

COUNTY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING – DECEMBER 1, 2003

The meeting was called to order by Brent Waltz, President.

I. ROLL CALL

The following members were present: Charlie Canary, Paul Reed, Ron West, R. J. McConnell, and Richard Mason. Keith Wright was not present. John P. Wilson was present as the Council's attorney.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. INVOCATION

IV. APPROVAL OF THE 12/01/03 AGENDA

Mr. Waltz requested the following addition and withdrawal:

- Add Juvenile Detention Center: request to transfer funds
- 2004 Salary Ordinance for Elected Officials: withdrawn

Mr. Canary moved to approve the agenda as presented including the amendments. Mr. West seconded the motion that carried unanimously.

V. APPROVAL OF THE 11/10/03 MINUTES

Mr. West moved to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Reed seconded the motion that carried unanimously.

Councilman, Keith Wright arrived at this time.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. West personally thanked Deborah Shutta, County Auditor for her dedicated eight years of service as Auditor. He noted of several times needing information and Mrs. Shutta always responded and was very helpful to him.

Mr. Waltz commented on behalf of all the Council members they also thanked Mrs. Shutta for her dedicated work as County Auditor.

Mr. Waltz explained the Council received a set of signed petitions concerning the Johnson Memorial Hospital. He read the following petition for the record.

*To the Johnson County Commissioners
The Johnson County Council Members
The Johnson Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees
The Johnson Memorial Hospital Medical Staff
The General Public*

By what right do Elected Officials ignore the will of their electors?

Since when do Elected Officials hold meetings behind closed doors to impose their own ideas contrary to those who trustfully voted them into office?

Do we have representative government of, for and by the people, or do we have a ruling class who has no regard for the will of those who gave them the opportunity to hold office?

Apparently the Commissioners and Council members think they own everything and the peoples' will, be darned.

We know of no citizen's wish to turn control of our local hospital over to a conglomerate in Tennessee.

There is nothing wrong with Johnson Memorial Hospital financially that it can't be fixed locally. It has had steady growth and improvements in services. Why do you suddenly wish to lease it to a conglomerate of questionable business ethics? What is in this deal for Elected Officials? What ever was discussed behind closed doors must have been a sweet deal for government officials because it offers nothing for average citizens who will see a rise in hospital bills and cuts in services.

This controversy has created such a stir in the community, we are sure the electorate will remember this breach of trust on all coming elections. We ask you not to privatize.

Mr. Waltz commented there are no sweet deals or behind closed doors meetings. He noted that every single member of the Council, Commissioners, and Hospital Boards would be working diligently to find out what is in the best interest of all the people of Johnson County. There has been a task force formed to address all issues and concerns.

VII. SALARY ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS, ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS, REDUCTIONS, & TRANSFERS:

Mr. Canary moved to approve the following requests as submitted.

SUPERIOR COURT NO. 2 – (133)

From: #133-302.0 – Travel & Training (\$ 400.00)

To: #133-216.0 – Books \$ 400.00

CIRCUIT COURT – (131)

From: #131-302.0 – Guardian Ad Litem (\$ 1,500.00)

To: #131-114.1 – Part-time GAL \$ 1,500.00

COUNTY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING – DECEMBER 1, 2003 – (cont.)

AUDITOR – (102)

From: #102-331.0 – Printing (\$ 500.00)
To: #102-216.0 – Office Supplies \$ 500.00

PARK NON-REVERTING – (271)

From: #271-410.0 – Equipment (\$ 6,000.00)
To: #271-210.0 – Supplies \$ 6,000.00

ANIMAL SHELTER – (219)

From: #219-441.0 – Van Cages (\$ 4,150.00)
To: #219-350.0 – Communications \$ 150.00
To: #219-225.0 – Operating Supplies \$ 4,000.00
From: #219-445.0 – Vehicles (\$ 2,300.00)
To: #219-221.0 – Vehicle Maintenance Supplies \$ 2,300.00
From: #219-441.0 – Van Cages (\$ 1,800.00)
From: #219-113.2 – Deputy Warden (\$ 5,000.00)
To: #219-113.3 – Kennel Attendant \$ 6,800.00

