

## JANUARY 2, 2013

The Wabash County Council met for an organizational meeting on Wednesday, January 2, 2013 in the Courthouse Meeting Room of the Wabash County Courthouse. Auditor Linda Conrad called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M. with seven (7) members present: James Kaltenmark, Randy Curless, Claude Markstahler, Gary Nose, Jeff Dawes, Bill Ruppel and Mike Ridenour. Markstahler led the Council in prayer and members recited the pledge of allegiance to the flag. The proceedings of the meeting were recorded by Wabash County Auditor Linda Conrad.

Conrad opened the floor for nominations for the County Council Chairman. Nose made a motion to nominate Kaltenmark for Chairman; the motion was seconded by Curless. Markstahler made a motion to close the nominations; the motion was seconded by Dawes and both motions passed by a 7-0 vote. Conrad turned the meeting over to Chairman Kaltenmark.

Kaltenmark opened the floor for nominations for the County Council Vice-Chairman. Markstahler nominated Randy Curless for Vice-Chairman; the motion was seconded by Nose. Ruppel made a motion to close the nominations; his motion was seconded by Dawes and both motions passed by a 7-0 vote.

After some discussion, Council agreed to the same schedule of meetings as the previous year. Ridenour made a motion to schedule the Council meetings on the 4th Monday of each month at 5:00 P.M. The motion was seconded by Dawes and passed by a vote of 7/0.

Council appointed representatives for the following County Boards and Commissions:

- |                                  |                  |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. E-911                         | Markstahler      |
| 2. Community Correction          | Kaltenmark       |
| 3. Solid Waste                   | Nose             |
| 4. Animal Control                | Kaltenmark       |
| 5. GIS                           | Dawes            |
| 6. Emergency Mgmt. & LEPC        | Nose             |
| 7. Plan Commission               | Curless          |
| 8. Job Classification Committee  | Curless/Ridenour |
| 9. Region IIIA:                  | Ruppel           |
| 10. Local Alcohol Beverage Board | Gary Wood        |

Because of the request to appoint a non-Council member to the Convention and Visitors Bureau board as Council's appointee, Ruppel asked if board appointees must be members of County Council because the organization receives tax money and in turn, the importance of a Council members on those particular boards. It was agreed that more research was needed before the appointment could be made to the

Convention Visitor's Bureau and that the appointment would be on hold until the next Council meeting. A motion was made by Ruppel to approve all Council appointees to the designated boards; the motion was seconded by Ridenour and passed by a vote of 7/0. Chairman Kaltenmark mentioned the need to assign Council liaisons to each county department for upcoming budget hearings at the next Council meeting.

Nose expressed concern regarding the Wabash County Animal Shelter becoming a non-profit organization but then requesting assessments from each local government within the county. Kaltenmark stated that the Shelter has no power to tax or collect taxes and that the reason they wanted to be a non-profit organization was to be able to qualify for grant funding. It was also confirmed by Auditor Conrad that as of 2013, the county is no longer paying any salaries of the Animal Shelter employees. It was suggested that Nose contact Animal Shelter board member, Pat Lynn in order to address his concerns and to report his findings back to the Council.

Ridenour asked about the upcoming annual financial report and the encumbered funds into 2013. It was stated that these would be coming at future meetings. Nose mentioned that Council needs to pay particular attention to the amount spent over the amount budgeted this past year. Questions were raised about the LOIT Stabilization Fund and it was agreed that Council needed an accounting to date from the Auditor's office because of the need to use monies for tax distribution from the Fund for the last two years.

Nose mentioned the published Report of Tax Abatements Applicable for 2012 pay 2013 and stated his concern about the many tax abatements being granted by the City of Wabash and what impact those have on County tax collections. Markstahler stated his concerns about the accountability of job creation from those getting tax abatements. Ruppel mentioned the trend toward abatement on residential properties. He questioned how city abatements impact county taxes. Ruppel asked for a breakdown of current county abatements and asked if the county ever uses a "call-back" feature for greater accountability if tax abatements are granted in the future. The Auditor's office will get a breakdown of county abatements for Council's review. Ridenour mentioned the possibility of a County Income Tax Credit that could be considered. It was stated that the State Legislature will be dealing with the jobs accountability from those receiving tax abatements in the future.

Council Reviewed: Auditor Conrad referred to the notice of public hearing for the review of budgets, tax rates and levies for the year 2012 payable 2013 for all taxing units scheduled to be held on Jan. 8, 2013 at 11:30 a.m. in the courthouse meeting room.

With no other business to come before the Council, Ruppel made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ridenour. The motion passed by a 7-0 vote.

**The following individuals attended the January 2nd Council meeting:**

*\*If any names are spelled incorrectly, we apologize.*

Sheriff Bob Land

County Treasurer Sharon Shaw

Sheila Rhoades