

## **Decatur County Council Meeting**

Tuesday, March 21, 2017, Room 106

**Present:** Ernie Gauck, Danny Peters, Judge John Westhafer, Kenny Hooten, Kenny Owens, Bill Metz and Larry Meyer

**President Gauck** called the meeting to order. David Fry lead the group in the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag.

After Council members reviewed the February 21<sup>st</sup> meeting minutes, Mr Owens moved to approve the minutes as corrected and Mr Metz seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0.

Mr Charles E Emsweller asked Council members to reconsider the \$50 wheel tax fee on automobiles, specifically antique cars. He has four cars that sit in his garage most of the time, yet the antique plate fees are the same as plate fees for a regular car- \$83.35 each. Mr Gauck stated it's hard to separate antique from the regular cars since 'an antique car' only has to be twenty-five years or older to be an antique car. Mr Gauck will research to see how many antique car plates are sold in Decatur County. During the discussion, Mr Peters stated the Council couldn't change wheel tax or surtax rates for 2017; if they would do anything, it is effective January 1, 2018.

**Board of Health Officer Dr Arthur Alunday, BOH President Alice Hardebeck, BOH member Dr James Howell, Environmentalist Sean Durbin, Sanitarian Alan Crosby, County Nurse Diane Stewart, BOH Office Manager Carol Beck and local Pharmacist Nick Peters** were present to discuss the impact of any further budget reductions in 2017. The **2017 Budget Order** requires their Council-approved budget of \$360,319 be reduced to \$307,403. Dr Alunday believes cuts already made will impair the abilities of the Health Department. Dr Howell stated they need to maintain the current levels of services. Mr Durbin explained the 'loan' discussed in the Council's February meeting isn't an option since it would have to be repaid by December 31, 2017. He stated their petition for an 'additional appropriation of \$80,000' is following the recommendation of **Wayne Hudson, DLGF Field Representative** to Decatur County Auditor. Mr Durbin stated they do understand the **DLGF** may or may not approve their petition. Mr Gauck told the group he wants to make it clear- the Council members are not against the Health Department. They were hoping in time, the Health Department would get more efficient- do the same with less money as all departments have had to do. Mr Durbin said he is currently working on several applications for various available grants in hopes of supplementing their revenues. Mr Hooten asked where will you be financially in 2018. Mr Durbin answered the increases in various fees charged by the Health Department should help their revenues by \$55,000, conservatively speaking. They should have a balanced budget in 2018. Mr Hooten asked if anyone from the Health Department has sat down with anyone from the Hospital (DCMH) to see if there are any overlapping programs/expenses to eliminate or share which would help both groups. Mr Owens moved to approve \$50,000 in additional appropriations for the Health Department and Mr Westhafer seconded the motion. Mr Westhafer, Mr Metz, Mr Owens, Mr Peters and Mr Hooten voted yea; while Mr Meyer voted nay. Motion carries, 6-1. Mr Peters asked Mr Durbin why the Health Department doesn't give detailed activity reports to the Council either monthly or quarterly like other departments do. Mr Durbin will see what reports he can provide.

**County Assessor Doreen Greiwe** explained in detail the reason she is petitioning the Council for an additional appropriation of \$12,500. **Honda** filed an appeal requesting a \$30,000,000 reduction on their 2015 pay 2016 real estate assessment. Her office has to defend those values/assessments, which involves hiring a consultant, an appraiser and/or an attorney. If Honda doesn't 'settle/compromise' or drop their appeal, it could cost about \$80,000 for an appraisal on their property. Ms Greiwe stated the original abatements granted to Honda are expiring, so now Honda is critiquing everything. Mr Gauck and Mr Owens suggested she attend the next County TIF meeting, which is March 28<sup>th</sup> at 5:50 p m, to request funding to cover costs of a consultant, appraiser and/or an attorney.

**Sheriff Greg Allen** presented an "Amended 144" Statement of Salaries, for the positions of Chief Deputy, Lieutenant, and Sergeant. The base pay for each rank has been incorrect for a couple of years and

Sheriff Allen would like to get those pays back on track. Mr Metz moved to approve the Amended 144, retroactive to January 1, 2017. Mr Meyer seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0.

After reviewing several requests for transferring of monies, Mr Hooten moved to approve and Mr Peters seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0.

Mr Metz made a motion to appoint Ryan Kennelly to the **Area Plan Commission** as their second appointee. Mr Hooten seconded the motion. Motion carries 6 -0. Council members had appointed Mr Kennelly to the APC at their February 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, but since the appointment was on their agenda they appointed him again.

With all Council members present, Mr Gauck opened the floor for nomination of officers for the Council. Mr Metz moved to appoint Mr Gauck as President and Mr Owens seconded the nomination. Mr Peters moved to close the nominations for President and Mr Hooten seconded the motion. Mr Owens moved to appoint Mr Peters to the position of Vice President and Mr Hooten seconded the motion. Mr Hooten moved to close the nominations and Mr Metz seconded the motion. Motions carried. President Gauck and Vice President Peters will serve in their positions, each, for a two-year term.

With nothing else to come before the Council, Mr Peters moved to adjourn and Mr Hooten seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned.

The next County Council meeting will be held at 9:00 a.m. on April 18th, 2017.

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Ernest Gauck, President

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Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_