

## **REGULAR MEETING**

## **RUSH COUNTY COUNCIL**

**AUGUST 22, 2018**

The Rush County Council met in regular session on Wednesday, August 22, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. with County Council Members Gerald Mohr, Charles Smith, Janet Kile, Warren Norris, Marvin Hedrick and Scott Barnes, Jodi Harr, Auditor and County Attorney Leigh Morning in attendance. Councilman Steve McCorkle was absent.

Council Chairman Gerald Mohr called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Minutes of the regular council meeting of July 11, 2018 were approved on a motion by Charles Smith and seconded by Janet Kile. Motion carried.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

Chairman Mohr opened the Public Hearing for the 2019 Rush County proposed budget. The total proposed county budget is \$25,016,114. He asked for comment from anyone in attendance. There was no comments from the audience. Charles Smith made the motion to close the Public Hearing. Warren Norris seconded. Motion carried

Chairman Mohr then opened the Public Hearing for the 2019 Rush County Solid Waste District proposed budget. Director Carole Yeend noted the total amount of the proposed budget is \$113,396. She notified the council she will not be in attendance at the budget hearings in September but one of her board members will be there. If there any questions regarding the Solid Waste budget, she requested they contact her prior to the budget hearings. Chairman Mohr asked for comment from anyone in attendance. There was no comments from the audience. Marvin Hedrick made the motion to close the Public Hearing. Warren Norris seconded. Motion carried.

### **NON BINDING REVIEW**

Auditor Jodi Harr presented the 2019 Estimate Taxing District Rates report for all Rush County taxing units, the 2019 DLGF Calculation of Estimated Maximum Levy for taxing units and the 2019 Estimated Tax Cap Impact reports prepared by the DLGF. After reviewing the reports, Marvin Hedrick made the motion to make no recommendation regarding these report. Warren Norris seconded. Motion carried.

### **ASSESSOR**

Rush County Assessor Mary Ann Bridges requested a budget transfer in fund 1188 Reassessment from account 10064 extra help to 30025 maintenance in the amount of \$6,000. She was informed by IT Director Randy Herbert that her server needed replaced. Smith made the motion to approve the transfer as requested. Scott Barnes seconded. Motion carried.

### **SUPERIOR COURT**

Superior Court Judge Brian Hill requested a budget transfer in fund 1000 County General Department 0201 Superior Court from account 40002 office equipment to account 30022 equipment maintenance to cover the Verizon bills for the remainder of 2018 in the amount of \$500.00. Hedrick made the motion to approve the transfer as requested. Kile seconded. Motion carried.

### **AUDITOR**

Auditor Jodi Harr requested a budget transfer in fund 1000 County General Department 0002 Auditor from account 20010 supplies to account 30002 travel. Due to an added district meeting of the Indiana County Auditors, the travel account will be short to cover the State Board of Accounts State Called meeting of Indiana Auditors in October. Barnes made the motion to approve the transfer as requested. Smith seconded. Motion carried.

### **HR DIRECTOR**

Human Resource Director Tony Personett updated the commissioners on the happenings of his first week. He has introduced himself to each of the employees while confirming their hire dates. He has helped with three employee terminations and three new hires. The council has requested information on developing a longevity plan for county employees. Personett is gathering information for that report.

Auditor Harr requested a reduction of funds in fund 1000 County General Department 0068 Commissioners account 40052 council use only in the amount of \$8,926.00 and from fund 1000 County General Department 0002 Auditor account 10032 Auditor Assistant in the amount of \$12,767.00 for a total reduction of \$21,693.00. This is the amount needed to pay the salary for the newly created HR Director for the remainder of 2018. Smith made the motion to approve both reductions. Barnes seconded. Motion carried.

Harr then requested an additional appropriation in fund 1000 County General Department 0117 Human Resources account 10239 in the amount of \$21,693.00 to cover the HR Director Salary. Hedrick made the motion to approve the additional appropriation. Norris seconded. Motion carried.

### **PROSECUTOR**

Prosecutor Phil Caviness requested the council approve an additional appropriation for fund 8118 CFDA # 16.588 STOP Grant in the amount of \$73,333.00. This is a fiscal year federal grant awarded through the State of Indiana to pay for a Deputy Prosecutor dedicated to violence against women. Smith made the motion to approve the additional appropriation request. Kile seconded. Motion carried.

As a part of the grant agreement for the STOP Grant, the county is responsible for paying twenty five percent of the grant total. Caviness requested the following two additional appropriations to cover the matching amounts:

Fund 2503 Infraction Deferral account 30207 grant match in the amount of \$7,918.03. Norris made the motion to approve this additional appropriation request. Smith seconded. Motion carried.

Fund 2502 Pretrial Diversion account 30207 grant match in the amount of \$6,000. Hedrick made the motion to approve the additional appropriation request. Barnes seconded. Motion carried.

