

**BARTHOLOMEW COUNTY COUNCIL  
BUDGET HEARINGS  
August 18, 2017**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Representing:</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Present:</b>
Laura DeDomenic	District 2	President	Present
Bill Lentz	At Large	Pro-Tem	Present
Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence	At Large		Present
Chris Ogle	District 1		Present
Mark Gorbett	District 3		Present
Jorge Morales	District 4		Present
Matt Miller	At Large		Present
Chris Monroe	- -	Attorney	Not - Present
Barb Hackman	Auditor	Secretary	Present

The Bartholomew County Council reconvened their 2018 Budget Hearings on August 18, 2017 at 12:00 p.m. in the County Council Chambers of the Governmental Office Building, 440 Third Street, Columbus, Indiana.

President Laura DeDomenic called the meeting to order.

The first hearing on the agenda for today was the Commissioner's Budget as presented by Commissioners Larry Kleinhenz, Carl Lienhoop and Rick Flohr. Commissioner Lienhoop stated that they had three-percent (3%) raises with the exception of the County Administrator which they gave a little bit more than that. Insurance and benefits was a five-percent (5%) increase. This is the total amount that Dunn and the Commissioners came up with. Auditor Hackman stated that the amount also includes the employee contribution so it is over inflated. The Health Benefit Trust will receive six-million two-hundred-eighty-four-thousand dollars (\$6,284,000) which is split out between the employee contributions, the Certified Share amount and the department

shares. The employee contribution is nine-hundred-twenty-thousand four-hundred dollars (\$920,400) and the Certified Share portion is three-million five-hundred-thousand dollars (\$3,500,000). President DeDomenic asked if we have ever looked at changes in plans for smokers. Commissioner Lienhoop stated that we do have the screening that kind of looks for issues that need to be addressed. Bill Lentz asked where the five-percent (5%) increase came from. Mark Gorbett stated that was a slippery slope. That caused us the issues from a few years ago. Commissioner Lienhoop stated that they need a couple more good years to have the reserves they should have. Gas and Oil went up a little bit. There was discussion as to who uses the fuel. They discussed the fifteen-thousand dollar (\$15,000) increase in consulting. This includes a contract for the Internal Controls with Crowe Horwath. Mark Gorbett asked about a new County Garage. He asked if it is on the radar for next year. Commissioner Kleinhenz stated that if they are given the money for it, yes. Mark Gorbett stated that if they have the increased revenue then they need to plan for it. They increased the amount for legal fees as our attorney has not had a raise in several years. Land and drain assessments are as close to the actual amount that is due next year as well as they amount for taxes for the cell tower at E911. Federally Mandated items are from the list they received after the study. They are supposed to address these items within ten (10) years and that was two (2) years ago. *(Multiple conversations were occurring at the time making it impossible to differentiate)* It was the consensus of the Council to remove the money for Thrive Alliance. There was lengthy discussion regarding the funds for the Not-For-Profits. Mark Gorbett made a

motion to remove the funding for Not-For-Profits. Matt Miller seconded the motion which passed unanimously. DSI money is outside the maximum levy. It was asked if there are any members of County Government on their board. They are requesting one-hundred-twenty-five-thousand dollars (\$125,000). Jorge Morales made a motion to approve the amount of one-hundred-twenty-five-thousand dollars (\$125,000) which was seconded by President DeDomenic. Motion failed by vote. The consensus was to reduce it to one-hundred-thousand dollars (\$100,000). There was discussion regarding liability insurance and bids. The 2018 money for the Court House includes money for the chiller/boiler as well as a new roof on the GOB building. The Commissioners are not certain that they have enough money in the budget to complete even these updates. Mark Gorbett asked that they include building a wall for Veteran's Service.

**- BREAK -**

There was continued discussion regarding getting a wall built in the Veteran's Office. The Commissioners will look into it and get it done. They have been busy with new buildings and moving offices, but they will get this done. The discussion switched to additional costs for more employees at the jail that would affect the Commissioners budget regarding insurance and benefits. There was discussion of an estimate for a new County Garage of five-million dollars (\$5,000,000) to eight-million dollars (\$8,000,000). Mark Gorbett followed up with discussion of possibly more public defenders and a drug court. As far as the Court House, they are using the report from the consultant as to what repairs need to be made and their priority.

