

January 31, 2018

BARTHOLOMEW COUNTY COUNCIL
December 12, 2017

Name:	Representing:	Title:	Present:
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	Present
Barb Hackman	Auditor	Secretary	Present

The Bartholomew County Council met on December 12, 2017 at 5:00 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.

Bill Lentz gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The first item on the agenda was the approval of meeting minutes of July 3, July 18, August 8, August 14 and August 15. Jorge Morales made a motion to approve the minutes with minor changes as noted by Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence. Mark Gorbett seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was the Second Reading of the Consideration of an Ordinance Modifying the Local Income Tax Rate. The Council will make statements and then the audience can make a statement. Attorney Monroe will keep the time for the statements by the public.

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Jorge Morales had met with every department before being elected to the Council. This year he has spent time with Sheriff's Deputies, CPD Officers, E911 and the Jail. He also viewed an autopsy to better inform himself about the opioid issue. He wants to do the same thing with the Courts. He does not like taxes, but the opioid issue is the reason we need this increase. We are currently putting our employees in peril with some of the conditions in the jail.

Mark Gorbett has spent the last three (3) years on Council trying to get our house in order. We have been running tight for quite a while. The opioid crisis over the past year has only made this problem worse. No one wants to raise taxes but this is based on what the needs are in the community; not wants, but needs. He wants to live in a safe community.

The public portion of the meeting was opened. Attorney Monroe explained that everyone would get three minutes.

Lisa Deaton was the first to make a statement. She has attended most of the meetings. She wants to see the Council not use the additional funds until they have an exact plan. She respects Mark Gorbett.

Russell Poling was the next to make a statement. He is sick and tired of tax increases. He wonders if the new road funding was considered into this process. He wonders if they have really considered every option. As to the opioid problem, he does not see how handing over money to law enforcement will solve the problem.

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Mark Schnieder was the next to make a statement. He thanked the Council for being open to him when he contacted them. He stated that County documents are hard to get a hold of. This is his first meeting to attend. He wants to see exactly where the money is going.

Jeff Jones was the next to make a statement. He is the voluntary leader of ASAP. They have spent five days a week over the past several months working on solutions to the drug problem in this community. He believes we need to invest in reducing the overcrowding in the jail as well as the Court systems. He believes this is the right thing to do and he supports the tax increase.

Dr. Sedores was the next to make a statement. She is one of the people that treats the addicted in our community. It starts with the small amount of money spent by the Federal Government on this problem. We need to fix this outside of jail. We need to treat the problem with programs to get them off the drugs. We need to identify the people at risk and working with the full community. This tax increase is little in comparison to what we spend on Narcan.

David Barker was the next to make a statement. He is asking them to pass the tax increase. We need it for daily government and to address the opioid epidemic. Twenty years ago when he moved here the County and City governments were well funded. The times have changed. He and his neighbors want to live in a safe community. We can't cut services and keep this community as it should be.

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Patrick Badgley was the next to make a statement. He moved here 51 years ago from Columbus, Ohio. His wife can no longer perform jail ministry. She is distraught over the fact that she cannot help these people. He hopes that they will throw politics aside and pass this to show the community that we will not give in to the drug issue.

Don Strietelmeier was the next to make a statement. He feels the three minute rule is unfair with such an important decision. On the opioid issue, he wants to know who is paying for the treatment. There were three members that voted against the increase but he has not heard why they are against this increase.

Kristen Brown was the next to make a statement. She looked at the Umbaugh Report. She believes that the revenues are going up consistently. The property tax is decreasing due to the caps. The CEDIT added in 2009 cost the tax payers five-million six-hundred-thousand dollars (\$5,600,000) to replace an eight-hundred-thousand dollar (\$800,000) deficit. Her recommendation would be that they due the Cumulative Capital Improvement tax next year and have the City give back the TIF revenue that they do not need.

Joe Lohmeyer was the next to make a statement. He has been involved with churches and other boards. He understands being short on revenue. He appreciates what they have done to prevent raising taxes, but he sees that it is time to raise taxes.

Mark Gorbett responded to some of the comments that were made. He agrees with Lisa Deaton that they need to be held responsible for this money. He wants to create a road map as to what will be done with this money. We have cut everything to the bone

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except the personnel. We did not see the opioid epidemic coming. They have not addressed things such as the Court House repairs and the Veteran's Monument. He commended Jeff Jones for his work as he knows it will save lives. He has a different view sitting on Council then he did as Sheriff. He knows that we cannot arrest our way out of the drug epidemic. We are on notice from the State that we are under staffed on Public Defenders. Less than two-percent (2%) of drug addicts go to counseling. Insurance does not pay for treatment. He thanked Lisa Deaton again.

Jorge Morales stated that while they do not have the exact direction of where the money will go but they will be voting on it. He does not have any control over the State or Federal government regarding their taxes. He would like to have the Doctor come back and educate them more on this issue. He asked Jeff Jones to explain where the funding comes from.

Jeff Jones stated that the State has a program called Recovery Works that is funding the problem.

Jorge Morales stated that Kristen Brown had addressed the additional income but not the additional expenses. In addition, she stated that she suggested getting more money from the TIF. The Council has done this on multiple occasions with no money being provided. We only have one Nurse covering three shifts in the jail.

Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence wanted to thank Jeff Jones. During the budget process there were no plans or costs as to opening the old portion of the jail. The budget

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was approved as is. She wanted to look at each salary and not give a three-percent (3%) across the board raise.

Bill Lentz stated that we are giving sixty-percent (60%) of the money to the City. He feels short term bonds would be a better way to go. We could do that for maintenance and Sheriff's cars. The budget was up twenty-five-percent (25%) and they cut over half of those increases.

