

July 14, 2021

BARTHOLOMEW COUNTY COUNCIL

June 29, 2021

Name:	Representing:	Title:	Present:
Matt Miller	At Large		Not Present
Bill Lentz	At Large	Pro-Tem	Present
Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence	At Large		Present
R. Scott Bonnell	District 1	President	Not Present
Greg Duke	District 2		Present
Mark E. Gorbett	District 3		Present
Jorge R. Morales	District 4		Present
Chris Monroe	- -	Attorney	Present
Pia O'Connor	Auditor	Secretary	Present

The Bartholomew County Council met on June 29, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Governmental Office Building, 440 Third Street, Columbus, Indiana.

Pro-Tem Lentz called the meeting to order.

Bill Lentz gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The first item on the agenda was the approval of the meeting minutes for June 8, 2021. **Jorge R. Morales made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mark E. Gorbett seconded the motion which passed unanimously (5-0).**

The next item was the Approval of the Economic Revitalization Area Request and Subsequent Abatement Request within the “Bartholomew County I-65/US 31 Industrial

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Park” as presented by Jason Hester with the Greater Columbus Economic Development Board. Mr. Hester presented a handout and directed everyone to the top of the last page. Attorney Chris Monroe stated that this is a very complicated process and not everything has been done to proceed to step 2. He is recommending that they sign the Declaratory Resolution to create the Economic Revitalization Area (ERA). This identifies the area and notifies the citizens of it. Jorge R. Morales thought that we had done the 1st step of the public hearings at the last meeting. Attorney Chris Monroe stated that some steps were taken but not all of them. A written copy was not given to the County Assessor. Mr. Hester stated that there is a draft Resolution before the Council tonight and they need to approve it to proceed. It formally states what they are doing. He presented a timeline of the steps starting with June 29, 2021. Step 1, tonight, would be to approve the Declaratory Resolution. Then, they need to file the Resolution, Information and Description with the County Assessor and all taxing units that are involved. If the Resolution is passed tonight and they file notice by July 2, they can have the public hearing at the regularly scheduled July 13 meeting. At that meeting, they would have a public hearing and then they would vote on a Confirmatory Resolution. **Mark E. Gorbett made a motion to Approve the Economic Revitalization Area Request as presented. Jorge R. Morales seconded the motion.** Greg Duke asked what they would gain from this that they do not already have. Mr. Hester stated that it is a pre-requisite to be able to offer an abatement phase-in of taxes. Currently, you cannot even consider an abatement in this area as there is no ERA. This will have the steps accomplished so that any abatement requests can be dealt with when

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brought before the Council. Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence asked where the 2-mile City Jurisdiction. It is not near this area. This area is basically the 4 sides of Exit 76 (I-65/US 31) interchange. They had identified about 670 acres of ground that could be suitable for development. Their estimate was just under 2,500 jobs could be created. He compared it to Woodside NW and Woodside South. Again, these are just their best estimates. The City regularly grants abatements within their TIF areas. He stated that Allen County named their entire unincorporated areas of their county as an ERA area. Jorge R. Morales asked how the Council had given abatements in other areas of the County without an ERA. Chris West, Tax Administrator, stated that all the abatements the Council had granted were in this area in ERA's. Dyno One, Georg Utz and Peer Foods are the most recent ones. Protem Lentz asked for any public questions. Mark Webber of The Republic asked for clarification on the name of Peer Foods. **The vote was called for and passed unanimously.**

The next item was a Presentation regarding Youth Services Center as presented by Judge Benjamin, YSC Director Anita Biehle, and Nicole Phillips. Judge Benjamin stated they wanted to give an update as to what they are doing with the YSC. In 2017 they took a team to 2 other Counties to view their youth facilities, one of which was Johnson County. They looked at best practices and did more research. She gave Ms. Phillips the lead to see what they could do better in regards to juveniles. After looking at all the information, they have been conducting an analysis regarding the YSC. The County Capital Improvement 5-year Plan had the YSC to be up in 2021. Ms. Miller stated they have formed a group that

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includes the schools, courts, and anyone that has a vested interest in the well-being of children. They started looking at secondary data that was compiled from schools. They mapped the stake holders. A System Map was presented. The data looks at how children get into each piece of the system and what happens once they are there. The largest youth offense is for Status Offenses, such as run-aways. They have an analysis of the mental health of the youth. With this information they set out a list of collective group insights. They also need to develop some guiding principles to help youth thrive. The final result was the creation of Youth and Family Community Connections. They will partner with existing support agencies. They would assure that training and support is provided. They would like to start this at the YSC. The Center will continue to function as it does, just with additional offerings. They would like to have this in a separate section of the facility to provide a more inviting entry. They have started a team to work on the future hub and want to have a single point of entry for youth. They have put together a proposal to establish this that would include 2 new employees. The Juvenile Justice members are leading this charge. They see the need for helping the youth of the community and hope to reduce the risk of youth ending up in the juvenile system. They have tremendous support for this initiative. Judge Benjamin stated that they hope to change the name of the Youth Services Center to the Youth and Family Community Connections as it is not just the kids that need to be assisted, the family and community need to be a part of the solution as well. This could help the entire youth in the community. This presentation has been e-mailed to the Council members. Mark E. Gorbett asked where they are looking to be in 3 to 5 years

