

WHEREAS, in the opinion of the County Auditor, the public interests required that the Lake County Council, should be called to meet in special session at this time, for the purpose of considering the budgets for the Year 2015, a written notice was sent to each member of the Council, and proper advertisement made, and all other acts performed in accordance with the laws governing such matters.

And now in obedience to such call, come Ted Bilski, President, David Hamm, Jerome Prince, Daniel Dernulc, Christine Cid, and Eldon Strong, County Councilpersons, together with Ray Szarmach, County Council Attorney. Councilwoman Elsie Franklin was absent.

OPEN: County Council Recommendations Discussions, and Actions

Bilski passed out a paper in reference to the 911 budget. He said Mr. Blanchard and the 911 Committee were looking at these costs. He said the 2013 cost for the County was \$11.60. This is the cost to the taxpayer, per call. He said, if you look at the 911 call by 2013 in Lake County, based on that budget from the general funds, the cost is \$9.69 per call. The breakdown in the numbers, per call cost to the taxpayer, in 2013 for the following Communities of St. John, Schererville, and Cedar Lake. You can see that St. John is \$21.81, Schererville is \$16.20, Cedar Lake is \$15.78. This is the cost per call. Bilski said these are actual costs to our actual levy, taxpayer cost per call.

Cid asked, this is just the County, not all of the Cities and Towns?

Bilski said, correct. He just wanted to pass this information out so when people question what the County is doing. He said they want to be able to provide those high quality radio performance for the safety of the Officers on the street, we want to be able to make sure that the calls aren't dropped, and we can handle everything, and make sure that they have the right tools for their jobs, and the cost is efficient.

Bilski said that this is the 8th run, and the actions that were taken on October 7th are included.

Dante said, as a reminder this is the annual "no action" by the Council activity, to actually expose, and take off from the revenue side, the appeals. There are 2 appeals, that have been approved, they are at the maximum amount. You have to take them out of their "resting" area, and put them into the bottom line, and when you do that, it's going to "flip" your bottom line from a balance, to a negative, which is equal to your appeal. It's just a maneuver, we have to submit a deficit budget to the State, it's required by the State, and it has to equal to your 2 appeals, at their maximum amounts.

He told the Council not to be concerned when you see a negative today, we just have to take it out of it's "resting" area, and put it into it's proper place, and when you do that, you flip to the minus of \$9,968,926, which are your 2 appeals.

Dante said you have to show a negative on the bottom line, otherwise you won't win the appeal. You have no chance of an appeal because if your budget is balanced, why are you appealing?

Dante said, you will essentially be moving some line items from the general fund to CEDIT, and some line items from CEDIT to the general fund.

Bridges and Drains will go over to CEDIT, and CEDIT will eject something over to the Commissioners.

Strong made a motion, seconded by Prince to re-visit the 3% employee salary increase. The majority voted "Yes", Franklin, and Dernulc were "absent". Motion to re-visit carried 5-yes, 2-absent.

Strong said, I have some issues, only because I think it's unfair. We have a lot of employees, the majority of them are \$28,000. Strong said he thinks they deserve a little bit more of an increase, and he thinks the ones on the higher end salary, don't need as much. He said he has had discussions with his colleagues about different variations of schedules, and how we can address, and approach this.

Cid said that she thought about giving those who make \$28,000, or less a 4%, and giving everybody else 3%, and giving those making over \$60,000 2%, to make up the difference for the lower ones that are under \$28,000. She said there has also been employees who have received pay increases in different percentages, and who have also received increases in their supplemental pay, so the thought was that either they should be excluded from the 3%, those who have gotten above that 3%, or equal or above to that 3%, that they should be excluded from the base pay increase.

Bilski said so the motion is to reduce the percent raise, across the board, apply 4% to anyone making under \$30,000?

Strong said, my original plan was anyone under \$28,000 should get 4%. \$28,000 to 40,000, would be a 3%, and \$40,000 and over would be a 2% increase. Cid seconded the motion.