The next budget discussed was about the public defenders as presented by Rob Kittle. He is on a committee that has looked into concerns regarding the number of cases versus the number of public defenders. A State program has a potential of up to a forty-percent (40%) reimbursement but it is not guaranteed. Their recommendation is for a Chief Public Defender that may or may not be a full-time position and then the addition of two (2) part-time public defenders. In conversations with the Commissioners, they would like to take another year to look at the Chief Public Defender position. That would mean that we would need an additional two (2) part-time positions for 2018. Mark Gorbett asked if this plan included a new Drug Court. The public defenders are contract employees, not “part-time” employees. It was mentioned that currently the Judges staff serve as clerical staff for the public defenders. Rob Kittle had a letter that he read into the record. The letter explained how the cases are tracked and what conclusion it comes to as far as number of public defenders that Bartholomew County needs. The numbers mentioned in the letter have actually increased since the time of the review. It was stated that if you take the public defenders out from under the judges then you need to have a Chief to oversee the department.

**- BREAK -**

President DeDomenic had two (2) plans to present. Option 1 is to increase the LOIT anywhere from a .25 to .50. An increase of .25 would result in about two million dollars (\$2,000,000) for the County and three million dollars (\$3,000,000) for the City. Option 2 is a short term fix only. That would be moving all the Commissioner’s Capital

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Improvement items to a Bond from the Indiana Bond Bank. These would be smaller bonds. Bill Lentz stated we could do the cars through a bond. That would be possible if you wanted to pay for the cars over 10 years. Option 3 would be to cut about two million dollars (\$2,000,000). There is not two million dollars (\$2,000,000) worth of items that can be cut. Mark Gorbett stated that this does not need to be a one year budget. They need to get a solution that is working toward the public defenders, the Court House and a new County Garage. The Sheriff will be back next year if they open a drug facility in the jail. Jorge Morales stated that the employees need to be taken care of. President DeDomenic stated that even if they do the LOIT increase, she would probably still favor bonding the larger building projects. Mark Gorbett stated that it may take a combination of the options to make it work, as Jorge Morales had stated. President DeDomenic stated that it doesn't make sense to bond out with a consultant unless you are bonding at least seven million dollars (\$7,000,000). This Indiana Bond Bank offer is a new opportunity and we would be the first County to do this. Jorge Morales suggested that we rent or purchase an existing building for the garage. It was explained that they could bond but they could make the payments from County General or the CEDIT. Jorge Morales suggested reducing programs from the Health Department which would lower their rate and thus allow more money into the County General. Bill Lentz would be in favor of bonding because we would not be sharing the money with other entities. The LOIT already exists; they would only be raising the rate. Mark Gorbett pointed out that as of right now, we still need to cut another three-million two-hundred-thousand dollars

(\$3,000,000). By increasing the LOIT by .5 they would have enough to fund the budget and still set aside over a million dollars (\$1,000,000) a year for the upcoming items. Matt Miller stated that if there is a tax increase, do it right by increasing it and getting what you need. He is concerned though that if there is more money, then it will be spent elsewhere and not set aside as was planned. Mark Gorbett knows what 2018 is looking like so he would do it and do it right the first time. We need to look long-term and make sure we plan for what we will need down the road. Right now, he would do a .5 increase. He feels that we have floundered over the last few years. President DeDomenic stated that she has had a lot of people that are conservatives approach her and tell her they would support this so that we can fix what we need to fix. Matt Miller stated that he wonders why these people aren't donating to the County. Bill Lentz doesn't want to take the heat for raising the tax and then two-thirds of it going to the City. It was stated that that is the law and they can't control it. They need to do what they need to do and stop worrying about what the other entities will get. You could specify the additional to the CEDIT plan of the Commissioners so that would be their money for the new garage or Court House. Matt Miller asked how much more we would receive from the gas tax increase. They had Sandy Beatty remove one-million six-hundred-thousand dollars from the Sheriff's Budget (*just to see end numbers*). President DeDomenic used the white board to show the amounts that would be collected. It was discussed that with all the capital projects, additional personnel and ongoing raises would be at least three-million dollars (\$3,000,000). Chris Ogle hopes that we can have the would help out with some

