

REGULAR SESSION RUSH COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS NOVEMBER 13, 2018

The Rush County Board of Commissioners met in regular session Tuesday, November 13, 2018 with Commissioners Paul Wilkinson, Mark Bacon, and Bruce Levi, Jodi Harr, Auditor and Leigh Morning, County Attorney, in attendance.

Paul Wilkinson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. with the Pledge to the flag.

Minutes of the October 29, 2018 regular meeting were reviewed. Bruce Levi made the motion to approve the minutes. Mark Bacon seconded. Motion carried.

CLAIMS

Auditor, Jodi Harr, presented the biweekly claims docket for November 13, 2018 in the amount of \$182,553.72. Bruce Levi made the motion to approve the claims as presented. Mark Bacon seconded. Motion carried.

Payroll ending November 16, 2018 in the amount of \$183,879.71 was presented. Mark Bacon made the motion to approve payroll. Bruce Levi seconded. Motion carried.

Requisition #20 for Jail Construction claims to be paid from the jail bond proceeds in the amount of \$840,205.54 were presented for approval. Mark Bacon made the motion to approve. Bruce Levi seconded. Motion carried.

COURTHOUSE

Marvin Rees requested permission to close the courthouse on December 11, 2018 from Noon until 1:00 p.m. to host the courthouse employee Christmas luncheon. Bruce Levi made the motion to approve the request. Mark Bacon seconded. Motion carried.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Chamber Director Sandy Fussner requested permission for the RCHS Madrigal singers be allowed to sing on the first floor of the Courthouse during Christmas on Main at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, November 16, 2018. Mark Bacon made the motion to approve the request. Bruce Levi seconded. Motion carried.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Julia Apple was introduced as the new Environmentalist/Office Manager for the Health Department.

SHERIFF

Sheriff James Cowan reported fifty two inmates currently housed at the jail. He gave an update on statistics of the Sheriff/Jail departments. He also reported that 2019 fuel bids have been advertised for the Commissioners to open at their December 10 meeting.

HIGHWAY

Highway Superintendent Jerry Sitton reported Rush County has been awarded \$585,000 as part of the Community Crossing Grant awarded by the State of Indiana. The funds will be used to resurface Henderson Road from US 52 to 400 N, 400 W from 400 N to 450 N, and 400 W from 500 N to 750 N. He requested that bids be advertised for the Commissioners to be open at 9:30 a.m. at their December 10 meeting. The bids will need to be marked on the front as Community Crossing Grant bids.

Sitton presented the October monthly financial report for the highway department. He also reported repairs/replacements have been approved for Bridge numbers 94, 63, 57, and 17.

COUNTY EMPLOYEE PERSONNEL POLICY

For several months the Commissioners and County Council have had discussions on making changes to the Rush County Employee Personnel Policy regarding vacations, work hours and salaries. HR Director Tony Personett presented the proposed policies to the Commissioners. The County Council agreed to fund these changes at their November 7, 2018 meeting. The vacation policy is proposed to be effective immediately for new hires with all current employees given the option to be grandfathered in. The proposed salary changes has new employees starting at a lower hourly rate than current employees. Personett commented if the Commissioners are not going to go to a thirty five hour work week for courthouse employees that they not adopt the new vacation schedule. He has talked to department heads. Some are understanding of the changes and some are not understanding. If these plans are approved, he will go to each department head and employee individually to discuss the changes with them. He noted employees annual salary would be the same or slightly more; however, the hourly rate will be less due to the increase in hours worked. Mark Bacon commented he likes this plan and that we all need to be responsible to the tax payers on how the tax dollars are spent. He made the motion to approve the proposed recommendation on salary which includes thirty five hour work week effective January 1, 2020 for current courthouse employees and clerical employees working forty hours at the highway and sheriff departments. Bruce Levi asked if Personett has talked to the highway superintendent and to the sheriff. Personett noted he has talked to them. The highway and sheriff clerical positions are included in this proposal; however, the other employees are not. Sheriff Cowan agrees with the proposed salary. He has already started this similar process with his part time employees. He does not agree with the proposed vacation policy. He feels like if we are going to make all employees the same, let's make all work forty hours. Paul Wilkinson commented that the county has three very distinct departments – Sheriff, Highway and Courthouse. There are going to be differences between them. These proposals will move employees overtime/exempt to salary and overtime/non-exempt to hourly rates. There are going to be some employees approve and some employees disapprove. Personett stated again that the county council agreed that no employee will make less annually then what they do now. He has heard complaints that all employees within the courthouse should make the same salary. He noted the county paid for a job classification and salary study to classify positions on special skills needed for their jobs. Department heads and employees signed off on the job descriptions used to set these classifications. Bruce Levi

seconded Bacon's earlier motion. After further discussion a vote was taken and no one was in favor. Motion was not approved.

