

WABASH COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

The Wabash County Council met in session on Monday, February 26, 2018 in the Commissioner's Meeting Room of the Wabash County Courthouse. Council Chairman Randy Curless called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M. Five Council members were present: Curless, Matthew Mize, Matt Dillon, Philip Dale and Kyle Bowman. Lorissa Sweet was absent. Chairman Curless announced that the District 2 Republican caucus has elected Barbara Pearson to fill the unexpired term of Council member Jeff Dawes who had resigned because of residence relocation. Pearson was not present due to a previously scheduled trip out of the U.S. Councilman Bowman led in a word of prayer and Curless led in the Pledge of Allegiance. The proceedings of the meeting were recorded by the County Auditor's office.

Chairman Curless 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 review the minutes of the January 22, 2018 Council meeting. Dillon made a motion to approve the minutes. Dale seconded the motion and it passed by a 5-0 vote.

The next order of business was the consideration of a resolution designating an economic revitalization area and qualifying that area for real and personal property tax abatement at the request of Midwest Poultry Services, LP. Present for this request was Wabash County Economic Development Director Keith Gillenwater, and Midwest Poultry Services, president Bob Krouse. Gillenwater had submitted to Council the results of the point evaluation process used to recommend a proposed tax abatement for Midwest Poultry Services which resulted in a total of 60 evaluation points; with 40 points or more recommended for a ten-year abatement. Gillenwater stated that the county's tax abatement committee members unanimously recommended approval of Midwest's request.

The ERA request regarding real estate improvements as submitted to Council on the statement of benefits reported that Midwest Poultry Services plans to construct three new hen houses and one fertilizer storage building on the property after a fire in October 2017 destroyed five hen-laying houses and associated machinery inside each. Gillenwater stated that no employees were laid off after the fire. The project will add 1.3 million hens which will produce both eggs and organic fertilizer which will be sold to retail outlets and local farms. The estimated start date is March 1, 2018 and the completion date is April 30, 2019. The estimated cost of the project is \$13,100,000. The total current payroll for all 135 employees is approximately \$4,293,432 and of that, 15 employees will be retained by this project. In regard to the ten-year request for personal property abatement requested by Midwest Poultry Services, a statement of benefits was submitted listing the total cost of new manufacturing

equipment at \$11,412,500. The cost will include hen enclosures, conveyers, processing equipment, computer equipment, back-up power generator, and high pressure water misting for climate control. Krouse gave a brief history of the company and stated that they have invested millions to date and want to continue to be a part of the County.

Councilman Mize asked if there are any plans to move the company's current headquarters from Mentone, Indiana to Wabash County. Krouse responded that this was being seriously considered and the move would provide 50-70 jobs in the N. Manchester area. Councilman Dale asked for clarification of the proposed statement of benefits estimates. Mize stated that he had had some reservations coming into the meeting concerning the request and the qualification as an economic revitalization area according to his understanding of the statute. He said that after hearing the details and the explanation of the project, he believes that the project satisfies the statute's definition. Dale made a motion to approve the declaratory resolution #2018-85-01 for the designation of an economic revitalization area at the request of Midwest Poultry Services, LP. Mize seconded the motion and it passed by a vote of four in favor and one against. Dillon voted against the motion. A public hearing will be held and the confirmatory resolution providing for 10-year abatements for both real and personal property will be considered at the next Council meeting on March 26, 2018.

The next order of business was a board appointment request from the Wabash County Tourism Commission for Laura Rager, N. Manchester to be appointed to the Visit Wabash County Board of Directors/Tourism Commission for a term of two years beginning January 1, 2018 thru December 31, 2019. Dillon made a motion to appoint Laura Rager to the tourism commission for a two-year term as requested. Mize seconded the motion and it passed by a 5-0 vote.

In regard to a board re-appointment, Dillon made a motion to re-appoint Gary Woods to the Wabash County Alcohol and Beverage Board for 2018. Bowman seconded the motion and it passed by a 5-0 vote.

The next order of business was to address a Transfer of Funds request. Veteran Service Officer Sam Daugherty was not present for this request.

TRANSFER RESOLUTION 2018-85-02

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, 2018, 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.

GENERAL FUND #1000

DECREASE:

Veteran Service Office/Dept.25	Amount Requested	Amt. Approved	AYE	NAY
#1000-30220-000.0025 Postage & fees	\$32.00	\$32.00	5	0

INCREASE:

Veteran Service Office/Dept.25	Amount Requested	Amt. Approved	AYE	NAY
#1000-21500.000.0025 Cemetery Flags	\$32.00	\$32.00	5	0

Explanation submitted by Sam Daugherty, Vet Service Officer – Requesting additional monies to be transferred into the cemetery flags account in order to purchase and distribute flags for the County of Wabash Veteran Service organizations.

Dillon made a motion to approve the request. Dale seconded the motion and it passed by a 5-0 vote.

In other business, Auditor Shepherd reported that the Commissioners will be re-establishing the Cumulative Capital Development tax rate soon by advertising a public hearing and approving an ordinance. She stated that the tax rate has been decreasing for several years and not raising enough revenue to fund capital projects.

Commissioner Brian Haupert reported that the Commissioners are currently looking for property with the intention of moving the Health Department and the Coroner's office to a new location and using the current office space for the expansion of the Probation Department.

Sheriff Bob Land reported that he is working with the Prosecutor's office regarding the recent shooting incident involving three sheriff's deputies.

Council reviewed:

January 2018 Auditor & Treasurer Financial Reports

January 2018 Wabash County Solid Waste Mgmt. District Income & Expense Statement

With no other business to come before the Council, Chairman Curless adjourned the meeting. The next scheduled meeting of the Wabash County Council is Monday, March 26, 2018.

The following individuals also attended the February 26th Council meeting:

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

Deputy Auditor B.J. Grube, County Commissioners Barry Eppley, Brian Haupert and Scott Givens, Sheriff Bob Land, Attorney Steve Downs, Attorney Mark Frantz, Nick Weber, Jeff Dawes, and "The Paper" reporter Andrew Maciejewski.