

COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

December 18, 2017

The Bartholomew County Commissioners met in regular session on December 18, 2017, in the Governmental Office Building, 440 Third Street, Columbus, Indiana. Commissioners Rick Flohr, Larry Kleinhenz and Carl Lienhoop were present. County Attorney J. Grant Tucker and County Auditor Barbara Hackman were also present.

Chairman Lienhoop called the meeting to order and gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The first order of business was the approval of the Commissioners' Meeting Minutes for December 11, 2017. Commissioner Flohr made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Kleinhenz seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Next was the approval of payroll. Commissioner Kleinhenz moved to approve the payroll. Commissioner Flohr seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Chairman Lienhoop read into the minutes the New Permit Report dated 12/11/17 to 12/15/17. Thirty (30) permits were issued with fees collected of \$2,701 and estimated construction costs of \$1,367,115.

County Engineer Danny Hollander gave the Highway Weekly Crew Report which included the following work: patched roads; put up signs; made brine; washed and waxed trucks; mowed in Hawcreek, Wayne and Sandcreek Townships; used the Bobcat mower along Southern Crossing; and replaced driveway pipe on 1000S.

Hollander then asked the commissioners to sign the **INDOT letter to receive Community Crossings** funds totaling \$836,011.50 for the county's overlay program. Commissioner Kleinhenz moved to sign the acceptance letter. Commissioner Flohr seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Next, was consideration of the purchase of **one (1) new 2017/2018 truck for the Weights and Measures** Office. The quotes received did not include a trade value for the 1999 truck being replaced.

| <i>Bidder</i> | <i>Quote</i> |
|--|---------------------|
| <i>Country Chevrolet (North Vernon)</i> | |
| <i>2018 Silverado 1500 Ext Cab</i> | \$ 27,940.45 |
| <i>Bob Poynter of Columbus</i> | |
| <i>2017 Silverado 1500 Ext Cab</i> | \$ 31,800.00 |
| <i>Chevrolet of Columbus</i> | |
| <i>2017 Silverado 1500 Ext Cab-1 piece cover</i> | \$ 34,619.25 |
| <i>2017 Silverado 1500 Ext Cab-Quad fold cc</i> | \$ 34,890.25 |

Chairman Lienhoop motioned to accept the low bid from Country Chevrolet. Commissioner Kleinhenz seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

The **Youth Services Center** also had a purchase request for **one (1) 2018 van**. Anita Biehle and Rob Gaskill presented a quote of \$21,032 from Fletcher CDJR (Franklin) for a 2018 Dodge Caravan. Several dealers were solicited for bids, but only one was able to provide a state bid. The Center will be getting rid of at least two, if not three vehicles. Commissioner Flohr made a motion to accept the bid. Commissioner Kleinhenz seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

The next item of business was the consideration of adopting a new means to collect delinquent property taxes. It was tabled last week for additional deliberation. Treasurer Pia O'Connor presented a Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement with the Association of Indiana Counties (AIC) acting as the Indiana Local Government Debt Setoff Clearinghouse to participate in the **AIC Tax Refund Exchange and Compliance System (TREC's)**. The program was created in conjunction with the AIC and NACO (National Association of Counties) to allow county treasurers to intercept state tax refunds for payment of delinquent taxes. She went over the following talking points from AIC.

- AIC's TREC's debt setoff clearinghouse program allows local units of government to easily and efficiently collect delinquent debt through the withholding of a debtor's person income tax refunds
- Senate Bill 515 amended the Indiana Code in April 2017 to grant units of local government authority to participate in the state's existing debt setoff program from incoming state tax refunds. Please see Indiana Code IC 6-8.1-9.5.
- Indiana state agencies have been using debt setoff to collect their debts for years
- No cost to register or participate other than debtor notification

- A pilot based on Marion County's debts showed that Indiana counties can expect significant debt repayment
 - Marion County pilot results from just 4 different types of old debts, revealed over \$1,000,000 eligible for collection
- Participating units of local government would receive analysis reports on debts owed to the county and on the amounts of monies returned
- Tax equity is ensured as more citizens are paying their fair share for services
- AIC TRECs is favorable to the debtor
 - Lowered credit-rating impacts
 - Receives required notification letters and 30-day contestation period
 - From other state models, very few debtors contest the debt
 - Notification letter itself often prompts debtors to pay
- Participating units of local government will receive notice of debtors who have passed away
- Easy and free method for collecting small debts of as little as \$25 or less if it can be combined with other debts to meet the \$25 threshold
- Ease of administration through easy download of debt files and upload of debt reconciliation data files that integrate into current utilized systems
- IT Helpline and clearinghouse staff easily accessible and available for question and assistance
- Debtor has two notification and contestation periods and benefits through lowered credit-rating impacts