PLEASANT TOWNSHIP ASSESSOR (112) PLAT MAP MAINT. (904)

From: #112-390.0 – Dues (\$ 370.00)
From: #112-323.0 – Travel (\$ 105.00)
From: #112-213.0 – Supplies (\$ 160.00)
To: #112-410.0 – Office Equipment \$ 635.00
From: #904-311.0 – Professional Services (Plsnt.) (\$ 590.00)
From: #904-316.0 – Travel & Training (Plsnt.) (\$ 153.00)
To: #904-440.0 – Office Equipment \$ 743.00

COURTHOUSE – (123)

From: #123-117.0 – Salary Custodian (\$ 4,500.00)
To: #123-114.0 – Part-time \$ 4,500.00

PROSECUTOR DEFERRAL PROGRAM – (327)

#327-313.0 – Deferral Program Participants \$ 1,123.45
#327-312.0 – Dues & Subscriptions \$ 865.00
#327-215.0 – Office Supplies \$ 1,000.00

MUSEUM – (125)

From: #125-323.0 – Travel & Training (\$ 300.00)
To: #125-413.0 – Office Equipment \$ 300.00

JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER – (140)

From: #140-222.0 – Food (\$ 4,000.00)
To: #140-340.0 – Utilities \$ 4,000.00

Mr. Mason seconded the motion that carried unanimously.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS – (122)

Joseph Pitcher, County Attorney, appeared to request additional appropriations for Professional Services (\$17,755.00) and Postage (\$10,000.00). He distributed and reviewed the Professional Services original budget, actual expenditures and unanticipated expenses for 2003.

Mr. Canary questioned the money that is being paid to the litigation attorney and asked if the county attorney could do some of the work.

Mr. Pitcher explained with the various changes in the appointed positions made by the Commissioners he is currently overseeing the Planning Department. The Highway Director, John Price will be staying at the Highway Department until the Commissioners have filled the position. Mr. Pitcher noted once the new Highway Director is appointed he will become the Fleet Director without additional compensation.

Mr. Canary asked when the new Plan Director is appointed will the salary be adjusted accordingly.

Mr. Pitcher commented they are currently receiving applications for the Plan Director. Mr. Waltz noted the salary would most likely depend on the individual's experience and education.

Mr. Mason moved to approve \$17,755 for Professional Services. Mr. Reed seconded the motion that carried unanimously.

#122-303.0 – Professional Services \$ 17,755.00

Mr. Pitcher explained that earlier in the year a transfer of \$20,000 was done to cover the shortage for postage, however \$10,000 is still needed.

Mr. McConnell moved to approve the request as presented. Mr. Canary seconded the motion that carried unanimously.

#122-322.0 – Postage \$ 10,000.00

MUSEUM – (125)

Mary Ann Plummer, Museum Director, appeared to request an additional appropriation for Utilities. She noted the request was for \$6,000 but because gas and electric bills have decreased she asked to lower the amount to \$2,500.

Mr. Mason suggested approving \$3,000 in order to be sure there are sufficient funds for the remainder of the year.

Mr. West moved to approve \$3,000 for Utilities. Mr. Reed seconded the motion that carried six to one, Mr. Mason voted nay.

COUNTY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING – DECEMBER 1, 2003 – (cont.)

#125-342.0 – Utilities

\$ 3,000.00

Mr. Waltz commended Mrs. Plummer for the twenty years of service with the county since she will be retiring the first part of 2004.

TREASURER – (103)

Jan Richhart, Treasurer, appeared to request salary ordinance amendments for her First Deputy and three other Deputies. She explained the additional funds would be transferred from two Deputy line items that had left the county. She filled one position at a lower salary and the other has not yet been filled. The increase would be a one-time pay for the outstanding job that the staff has done.

Mr. Wright asked if the Council granted an additional appropriation to the Treasurer for part-time help.

Mrs. Richhart responded she did receive additional money for part-time last month in the amount of \$5,000. She is requesting to transfer \$1,187.12 into part-time from the excess line items also.

Mr. Wright commented he would like to see the excess funds revert back to county general to replenish the additional appropriations that were approved earlier for part-time.