money from the additional funds they will receive due to an additional amount on the LOIT. This could be done through an Inter-Local Agreement and could be used for items such as a drug court since the drug problem is both a City and County issue, but this will completely depend on whether the LOIT is increased by this Council. Mark Gorbett explained his thinking using rough numbers. These funds (*increase from an increased LOIT*) would allow funds to be used for items such as bonding all the while allowing them to meet their current budgetary needs. Matt Miller asked if we have employees that would be willing to take an early retirement package to help reduce staff. This had been discussed a couple of years ago and it was deemed that it would not be cost effective. There was discussion regarding the Riverboat funding and the fact that it has been decreasing each year. Jorge Morales stated that he believes they should look at the Health Department budget and see if they can cut some items out of there so that they can reduce their rate, thus allowing more for County General. One of his ideas was to reduce the vaccine program. Chief Deputy Auditor Beatty stated that they would be getting rid of free vaccines for children whose families cannot afford them but giving all kinds of money to drug addicts. Jorge Morales stated he agreed but that is the way society works. Chris Ogle stated that he is not going to make cuts to the Health Department that affects people that cannot afford those services. He has no problem cutting something like Dining with Diabetes that is already a program through CRH. Mark Gorbett asked if we need to determine whether we are going with a LOIT increase or not. Jorge Morales stated that he feels it is too early. Mark Gorbett stated that we are at a point where we are

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one-million eight-hundred-thousand dollars over budget after the cuts that have been made. Jorge Morales stated that he is hypothetically in favor of the .5 increase. Chris Ogle, Mark Gorbett and Laura DeDomenic are in favor of the increase. The remainder members are not in favor of it at this time. Mark Gorbett questioned what solution Bill Lentz proposed for meeting the budget requirements. Bill Lentz stated he was in favor of bonding the cars. President DeDomenic stated she would bond buildings but never cars. Bill Lentz believes we would be much better by bonding than raising a tax. Jorge Morales stated that he is up for re-election but he is still in favor of it because he believes it is the right thing to do for this County. Mark Gorbett was hoping the Council would stand together on this but that is fine. Chris Ogle stated that you can either have your name on the front page for eliminating people or you can be on the front page for raising taxes. Mark Gorbett asked that we move forward either with cutting items or doing something.

The Council started at the first page of the budgets. It was determined that the Clerk's was fine. The Auditor's Office was asked about the Professional Services. That is the amount for the TIF Neutralization. The communication and transportation still has money in it. That is for two conferences yet to attend. *(Multiple conversations were going on at the same time)* There was nothing in the Treasurer's or the Recorders. They have cut the Sheriff's funds. The Surveyor has given money back. The Coroner's office is what it is. The Assessor has an open position for over a year. They cut this position which cuts about thirty-four-thousand eight-hundred-fifty-four dollars (\$34,854).

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President DeDomenic wanted to discuss the Code Enforcement Budget. Mark Gorbett wants to leave the truck in the budget but he isn't certain it is enough money. Director Thompson has not been able to attend due to the situation with his step-son. Emergency Management wants to increase the pay for the Director and Deputy Director. Mark Gorbett suggested they do it over a two year period. They were in agreement to give half the raises in 2018 and the other half in 2019. They agreed not to fund the Administrative Assistant. Drainage Board was down so no changes. Voter's Registration was left alone. Co-op Extension was the next one to be looked at. Jorge Morales recommends eliminating a position. Purdue also pays part of the salaries. Auditor Hackman has it reduced to the one-point-five percent (1.5%) that Purdue was wanting. It was decided to give no additional money to the position. This position had started as an Administrative Assistant to the two Extension Agents, but that was years ago. The Work Study is reimbursed fully by the 4-H Council so it was left alone. In Park Board, Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence suggested to remove the five-thousand dollars for Ash tree removal. President DeDomenic suggested cutting everything back to the 2017 amounts because it appears they have just increased all the line items by ten-thousand dollars (\$10,000). They decided to leave the Professional Services as it is only four-hundred dollars (\$400) and it is three-percent (3%) rise. They also left the Ash Tree amount in. Scott Mayes had e-mailed President DeDomenic that he could reduce ten-thousand dollars (\$10,000) and another area by three-thousand dollars (\$3,000). They did reduce the Dunn Restrooms to seven-thousand dollars (\$7,000) in Park Board. In Veteran's, they decided to possibly