O'Connor said the state agencies have been using debt setoff for over 5 years, e.g., collecting delinquent child support payments. She said that approximately 2,700 parcels are delinquent. Not all delinquent taxes are eligible to be collected using this program. Only individuals' refunds can be captured - LLCs, corporations, partnerships, etc. are exempt from the program. TRECs is ideal for collecting personal property/mobile home taxes which involves a costly, confusing and lengthy process of going to court and receiving judgments, along with the associated paperwork, for relatively small amounts of delinquent taxes. In addition to the tax sale program for delinquent real estate tax collection, TRECs could be another tool in the toolbox

for collecting taxes. Auditor Hackman said the AIC Board's legislative committee is still tweeking the program, but overall consensus is very positive. Marion County Treasurer said their pilot program was generally well-received by the public with only a few complaints.

While Commissioner Kleinhenz applauded O'Connor's efforts to pursue different avenues of collecting taxes, he thought it intrusive to collect against someone's personal tax refund. Commissioner Flohr recognized its usefulness to county government, but felt constituents would not like it. There was additional discussion from audience members giving both positive and negative support. Chairman Lienhoop personally agreed with the other commissioners. However, he also felt a responsibility to the treasurer to provide her with the tools for her job; and to other parties, such as banks, which hold the assumption that property taxes are being paid. He was surprised at the number of delinquent parcels and noted that the process was already being used for delinquent child support (which would take priority over taxes).

Commissioner Flohr made a motion to **not sign** the memorandum of understanding. Commissioner Kleinhenz seconded the motion. Chairman Lienhoop called for the vote and the motion passed 2-0, with Chairman Lienhoop casting the only nay vote.

The next agenda item was the consideration of a Memorandum of Understanding with **Thrive Alliance and Bartholomew County Courts for a Volunteer Advocates for Seniors or Incapacitated Adults (VASIA) Guardianship Program** ("MOU"). Judge James Worton explained that the Indiana Office of Court Services would grant \$50,000 to help fund Thrive Alliance's administration of a volunteer advocate program to represent the best interest of Bartholomew County seniors and incapacitated adults in partnership with the county's court system. It is a pass-through grant and requires a county in-kind match, but no county dollars would be needed. Collaboratively with the state, Thrive Alliance would be responsible for the vetting, screening, training, and supervising of volunteers; and for maintaining progress reports and financial accounting to the courts; and for the completion of reports as required by the Adult Guardianship Office. The county would provide the accounting means for the pass-through VASIA funding. The MOU runs from 1/1/18 through 12/31/18. The term may be extended with mutual consent and availability of future grant funds. Commissioner Kleinhenz moved to approve the entrance of Bartholomew County into the MOU with Thrive Alliance. Commissioner Flohr seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Next was the first reading of an **Ordinance Creating Fund 734, the Local Income Tax (“LIT”) Public Safety Fund and Fund 117, the Local Income Tax Public Safety-County Share Fund**. To accommodate changes enacted during the 2016 Indiana Legislative Session the two non-reverting accounts are needed for the proper bookkeeping of certain LIT money being received in 2018. Use of clearing Fund 734 will be to receipt disbursements from the State of Indiana-Local Income Taxes. The funds will pass-through to Fund 117 to be used for public safety purposes, as defined by state law, IC 6-3.6-2-14 and amendments thereto. Chairman Lienhoop opened the meeting for public comment. There being no comments, he then closed the meeting. Commissioner Kleinhenz moved to approve the ordinance creating Funds 734 and 117 on first reading. Commissioner Flohr seconded the motion that passed unanimously. Second reading of the ordinance will be at the next meeting.

Chairman Lienhoop stated that **County Offices will be closed** Friday, December 22nd, and Monday, December 25th, in observance of Christmas.

The next Commissioners’ Meeting will be held on **Tuesday**, December 26, 2017, at 10:00 a.m. in the Commissioners’ Chambers. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

BARTHOLOMEW COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS

CARL H. LIENHOOP, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

LARRY S. KLEINHENZ, MEMBER

BARBARA J. HACKMAN

RICHARD A. FLOHR, MEMBER