

REGULAR MEETING – WEDNESDAY AT 5:00 P.M.

The Switzerland County Council met in regular session pursuant to law and by being duly advertised.

Those present: council: Mike Bear, Lisa Fisher, Andy Haskell, Elizabeth Jones, Rachel Schuler, Glenn Scott, and John Welch, and the county auditor, Gayle Rayles.

The meeting was opened by Glenn who also led the pledge of allegiance.

The minutes of the previous regular meeting and joint meeting of March 8th were approved as presented on a motion by Rachel, seconded by Lisa and all agreed.

#1 Other Business

Public Safety Tax: Gayle said that Kay Schwade, of GFC, had mentioned during budget time, that a Public Safety Tax could be initiated to help pay for emergency 911 services. Gayle has since talked to Jacque, a former auditor and is currently a representative of Maximus about the same thing. This is an income tax not a property tax. The maximum amount this can be is 1/2 of 1%. This can be designated strictly for the county for public safety then all of it could be kept here in the county where as the COIT funds are split with all entities in the county. The plan would be to use this money to help maintain our 911 system. She estimated the amount to be almost \$400,000.00 per year if this tax is enacted. Gayle said this is something most counties are doing now. This is done by ordinance and by notifying the state of the new tax. The deadline to decide is probably by June. This would also help the general fund balance as part of the 911 services are paid from it. This is just an FYI before time runs out. This is to be discussed at the next meeting in May.

Umbaugh invoice: Gayle asked about payment for an invoice for services performed for the East Enterprise Regional Sewer District. The cost is \$4,000.00 for a rate study to comply with the grant application requirements. After some discussion it was decided that Mark Lohide would look into which rate study this bill is for.

Maximus – professional budget assistance: Gayle said that last year Kay Schwade told the county they would be short several hundred thousand dollars and she didn't agree. Gayle showed her what she had missed and never got the new reports she was told she would have. So Gayle would like to hire Maximus as the county already does business with them regarding IV-D reimbursement. Rachel asked if Jacque would come to a meeting – Gayle said yes. Council asked where she is from. Jacque is the one who further explained the Public Safety Tax. Gayle is to ask her to come to the next meeting.

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#2 Additional Appropriation Ordinances

The following additional appropriation ordinances were approved on a motion by Rachel, seconded by John and all agreed.

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE

WHEREAS, it has been determined that it is now necessary to appropriate more money than was appropriated in the annual budget:

SEC. 1 BE IT ORDAINED by the County Council of Switzerland County, Indiana that for expenses of said municipal corporation, the following additional sums of money are hereby appropriated and ordered set apart out of several funds herein named and for the purposes herein specified, subject to the laws governing the same:

COUNTY GENERAL FUND (1000)	MOUNT REQUESTED	AMOUNT APPROVED
<i>COMMISSIONERS</i>		
100 PERSONAL SERVICES		
4115 SS/OASI	\$ 400.76	_____
TOTAL COUNTY GENERAL FUND	\$ 400.76	_____

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COUNTY GENERAL FUND (1000)	MOUNT REQUESTED	AMOUNT APPROVED
<i>JAIL</i>		
100 PERSONAL SERVICES		
4128 VEVAY PT JAILER	\$ 1033.50	_____
4129 TOURISM PT JAILER	\$ 4205.50	_____
200 SUPPLIES		
4242 PRISONER MEALS	\$ 122.96	_____
300 OTHER SERVICES/CHARGES		
4321 PRISONER MEDICAL	\$ 259.22	_____
TOTAL COUNTY GENERAL FUND	\$ 5621.18	_____

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Additional Appropriation Ordinances cont'd

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE

WHEREAS, it has been determined that it is now necessary to appropriate more money than was appropriated in the annual budget:

SEC. 1 BE IT ORDAINED by the County Council of Switzerland County, Indiana that for expenses of said municipal corporation, the following additional sums of money are hereby appropriated and ordered set apart out of several funds herein named and for the purposes herein specified, subject to the laws governing the same:

COUNTY GENERAL FUND (1000)	AMOUNT REQUESTED	AMOUNT APPROVED
<i>PARK BOARD</i>		
200 SUPPLIES		
4219 RESTROOM SUPPLIES	\$ 299.98	_____
TOTAL COUNTY GENERAL FUND	\$ 299.98	_____

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GUARDIAN AD LITEM FUND (1213)	AMOUNT REQUESTED	AMOUNT APPROVED
100 PERSONAL SERVICES		
4111 GUARDIAN AD LITEM SAL	\$12000.00	_____
TOTAL GUARDIAN AD LITEM FUND	\$12000.00	_____

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE

WHEREAS, it has been determined that it is now necessary to appropriate more money than was appropriated in the annual budget:

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BELTERRA FUND (4900)	AMOUNT REQUESTED	AMOUNT APPROVED
100 PERSONAL SERVICES		
4160 EE GROUP HEALTH INS	\$ 3680.46	_____
TOTAL BELTERRA FUND	\$ 3680.46	_____

REGULAR MEETING – PAGE 4**#3 Tax Dispute**

This concerns the property tax dispute between Belterra and the county. Gayle had a handout for each council member with the financial impact this could have. The courts determined that the county would owe back \$239,577.40 in taxes. The interest accrues at 4% for 1 year and then jumps to 9% the next year for 1 year; later it reduces to 3% the last 2 years. (These are set by the state.) She estimates that \$639,634.00 is interest that is due Belterra currently. The interest is costing the county \$44.77 per day. Jeff Bennett, of Bingham and Greenbaum, and Gayle have talked and she is recommending that the county pay only the taxes back now but not the interest. Gayle is recommending this to stop the accrual of interest on a daily basis. The payment/refund would essentially come from each entity that received property tax money: county general, the health dept., the school corp., soil and water, and York Township. This does not have to be paid back by the entities all at once. She and Jeff feel the decision will be appealed and any changes to the original decision that result in a change in money due either party can be handled at the time of the final decision settlement.

County Attorney, Wil Goering, said that the court decision was actually good for the county as the cost could be a lot greater if Belterra had gotten the assessment down to \$45,000,000.00. Wil said he wouldn't wait to pay the principle and interest.

Gayle explained how the county would get the money back from the entities via the Form 22's. She would just deduct their portion at settlement time in June and December if council so decides. This will be decided at the next meeting.

Elizabeth made a motion to pay the settled tax dispute amount of \$239,577.40, seconded by Lisa, and all agreed. Gayle would recommend paying the interest in stages, not all at once; 2 or 5 years, Gayle will check. Andy asked if the \$239,577.40 would come out of the Rainy Day Fund; Gayle said yes temporarily. There is \$471,000.00 in savings and \$1,154,000.00 in the Rainy Day Fund as of January 31st. Gayle is to pay the \$239,577.40 out of the Rainy Day Fund on Monday.

#4 Courthouse Security

Glenn asked Commissioner Mark Lohide about how the issue of security came about. He said that Judge Coy had approached Commissioner Steve Lyons last year about this. There is a state statute that says there should be a minimum plan for courthouse security in Indiana. The degree of security can be decided by each county. The biggest expenses would be start-up equipment and employees. Glenn wants to know if it is for the whole courthouse or just the courtroom. Wil Goering, said the statute states the building that holds the courtroom. The commissioners are looking at following the minimum requirements prescribed by the state. There is no money from the state to help pay for this. We are the only county with no security at the courthouse.

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With no further business to come before the council, Lisa made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Mike and all agreed. The meeting adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

Attest: _____
Gayle A. Rayles, Auditor
Switzerland County, Indiana