Owen County Council

Meeting-May13, 2024 @ 6:00 PM

Courthouse 2nd Floor

YouTube Live Streamed-Owen County Government

Meeting was called to order by President Polly Chesser.

Opening Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance

Roll call and public sign in

Council members present: Polly Chesser, Anton Neff, Andy Wood, Verl Keith, Amy Casebeer, Nick Robertson, and Steve Carrell

Auditor Sheila Reeves

Approval of minutes motion made by Wood to approve the meeting minutes from April 9, 2024, seconded by Robertson passed 7/0. Wood made a motion to approve the special meeting minutes from April 22, 2024, seconded by Robertson motion passed 6/0/1 Keith abstaining from the vote.

Building Department Suzanne Simmerman presented a position description for a Code Enforcement Officer, sent info to the council members regarding that job. Commissioner Burton had County Sanitarian John Reeves talk about his job experience concerning the problem throughout the county.

Simmerman's request was $50,000 from storage unit money, enlist the current inspector as a Code Enforcement Officer with a $10,000 raise and part time position at $25,000 as a Code Enforcement Officer, jobs would be interchangeable with $5,000 going toward a vehicle fund. Discussion continued with Council members, Simmerman, Burton, Sheriff White.

Burton gave a brief update on the jail property, Franklin wants to limit his property to 10 acres instead of the 30, he wants to keep the log yard in the back. A huge benefit to the county is we will put 107 acres back on the tax roll.

Conversation back to the Code Enforcement Officer between Council, Simmerman, Burton and members of the public, with complaints to a certain property and property owner.

Keith made a motion to give the Commissioners and the Building Department the funds requested and start the process and see where it goes in 6 months, motion amended to a year and one half, Carrell seconded the motion. Motion repeated by Keith: Take their plan and let them fund it for a year and one half out of Building Department Funds, not the General Fund. Get the Enforcement Officer started, vote taken 3/4 failed.

Neff made a motion for a final decision at the next meeting get the key stakeholders together to wrapped up and finalize a comprehensive proposal of what needs to be done, who is going to do what, and how it is going to be paid for and then act in June, seconded by Robertson 4/3 approved.

Wood made a motion to appropriate the amount of $50,000 to get a code enforcement officer as a law enforcement code officer and it falls under the Sheriff, for 6 months seconded by

Chesser for discussion. Wood asked for another vote after discussion for the Code Enforcement Officer to be under sheriff 1/6 failed.

Neff made a motion to advertise up to $50,000 out of the storage unit fund 4015 to coincide with the final proposal that needs to be put together, seconded by Wood 7/0 approved.

Jail Project review Polly has been in touch with Monroe County Commissioners to meet about a regional facility. Burton stated appraisals are ordered through Figg Appraisal, Owen County and Franklin will be trading dollar for dollar no money changing hands. Chesser stated USDA needs to be notified once things are hammered out.

Spencer-Owen Economic Development Corporation Marce King requested a Letter of Support for an EDD (Economic Development District) together working with Brown, Monroe, and Owen. Greg Jones with Southern Indiana Development Commission helped explain the benefits to each county and they all have equal representation and work together on proposed projects.

Hamilton Center represented by Cindy Rotman the a CCBHC site (Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic) for mental health and substance abuse treatment. These services will be available to our community in January of 2025 or at least by 2027.

Spencer-Owen Economic Development and Abatement review Committee:
Abatement review committee Resolution for Mader Mill: the resolution dated April 11, 2024 was read the motion to continue the abatement was passed 3/0/1abstained. This is a 10 year abatement currently in year 7. Robertson made a motion to decrease their abatement to 50%, seconded by Carrell 4/3 approved.

Abatement review committee Resolution for Owen Valley Winery: the resolution dated April 11, 2024. The review committee affirmed their decision that the Owen Valley Winery did not score high enough with the current scoring system to merit an abatement. This is a 5-year sliding scale 180 60 40 20. Keith made a motion to not give the winery the abatement, seconded by Casebeer 2/5 not approved.

Health Department Christine McBride additional appropriations: See attached public notice advertisement.
Communications Director Cherie Anderson additional appropriations: See attached public notice advertisement.

Sheriff Department new job descriptions for Dare SRO Deputy and Jail Officer/Special Deputy, Robertson made a motion to accept seconded by Wood,7/0 motion carried.

CASA Beth Eaton will retire at the end of year, Jonna Norris will be her replacement additional appropriations: See attached public notice advertisement

Probation transfer request: See attached public notice advertisement

State Judicial Officers were given raises by default some other positions that are county paid that includes Sheriff Chief Deputy and Jail Commanders, a motion was made by Neff for the appropriation for the amount not to exceed what the Auditor comes up with an amount on a pro rata balance of the 2024 budget seconded by Wood 7/0 passed.

Highway Department Greg Melton additional appropriations: See attached public notice advertisement

Jury Fund appropriations: See attached public notice advertisement.

Salary ordinance confirmation summaries Neff made a motion to approve summaries as presented seconded by Wood 7/0, approved.

Sheriff’s Department additional appropriations: See attached public notice advertisement

Public comment concerning the new jail.

Neff discussed getting ready for the budget hearings, would like to have a budget planning session.

Motion to adjourn by Neff seconded by Chesser 7/0.

Sheriffs’ department out of 1170 for uniforms and printing have shortfalls, motion made by Wood seconded by Keith on all three approppriatioons7/0 approved.

The Owen County Council will hold a Public Hearing on June 10, 2024 @6pm for Additional Appropriation Requests:

County General $240.00 and $120.00 1000-00900 to 1000-232-38000 Interpreter

PSAP Sheriff $5000.00 1170-00900 to 1170-24200 Uniforms

PSAP Sheriff $3000.00 1170-00900 to 1170-32600 Printing

Storage Fund $50000.00 4015-00900 to 4908-11400 Reg Wages

Tobacco $12243.86 1206-00900 to 1206-32400/34900Cancer

Projects/Education-Supplies 911 Dispatch $50000.00 1222-00900 to 1222-30100 Other Services Jury Fund $19187.86 2600-00900 to 2600-39500

Jury Pay CASA $12500.00 1212-00900 to 1212-32900 Training

LRS $167000.00 1169-00900 to 1169-41000 Grant Match