

Vermillion County Council Meeting Agenda/Minutes

Monday September 23, 2013

7:00 pm

Commissioners Courtroom, Courthouse, Newport, Indiana

- I. Call to order. President Mike Carty called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
- II. Roll call. Present were Mike Carty, Jim McLain, Brent Bush, Milisa Carty, Randy Dreher, Mike Costello, Jill Wesch, Attorney Don Darnell and Deputy Auditor Becky Julian.
- III. EDIT Tax Increase Ordinance. The Ordinance being discussed is to raise the county's Economic Development Income Tax from 0.1 percent to 0.2 percent beginning January 1, 2014. Lary Langley told the council that he remembered the wheel tax being increase and then the state cut the budget by the same amount. He wanted to know if the same thing would happen if they raised the EDIT tax. Mike Carty said it could not. Lary Langley said he was against the increase if the money was going to go to the Economic Development Council. Mike Carty explained that at this time half of the money goes to Economic Development and half goes to the highway department for roads. Mike Carty said there needs to be a plan in place from the highway department and if in a year there is no plan he will fight to get the tax decreased. Lary Langley asked if that was possible and Carty said it could be increased or decreased every year. McLain said he felt the highway received enough money and if they needed more the county should provide it. Kerri Langley Burke said there are not many homes for sale in the county but everyone talks about how the county can't get people to move in. She said they can't if there aren't a lot of houses to choose from. Burke also questions where the information of Gessie being the crime capital of the county from and Commissioner Tim Wilson said the information came from the sheriff's department and added that he did not say the people of Gessie are criminals, but that they are being hammered by what is happening there. Burke said there have only been 4 cases filed in Gessie in the last year. She also said they shouldn't put stuff like that in the paper if they want people to move in. Burke also commented that if money was given to the Highway last year and it was not enough to pave roads, only chip and seal them, then this increase would not be enough to pave them either. Mike Carty said the increase would not solve all the issues but it would help if the long range plan that was developed was followed. Carty said if businesses come to Vermillion Rise and all the people live outside the county they are not going to move later. He said they need to find ways to help the communities take advantage of what is presented to us. Burke said she is against the increase because she understands that no one is being held accountable for the money. Dreher said the Reuse Authority is a separate entity and we receive no money from them, but they want fire and police protection. He said we need to charge them for that. He also stated the Economic Development and Reuse Authority should be two separate boards and not the same people. Someone said it was separate boards. Dreher said yes but it is made up of the same people. Les Zimmerman said the Economic Development Council and Soil and Water helped Dana and Newport pursue sewer systems after the council rejected an EDIT tax to create a county-wide system, and those efforts resulted in over \$9 million in grant money. Mike Carty said most people don't see the Economic Development Council's efforts to fund such projects. EDC President Doug Samuelson encourage the council members to read the list

provided of things that had been accomplished through EDC over the years. He said it was not highly publicized and he hopes they see that it was money well spent. He said the money they are talking about is not enough to divide the county over, if it's going to be that divisive they should set it aside and find another way. Travis Newman said he was opposed to the tax, stating he wants what is best for the county but he did not believe that increasing the tax would result in economic development. He asked how Clinton would benefit from the tax and it was explained that the city receives a portion of the EDIT tax money. Newman asked about the accountability for the funds and Mike Carty explained that the council has to approve the EDC budget and their claims are reviewed. Samuelson added that the EDC meetings are open to the public. Newman said everyone talks about the increase as being small but it is actually doubling and that his salary has never doubled. Samuelson explained that the increase being considered is the smallest that is allowed. Yale Yager said he is in favor of the increase and would have liked to see the rate increased by a larger amount. He said they need to get competitive with neighboring communities. Larry Langley said several current employers have small percentages of their employees who live in the county. He mentioned Duke Energy with 29%, TIN Inc. with 44% and North Vermillion Schools with 55%. Mike Carty explained that the increase was not just to give the city money. He said it is for the whole county and that good things will happen at Vermillion rise and we need to get pro-active. Milisa Carty said they are all taxpayers and if she pays \$30 now, she doesn't mind paying \$60 if she knows they are going to see something for it. She said she would like to see progress in this county. Jill Wesch said if we are not going to invest in ourselves, who is going to come in and invest in us. Brent Bush said he has no problems if the money is being spent wisely. Wesch made a motion to increase the EDIT tax from 0.1 percent to 0.2 percent effective January 1, 2014, Seconded by Milisa Carty. A roll call vote was taken.

- Brent Bush voted for the increase.
- Milisa Carty voted for the increase.
- Randy Dreher voted against the increase.
- Jim McLain voted against the increase.
- Mike Costello voted against the increase.
- Jill Wesch voted for the increase.
- Mike Carty voted for the increase.

The motion was approved by a vote of 4-3.

IV. Adjournment. Milisa Carty made a motion to adjourn at 8:11 pm, seconded by Jim McLain.

Read in full and approved by the Vermillion County Council on the 16th day of October, 2013.

Michael Carty

Jim McLain

Randy Dreher

Michael Costello

William Brent Bush

Jill Wesch

Milisa Carty

Attest: _____
Phyllis Orman, Auditor