Levi asked if there is a way to separate clerical in the courthouse, highway and sheriff. Personett responded the study assigned the classifications to the jobs. Wilkinson commented the items that need addressed immediately are the items that will effective new hires. Jerry Sitton commented he wants his clerical kept separate from the others. Personett stated the highway and sheriff clerical positions were already classified higher than most courthouse clerical positions. County Attorney Leigh Morning commented that all county clerical employees are non-exempt. She said we need to start talking hourly rates rather than salary basis. Wilkinson commented it would be easiest to leave things as they currently are; however, employment laws are changing and we need to change to be in compliance. It was suggested the commissioners look at each of these proposals separately.

COUNTY NON EXEMPT EMPLOYEE WORK HOURS

Mark Bacon made the motion effective immediately all new full time non-exempt courthouse employees will work thirty five hours per week. Highway non-exempt employees will work forty hours per week. Sheriff Department non-exempt employees will work forty hours per week. Bruce Levi seconded. Motion carried.

Mark Bacon made the motion effective January 1, 2020 all full time non-exempt courthouse employees will work thirty five hours per week. Bruce Levi seconded. Motion carried.

AT 10:25 A.M. THE COMMISSIONERS RECESSED IN ORDER TO CONDUCT A DRAINAGE BOARD PUBLIC HEARING.

AT 11:00 A.M. THE REGULAR COMMISSIONER MEETING RECONVENED.

VACATION POLICY CHANGES

Mark Bacon made the motion to approve the Amended Vacation Policy for all new county employees effective immediately and effective January 1, 2020 for all current employees who wish to change to the amended policy. Any current employee who does not wish to change to the amended policy will be grandfathered in with the old policy until the time of their termination of employment with Rush County. Bruce Levi seconded. Motion carried.

SALARY CLASSIFICATIONS

Discussion was then held on pay schedules for the COMOT and PAT classifications. Sheriff Cowan reminded the commissioners of the recommendation of the classification study that the Chief Deputy at the Sheriff Department become an exempt position rather than a non-exempt position. If this position is changed, the Chief Deputy would now be an administrative position and would not be used as a road deputy when needed. He feels like in a small office like the Rush County Sheriff Department, we need the option of available man power on the

road. He recommends leaving the position as non-exempt. All three commissioners agreed to leave the Sheriff Chief Deputy as a non-exempt position.

Discussion was then held on the PAT positions and how to pay them. These positions all require specialized training.

Tom Monka commented that by Indiana State statute the Area Plan Commission hires employees and sets their salaries. How does this fit into this proposal. Paul Wilkinson commented that the salaries still have to be set based on the budget given to them by the county council.

Mark Bacon made the motion effective immediately all new full time employees will be subject to the Salary Classification Schedule for COMOT classifications. This includes any COMOT position at the courthouse, highway department and sheriff department. Bruce Levi seconded. Motion carried.

Mark Bacon made the motion effective January 1, 2020 all full time employees in the courthouse, highway department and sheriff department with a Salary Classification of COMOT be paid according to the Salary Classification Schedule with the understanding that the salary for current employees in this classification are not paid less than their 2019 annual salary. Bruce Levi seconded. Motion carried.

Mark Bacon made the motion effective January 1, 2020 all full time employees with a PAT classification will be paid according to the Salary Classification Schedule for PAT classifications with the understanding that the salary for current employees in this classification are not paid less than their 2019 annual salary. It is also recommended that for a new hire eight percent be deducted from this starting pay. Bruce Levi seconded. Motion carried.

Discussion was then held on the salaries of Elected Officials. Wilkinson feels that as elected officials we should go to the council each year to justify why we would like a pay increase. Mark Bacon made the motion to leave the elected officials salary as they are now giving them the option to discuss salaries with the county council each year. Bruce Levi seconded. Motion carried.

Personett informed the commissioners that in discussions with the new Health Department Environmentalist/Office Manager, she was informed that her hours could change to 35 hours per week. Bruce Levi made the motion that the Environmentalist/Office Manager in the Health Department work a 35 hour week effective immediately. Mark Bacon seconded. Motion carried.

Wilkinson's final comment on salaries was that salaries are a very sensitive discussion to have but it has to be done.

TITLE VI

County Attorney Leigh Morning is working on the updates to the Title VI portion of the Rush County policy. She asked for clarification on the following items:

- We do not have a county organizational chart. She will work on one.
- Is there a list of translation services available and what is the cost? Other than the translator used by the court, the county does not have the service available. Personett will work on this.

- How often will training be done? Personett will go to each county employee every six months. Sitton reads the requirement as only new employees need to be trained.
- When will the county training plan be updated and completed?
- Where is the Title VI information to be kept for public access? It will be on the county website and available in the HR office and the County Highway office.

Morning will complete the forms. She recommends having a public hearing to inform the public of the policy.

APPOINTMENTS

The commissioners have received letters of interest on the 2019 appointments. They will review them and make the appointments by the end of 2018.

The next regular meeting will be Monday, November 26, 2018.

Bruce Levi made the motion to adjourn. Mark Bacon seconded. Motion carried.

/Paul Wilkinson/
Paul Wilkinson Chairman

/Mark Bacon/
Mark Bacon

/Bruce Levi/
Bruce Levi

ATTEST:

/Jodi Harr/
Jodi Harr, Auditor