

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 First Reading of budgets for Year 2016, 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, Elsie Franklin, Jamal Washington, Daniel Dernulc, Christine Cid, and Eldon Strong, County Councilpersons, together with Ray Szarmach, County Council Attorney.

OPEN: County Council Recommendations, Discussions, and Actions

President Bilski said that this is the 6th run of the 2016 budgets. This will be the First Reading of the budgets.

Bilski said that there will be a presentation from Community Corrections Department.

Kellie Bittorf, who is the Executive Director, and Mark Murphy, who is Director of Operations were present.

Kellie said that they took over the Sheriff's Work Release on 6-15-14. She said that at the time, there were 45 offenders who transferred over into their custody. She said 28 were felonies offenders, and 17 misdemeanor offenders.

Kellie said 28 felony offenders could have been in their custody at the State expense. Any felony offenders can be absorbed through Community Corrections, through the State Grant. Prior to that, Community Corrections did not have Pre-Trial, or Misdemeanant Programs, or populations, so those are 2 Programs that they created to help the County save taxpayer dollars. She said it has gone very well since then, they have served a total of 110 Misdemeanants, through Pre-Trial, and also the newly created Veteran's Treatment Court. She said they have worked very closely with Judge Cantrell, and recently received certification through the Indiana Judicial Center.

She said that Program has exploded, and they just recently hit the 50 person offender mark. She said they are excited about working with Judge Moss.

She said they serve the felony population in the Pre-Trial and Veterans Treatment Court as well. From June 1, 2015, to June 30, 2015, which is 695 days, based on the amount of days serve, equals 14,265 days served, based on assuming if they had all spent, and this is just an assumption, not that they would have, but if they had all spent those days in the Lake County Jail, she was told the current per diem, or the 2014 Per diem, is 102 days in the Jail, that's a savings to the taxpayers of almost \$1.5 million dollars.

Kellie said, and that's through Work Release, primarily through Work Release, and also (inaudible).

Dernulc asked again, you said that's a savings of \$1.5 million dollars?

Kellie said, correct.

Dernulc asked, and you have taken over for the Work Release, and how has that worked for you?

Kellie said it has worked really well. We work with all of the Courts, the Felony Courts, County, and City Courts.

Dernulc asked do you have any people "push back" on you, as it relates to, getting rid of that, (inaudible)?

She said that only one we've met with after the transition, we met with all of the Courts, the only one that we're not receiving referrals from are the Gary Courts, and Kellie said, "I am not certain why that's happening, to be honest".

Dernulc asked, you still are not?

Kellie said, we are not, so those are continuing to be at the Jail.

Dernulc asked, is that Gary City Court?

Kellie answered, yes.

She said they are also doing community service. The Sheriff calls it Community Service, we call it Community Outreach. She said that she meant to bring a copy of their annual report that they submit to

the Department of Corrections, which is we operate on fiscal year, July 1 to June 30th. She said she will forward each Councilperson a copy. She said they reported 14,500 hours of Community Outreach that was completed by their offenders, and that was to about 20 places in the Lake County communities. She said they provide service to all of the County buildings. They provide service to the old Lake County Jail, Gary Sanitation Department, Gary Recycling, Gary Street Department, Safety Village, numerous churches. She said they do lawn care for Commissioners. They have empty lots that we do lawn care service. We re-did the Jury room, and the Courtroom and tables for Judge Cappas, and Judge Vasquez. We have a lot of talent in our building, so we provided those services. She said based on 10 hours, just did an average of \$10 per hr, that's \$145,000 dollars labor, she didn't include benefits or any of that, so great taxpayer dollars savings there.

Bilski asked the assistance to the outside taxing units, who is... Merrillville, Hobart, Crown Point, Lowell, I mean?

Kellie said we provide, and we have offered, anyone can call us, and we'll provide the services, so it's always available, so if they call us, we will provide that for them. She said it has to be non-profit, or government.

Hamm asked, is there anyway that you feel overwhelmed with what you're doing?

Kellie said, no, not at all.

Franklin asked how much money are we sending out of the County, as it relates to, for instance, how much money do we have to pay out(inaudible)?

Kellie said we are contracted with Sentinel, for the bracelets, and on average, she believes their cost for the RF, they use RF's primarily, and pay \$2.50 per bracelet. She said that's their actual cost, but they charge more to the offender, and she believes it's like \$4.60 for GPS.

Franklin asked, so you are saying that \$2.50?

Kellie said, yes, \$2.50.

Franklin asked, for the bracelets?

Kellie said, correct.

