

**County Council Meeting
September 19, 2017**

Present: Jack Kroeger, Blake Bunner, David Gogel, Matt Knepper, Todd Ruxer, Steve Winsett, Aaron Benton, Auditor Autumn Winkler, Attorney Andrew Foster

Meeting was called to order by President Blake Bunner at 5:03 P.M.

Minutes

Winsett made a motion to approve the minutes from August 15th and August 24th as presented. Benton seconded the motion, motion was approved.

Additional Appropriations

County General – Plan Commission

Zoning Board - \$900.00

Legal Services - \$2,000.00

Plan Commission Administrator Kay Erwin came before the council to request additional funding to pay zoning board members, because they have been holding meetings every month and there was not enough money budgeted for that. Erwin stated that they did not have a meeting this month, so she would be able to lower the request to \$600.00. That will be enough funding to finish the rest of the year.

Erwin also has a request for \$2,000.00 in legal services. They have had to redo several ordinances this year and have been very busy so the attorney is doing more work. Bunner asked if these costs have already been incurred and Erwin stated they have. Benton made a motion to approve the \$600.00 request for meeting allowance and the \$2,000.00 request for Legal Services. Ruxer seconded the motion, motion was approved.

County General – Commissioners

Overtime - \$2,500.00

The commissioners are requesting \$2,500.00 in overtime for the Maintenance Supervisor to refinish the floors. He has started the process, but it is a very long and hard job that needs to happen after hours. Knepper made a motion to approve the additional appropriation for overtime. Ruxer seconded the motion, motion was approved.

Transfers

Plan Commission

Decrease: Advisory Board	1000-124-4131.00	\$50.00
Increase: Zoning Board	1000-124-4132.00	\$50.00

Kay Erwin explained that she needs to transfer \$50.00 from the Advisory Board to the Zoning Board to pay meeting allowances for their upcoming meeting. Benton made a motion to approve the transfer. Ruxer seconded the motion, motion was approved.

Erwin provided the council with a list of the counties ADA deficiencies and estimated cost to repair each item. Erwin stated she wanted the council to be aware of what was coming if departments request money for repairs. The council thanked Erwin for putting all the time and work into this project.

Troy Solar – Justin Wolf

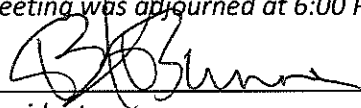
Justin Wolf with Orion Renewable Energy came before the council to discuss a proposed solar energy development they have been working on. Wolf explained a little about his company and the energy businesses they have developed so far. They researched and scouted for locations for about a year and all signs pointed to Spencer County. Wolf stated they have been on the ground for about 8 months working with Rob Schulte talking to landowners and ensuring they had the support of the community before proceeding. Wolf stated that everyone has been very supportive. The proposed project would be located just north of Troy and just south of New Boston around SR 545. They plan to long term lease around 2,000 acres, but not all acreage would be utilized with solar panels. Some areas are agriculture or classified forest. This project would be the largest solar power development in the state at the current time. There is increased interest in solar power along with wind and coal. This power would be placed into the exchange to be sold. Part of the guidelines for selling power in the exchange is the need to offer the lowest rates available to the consumers and a tax abatement is critical to making that

possible. They are now to the point of coming before the county to discuss possible tax abatements. The proposed abatement states a real and personal property tax abatement, but a majority of the assessed value will be in personal property for the solar panels. The real improvements would be a possible fence, shed, etc. They are anticipating only 1 employee to serve as a maintenance person. Wolf stated that they did not choose prime agriculture land to be used for this project, the solar panels will be placed and land will pretty well be left alone until the project is complete. This will allow the soil to develop and should produce better ag land when the project is over and the equipment is removed. Benton asked how long they anticipate this project lasting and Wolf stated that it is normally a 30 year agreement. Knepper asked if they would use local contractors to build the project and Wolf stated he felt they would, they would turn to Rob Schulte for assistance. Kroeger asked when the anticipated start date would be and Wolf answered that their goal end date for phase 1 is December 31, 2020, so that is what they are working towards. There are 2 phases to this project, the target completion date for phase 2 is December 31, 2023. The beginning of the requested 10 year abatement would begin when the project is up and running. It was discussed by the council that the real property taxes would still be paid by the property owner and the abatement would be for the personal property improvements. Auditor Winkler asked for clarification because the resolution continuously states real and personal property tax abatement and if a real property tax abatement is approved and the property owner is responsible for the taxes not Troy Solar then the property owner would be receiving the deduction. Assessor Janie McGinnis was in attendance and stated that the land would change from agriculture to commercial when the solar panels were installed. That would increase the assessed value and in turn increase the taxes on the land. It was stated that maybe the difference in assessed value from ag to commercial could be abated, but no one is clear at this time if that is allowed. The only request today is to designate the property as an Economic Revitalization Area and then we can clarify the specifics of the actual real and personal property abatements and what is allowed. Kroeger made a motion to approve Resolution 2017-04 Preliminary Economic Revitalization Area Resolution as presented. Benton seconded the motion, motion was approved.

LTRSD – Kelly Kuchenbrod

Kuchenbrod came to provide the minutes from the last meeting to be added to the binder in Auditor Winkler's office.

Ruxer made a motion to adjourn. Knepper seconded the motion, motion was approved. Meeting was adjourned at 6:00 P.M.



President

Attest:


Auditor, Autumn Winkler





