

**DEKALB COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING**

June 1, 2020

The following Council Members were present:

President Richard Ring  
Vice President William VanWye  
Member Eldonna King – ATTENDED ELECTRONICALLY  
Member Robert E. Krafft  
Member Martha Grimm  
Member David Yarde – ATTENDED ELECTRONICALLY  
Member Amy Demske

Others present: Auditor Jan Bauman  
Attorney Donald J Stuckey

*Due to the State’s temporary relaxation of meeting rules allowing members to attend the meeting electronically and still be allowed to vote (due to COVID-19), three members chose this option. They are denoted above.*

Eldonna King opened the meeting with prayer at 8:32 a.m.

**MATTER OF MINUTES**

William VanWye made a motion to approve minutes dated May 4, 2020. Martha Grimm seconded, and all approved.

**MATTER OF ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS**

There were no additional appropriations for consideration.

**MATTER OF TRANSFERS**

Martha Grimm made a motion to approve the Clerk’s \$9,000 transfer from Postage (33220) to Elect Forms/Paper (22120) within County General. Eldonna King seconded. A roll call vote was taken as shown below. Motion carried.

R. Ring – Aye	M. Grimm - Aye
W. VanWye – Aye	D. Yarde – Aye
E. King – Aye	A. Demske - Aye
R. Krafft - Aye	

**MATTER OF COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS BUDGETS**

Community Corrections’ Finance and QA Manager Bonnie Emerson presented the department’s fiscal budget for the Juvenile Grant Fund. The budget is for \$88,868 and is the same that has been asked for in previous years. Salaries are split between the Grant and Ordinance Fund. There were no raises in this budget pending guidance from the Council. Any increases will be paid out of the Juvenile Ordinance Fund budget. It is a fiscal budget that runs July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. Community Corrections is expecting approval from the State at any time.

Eldonna King made a motion to approve the \$88,868 budget for the Juvenile Grant Fund for fiscal year 20/21. William VanWye seconded. A roll call vote was taken as shown below. Motion carried.

R. Ring – Aye	M. Grimm - Aye
W. VanWye – Aye	D. Yarde – Aye
E. King – Aye	A. Demske - Aye
R. Krafft - Aye	

#### **MATTER OF COMMISSIONERS-COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

**Community Corrections:** There are some mechanical problems yet at the facility. The yard work has been determined. Community Corrections has opened back up, and there are 7 clients. There are many punch list items that need to be addressed.

**Reopening County buildings to the public:** Beginning today, June 1<sup>st</sup>, the County buildings are open to the public without appointment. Patrons must wear face masks and use hand sanitizer upon entry.

**Development Services:** The new Building Inspector was introduced. His name is Jeff Martin. A vehicle has been purchased for the building inspector. The computerized permitting program has been purchased, and training is going to begin on Wednesday. The office has a lot of repairs that need to be addressed. Alternatives are being considered, and a new option will be discussed this afternoon during the Commissioners' meeting. William VanWye asked that the Commissioners think about whether the department could be moved to the same sight as the Highway in the future before putting a lot of money into the building. Richard Ring suggested the Commissioners create a comprehensive plan for all of the County buildings and determine where all departments should be located to prevent the County from being forced into costly, immediate solutions. William Hartman explained that the Commissioners are trying to find a less expensive, temporary fix for Development Services.

**Code Enforcement Officer:** The Commissioners believe it may be time to hire a Code Enforcement Officer. The position would be part time and driven by complaint. The position would not be created to look for code violators. There is a property in Corunna that has a stockpile of old tires which is a mosquito and fire hazard. The position would be built into the 2021 budget if Council allows and would be under the supervision of Chris Gaumer. An ordinance could be written to create a ticketing system. Violations would end up as a lien on the property. We could look at surrounding counties to see how they have their ordinances set up. Auditor Bauman needs to look into whether the LITED Fund can pay payroll or be transferred to another fund to reimburse payroll expenses for the position.

**Resurfacing CR 40 between CR 55 and SR 1:** County Road 40 is in serious need of repair between County Road 55 and State Road 1, mainly due to the truck traffic to and from SDI. The DeKalb County Redevelopment Commission is willing to assist with the road resurfacing from the SDI TIF Fund up to an amount of \$400,000. An additional appropriation will be coming before Council soon.