Caviness requested two transfer of funds in fund 2503 Infraction Deferral to cover the cost of a new copy machine. The first transfer is from account 10200 social security to account 40002 office equipment in the amount of \$1,296.00. Smith made the motion to approve the transfer. Hedrick seconded. Motion carried. The second transfer is from account 10235 deputy prosecutor to account 40002 office equipment in the amount of \$4,170.00. Barnes made the motion to approve. Smith seconded. Motion carried.

### **PUBLIC DEFENDER**

David Malson was present to request an additional appropriation in fund 1000 County General Department 0271 Public Defender account number 30092 Pauper Attorney in the amount of \$42,000.00. The request is needed due to the increased number of Public Defender cases.

Norris made the motion to reduce the budget in fund 1000 County General Department 0068 Commissioners account 40052 council use only in the amount of \$42,000.00. Barnes seconded. Motion Carried.

Smith made the motion to approve the additional appropriation request in fund 1000 County General Department 0271 Public Defender account number 30092 Pauper Attorney in the amount of \$42,000.00. Barnes seconded. Motion carried.

### **EMA**

At the July 11, 2018 council meeting per request of the county commissioners, the county council agreed to increase the salary of EMA Director Chuck Kemker in the amount of \$7,500 per year for his added responsibilities as EMS County Co-Coordinator. This resulted in an additional appropriation request in the amount of \$3,462.00 for the remainder of 2018. The 2018 Salary Ordinance was also amended to reflect this change.

Norris made the motion for a budget reduction in fund 1000 County General Department 0068 account 30122 Ambulance/Carthage in the amount of \$3,462.00. Smith seconded. Norris, Smith, Hedrick, Kile, and Mohr voted Aye. Barnes voted Nay. Motion carried.

Norris then made the motion to approve an additional appropriation in the amount of \$3,462.00 in fund 1000 County General Department 0360 Public Safety account number 10051 EMA Director Salary. Discussion was held. It was noted the salary change was approved at the last council meeting. The question was asked if the council was wanting to now reduce the pay for

the EMA Director for the remaining of 2018. Smith commented the council agreed to pay him through this year. He feels the 2019 salary should be addressed at the 2019 budget hearings. Commissioner Paul Wilkinson stated the commissioners spent a great deal of time on the new EMS plan. They stayed within the 2018 approved budget and did what was recommended in the EMS study conducted earlier in the year. The new policy brings accountability to the volunteer units. It does not have a negative impact on the 2018 budget. Councilman Mohr commented the concerns are not about the additional responsibilities of the EMA Director. It is more of a concern of what he does that is not asked of him. Wilkinson commented that concern can be addressed with the 2019 budget because the council committed at their last meeting for the salary increase for 2018. Smith stated his concern is not with the increase in pay but with the amount of the increase in pay. Other offices are doing more with no more pay. Barnes noted he was not present at the July meeting but he would have voted against the increase in pay. Wilkinson replied that he respects and appreciates the council and their concerns but we need to be accountable. Smith seconded the motion made earlier by Norris. Norris, Smith, Kile and Mohr voted Aye. Hedrick and Barnes voted Nay. Motion carried.

### **2019 SALARY RECOMMENDATION**

At the August 20, 2018 County Commissioner meeting, the county commissioners voted to make the recommendation for a two percent salary increase for all county employees.

### **COUNTY PHONE SYSTEM**

IT Director Randy Herbert, County Attorney Leigh Morning and Ron Jarman have been working with Frontier on the purchase of a new county phone system. The phone system, four year maintenance contract and a four year warranty will cost approximately \$58,000. They did consider a lease but it would have been much more expensive. It is estimated the county will see a \$1,400.00 per month savings by purchasing this system. After discussion, the county council recommendation is to pay for the system from the Riverboat fund.

### **HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Rush County Health Officer Dr. Helen Steussy was present to report the resignation of Environmental Health Sanitarian Teresa Nigh. She stated this is a required and necessary position within the Health Department. This time of year is busy with new building projects and fall festivals requiring food permits. The Health Board has considered providing these services by contractor, part time employee (s) and full time employee. Their review leads them to believe it must be a full time employee. The county needs to avoid the conflict of interest that could arise with using a contractor. They need continuity in the same position. They need a commitment which would come from a full time employee. State of Indiana analysis recommends one to one and a half employees to make sure there is always coverage. State of Indiana Environmentalist Kim Roe is helping out in Rush County with septic inspections at this time. They would like to hire a full time employee. HR Director Personett has called around to other counties to see how this position is handled. According to Steussy we pay the least of these counties. Steussy would like to see an increase in pay for this position in 2019.

Hedrick noted that according to the 2017 Rush County Health Department Annual Report, there were only twenty septic permits issued and one hundred twelve food inspection/permits. He spoke with past inspector Reno Gosser and he stated he had ample time to do the work as a part time employee. Hedrick also noted that the county has had to reduce staff in other offices. We have to look at this position now that it is vacant.