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down the road. Ms. Phillips stated they would like to have the physical space at the YSC and 1 or 2 employees that can run it with a goal of 5 years. Judge Benjamin stated that possibly they could close in one of the pie shapes at the YSC to make it the hub for this. Mark E. Gorbett asked if we are duplicating a process because most of the issues begin with the adults in the lives of children. Judge Benjamin stated that is the question they have asked as they do not want to duplicate any services. Ms. Phillips stated that the YSC does a great job of giving youth information where they can get assistance, but no one ever follows up with them. A navigator could do that. Judge Benjamin stated that it is sometimes hard to get the family involved. Working with ASAP, they can help overcome some of this by connecting everyone involved, not just the juveniles. Ms. Phillips stated that Children's Bureau has a grant from IU and is working in Delaware and Grant Counties. There is also a National Assessment Center that is nationwide and they support single point of entry systems across the country. They provide guidance and support, but not funding. They have considered moving current employees to these positions without the creation of new positions, but they do not feel this would work as they would be losing current services. If this works, they hope to reduce the number of juveniles in the system that then could reduce the number of employees required to work with them. Mark E. Gorbett asked if they would do this like they did ASAP with help from the City. He understands the need but there is only so much money available. Judge Benjamin stated that is why they have everyone at the table at this time. Mark E. Gorbett stated that at the last meeting, they approved another \$100,000 for mental health in the Jail. Judge Benjamin stated that they

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have invited everyone they can think of to the table for input. Bill Lentz asked if they have involved any 501C3's involved. At this time, they have a few. They also still have youth from other Counties coming to our facility. The thought around the country is that the less youth in detention, the better. That does not solve the problem. We do charge the other counties fees including any transportation and other costs. The staff is treating the juveniles with great care and compassion. Mark E. Gorbett asked when they would hear from them again. Judge Benjamin stated that they will meet again and come up with what the additional costs would be.

The next item was the Discussion and Approval of a Resolution Regarding Council Meetings as presented by Auditor Pia O'Connor and Attorney Chris Monroe. Auditor O'Connor stated that this came from the State so that members of the Council could meet via electronics as Matt Miller is tonight. Attorney Chris Monroe stated that the State Legislature decided that remote meetings were not a bad idea. They came up with arrangements that would allow people to attend meetings electronically with certain restrictions. Jorge R. Morales asked if they should have a similar Resolution as the Commissioners put in place. Attorney Chris Monroe stated that is what they are doing. He will have a Resolution at the next meeting. Jorge R. Morales stated that he could not hear half of what the presenters were saying. Auditor Pia O'Connor stated that they needed to turn off the fan for the air conditioning. Commissioner Kleinhenz stated they will work on moving the HVAC unit out of the Chambers.

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The next item was the Discussion of the Sheriff Salary and Salary Ordinance change. Auditor Pia O'Connor stated this had been brought before the Council in May. Sheriff Matt Myers is currently eligible to ask for 10 percent of the tax warrants that are collected. She handed out a spreadsheet of his salary with the amounts he has collected including the tax warrant amounts. He has earned over \$50,000 in tax warrants since he requested them. He can ask for those because he does not have a contract and is paid at 80% of the Prosecutor's pay. Jeff Beck stated that the Sheriff cannot make more than the prosecutor. He can make 80% plus 10% of the tax warrants not to exceed the pay of the Prosecutor. Mark E. Gorbett stated that a full-time Prosecutor makes \$159,000, so that would be the maximum they could pay him. Jeff Beck stated yes, they would pay the 80% and then the 10% of the tax warrants until he hit the limit. He believes that they are required to pay at least 80% of the Prosecutor. Sheriff Myers did not sign the contract because the Council did not accept the pension change so he decided to take the tax warrant money. Attorney Chris Monroe stated that there are 3 methods, as listed by State Statute, by which a Sheriff can be paid. Two are specific to the Sheriff and the other one is as a general county employee. He does not believe the Council is required to amend the salary for the Sheriff as there is no signed document. Greg Duke pointed out that the Sheriff is on track to make the target amount this year. Mark E. Gorbett asked if he meets the amount by September 1, does he then not get paid for the remainder of the year as he would be at the Prosecutor amount. Jeff Beck stated that his understanding is that he cannot collect more tax warrant money than the difference between his salary and the Prosecutor pay.