Franklin said, basically, she is looking at how much money are we paying for this service, out of State, that does not come back to us in the County, Franklin said, that's what I'm asking.

Bilski asked what is the name of the company that you are contracted with?

Kellie said, it's Sentinel, out of California. But there is no local company in Indiana, or within the County that we could actually lease equipment from, at that cost. Not at \$2.50. She said we provide all Lake County employees who do field work and the Case Manager, for the actual equipment, as far as she knows, the other local company, they also utilize the out of State company to get the equipment.

She said they can further discuss that in a meeting next week that Councilman Washington set up.

Franklin said we had a Program that was call, Adopt a Park, years ago. That took place under the Sheriff at that time, Sheriff Dominguez, where they adopted Parks in certain communities. Franklin asked, do you still have such a Program?

Kellie said, we do not, but we would be willing to be involved in that. She said those are the things that their clients like being involved in, and they take great pride in those types of things.

Franklin said that was under Community Corrections, they are the ones that were doing that. Kellie said, she remembers that. Kellie said that all it takes is a phone call.

Bilski said, there may be additional questions, and you have a meeting scheduled with Councilman Washington. We have a study session, followed by a Council meeting, and we can always call you in with any additional questions.

Kellie said she would be willing to come in to answer any additional questions that the Council may have.

Bilski said that there was suggested action for consideration of increasing Department 0500, Fund 287 Merit Retirement line item by \$100,000, and reducing Sheriff's 0500 line by an equal amount.

Cid said, for 2016 right?

Bilski said right.

Dante said the justification for it is on page 12 of your spreadsheet. You will see the Fund 287. That fund has really increased greatly, in terms of it's cash and revenue. Dante said you will see all of the cash that's in there, there is \$840,000 on Line 6, as of June 30th, and growing. Dante said he doesn't see why you can not push, and bump that \$600,000 dollars up, which is currently at, to at least \$700,000 maybe even more, and push some of the costs from the general fund into that fund, conservatively, and safely, by at least \$100,000 to \$150,000 dollars.

Cid asked this is the fund where the increase from that fee went up from \$13 to \$25?

Dante answered, right.

He said he has the revenues, which are now \$600,000/ \$700,000 dollars, he can push it to \$800,000. He said he only has 8B at \$800,000, so that's a conservative estimate, plus you've got a ton of cash in there, so \$100,000 "bump" on that fund is a "no brainer". Maybe more.

Bilski said, maybe \$150,000?

Dante said, \$150,000 would be great.

Hamm made a motion, seconded by Franklin to increase Sheriff's Budget, 0500, line item 41235/Merit Retirement in Fund 287 by \$150,000.

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

Hamm made a motion, seconded by Cid to reduce Sheriff's budget, 0500, line item 41235/Merit Retirement in General Fund 001 by \$150,000.

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

Dante said, you are essentially balanced, at this point. He said he has asked Ajaz to prepare for the Council, along with the Ordinances, they must include, it's separate, but include Lake Ridge, and Solid Waste. They are not in any of this material. They must be presented, and amended separately, so when you get into Ordinances, please do not forget to adopt Lake Ridge, both of theirs' Operating and Capital, and Solid Waste.

Bilski said they will add number 7 as Lake Ridge, and number 8 is Solid Waste, for First Reading.

Dante said, they are separate on the Gateway, their submissions are separate, but they have to be approved just as if they are one of our budgets. That includes budget, levy, and tax rate.

Dante said Solid Waste is in good shape, and he thinks there are raises in there, possibly.

Hamm said he and Cid sit on that Board, he thinks the bottom-line went down some.

Cid said, it did, but her only concern is, usually if we don't give County employees a pay increase, we don't give to Solid Waste. She said if it's in there, that's something that could be backed out later, because she doesn't recall.

Hamm said he remembers that it went down slightly, and he would consider that himself, a reorg, because they did get a new Director, who took a pay cut, there was a big cut by the Attorney, there were some movements made, but bottomline it, a decrease.

Attorney Szarmach said, with regard to the 3 binding recommendations, Lowell Public Library, Lake Ridge, and Lake County Solid Waste.

Dante said take Lowell Public Library off, we may have done it last year, but it was in error.

Attorney Szarmach said, it was done by motion, not by Ordinance. He said it makes more sense to do it in a Resolution because it says an exhibit, that was presented.

Hamm asked is that non-binding?

Dante said these are binding, so watch it, it should be included on the 1st and 2nd Reading. You have to have 2 readings on this.

Dernulc asked Hamm, this was given to us today, we didn't have our review. The shape that this District is in, is better than it was last year right?

Hamm answered, yes sir.