Matt Miller asked what the Recovery Works would cover. Jeff Jones explained that it covers the cost of the counseling and the materials. It would cover just the Counselor. Passing this tax will not make the drug problem disappear. There is no plan as to where the money will be going. He cannot support this tax.

Laura DeDomenic stated that when she came on the Council we have had problems with the budgets. We have cut everything to the bones except employees. To reduce one-million dollars (\$1,000,000) in employees is at least twenty (20) employees. She could not find the departments that could stand to cut services by losing employees while still not addressing the jail staffing and court staffing issues. Bonding is simply borrowing money that we don't have the funds to pay back the loan. About one-third (1/3) of the tax increase will cover the budget deficit. To add the people we need to for a drug court and throughout the courts and the jail would be another twenty (20) people. Our buildings are falling apart and need to be maintained instead of waiting for them to fall down and build new buildings.

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Jorge Morales shared that a jail employee had showed a bruise where she had been hit by a bar thrown by an inmate. Lawsuits to the County by employees being hurt would be more than the increase in taxes. He finds that all the public chairs being full tonight is rare as there are very few people at the majority of the meetings.

Jorge Morales made a motion to increase the current LIT tax from 1.25 to 1.75. Mark Gorbett seconded the motion. The vote was 4-3 with Mark Gorbett, Jorge Morales, Laura DeDomenic and Chris Ogle in favor of and Matt Miller, Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence and Bill Lentz against. Matt Miller stated that if this tax is passed, he hopes it is spent diligently. Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence voted against because they have talked continually about a five (5) year plan but she has seen no updates on this. Mark Gorbett made a motion to modify the LIT allocation as Public Safety at .25, Economic Development at .25 and Certified Shares at 1.25. Jorge Morales seconded the motion. President DeDomenic asked for any questions and explained what the allocation was about. The vote was 4-3 with Mark Gorbett, Jorge Morales, Laura DeDomenic and Chris Ogle in favor of and Matt Miller, Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence and Bill Lentz against.

The next item on the agenda was the Second Reading of the Flatrock Township Trustee Budget as presented by Auditor Barbara Hackman. This is done by the County Council because she has two (2) Advisory Board Members that are volunteer fire fighters, requiring the Council to approve the Township budget. The General Fund is twenty-thousand seven-hundred-fifty dollars (\$20,750), Township Assistance is eight-thousand five-hundred dollars (\$8,500), Fire Fund is thirty-two-thousand five-hundred

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dollars (\$32,500) and Cumulative Fire is nineteen-thousand five-hundred dollars (\$19,500) for a grand total of eighty-one-thousand two-hundred-fifty dollars (\$81,250). President DeDomenic opened the meeting for public discussion. Hearing no comments, the public portion of the meeting was closed. Chris Ogle made a motion to approve the 2018 Flatrock Township Budget as presented. Mark Gorbett seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was the Second Reading of the Solid Waste 2018 Budget as presented by SWMA Director Heather Siesel. Personal Services is at one-million thirty-one thousand three-hundred-twenty-nine dollars (\$1,031,329), Supplies at eighty-thousand nine-hundred-thirty-seven dollars (\$80,937), Services and Other Charges at one-million nine-hundred-eighty-four-thousand dollars (\$1,984,000) and Capital Outlays at three-hundred-eighty-seven eight-hundred dollars (\$387,800) for a total budget of three-million four-hundred-eighty-four-thousand sixty-six dollars (\$3,484,066). It is down approximately one-hundred-thirty-one thousand dollars (\$131,000). They will need new cell construction in 2022. The public hearing of the meeting was opened and hearing no comments it was closed. Mark Gorbett made a motion to approve the budget as presented. Matt Miller seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The next item was the Second Reading of the Bartholomew County 2018 Budget as presented by Auditor Hackman.

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Jorge Morales made a motion to accept the 2018 Budget as presented. Mark Gorbett seconded the motion. The vote was 4-3 with Mark Gorbett, Jorge Morales, Laura DeDomenic and Chris Ogle in favor of and Matt Miller, Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence and Bill Lentz against.

The next items on the agenda were updates by the Council members regarding Boards and Commissions as follows:

Matt Miller:

Personnel Administrative Committee – nothing to report

Job Review/Classification Committee – nothing to report

Mark Gorbett:

Emergency Management Bd – nothing to report

Emergency Dispatch Services – nothing to report

Community Corrections Bd – nothing to report

Data Board – staff in place – nothing to report

Drug Epidemic Committee – nothing to report

Jorge Morales:

County Plan Commission – cancelled

Liaison to Sheriff's Merit Bd – nothing to report

Cols Economic Development Bd – nothing to report

Bartholomew County Redevelopment Commission – nothing to report

He has spent time with law enforcement and E911.

Laura DeDomenic:

Liaison to Health Bd – reviewed 2018 budget

Bartholomew County Redevelopment Commission – nothing to report

Columbus Economic Development Bd – Duke has given a grant for the County TIF area.

She also has met with Jeff Jones regarding plans about the drug problem.

Bill Lentz:

Job Review/Classification Committee – nothing to report

Personnel Administrative Committee – nothing to report

Cols Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Bd – nothing to report

Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence:

County Parks & Recreation Bd – parks are very busy.

Job Review/Classification Committee – nothing to report

Youth Services Center Advisory Committee – nothing to report

JDAI – nothing to report

Affordable Housing Meeting – nothing to report

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Chris Ogle:

County Extension Bd – nothing to report

Solid Waste Management District Bd – nothing to report

Auditor Hackman had nothing.

Chris Ogle made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Jorge Morales and passed unanimously.

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

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ATTEST: _____
Barbara J. Hackman, Auditor
Bartholomew County