

WABASH COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

The Wabash County Council met in session on Monday, August 28, 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. Six Council members were present: Dawes, Matt Mize, Matt Dillon, Kyle Bowman, Lorissa Sweet, and Philip Dale. Randy Curless was absent. 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. He stated that if a member of the public wishes to address Council, he or she should raise a hand and state their name for the minutes.

The first order of business was to approve the minutes of the July 24, 2017 meeting. Dillon made a motion to approve the minutes. Sweet seconded the motion and it passed by a 5-0 vote with Mize abstaining because of his absence from the July meeting.

Wabash County Sheriff Bob Land was present and had earlier provided copies of the U.S. Department of Labor's mandate to compensate K-9 Unit officers for the "care time" they spend with K-9 units off duty. The information sent to each Council member explained that Council has four options to be in compliance with the mandate: (1.) compensate for the requested amount of \$138.35 per pay period at an annual cost of \$3,597.00 per handler, (2.) compensate each handler ½ hour each day in comp time which equals 14 hours per 28 days in addition to the amount of comp time they already earn which results in more time off duty, (3.) the officers could work an 8.5 hr. shift and incorporate the ½ hour into the regular work schedule which would result in less time on the road, or (4.) compensate the officers for an additional 9% annually along with their annual salary. A letter from one of the K-9 unit officers stated that the officers are requesting regular pay (not requesting overtime pay) for 30 minutes per day, 365 days per year and not comp time which would result in less time on duty. The extra pay would be approximately \$3,918.00 and \$3,899.00 for the two K-9 unit officers. Land reminded Council that these officers are on-call 24/7. No decision was made by County Council. Sheriff Land also submitted the average daily population since the year 2012 for review by Council members.

The next order of business was to address the Additional Appropriation requests and present for the requests were: Sheriff Bob Land, County Highway Superintendent John Martin, and Health Department Registrar, Kathy Carter-Lower.

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS
ORDINANCE #2017-07

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 additional sums of money are hereby appropriated and ordered set apart out of the several funds herein named and for the purposes herein specified, subject to the laws governing the same:

COUNTY GENERAL FUND– #1000

SHERIFF/JAIL DEPT.	Requested	Appropriated	AYE	NAY
Inmate Transfers #1000-30331-000.0029	\$140,000.00	\$140,000.00	6	0

Explanation submitted by Sheriff Land: He submitted an accounting of inmate transfer costs from three out-of-county facilities that have been paid from the LIT Public Safety Fund as of 8/28/17. Currently, the dept. has unpaid invoices from June and July and not enough money in the Public Safety Fund to pay the invoices since the state distribution to the Public Safety Fund is received one time monthly. Land estimates that the DOC reimbursement totals \$305,425 but not all has been received. In order to pay the June and July invoices, the money must be appropriated from the General Fund.

Dale made a motion to approve the request. Dillon seconded the motion and it passed by a 6-0 vote.

COUNTY HIGHWAY FUND– #1176

	Requested	Appropriated	AYE	NAY
Repair of Roads/Contract #1176-30123-000.0039	\$28,000.00	\$28,000.00	6	0

Explanation submitted by Supt. Martin: For the striping of three roads: Old 24 west, Meridian Road, and Old 15 north of North Manchester.

Dillon made a motion to approve the request. Dale seconded the motion and it passed by a 6-0 vote.

	Requested	Appropriated	AYE	NAY
Drainage Assessments #1176-30820-000.0039	\$5,500.00	\$5,500.00	6	0

Explanation submitted by Supt. Martin: For drainage assessments due to the reconstruction projects completed on county tiles.

Dillon made a motion to approve the request. Mize seconded the motion and it passed by a 6-0 vote.

CUM. BRIDGE FUND– #1135

	Requested	Appropriated	AYE	NAY
Bridge #151 Design #1135-30571-000.0000	\$120,000.00	\$120,000.00	6	0

Explanation submitted by Supt. Martin: To fund the design for construction of a new bridge south of the County Line, west of Old Slocum Trail. The current bridge has a weight limit of 12 tons and is deteriorating quickly and is required to have a yearly inspection which results in high priority replacement.

Council member Mize questioned the cost of just the design of the bridge and asked if costs could be saved by designing and constructing the bridge under one vendor contract. Martin stated that no costs could be saved on this particular bridge and that he expects two bridge constructions in 2018.

Dillon made a motion to approve the request. Dale seconded the motion and it passed by a 6-0 vote.

	Requested	Appropriated	AYE	NAY
Bridge #701 Design (deck only) #1135-30572-000.0000	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00	6	0

Explanation submitted by Supt. Martin: To fund the design for construction of the deck only of a bridge on Walnut Street in LaFontaine. The current bridge has a weight limit of 12 tons and is deteriorating quickly and is required to have a yearly inspection which results in high priority replacement.

Dillon made a motion to approve the request. Sweet seconded the motion and it passed by a 6-0 vote.

COUNTY HEALTH FUND– #1159

	Requested	Appropriated	AYE	NAY
Contractual Services #1159-30650-000.0000	\$1,625.00	\$1,625.00	6	0

Explanation submitted by David Roe, Health Officer: Council approved the \$15,750.00 cost of this computer database program in July, 2016. The contracted amount of maintenance fees for the computer program provided by Digital Health Department, Inc. was not encumbered from 2016 into 2017. The County Health Fund pays the maintenance fees for all programs and the amount owed for 2017 is \$1,625.00 in addition to the amount budgeted for departmental maintenance fees. There are two more years of payments of \$3,500 each year for maintenance of the computer program that will be budgeted for 2018 and 2019.