Prince said Strong has worked diligently on this, and Cid has expressed similar interest in the past. Prince said the only thing that he would say is that on the surface, it seems like a good gesture for some employees. When you consider the total amount of savings, it's basically a symbolic gesture that pretty much is equivalent of what we've done with salaries in the past. He said he thinks a better way is to go along the route of what we are proposing to do with the Judges, and unfortunately, the only unfortunately part for me, is that I won't have a part in it, one way, or the other, but I think a schedule, as we suggested with the Judges, or some sort of compensation plan that's consistent, I think would eliminate not only the issue today, but in the future. The problem has been consistency, whether it's with the sporadic pays that exist, of the different levels of supplemental pay, it's inconsistency at best. Prince said, even with a motion, such as this, I think you again will have some employees that will be happy, and some who will not be.

Prince said he wanted to appeal to the Council to "stay the course". We've done really good work this year, coming out of what was potentially a deficit, and achieved a balanced budget. We've settled some really big issues with the Judges.

Strong said when you have some secretaries in the County, in one department making \$24,000, and in another department making \$40,000, it's unfair.

Dernulc agrees with Strong, ...(inaudible, the fire alarm is going off)...

Prince said this doesn't achieve the position of fairness, I think if anything, it just exacerbates the issue that currently exists, and that's a pay scale that has no consistency.

Cid rescinded her second.

Dernulc seconded the motion.

Dernulc, Cid, and Strong voted "Yes". Hamm, Prince, and Bilski voted "No". Motion failed 3yes, 3-no.

There was a motion to recess because the fire alarm was sounding and everyone had to leave the building until they find out for reason for the fire alarm going off.

Cid spoke about positions that have been vacant, she said, there are 11 positions, and eliminating the positions and moving the money to Insurance. She said these positions are in the general fund, and are not contractual or statutory positions.

Cid made a motion to eliminate vacant positions, that have been vacant for more than 6 months, there are 11 positions. Strong seconded the motion.

Cid wanted to correct her motion, that anything that's not Contractual, or Statutorily required.

Cid said, and these positions are not.

Attorney Szarmach wanted to clarify the motion by asking Cid, these positions, as of today?

Cid said, as of today.

Attorney Szarmach said, as of today. You want to remove from the 2015 budget, all positions that have been vacant, as of today?

Cid said, no, they don't have to be eliminated today.

Attorney Szarmach said, if you want to remove a position, or add a position to any current budget, you have to do it with a 144, which you can do.

Cid asked, so you are saying we have to type up some revised 144's?

Attorney Szarmach answered, right, to eliminate a position, whether vacant, or not. What you are doing is amending the 2014 Salary Ordinance.

Bilski asked, would it be easier if we said, those positions will be frozen, as of today, and then, in 2015, it would be eliminated?

Dante said, correct.

Attorney Szarmach said those positions in the 2014 budget, that have been vacant for 6 months, as of today, that would be your motion.

Dante said there would be a freeze, and elimination combination.

Bilski said, and then they would be eliminated in 2015.

Cid made a motion, the 11 vacant positions be placed in a hiring freeze, those positions are frozen, and then eliminated effective January 1, 2015. Strong seconded the motion.

Dante said just reconfirm again that these positions are not statutory, he checked them again.

Cid said it's a half million dollar savings.

Dante said it will go right over to Insurance.

The majority voted "Yes". Franklin was "absent". Motion carried 6-yes, 1-absent.

The following 11 positions will be eliminated in 2015:

- Position 0600-11727
- Position 0300-16058
- Position 2400-12420
- Position 3000-18817
- Position 4000-13608
- Position 4030-12427
- Position 4030-12536
- Position 4040-12537
- Position 4050-15528
- Position 4200-12433
- Position 4200-12433

Hamm made a motion, seconded by Cid to reduce the following:

- 001-2900-44520 by \$460,000**
- 001-2900-44530 by \$424,000**
- 001-2900-44510 by \$16,000**
- 001-2900-43650 by \$1,969,000 for a total of \$2,869,000.**

The majority voted "Yes". Franklin was "absent". Motion carried 6-yes, 1-absent.

Cid made a motion, seconded by Hamm to reduce the following:

- 012-2900-41230 by \$1,784,768**
- 012-2900-41240 by \$1,084,232**
- And Increase the following:**
- 001-2900-41230 by \$1,784,769**
- 001-2900-41240 by \$1,084,232**

The majority voted "Yes". Franklin was "absent". Motion carried 6-yes, 1-absent.

There being no further business to come before the Council, it was moved and seconded that the Council does now adjourn, to meet again as required by law.

President, Lake County Council

Attest:

Peggy Holinga Katona,
Lake County Auditor

