded. Motion carried.

Discussion was then turned to the county general fund running out of money by the end of March. Marvin Hedrick made the motion to advertise for an additional appropriation in Fund 1110 CAGIT County Certified Shares. This will be an obsolete fund once there is no more money there. The balance is \$399,412.72 and will be moved to county general once the additional appropriation is advertised and approved in March. Steve McCorkle seconded. Motion carried. Hopefully this will keep us from borrowing from another fund prior to spring tax distribution.

AREA PLAN COMMISSION

On behalf of the Area Plan Director, Auditor Jodi Harr requested a transfer in the amount of \$1,276.50 from Administrator to part time in the Area Plan Budget. Charles Smith made the motion to approve. Steve McCorkle seconded. Motion carried.

Marvin Hedrick noted that based on last month's activity in the Area Plan Office, he feels part time is the way to go.

Craig Custer asked where the money collected in the Area Plan Office goes. It gets deposited into county general. Custer also commented that he had spoken with the Gibson County Auditor regarding Area Plan. Gibson County does not have an APC so he asked why Rush County needs to have an APC and BZA board. He asked what those two boards have done for us and has it made Rush County a better place to live. Marvin Hedrick commented it has set up procedures and rules to protect property owners. Custer noted that Steve McCorkle had made a comment that we need the APC in order for economic development. Custer then asked County Attorney Leigh Morning if the Commissioners have to listen to the APC recommendations. Morning stated that yes they do.

SALARY ORDINANCES

Harr presented amended Salary Ordinance 2016-3 for the amendments listed above for the Auditor, Area Plan, and Community Corrections. Scott Barnes made the motion to approve. Steve McCorkle seconded. All were in favor with the exception of Councilman Smith and Councilman Hedrick voting no on the Administrative Assistant increase in Community Corrections User Fee funds. Motion carried.

LOCAL COORDINATING COUNCIL

Bob Bridges representing our Local Council for Drug Free Schools requested the yearly distribution of \$8,500 for 2017. Marvin Hedrick made the motion to approve. Scott Barnes seconded. Motion carried.

COUNTY FINANCIAL SITUATION

Concerned citizen and tax payer, Verlin Custer, commented that assessments are going down on farm land. How is the council going to fund all of these projects? If not enough revenue in income tax, how does the county pay for the bond for the Jail Project? It would be paid through property tax back up. Custer also asked the council what services is the council prepared to cut when this happens. If not wind farms, what other economic projects can we get to make up this income? Councilman Barnes said there are not really any big commitments from economic development at this time.

Councilman McCorkle said it was said last year that Rush County will be one of five Indiana Counties that will be bankrupt within five years due to the circuit breaker cuts and lowering assessments.

Councilman Hedrick voiced his concern that if the state would stop funding the Community Corrections Department, we would be in a bind. The Community Corrections is doing a fantastic job but he does worry about the cost.

Councilman McCorkle concluded by saying the taxpayer deserve to know the counties priorities. He suggested the commissioners and council members get together to set those priorities and start on the 2018 budget priorities in March.

MISC

- Councilman Hedrick commented the council needs to look at possibly increasing the part time rate at budget time. This may help us to be better able to get quality workers.
- Commissioners Barnes commented the council needs to start looking at each department and funds available to each department. Community Corrections has money. Highway Department has money. Other departments do not have any money. He feels decisions should be based on funding available not on who does a good job.
- Marvin Hedrick would like department heads to come to council meeting to ask permission to advertise for a vacant position or new position prior to advertising unless it is an emergency situation. All members were in agreeance.
- Steve McCorkle thanked Commissioner Mark Bacon for attending the council meeting.

Steve McCorkle moved to adjourn. Warren Norris seconded the motion. Motion carried.

/s/Gerald Mohr
Gerald Mohr, Chairman

/s/Warren Norris
Warren Norris

/s/Charles Smith
Charles Smith

/s/Janet Kile
Janet Kile

/s/Marvin Hedrick
Marvin Hedrick

/s/Scott Barnes
Scott Barnes

/s/Steve McCorkle
Steve McCorkle

ATTEST:

/s/Jodi Harr
Jodi Harr, Auditor