Est

Martin

County

THE MARTIN COUNTY COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

February 5, 2024

MINUTES

The Martin County Council convened in regular session on Monday, February 5, 2024, in the Commissioners’ Room at the Courthouse located at 129 Main Street, Shoals, Indiana. Councilmen attending: Jordan Dant, Adam Greene, Warren Albright, Keith Gibson, Monty Gregory, and Jim Hamby. Councilman Andrew Beaver was absent. 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 January 8, 2024 were approved with a motion made by Councilman Greene, seconded by Councilman Hamby. All in favor, motion passed.

**RE: SHOALS PUBLIC LIBRARY BOND**

Shoals Public Library Director, Sylvia Albaugh, stated last Fall the Shoals Library was awarded $500,000 community facilities grant from OCRA to do an expansion to the library. The Shoals Library is currently working with architects and the project is moving forward. Director Albaugh presented a rendering of the completed project with layouts of the new floor plans. There will be a two-story addition added on to the back of the existing library which will add a children’s area and will include a ground entrance and an elevator. The library is a Carnage library which was built in 1914 and has fifteen steps up to the entrance and another six or eight steps to get to ground level. The restrooms are down in the lower level, which is down a narrow staircase. The library has also outgrown the space.

The OCRA grant is for $500,000 and the project is a $1 million dollar project. The library has secured the rest of the funding through a USDA rural development loan for $500,000. The library has been approved based on the ability to pay for a loan for $660,000. The resolution Director Albaugh will bring to the Council’s next meeting does say $660,000, because the library has the ability to pay the $660,000 and just in case there are increased costs there will be a cushion in the loan. Director Albaugh stated she and the library board are at the meeting tonight to let the Council know of the project with hopes they will come and visit the library and see what it looks like today and see the plans for the future. Director Albaugh stated since both sources of funding for the expansion are federal funding, the Council is the library’s fiscal body, she will be back at the Council’s meeting next month to ask for approval to obtain the USDA loan. Attorney David Lett provided a copy of the resolution for the Council to review before the next Council meeting.

Councilman Albright asked how many square feet would be added to the library with the expansion. Director Albaugh responded the expansion would add about 1,600 square feet, which is about one third of the size of the existing library. Councilman Hamby asked if the existing part of the library would be renovated. Director Albaugh responded the rest of the building would stay very much the same, they hope to replace the floors and ceiling tiles and paint the walls. President Dant asked what the expected construction costs were. Michelle Carrico from SIDC stated the total project cost is $1,040,000 with the construction costs being around $850,000- $860,000, with the remainder being non-construction costs. President Dant asked if contingencies were built into the cost. Ms. Carrico stated there is about a 10% rate built in for contingencies. President Dant asked when the project was expected to go out to bid. Ms. Carrico stated specifications have just been finalized this afternoon and have been sent out for final approvals, she expects bids to be accepted in 30-60 days. Councilman Gregory asked if it comes in overbid what are the library’s plans. Director Albaugh stated they do have extra funding; they have community members who they believe will step up if needed. Director Albaugh stated this project was started many years ago and the library was ready in April of 2020 to apply for the OCRA grant, then COVID occurred and the funding went away for a time. President Dant stated if the total loan approved amount of $660,000 were borrowed there would be another 11.5% of contingency, with essentially a 22% contingency if the max loan amount were taken.

Attorney Lett stated the library board is not asking the Council to impose any additional tax and there would be no additional obligation to the County. The library’s plan is to continue the regular tax levy. The library board believes they will be able to pay the bond issue over a period of 40 years, but the library board does not believe it will take 40 years. Attorney Lett stated the reason this is coming to the County Council is because more than half of the parcels of real estate contributing to the library are outside the town of Shoals now with the addition of Halbert, Center, Lost River, and Mitcheltree; under Indiana Statute there is a requirement that the bond approval must come before the County Council. Attorney Lett stated the library board will be back at the Council’s March meeting to ask for approval of the resolution.

