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Martin

County

THE MARTIN COUNTY COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

June 3, 2024

MINUTES

The Martin County Council convened in regular session on Monday, June 3, 2024, in the Commissioners’ Room at the Courthouse located at 129 Main Street, Shoals, Indiana. Council members attending: Jordan Dant, Adam Greene, Warren Albright, Keith Gibson, Monty Gregory, Jim Hamby, and Sheri Bowling. Also attending was Auditor Michelle Norris.

President Jordan Dant called the meeting to order with the Pledge to the Flag at 6:00 pm.

**RE: MINUTES**

The minutes from the regular meeting held May 6, 2024 were approved with a motion made by Councilman Gregory, seconded by Councilwoman Bowling. All in favor, motion passed.

**RE: OLD NATIONAL BANK BUILDING**

 Commissioner President Paul George addressed the Council via Zoom to inquire if the Council would be interested in pursuing the purchase of the former Old National Bank building across the street from the Courthouse. Commissioner George stated the building is currently up for auction but he does not know what the building may sell for and the County usually does not participate in auctions due to the uncertainty of the sale price. President Dant asked the auction was a closed bid auction. Commissioner George stated the auction is an online open bid auction and the bidding closes on June 18th. Clerk Julie Fithian stated the top bid is currently $50,000, she did call to find out the reserve and they would not give that information.

 Taxpayer Walt Waggoner stated there are a lot of people in the County who would like to see the County purchase that building for an annex instead of remodeling another structure away from the Courthouse. Councilman Greene stated the building would still need to be remodeled. President Dant stated it would be ideal to know the renovation cost along with the purchase cost before buying a building. President Dant stated if the auction does not close until the 18th there is time for a contractor to go in and estimate a cost per square foot for renovations. President Dant stated the property taxes for the building is about $12,000 per year, but the County is paying that amount in rent on just one of the office rentals. President Dant asked Commissioner George how much total rent is being paid by the County for office space. President George stated about $700 per month for the Prosecutor’s building and $1,000 per month for the Community Corrections building in Loogootee. Councilman Gregory stated that is $20,400 per year in rent payments.

 President Dant asked Commissioner George if there was any reason why Community Corrections and the Prosecutor could not be in the same building. Commissioner George stated Community Corrections patrons cannot be in direct contact with anyone in the Prosecutor’s office. The offices would have to be partitioned off with separate entrances. President Dant asked when a time could be set up to look at the building. Auditor Michelle Norris stated there is a public open house on Friday, June 7th from 2:00pm- 5:00pm.

Councilman Greene stated he would hate to ruin chances of getting a bank in Shoals, he believes there is a bank interested in the building. Councilman Albright asked if there was still a clause in effect which states the building can not be sold to a bank, to which Councilman Greene stated there is not. Councilman Albright stated if the County did buy the building it might be possible that spaced could be rented out to where a bank could operate in one office and utilize the drive through. Councilman Albright stated he does not believe a bank is wanting a full-service bank in Shoals.

 President Dant asked Commissioner George if he had a contractor who would be able to come give an estimate of the cost of renovations per square foot. Commissioner George stated he will contact Matt from Core to see if he would be able to come down and give an estimate. President Dant stated a special meeting can be called if needed before the 18th.

**RE: ABATEMENTS**

 Auditor Norris stated two abatement compliance with statement of benefits forms were received; one from United States Gypsum Company for personal property and the other from Solomon Westgate Holdings aka Westgate 8. Auditor Norris stated Westgate 8’s abatement started in 2023 pay 2024 with 100% abatement in the amount of $7,291,200. Next year’s abatement would be a 90% abatement with the 2024 pay 2025 abatement amount unknown until the assessed values are determined. Auditor Norris stated based on last year’s assessed values the abatement would be about $6,562,080. Auditor Norris stated the abatement for USG is in year number nine with 2024 and 2025 left on the abatement. Auditor Norris stated 2024 will be a 20% abatement. Based on the 2023 assessed values the abatement would be about $40,746.00. A motion was made by Councilman Greene to approve the abatement compliance statements for USG and Westgate 8, seconded by Councilman Albright. Councilman Hamby objected. All others in favor, motion passed.

 Councilman Albright stated the abatement renewal is not something the Council can vote to not do; it is not a renewal it is a compliance review. If the entity does not file or does not file correctly then the Council does not have to approve the abatement, otherwise it is just for the Council’s information. President Dant agreed, the properties have already been approved for a ten-year abatement. Councilman Gregory asked Auditor Norris if the abatements were filed correctly, to which Auditor Norris responded yes. Councilman Albright stated the topic should have read review instead of renewal.

**RE: DEPARMENT BUDGET MEETINGS**

 Auditor Norris stated she would like to discuss when to schedule the department budget meetings. After discussion it was decided to schedule the department budget meeting on August 5th which is also the same day as the scheduled Council meeting. The Council meeting will be held at 8:00 am and the departments will be scheduled to meet with the Council to follow.

**RE: ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS**

General Fund- Fund 1000

Prosecutor

 State Scholarship Deposit

 Pros Title IV-D- Fund 1000.660

 Conference and Training $1,083.20

 Travel $416.80

Auditor Norris stated a scholarship was received by the State for an employee to attend conference, which has already been received by the County. The appropriation is needed to be able to spend the scholarship in the budget. A motion was made by Councilman Albright to approve the additional appropriation for the prosecutor title IV-D for $1,500, seconded by Councilman Gregory. All in favor, motion passed.

Probation- Fund 1000.233

 Case Manager $15,000

Auditor Norris stated this appropriation request goes back to the last Council meeting where the Council approved the case manager position for Probation. President Dant stated to be clear this is temporary funding through the end of the year. A motion was made by Councilman Gregory to approve the additional appropriation for the probation case manager position from the general fund for $15,000, seconded by Councilman Gibson. All in favor, motion passed.

Sewer and Demo Lien- Fund 6042

 Sewer Leins $2,000

A motion was made by Councilman Greene to approve the additional appropriation for the sewer and demo lien fund in the amount of $2,000, seconded by Councilman Gregory. Councilwomen Bowling objected. All others in favor, motion passed.

Constituent Authur Ping addressed the Council regarding concerns for the economy and Federal Government.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:35 pm with a motion made by Councilman Gibson and seconded by Councilman Greene, all were in favor and the motion passed. The next regular Council meeting will be held Monday, July 1, 2024, at 6:00 pm.

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 Jordan Dant Adam Greene

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Warren D. Albright J. Keith Gibson

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Monty Gregory Jim Hamby

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Sheri Bowling

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Michelle Norris, Martin County Auditor