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allow him to purchase a good, used van that had under twenty-thousand miles. Mark Gorbett asked why we were asking our Veteran's to use a used vehicle while providing new vehicles for the Sheriff's Department. They put the van in at thirty-seven-thousand five-hundred dollars (\$37,500). They left Weights and Measures as it was. In the Council, they had increased the attorney as they made need an additional to finish this year in that line. They left the consulting line item alone. In the Commissioner's budget, they looked at the increase for the County Administrator. It was determined to be consistent and split the raise over two (2) years. It was also noted that they had raised the Matron position in the Sheriff's budget. They brought the 03-01 to sixty-thousand dollars (\$60,000); gas and oil to two-hundred twenty-five thousand (\$25,000). There was discussion regarding raises for the Council and Commissioners attorneys. They are not asking for a raise for the Council attorney, but rather more money in the line item for additional costs with him. In the Commissioners, they reduced mental health to one-hundred-thousand dollars (\$100,000). They reduced 03-21 to three-thousand five-hundred dollars (\$3,500). They put printing and advertising at seven-thousand dollars (\$7,000). They left 03-90 at ten-thousand eight-hundred dollars (\$10,800). They moved all the Capital Improvements to the LIT. They have one-hundred-seventeen-thousand dollars (\$117,000). In Maintenance, the Supervisor pay increase was questioned. It was decided to move the fifty-eight-thousand seven-hundred-ten dollars (\$58,710) which is the same amount as the Highway Superintendent. It was decided to raise the Assistant Supervisor by half the request for 2018. In the Jail budget, in 03-10 is for the medical

contract. They decided to move it to three-hundred-thousand dollars (\$300,000). They took the food to two-hundred-fifty-thousand dollars (\$250,000). They took one-hundred-eleven-thousand dollars (\$111,000) for part-time. In Youth Services, they want to change the Director to a Probation Officer pay scale. It is an increase from sixty-five-thousand dollars (\$65,000) to seventy-five-thousand dollars (\$75,000). It was decided to leave the increase in the budget. Mark Gorbett suggested they add a Public Defender in the Circuit Court. The consensus was to increase the Public Defenders by three-percent (3%) and add one position to the Circuit Court. All raises in Circuit were backed down from five-percent (5%) to three-percent (3%). They have to leave the 03-90 line due to a contract that was messed up. In Superior Court I, they gave the Public Defenders a three-percent (3%) raise. They have three (3) full time Public Defenders and one (1) part-time. In Superior Court II, they have two (2) Public Defenders that need to have the three-percent (3%) increase. Those amounts were already in their budget. They took one-thousand dollars (\$1,000) off their office supplies. In the IT budget, they can reduce Training to twenty-five-thousand dollars and Cabling and Wiring can be reduced to seven-thousand dollars (\$7,000). The total at this time shows they have cut eight-million dollars (\$8,000,000) from the original requests but they are still one-million seven-hundred-thousand dollars (\$1,700,000) short. Jorge Morales stated that Brad Barnes had wanted County General to pick up one-hundred-fifty-thousand dollars (\$150,000) in insurance costs.

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The meeting was recessed at 6:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m. Monday, August 21, 2017.

**BARTHOLOMEW COUNTY COUNCIL**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Laura DeDomenic, President

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Bill Lentz, Pro-Tem

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chris Ogle, Member

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence, Member

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jorge Morales, Member

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Gorbett, Member

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Matt Miller, Member

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Barbara J. Hackman, Auditor  
Bartholomew County