Dernulc said he is trying to grasp this, and asked, we are actually, our levy has been lowered correct, or has it?

Cid answered, it says "rate reduced to remain within statutory levy limitations", but she doesn't know what it was last year, this doesn't show. Cid said there isn't a comparison here. Cid said, it went down. (Many talking at the same time).

Cid said, it did go down, it shows on here. It went from .0270 to .0237.

Dante said that today is the start of the objection period.

Cid said that she found out today, regarding the internal controls. The State Board of Accounts will be sending out standards on that by November 1st, that's per the Statutes, they will be sending out standards on that. So, there is really nothing we can do until then.

Dante said that last year, at this time, we discussed Lake Ridge, and Solid Waste. We received it, we discussed it, and that's all that he has that we did on that day.

Cid asked, on First Reading day?

Dante said, that's all we did on that day, last year.

Bilski asked, do we make a motion to approve a Resolution, does it require 2 readings, or do we make a motion to approve "as presented"?

Attorney Szarmach said, here is what you did last year, and I assume they reviewed it. We had our Ordinances, 1 through 6, which are in front of you for 1st Reading, and Second Reading. Below that we had 2016 Budget Binding Recommendations, one was Lowell, which we're not going to do, the second was Lake Ridge, and then 3 was Lake County Solid Waste, just binding recommendations. Attorney Szarmach said, if you want to put it in a Resolution, which is 1 reading, all of our Resolutions are, at the time Second Reading, if you want to do it as an Ordinance, this would be "OR 7", which I would draft up, but you can pass that today, and know exactly what it's going to be., and the same with "OR 8".

Bilski suggested that they are put in the form of an Ordinance, and then we would be covered all the way around. There would be no downstate objections. He thinks this is the simplest and safest way, OR 7 would be Lake Ridge, and OR 8 would be Solid Waste, do it that way, and approve on Second Reading.

In the Matter of Ordinance Authorizing Tax Levies – First Reading

Franklin made a motion, seconded by Cid to approve Ordinance Authorizing Tax Levies on First Reading. All voted "Yes". Motion carried 7-0.

In the Matter of Ordinance for Appropriations, Forms 4A and 4B – First Reading

Cid made a motion, seconded by Hamm to approve Ordinance for Appropriations, Forms 4A and 4B, on First Reading. The majority voted "Yes". Dernulc, and Strong, "No". Motion to approve on First Reading carried 5-yes, 2-no.

In the Matter of Salary Ordinance for 2016 – First Reading.

Hamm made a motion, seconded by Cid to approve the Salary Ordinance for 2016, on First Reading. The majority voted "Yes". Dernulc, and Strong, "No". Motion to approve on First Reading carried 5-yes, 2-no.

In the Matter of Longevity Ordinance for 2016 – First Reading

Washington made a motion, seconded by Hamm to approve the Longevity Ordinance for 2016 on First Reading. All voted "Yes". Motion to approve on First Reading carried 7-0.

In the Matter of Sheriff Clothing Allowance Ordinance – First Reading

Dernulc made a motion, seconded by Cid to approve Sheriff Clothing Allowance Ordinance, on First Reading. All voted "Yes". Motion to approve on First Reading carried 7-0.

In the Matter of Per Diem Expense Ordinance for 2016 – First Reading.

Strong made a motion, seconded by Hamm to approve the Per Diem Expense Ordinance for 2016 on First Reading. All voted "Yes". Motion to approve on First Reading carried 7-0.

In the Matter of Lake Ridge Fire Protection – First Reading

Hamm made a motion, seconded by Dernulc to approve the Ordinance on First Reading for recommendation of the proposed Budget, Levy, and Tax Rate for 2016 for Lake Ridge Fire Protection. All voted “Yes”. Motion to approve on First Reading carried 7-0.

In the Matter of Lake County Solid Waste – First Reading

Cid made a motion, seconded by Hamm to approve the Ordinance on First Reading for recommendation of the proposed Budget, Levy, and Tax Rate for 2016, for Lake County Solid Waste. All voted “Yes”. Motion to approve on First Reading carried 7-0.

Bilski said we are scheduled to have a Budget Workshop on 9-24-15 @ 10:00 a.m

Dernulc made a motion, seconded by Washington to cancel the Budget Workshop scheduled for 9-24-15 @ 10:00 am, and the Budget Workshop scheduled for 10-1-15 @ 4:00p.m. All voted “Yes”. Motion carried 7-0.

The next Budget Workshop will be held on October 5, 2015 @ 10:00 a.m.

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:

John Petalas,
Lake County Auditor

