

WABASH COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

The Wabash County Council met in session on Monday, February 27, 2017 in the Commissioner’s Meeting Room of the Wabash County Courthouse. Chairman Jeff Dawes called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M. Seven Council members were present: Dawes, Randy Curless, Matt Dillon, Kyle Bowman, Lorissa Sweet, Philip Dale, and Matthew Mize. Bowman opened with a word of prayer and Dawes led in the Pledge of Allegiance. The proceedings of the meeting were recorded by the County Auditor’s office.

Chairman Dawes requested that those present silence their cell phones and stated that all public comments regarding agenda and non-agenda items are permitted and encouraged.

The first order of business was to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2017 meeting. Dillon made a motion to approve the minutes. Curless seconded the motion and it passed by a 7-0 vote.

In the next order of business, County Recorder, Lori Draper requested to spend \$9,000.00 for an annual software maintenance update for the office computer system. She stated that this amount was discussed during the previous budget hearings and that, in the past, this request traditionally would be approved by County Council as an additional appropriation. She was recently informed by the State Board of Accounts and the County Recorder’s Association that anything spent from the Recorder’s Records Perpetuation Fund does not require Council approval as long as the purchase is within the guidelines of the fund’s allowed expenses. Dillon made a motion to approve the purchase. Dale seconded the motion and it passed by a 7-0 vote.

The next order of business was to address the Transfer of funds requests.

**TRANSFER RESOLUTION
2017-85-01**

Whereas, it has been determined that it is now necessary to appropriate more money than was appropriated in the annual budget; NOW, THEREFORE:

SEC. 1 Be it ordained by the Wabash County Council of Wabash County Indiana, that for the expense of said county government and its institutions for the year ending December 31, 2017, the following sums of money are hereby transferred and ordered set apart out of the several funds herein named and for the purposes herein specified, subject to the laws governing the same:

SEC. 2 WHEREAS, it has been shown that certain existing appropriations now have unobligated balances which will not be needed for the purposes for which appropriated, it is further resolved that the following existing appropriations be reduced in the following amounts.

**DECREASE: GENERAL FUND #1000
Central Dispatch Department #9600**

IDACS/NCIC account	Amount Requested	Amt. Approved	AYE	NAY
#1000-30140.000.9600	1,432.81	1,432.81	7	0

INCREASE: STATEWIDE 911 FUND #1222

Dispatch Equipment	Amount Requested	Amt. Approved	AYE	NAY
#1222-40060.000.0000	1,432.81	1,432.81	7	0

Explanation submitted by Central Dispatch Director, Sandy Beeks: received notice from State Board of Accounts that we are not allowed to pay for equipment out of the Statewide 911 funds, so need to do a transfer of funds from the General Fund, Central Dispatch department budget in order to correct the error.

Curless made a motion to approve the request for a transfer of funds. Dillon seconded the motion and it passed by a 7-0 vote.

Presented to the Wabash County Council, read in full and adopted this 27th day of February, 2017 by the above aye and nay vote.

The next order of business was the presentation of the Wabash County jail options. Eric Ratts, Architect with DLZ, an Architecture, Engineering, and Planning firm based in Indianapolis presented the building programming and preliminary design for the Sheriff's Office and Jail; "The Year 2035 Plan". He outlined the steps of the project, the feasibility study, jail design trends, the impact of the changes in the criminal codes (HEA 1006), the interview process, projections to the year 2035, comparison to other counties with similar populations, projected number of beds required, the costs of sending inmates to other counties, the building program and preliminary design concept, developing a successful process, probable project costs, operational costs, and project schedule. Mr. Ratts answered several questions of the council and the public in attendance.