Dillon made a motion to approve the amount requested. Dale seconded the motion and it passed by a 6-0 vote.

LOCAL HEALTH TRUST– #1206

	Requested	Appropriated	AYE	NAY
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Capital Equipment	\$7,875.00	\$7,875.00	6	0
#1206-40421-000.0000 Computer Software program				

Explanation submitted by David Roe, Health Officer: The original computer database provided by Digital Health Department, Inc. was approved for payment by Council in July, 2016. The first payment of \$7,875.00 was paid in 2016 but the second payment in the amount of \$3,150.00 was paid by mistake from #8850 SPHI Fund. We need to transfer funds in order to correct the error in payment but the amount must be appropriated to spend from this fund. Dillon made a motion to approve the request. Sweet seconded the motion and it passed by a 6-0 vote.

Presented to the Wabash County Council, read in full and adopted this 28th day of August, 2017 by the above aye and nay vote. The Auditor was directed to present the above additional appropriation to the Department of Local Government Finance for approval as provided by law.

Christine Flohr was in attendance at the meeting to explain the details of the economic impact from the investment of \$75,000 from the CEDIT Fund to Wabash County Tourism by the County for 2016-2017. She explained that the money was used to hire a new employee who designed a website in partnership with Deluxe Corporation who was instrumental in obtaining the financing for the City of Wabash's downtown revitalization project. She also stated that the money was used to fund social media marketing, Google Analytics, digital and print partnership marketing campaigns, radio marketing into larger markets, the Roann Gateway sign project completed with three gateway signs still in process, a Digital Kiosk, FAM Tours travel writers & bloggers, conference solicitation, Trolley experience tours, and one to one marketing educational sessions. Flohr stated that Wabash County received the Lt. Governor's Hoosier Hospitality Award. She submitted Wabash County Tourism's 2018 budget for review by the County Commissioners and the County Council which includes \$75,000 from the county's CEDIT Fund for 2018.

Darren Bates, owner of Data Pit Stop, tax data and county website consultant was in attendance to review the county's current credit rates and credit percentages with County Council in light of the changes from LOIT, Local Option Income Tax to LIT, Local Income Tax which now eliminates the local options and designates only three income taxes rates; property tax relief/certified shares, public safety and economic development. He submitted a comparison of various property types of properties currently owned by county residents by parcel number, current assessment, current deductions, net assessed value and taxes charged. The comparison included a possible decrease of the current 1.00% property tax relief rate to a .50% rate and the resulting impact on taxes and circuit breaker cap losses on county taxing units. Bates stated that Wabash County is losing revenue because of the property tax relief percentage given to homeowners. The proposed change will not increase Wabash County's total income tax rate but will reduce cap losses and increase revenue to all taxing units. Discussion and questions from Council followed. Bates recommended a long-term, 3-5 year plan with no increase in the total LIT rate of 2.90% but an increase in the property tax

expenditures or certified shares of local income taxes from 1.40% to 1.90%, and the decrease of the property tax relief percentage from 1.00 % to .50% so that more revenue would be received by the county in order to fund necessary services from the General Fund and thus eliminate the supplementation from the Economic Development (EDIT) Fund and borrowing from other county funds until the property tax distribution is received.

Council Chairman Dawes stated that this recommendation is listed as one of the options suggested by the County Budget Committee, consisting of three council members, one Commissioner and the county auditor while meeting to discuss the issues facing Council during the upcoming 2018 budget hearings. Dawes suggested that Council members study this option and the others listed in the 2018 proposed budget books to be received from the Auditor's office. Dawes directed Auditor Shepherd to advertise a public hearing to discuss the income tax options and get public input regarding the possible decrease in the property tax relief from 1.00% to .50% and the resulting rearrangement of property relief percentages within the .50% so that a decision could be made before the November 1, 2017 deadline.

As advertised on the Council's August 28th agenda, per IC 6-1.1-17-3.6, (a)(b)(c)(d) at the first meeting of the county fiscal body in August, the county fiscal body shall review the estimated levy limits and estimated circuit breaker impacts provided by the DLGF and allow any representative of a taxing unit to comment on the taxing unit's proposed budgets, levies and tax rates. After the meeting, the county fiscal body may prepare and distribute written recommendations to the county's taxing units. If written recommendations are not prepared, the minutes of the meeting shall be distributed by the county auditor. Auditor Shepherd directed the Council to the estimated levy limits and the estimated circuit breakers that had been provided to them by the Auditor's office and explained that each taxing unit's proposed budgets, levies and tax rates could be viewed on the DLGF's Gateway computer program. Council's consensus was that each taxing unit's budget should stay within the allowed levy limit and to consider the circuit breaker estimated impact while creating their proposed budgets. There were no representatives from the county's taxing units present at the meeting and no written recommendations were given by the County Council regarding individual taxing unit's proposed budgets, levies, and tax rates.

Council reviewed:

July 2017 Auditor & Treasurer Financial Reports

July 2017 Solid Waste Management District Income & Expense Statement

Auditor Shepherd stated that the DLGF budget workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 6, 2017 at 9:00 A.M.; it is optional for Council members to attend. She reminded Council of the upcoming budget hearings scheduled for Sept. 12 & 13 beginning at 12:30 P.M. and Sept. 14 at 5:00 P.M. with Sept. 25 as the final budget adoption in addition to the agenda of

the regular September Council meeting.

With no other business to come before the Wabash County Council, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting is scheduled for September 25, 2017.

The following individuals also attended the August 28th Council meeting:

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

County Commissioners Barry Eppley and Scott Givens, Attorney Mark Frantz, Wabash Plain Dealer reporter Mackenzie Klemann, and The Paper reporter Emma Rausch.