**Prospective Highway property:** President Ring advised the Commissioners that prior to any purchase of the property at CR 427 and CR 32 that they should have the current owner rezone the property from commercial to industrial. That way, if the County is not stuck with a property they cannot use if it cannot be rezoned to industrial. The Commissioners have to go through the process of negotiating a price before they can even ask the owner to rezone it.

Also, President Ring recommended that the Commissioners create a plan for the County Farm property so the long term use of it is determined. If the jail and highway are located out there, a second access point from County Road 40 will be required because of the number of people working or living on the property. The cost for utilities and a road would not all be attributed to the Highway's relocation.

President Hartman said if the Highway is put on the County Farm property, it will need to be located on the north end of the property, and therefore, utilities will have to be installed since the utilities from Community Corrections are too far away. Estimated addition of utilities is \$1 million. Discussion ensued whether the Highway Department should be located on County Road 34 as opposed to the County Farm.

Attorney Stuckey said it is the job of the Commissioners to propose a plan for the purchase of property. It is Council's job to either approve it or disapprove it. Council should not take part in the planning.

**Employee Health Insurance:** Gallagher has talked the insurance company down to 18% from 28%. There is a phone call this afternoon to talk further with PHP about options. Last week a local company gave a presentation about a completely different type of cost sharing for medical costs. One thing the Commissioners are really looking at is beginning a clinic for employees, and are investigating the possibility of partnering with a local company to share the cost of one.

#### **MATTER OF DEKALB COUNTY AIRPORT UPDATE**

Although no one from the Airport Board was present for the meeting, a brief was sent to Council members.

The Airport has advertised the County Road 62 Road Extension Project for bids. They are still expecting federal grant money this year to complete the project.

With approval from the Commissioners, the Airport would like to proceed with the acquisition of the final home along County Road 31 needed for the runway extension. This is the Haley home just north of the Dickmeyer home they just purchased.

#### **GUIDANCE TO DEPARTMENT HEADS REGARDING 2021 BUDGET PREPARATION**

Council is going to need to be extremely conservative this year because of the unknowns with income due to COVID-19. President Ring suggest that the budget be kept to a 1.5% increase. Dotty Miller will be reviewing the 5 categories from the wage study as well as the survey of Indiana counties to help Council determine what types of increases should be made to wages. The Highway Department is facing more immediate decreases in income because there is less gas tax coming in. The State is talking about relaxing the 50/50 rule between restricted and unrestricted monies temporarily. Budget presentations will be August 11-12.

#### **PLANNING FOR UPCOMING TAX ABATEMENT COMMITTEE OBLIGATIONS**

A list has been prepared for the Property Tax Abatement Committee to conduct site visits for companies seeking to continue their abatements for pay 2021. The Abatement Committee will meet on July 6, 2020, at 8:10 a.m. to discuss its recommendation to Council regarding compliance of companies with respective abatements.

#### **MAY 2020 SUPPLEMENTAL LOCAL INCOME TAX DISTRIBUTION**

The State has distributed a supplemental local income tax. It is based on the local income tax rates imposed within the qualifying county as of December 31 of the trust account balance year. For the 2020 supplemental distribution, this date would be December 31, 2018. County General received \$719,787, LITED received \$241,770, LIT Public Safety received \$231,927, and the Local Income Tax Property Tax Relief received \$878,877 on May 13, 2020.

**CARES FUNDING FOR COVID-19 EXPENSES VERSUS FEMA**

Auditor Bauman will be meeting with Homeland Security Director Jason Meek next week to discuss the CARES funding the County will be eligible to receive for COVID-19 expense compared with utilizing FEMA for COVID-19 expenses. There is a lot of information to comb through. More to come as that information is researched. President Ring mentioned he learned that the FEMA funding has been streamlined, so hopefully FEMA reimbursements won't take as long as they used to. CARES money can now be used as the 25% match for FEMA reimbursements.

**MATTER OF ADJOURNMENT**

Amy Demske made a motion to adjourn at 10:50 a.m. Second by David Yarde, and all approved.

DEKALB COUNTY COUNCIL:

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Richard Ring, President

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William VanWye, Vice President

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Eldonna King

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Robert E. Krafft

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Martha Grimm

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David Yarde

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Amy Demske

ATTEST:

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Jan Bauman  
DeKalb County Auditor