WARREN COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING
~~MONDAY~~ MARCH 19, 2023 4
Tuesday

Council present for the meeting: Matt Commons, Ben Dispennett, Ethan Foxworthy, Dwain Akers, Neil Ellis.

Public:

Department Head/Elected Official – Robin Weston-Hubner, Auditor; John Comer, Commissioner; Anthony Pruitt, Sheriff; Charity Perigo, Chief Deputy Auditor.

1. The Council Meeting was called to order by Ethan Foxworthy, Council President.

2. Ethan Foxworthy, Council President led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. New Business:

   a. Items to add to agenda: Resolution concerning LEAP, March 11, 2024 Minutes, STELLAR Grant. Ben Dispennett made a motion to approve the agenda seconded by Neil Ellis, all voted in favor.
   b. Matt Commons made a motion to approve the Council minutes for February 20, 2024 and March 11, 2024 Council Minutes seconded by Dwain Akers, all voted in favor.
   c. 2024 Sheriff Annual Report – Sheriff Pruitt explained the Report to the Council. Maintenance items replaced in 2023. Explained the programs offered to the inmates. No additional appropriations were requested in 2023. Fund not used in 2023 budget are Jail $40,944.06, Sheriff $36,965.05. Explained number of inmates, funding from other counties, meals given out and funds expended. Explained Commissary Report. Dispennett asked about a 5-year plan for jail repairs. Sheriff Pruitt explained the roof issues. Discussed Jail repair, additions and/or replacement funding. Fountain County Jail was $17 million to build with 112 beds.
   d. 2024-2 Additional Appropriation Ordinance – Discussed additional to the 2024 budget. Matt Commons made a motion to approve Ordinance #2024-0319A Additional Appropriation seconded by Neil Ellis, all voted in favor.
   e. JOINK PILOT Agreement – Weston-Hubner explained the agreement will be signed by the Commissioners and Council will approve anticipated tax abatement. Discussed agreement.
   f. Resolution Opposing Construction of LEAP – Commons explained the Resolution opposing construction of a pipeline to divert water from Wabash River Aquifer to LEAP Innovation District. Many Counites have signed similar Resolutions. Discussed IEDC/LEAP being noted in the Resolution. Matt Commons made a motion to approve Resolution #2024-0319B Resolution Opposing Construction of LEAP seconded by Neil Ellis, Ben Dispennett voted nay all others voted in favor. Dispennett voted nay on the motion to approve the resolution stating that he wanted to see the results of the water studies before opposing this issue. He recommended to instead consider the resolution that was recently passed by the Warren County Commissioners in February that emphasized the need for local representation on such important issues.
   g. STELLAR Grant – Dispennett explained the Stellar Grant is ran by OCRA try to find way to reward communities that work together. State selects communities for revitalizing downtowns, preserving rural communities, etc. This requires a lot of work for grant writing, administrative side costs. All Counties are going for this grant opportunity. There is a 20% match with Williamsport and County going after the Stellar Grant. County Blight elimination in unincorporated towns. Process includes a Letter of Intent for the 20% match from the County. After May 1st, within 2 months will narrow to 4 communities, $50,000 consultant to do planning grant by December to put in the application, presentation and state would narrow down to 2 communities that will be awarded January 2025. This will be presented to the Commissioners April 1st.

4. Old Business:

5. Elected Official/Department Head comments:

   a. Discussed Rainy Day Fund – Discussed putting 2023 unused Budgets into the Rainy-Day Fund.
   b. Robin Weston-Hubner, Auditor – Explained taxes to be mailed this week, Health Insurance Consultants are being interviewed, 2025 budget begin working. Community Shred Day and Tire Recycle May 18th.
   c. Ben Dispennett - Discussed a spot employee bonus program.

6. Public Comment:

Next Council meeting April 16, 2024 @ 4:00 p.m.

There being no further business Dwain Akers made a motion to adjourn seconded by Neil Ellis, all voted in favor.

ATTEST: _____
Robin Weston-Hubner, Auditor

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Ethan Foxworthy, President

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Matt Commons, Vice President

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Dwain Akers

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Sharon Hutchison

_____
Neil Ellis

_____
Ben Dispennett

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Russell K Hart