Mr. West moved to approve the request as presented. Mr. McConnell seconded the motion.

Mr. Reed commented he feels the Treasurer is doing a very good job, however he would be voting against the request because the Council was not able to increase the Sheriff Deputy's salary.

The motion carried five to two, Mr. Wright and Mr. Reed voted nay.

(effective 11/26/03)

#103-112.0 – First Deputy \$27,800 to \$29,500

#103-113.1 – Deputy \$21,553 to \$22,053

#103-113.2 – Deputy \$23,150 to \$25,120.68

#103-113.5 – Deputy \$21,659 to \$22,159

From: #103-113.3 – Deputy (\$ 3,964.91)

From: #103-113.4 – Deputy (\$ 1,892.89)

To: #103-112.0 – First Deputy \$ 1,700.00

To: #103-113.1 – Deputy \$ 500.00

To: #103-113.2 – Deputy \$ 1,970.68

To: #103-113.5 – Deputy \$ 500.00

To: #103-114.0 – Clerical Assistants \$ 1,187.12

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

Health Department – Clarification of the Fees for the use of Credit Cards

John Bonsett, Health Director, appeared to clarify the minutes of August 11, 2003. He stated the Council approved at the August meeting to allow the Health Department to accept payments with a bankcard or credit card. The minutes also stated the department is discussing an overall fee increase for their services to help offset the credit card's service charges. He explained that was not the intent for an increase. The department is reviewing their fee ordinance in certain accounts but not to pay for the credit card services. They will be paying the services charge from their approved Health Department budget.

Rainy Day Fund (see minutes 11/10/03)

Mr. Waltz explained the Council tabled the proposed resolution for the Rainy Day Fund in order to have the exact language granting the Council greater authority in allocating the funding.

Mr. McConnell noted the proposed language was in the fourth paragraph that was limiting the use of the fund.

The new language for paragraph four reads as follows:

4. The Johnson County Council hereby intends to utilize its decision-making power regarding fiscal affairs and set priorities for allocation and expenditure of the "Rainy Day Fund" as deemed necessary to best serve the residents of Johnson County

Mr. McConnell moved to approve the Resolution to Establish a "Rainy Day Fund" including the new language. Mr. Mason seconded the motion that carried unanimously.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

2004 Sheriff's Contract

John P. Wilson, Council Attorney, noted the 2004 contract is exactly the same as the 2003.

Mr. Canary moved to approve the 2004 Sheriff's Contract. Mr. Reed seconded the motion that carried unanimously.

Alternative Revenue Sources

Mr. Waltz explained the Council has had several discussions involving ways to potentially raise revenue. One of things the Council collectably as a body agreed to do would be to occasionally revisit the issue each year. Mr. Waltz requested to include on the January Council Agenda under "Old Business", Discussion of Alternative Revenue Sources. He did note that he was not indicating he was for any type of additional taxes in fact he is opposed to any tax increase during a recession.

COUNTY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING – DECEMBER 1, 2003 – (cont.)

Mr. McConnell commented as the Council discusses revenue sources next month another issue is the elimination of the inventory taxes and what impact that will have on the county's finances. He knows of other counties that have employed CPA firms to create a breakdown of how much the inventory tax has brought into their county. He suggested that the body of the Council might want to do the same thing. By having the information this could give them an idea of what kind of impact this will have and the best way to replace the lost revenue.

Mr. West noted the only major mechanism the Council has to offset the lost inventory tax is the EDIT tax. One of the problems with the EDIT tax concept is that as the inventory tax is phased out the assessed valuation changes, which increases the tax rate. As an example real property taxes such as apartments would increase then the owners would pass the increase on to the renters. The renters would be paying the new EDIT tax along with increased rent.

Mr. Mason informed the Council that Mr. West received a Silver Certificate from the Association of Indiana Counties (AIC) for his participation in their conferences. Mr. West commented the AIC seminars are very informative for county officials.

Mr. Waltz commended the Council for the last year of being respectable to each other even over controversial issues.

There being no further business, Mr. McConnell moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Mason seconded the motion that carried unanimously.