**RE: ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS**

General Fund

Fund 1000

Soil and Water Conservation District

SWCD- Coordinator Trainer $2,514

A motion was made by Councilman Greene to approve the additional appropriation for fund 1000 in the amount of $2,514, seconded by Councilman Albright. All in favor, motion passed.

Redevelopment Commission

Fund 4917

Meeting Supplies/Meals $1,800

A motion was made by Councilman Gregory to approve the additional appropriation for fund 4917 in the amount of $1,800, seconded by Councilman Greene. All in favor, motion passed.

TIF Capital Project-WG

Fund 4500

Professional Services $25,000

Martin County Alliance $40,000

Total for Fund 4500: $65,000

A motion was made by Councilman Gregory to approve the additional appropriation for fund 4500 in the amount of $65,000, seconded by Councilman Greene. All in favor, motion passed.

**RE: FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS GROUP CONTRACT**

President Dant stated the Financial Solutions Group contract was tabled at January’s meeting and Auditor Norris was asked to contact FSG and discuss scaling back services provided. Auditor Norris stated she contacted Greg Guerrettaz at FSG and they discussed the way the contract is written is for services up to $25,000 and the Council can decide what it wants FSG to do for the County. Mr. Guerrettaz stated FSG will not be performing services which are not requested.

Councilman Hamby asked how many years the County has contracted with FSG. President Dant stated 2024 will be four years. Auditor Norris was asked what FSG offers that cannot be asked of the State. Auditor Norris responded as an example she was asked by the recycling center board to figure out the impact of putting the recycling center back on the tax roll. Auditor Norris stated she contacted the State and was told to contact your financial advisor and attorney.

Councilman Hamby stated he remembers Mr. Guerrettaz stating when he was in the budget meetings in the Summer, that he charges about $75,000 for most counties. President Dant stated that most counties have a lot more going on with $15,000,000 budgets verses the budget of Martin County. President Dant stated he believed that Auditor Norris commented at the last meeting she was concerned about completing the budget versus sustainability model and also keeping up with current updates with the State. Councilman Albright stated FSG did find several thousand dollars in dormant funds which was not known to anyone to be available. Councilman Albright stated he believed FSG was the one to point out that not much interest was being collected from funds in the bank which would pay several years of the FSG contract. Councilman Albright stated hopefully it comes to where we do not find any more surprises.

President Dant asked Attorney Lett if he has reviewed the FSG contract. Attorney Lett stated he has reviewed the contract and he has no legal objections. President Dant stated the Council could identify what things FSG will be helping with and anything else outside those identified areas will need to be brought to the Council. Councilman Greene asked Auditor Norris if the two main things she is worried about was the sustainability model and updates from the State, to which Auditor Norris agreed. Councilman Albright stated the sustainability model tends to use up the whole budgeted amount; without a working budget there will be no models which can be sustained. A motion was made by Councilman Gregory to accept the FSG contract not to exceed $25,000 which includes the sustainability report and updates from the State but any other topics must be brought before the Council before FSG is contacted, seconded by Councilman Albright. All in favor, motion passed.

**RE: 2023 SHERIFF DEPARTMENT RAISES**

Councilman Hamby asked if the Sheriff’s department received the 5% raise at the beginning of the year on top of the raises which were given in late 2023. The Auditor and Council stated that if a Sheriff’s department employee received a raise at the end of 2023 the employee did not get the 5% raise at the beginning of the year. President Dant stated at budget time the roles were identified which had already received raises and those were excluded from the 5%.

**RE: WESTGATE UPDATES**

President Dant stated there has been a group formed from Green, Martin, and Daviess counties comprised of one commissioner and one council member from each of the counties. This group is meeting monthly with the purpose being there are a lot of moving parts and there is a lot of expensive infrastructure upgrades which need to happen. One of the goals is to have the counties working together instead of against each other and will give more leverage when negotiating with developers.

The Courthouse will be closed on Monday, February 19th in observance of President’s Day.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:43 pm with a motion made by Councilman Gregory and seconded by Councilman Gibson, all were in favor and the motion passed. The next regular Council meeting will be held Monday, March 4, 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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Andrew Beaver Jim Hamby

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Monty Gregory

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

Michelle Norris, Martin County Auditor