

## BLACKFORD COUNTY COUNCIL MINUTES OF

August 23, 2023 2024 Budget Appeals/Public Hearing

The Blackford County Council met at 6:00 p.m. in the first floor Commissioner/Council meeting room of the Blackford County Courthouse located at 110 W Washington Street, Hartford City, Indiana for the 2024 Budget Appeals/Public Hearing on Wednesday, August 23, 2023. The meeting was also available on Zoom.

**President Dan Borgenheimer called the Regular Meeting to order, and Auditor Sharon Hartley called roll. The members answering roll were Dan Borgenheimer, Kyle Lechien, Jack Beckley, Karen Mealy, Ryan Goodspeed and Patrick Cale. Fred Tobey was absent. Also present in person, Warren Brown, Kelly Cale, John Pluimer, Anne Owen, John Oxley, Kelli Schriver, Paul Schriver, Jim Heflin, Sue Kochanek, Christy Clark, Joelle Freiburger, Lisa Simmons, Kim Pitts, Thomas Barclay, Robert Bellucci Laura Coons, Judge Brian Bade, Devin Cavanaugh and Judge Nick Barry. Attending on Zoom: Tyler Hunt, Trisha Keesling, Mary Beal, Meagan Westfall, Sam Swenson, Cheri Brown, and Dana Turner.**

**The minutes of the August 9, 2023, 2024 Budget Workshop were approved as Presented on a motion by Karen Mealy and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ryan Goodspeed . The vote was 6/0.**

**The minutes of the August 21, 2023, Executive Session were approved as Presented on a motion by Patrick Cale and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kyle Lechien . The vote was 6/0.**

**The 2024 Blackford County Solid Waste District Budget was reviewed.**

**Robert Bellucci from Commonwealth** spoke of the need for the \$60,000 EDIT funding that was removed from the 2024 budget. They had been waiting for necessary easements for the project. They have secured everything they need at this point.

**Planning & Zoning Director Anne Owen** explained the responsibilities of her office and the necessity of extra help. She foresees the need as being greater in 2024 and asks the extra help appropriation to be left at the 2023 rate and not cut from the 2024 budget. **Patrick Cale moved to keep the extra help at the 2023 amount of \$9,360 for the 2024 budget. Ryan Goodspeed 2<sup>nd</sup> and the vote was 6/0.**

**Surveyor Paul Schriver** explained the **Drainage Board Secretary** job title change to **District Administrator** is due to the approval of the job description for the WIS wage study.

**Commissioners Laura Coons and John Oxley** spoke on behalf of the Facilities Manager's courthouse budget. They request the Furniture line be cut by \$1,800 and that amount be added to the Lawn Care line in the 2024 budget. **Karen Mealy moved to cut Furniture by \$1,800 and add \$1,800 to the Lawn Care line for 2024. Ryan Goodspeed 2<sup>nd</sup> and the vote was 6/0.**

**Thomas Barclay from Commonwealth** spoke on the Jackson Township Regional Sewer District project and the need for funding from the county.

**Judges Brian Bade and Nick Barry** spoke of the need for a third probation officer. Judge Bade offered to pay all of the Probation Secretary's wages from user fees and Judge Barry offered to review cash bond funding options. **Karen Mealy made a motion to reinstate the third probation officer position. The motion died for lack of a second.**

**Courthouse Security Officer Bert Witkamp** is listed as a Sheriff Merit Officer (should be Security on the Civilian list) on the WIS wage study. This will be reviewed with Sheriff Heflin.

**Wages for the Sheriff Merit Officers** was discussed. **Ryan Goodspeed moved to use the Matrix for merit officers and no longevity in 2024 due to the large increases. Patrick Cale 2<sup>nd</sup> and the vote was 6/0.**

**Highway Department wages** were discussed. Council wants to use the External Mid-point. Highway Superintendent John Pluimer presented a breakdown for employees using the same total amount as the mid-point. **Jack Beckley moved to accept Pluimer's wage breakdown and Patrick Cale 2<sup>nd</sup>. The vote was 2/4 with Lechien, Borgenheimer, Goodspeed and Mealy voting nay. Ryan Goodspeed moved to use the WIS plan mid-point and Karen Mealy 2<sup>nd</sup>. The vote was 4/2 with Beckley and Cale voting nay. The mid-point will be used for Highway wages.**

**Wages for all other employees** was discussed. **Karen Mealy moved to use 25% of the External mid-point of the WIS wage plan for raises with Elected Officials receiving no raise and employees making over the 25% external mid-point receiving no raise. Ryan Goodspeed 2<sup>nd</sup> and the vote was 6/0.**

Planning & Zoning Director pay was discussed. Ryan Goodspeed moved to make the position Salary Exempt and 40 hours per week at a salary of \$35,568. Patrick Cale 2<sup>nd</sup> and the vote was 6/0.

Discussion on making the Chief Probation Officer position Salary Exempt was continued pending legal approval.

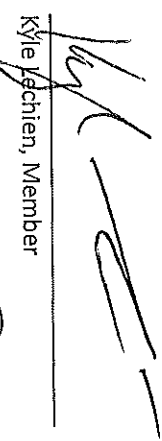
Commonwealth will be asked to the next meeting for more information on the Jackson Sewer District project.

There being no further comment President Borgenheimer adjourned the meeting at 8:09 p.m. on a motion by Kyle Lechien and 6/0 vote.

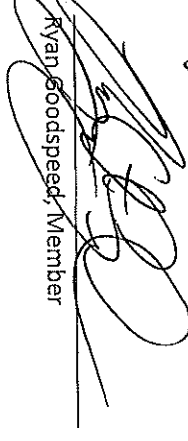
Approved this 4<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2023.

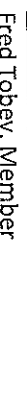
  
Dan Borgenheimer, President

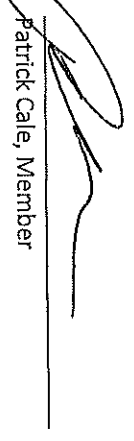
  
Karen Mealy

  
Kyle Lechien, Member

  
Jack Bedkley, Vice President

  
Ryan Goodspeed, Member

  
Fred Tobey, Member

  
Patrick Cale, Member

Attest:   
Auditor/Secretary