Todd Samuelson, Certified Public Accountant with Umbaugh & Associates was present to explain the jail project financing options and presented several financing scenarios with the advantages and disadvantages of each: property tax levy including the referendum process and the impact of circuit breakers with a tax rate increase, economic development rate increase of .6% and a special income tax rate of .2%, special income tax rate of .5% with 125% coverage and the same with 135% coverage, and a decrease in property tax relief income tax to offset the special income tax rate. He estimated the total jail project costs and funding at \$30,895,000.00 and the financing would need to include the issuing of municipal bonds through the creation of a building corporation which would issue the debt due to the county's debt limit calculation of only \$8,909,074 available debt. The bonds would have a maximum of twenty (20) years to repay. Council members had several questions of Mr. Samuelson during the presentation.

It was noted that to date this year, the state legislature has not approved any special purpose rate requests for counties wishing to build a jail or finance operational costs. State Legislators suggested thinking "regionally" instead of county by county, and suggested maxing out the County's current income tax rate to finance a jail. Bill Ruppel, lobbyist representing Wabash County is

continuing to work at the Statehouse toward a possible special purpose income tax rate.

The next order of business was the consideration of a temporary loan from the Cum. Bridge Fund to the General Fund.

**WABASH COUNTY COUNCIL
RESOLUTION 2017-85-02**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A LOAN FROM CUMULATIVE BRIDGE FUND
TO THE COUNTY GENERAL FUND**

WHEREAS, the Wabash County Council has determined under the authority of Indiana Code #36-1-8-4, that it would be in the best interest of Wabash County to authorize a loan of the Cumulative Bridge Fund to the County General Fund due to an inadequate operating balance. Council has determined an emergency situation exists as timely payments of employee benefits and vendor claims are at risk;

NOW THEREFORE, as there are sufficient funds on deposit in the Cumulative Bridge Fund for current needs, this Council does hereby sanction a temporary loan not to exceed the amount of Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000.00) from the Cumulative Bridge Fund to the County General Fund. Said appropriation is to be used for the operating expenses of Wabash County. Per Indiana Code #36-1-8-4, the Cumulative Bridge Fund must be reimbursed in the total amount of the loan on or before July 15, 2017.

Passed by the Wabash County Council this 27th day of February, 2017.
Signed by all Council members

Dillon made a motion to approve the temporary loan from the Cumulative Bridge Fund to the General Fund in the amount of \$500,000.00. Dale seconded the motion and it passed by a 7-0 vote.

The next order of business was the possible transfer of unappropriated cash balances from several funds. County Auditor Shepherd submitted the revised balances for consideration by Council. It was the consensus of Council to transfer none of the remaining appropriation balances.

Councilman Dillon requested that Council members consider a discussion of the continuation of Wabash County's membership in the Northeast Indiana Regional Development Authority. He questioned the benefits provided by the regional group.

Councilman Dawes stated that Wabash County provides no financing of any project that the County does not favor. He stated that this membership also provides an opportunity for local taxing units to seek grant funding that may otherwise be unavailable to them.

Commissioner Eppley stated that because of the decrease in the population of Wabash County, it is more important than ever to utilize the momentum of the Regional Authority for job creation projects that our county could not fund on

its own. It was agreed by Council to schedule this topic for further discussion on the March meeting agenda. Auditor Shepherd was directed to add this to the March agenda.

Bowman stated that the Purdue Extension Annual Report is available for review at the local County Extension office.

Council reviewed:

January 2017 Auditor & Treasurer Financial Reports

January 2017 Solid Waste Management District Income & Expense Statement

With no other business to come before the Wabash County Council, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting is scheduled for March 27, 2017.

The following individuals also attended the February 27rd Council meeting:

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

Deputy Auditor B.J. Grube, County Commissioner Brian Hauptert, Barry Eppley and Scott Givens, Sheriff Bob Land, Superior Court Judge Goff, Circuit Court Reporter Christa Stroup, Purdue Extension Director Teresa Witkowske, County Coordinator Jim Dils, Attorney Mark Frantz, Wabash Plain Dealer reporter Mackenzie Klemann, The Paper reporter Emma Rausch, Bonnie Corn, Louella Krom, Ryan Short, and William and Lena Gray.