Kim Roe was next to speak. She served full time while Gosser served part time. Environmentalists are necessary to public health. Currently there are fifteen pending septic permits that she is going through in Rush County for the health department. This is a regulatory compliance position. Making this position part time will create financial hardship on the part time employee due to conflict of interest with the other job(s) that they will most likely be doing. She noted it takes about one year to be completely trained for the position of sanitarian/environmentalist.

Dr. Steussy commented effectiveness in the job comes not only with training but also with experience. Health Board Attorney Julie Newhouse stated the health department has reduced their staff and budget during the past budget crisis. Dr. Steussy stated the county needs this position to continue growth within the county. She asked if the health department could have the council's permission to hire a full time employee for this position.

Barnes commented he had issues with the past environmentalists and he is gun shy as to who will be the next one. Dr. Steussy stated she understands this concern. She believes the issue with the last environmentalists was the lack of experience in this field. The health board wants to get an experienced person and pay the salary needed to get the best they can. She wants permission to get the best person but will need to pay them more. Hedrick agrees the past employee was in a no win situation because they had not experience.

Smith stated the issue is the health department budget does not have the funds to pay more this year or next year. He asked Dr. Steussy if she was willing to reduce her pay in order to cover a salary increase for the environmentalist. Dr. Steussy stated no she is not and that she would resign if they cut her pay. The health department has already cut what they can cut without cutting services.

Hedrick would like for the health department to advertise the position as contracted, part time and full time to see what kind of interest is out there. Barnes asked if we can look at restructuring to see if the Area Plan office and the Health Department can work together on some of the services. He asked what percent of the past employees time was spent on septic and food separately. Dr. Steussy does not know but she will find out. Roe noted as far as she knows you can contract with another county for food inspection. Personett will research. County Attorney Leigh Morning does not think so.

It was noted there is still no motion to approve advertising for a full time position. Smith asked how long the council recommends the health department wait to advertise for full time if no one

expresses an interest in contract or part time. Hedrick commented he has talked to certified inspectors who said it would be about \$500 per inspection for a contract. Roe again stated the concern is conflict of interest in doing a job and then inspecting your coworkers. She cautioned the council in that choice. Also you need to consider if the contractor doing the inspection is going to handle the process from the time of the application to the final inspection.

After no one coming to a consensus, Barnes made the motion to advertise and hire for two part time positions. Hedrick seconded. Smith, Kile, Hedrick and Barnes voted Aye. Norris voted Nay. Motion carried.

Auditor Harr asked what kind of pay rate the council would like for the part time environmentalist. The council will wait and see what kind of applications the health department receives.

### **SHERIFF**

Sheriff Jim Cowan reported an average inmate count of sixty. He gave the department statistics and reports. He also discussed the inmate release program and finding them jobs.

Due to the vacancy of a full time corrections officer, Cowan requested permission to advertise for one full time and part time correction officers. Smith made the motion to approve the advertising of the position. Kile seconded. Motion carried.

### **JAIL COMMISSARY**

Cowan notified the commissioners that State Board of Accounts recently notified all county sheriffs that they were to file a semi-annual commissary report to the county council instead of filing it annually. The State does not have the format of the report available at this time. He presented a report of receipts and deposits for January 1, 2018 through June 30, 2018.

### **HEALTH DEPARTMENT RESIGNATIONS**

Commissioner Paul Wilkinson reported he was just handed written resignations effective immediately from Dr. Helen Steussy and Health Board Attorney Julie Newhouse. He would like to give HR permission to work with the Health Board on replacing these two positions. Barnes asked if the county can explore the option of being part of a multi county health department. County Attorney Leigh Morning will check on the legalities of joining with other counties. Personett will contact other county commissioners to see if there is an interest in doing that.

### **WORKSHOP**

The council will meet in a workshop discussion on August 28, 2018 at 8:30 a.m. to continue discussion of the 2019 budgets.

The next county council meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 11 at 9 a.m.

Charles Smith moved to adjourn the county council meeting. Warren Norris seconded the motion. Motion carried

\_\_\_\_\_/Gerald Mohr/\_\_\_\_\_  
Gerald Mohr, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_/Warren Norris/\_\_\_\_\_  
Warren Norris

\_\_\_\_\_/Charles Smith/\_\_\_\_\_  
Charles Smith

\_\_\_\_\_/Janet Kile/\_\_\_\_\_  
Janet Kile

\_\_\_\_\_/Marvin Hedrick/\_\_\_\_\_  
Marvin Hedrick

\_\_\_\_\_/Scott Barnes/\_\_\_\_\_  
Scott Barnes

\_\_\_\_\_/absent 8-22-18/\_\_\_\_\_  
Steve McCorkle

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_/Jodi Harr/\_\_\_\_\_  
Jodi Harr, Auditor