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Commissioner Kleinhenz stated that a pension, at some point, will be paid to him. It will be paid based on the 80%, not the tax warrants. Mark E. Gorbett stated that it would be based on what shows up on the W-2. Jeff Beck stated that it is based on the salary paid, not the tax warrants. Matt Miller asked if Jeff Beck is back representing the Sheriff. Jeff Beck stated he is the legal counsel for the Sheriff's office. Sheriff Myers has a separate personal attorney. Mark E. Gorbett stated that if they would agree with an increase, it would just lower the amount of the tax warrants that he would be able to receive. Attorney Chris Monroe stated that the only issue the Council can deal with is the salary amount. They could leave him where he is or raise him to the 80% or even higher, if they wish. It is a hybrid due to the fiscal year being July 1. His legal opinion is that they do not have to raise his salary because he has no contract with the County. Commissioner Kleinhenz asked if they had to pay at 80% because of the State Statute. Attorney Chris Monroe stated that there are 3 statutes and one of them does not mention 80% at all. Jorge R. Morales asked if it would be appropriate to ask the Sheriff what he wants. Jeff Beck stated that the Sheriff wanted to sign the contract for 80% and no tax warrant money but to receive the pension. He agrees that at the end of the day, it all ends up the same. He responded to Auditor O'Connor that he was sworn in to represent the legal issues of the Sheriff's Department. He does not work for Matt Myers personally; he works for the Sheriff's Office. Attorney Chris Monroe stated it is the Council's determination as to whether to raise the salary or not. Mark E. Gorbett stated that even where he is currently, he will max out. Attorney Chris Monroe asked if FICA is taken out of the tax warrants. Auditor Pia

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O'Connor stated yes as it all runs through the payroll process. The amount of the requested increase is 2.45%. Greg Duke stated that he would like to see this in writing and would it come with the pension being held over the Council's head. Will there be a contract; an agreement on the retirement? Jeff Beck stated that if they would agree to amend the pension to 8 years, he believes Sheriff Myers would sign the contract and the County would be better off. He stated that if they agree that he will get the pension, then change the policy to 8 years and allow the County to collect the tax warrants. Mark E. Gorbett stated that it would not be only the Sheriff but also the Chief Deputy and the other members. Matt Miller stated that the conversation has been directed that Matt Myers has worked hard and he deserves it. If the amendment were made, it would not necessarily affect all the future Sheriff's as there are 3 statutes as to how to pay the Sheriff. Greg Duke stated he would not make a motion. He does not see an immediate need to make any change. He would like more information. Some of that would be hearing from the Sheriff's attorney and what they are thinking. Bill Lentz, Mark E. Gorbett, Matt Miller, Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence, and Jorge R. Morales concur at this time. Mark E. Gorbett stated that when he retired, they took his highest 5 years which included overtime and any other money paid out in salary. Attorney Chris Monroe will send the Council members the 3 statutes they have been discussing. He discussed the Judges pay. There had been a change years ago where the State paid a higher amount and the County could pay an additional \$5,000. No motion has been made tonight regarding the Sheriff's salary, so no action can be taken on this issue. Mark E. Gorbett asked Jeff Beck to have Sheriff Myers attorney reach out to Attorney

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Chris Monroe. Greg Duke stated that he had run into Jail Commander John Martoccia who informed him that we would be receiving the change to the grant, allowing us to use the funds for mental health services in the Jail.

Pro-tem Bill Lentz stated that Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence had lost her husband about 10 days ago. He stated that their prayers are with her.

The next items on the agenda were updates by the Council members regarding Boards and Commissions as follows:

R. Scott Bonnell:

County Extension Bd – not present

Solid Waste Management District Bd – not present

Sheriff's Merit Bd – not present

Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence:

County Parks & Recreation Bd – nothing to report

Job Review/Classification Committee – nothing to report

Youth Services Center Advisory Committee – nothing to report

Bill Lentz:

Personnel Administrative Committee – nothing to report

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Cols Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Bd – nothing to report

Health Bd – nothing to report

Matt Miller:

Personnel Administrative Committee – nothing to report

Job Review/Classification Committee – nothing to report

Greater Columbus Economic Development Bd – nothing to report

Bartholomew County Broadband Initiative – nothing to report

Pro-tem Lentz wished the best to Matt Miller's wife.

Jorge R. Morales:

County Plan Commission – nothing to report

Greater Cols Economic Development Bd (proxy) – nothing to report

Bartholomew County Redevelopment Commission – nothing to report

Bartholomew County Broadband Initiative – nothing to report

Greg Duke:

Emergency Management Bd – nothing to report

Jt Council Emergency Dispatch Services – nothing to report

Job Review/Classification Committee – nothing to report

Bartholomew County Redevelopment Commission – nothing to report

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Mark E. Gorbett:

Community Corrections Bd – nothing to report

Data Board – nothing to report

Drug Epidemic Committee – nothing to report

ASAP – nothing to report

There being no further business to come before the Council, **Mark E Gorbett** made a motion to adjourn at 7:50 p.m. **Jorge R. Morales** seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

BARTHOLOMEW COUNTY COUNCIL

By: ABSENT
R. Scott Bonnell, President

By: _____
Bill Lentz, Pro-Tem

By: _____
Matt Miller, Member

By: _____
Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence, Member

By: _____
Jorge R. Morales, Member

By: _____
Greg Duke, Member

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By: _____
Mark E. Gorbett, Member

ATTEST: _____
Pia O'Connor, Auditor
Bartholomew County