WASHINGTON COUNTY COUNCIL

~~WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS~~

WASHINGTON COUNTY COURTHOUSE

99 PUBLIC SQUARE, SUITE 200

SALEM, INDIANA 47167

JULY 7, 2025

THE WASHINGTON COUNTY COUNCIL AND THE WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MET IN JOINT SESSION ON JULY 7, 2025 AT 9:00 A.M. THE MEETING WAS LOCATED AT THE WASHINGTON COUNTY COURTHOUSE, 99 PUBLIC SQUARE, SUITE 200, SALEM, INDIANA. IN ATTENDANCE WERE COUNCILMEMBERS MARK ABBOTT, GERALD FLEMING, PRESTON SHELL, BRAD GILBERT, ANDREW DAVISSON, TODD ARMSTRONG, COMMISSIONERS PHILLIP MARSHALL, TODD EWEN, TONY CARDWELL, ATTORNEY ALYSSA COCHRAN, ATTORNEY APRIL GELTMAKER, AUDITOR KYRA STEPHENSON AND DEPUTY AUDITOR MICHELE FLEENOR. COUNCILMEMBER WISCHMEIER WAS ABSENT.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT ABBOTT CALLED THE COUNCIL TO ORDER.

COMMISSIONER PRESIDENT MARSHALL CALLED THE COMMISSIONERS TO ORDER.

COUNCILMEMBER DAVISSON LED THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE FOLLOWED BY PRAYER LED BY COUNCILMEMBER FLEMING.

COUNCILMEMBER SHELL MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER DAVISSON. THE MOTION PASSED.

PUBLIC COMMENT

KEELEY STINGEL OFFERED ENCOURAGING WORDS TO THE COUNCIL AS THEY HEAD INTO BUDGET TIME ESPECIALLY NOT KNOWING WHAT SENATE BILL 1 WILL DO TO COUNTY REVENUES.

SALEM COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION

NEW SALEM SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT TERRY GOODIN INTRODUCED HIMSELF. SUPERINTENDENT GOODIN ALSO ASKED IF THE COUNCIL WOULD APPOINT SOMEONE TO BE THE COUNCIL'S LIASON TO THE SCHOOL.

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS

FIRST READING AND CONSIDERATION OF THE ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS WENT BEFORE THE COUNCIL AT THE REGULAR JUNE MEETING. THE ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS ARE NOW UP FOR APPROVAL AT THE JULY MEETING. COUNCILMEMBER ARMSTRONG MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS:

1000.11701.00000.0381 CORRECTIONAL OFFICER 17	$25,000.00
1000.11702.00000.0381 CORRECTIONAL OFFICER 18	$25,000.00
4952.20102.00000.0000 GENERAL EXPENSES	$ 3,798.55
4952.32600.0000.0000 UTILITIES	$ 46.55

THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER SHELL. THE MOTION PASSED.

COUNCILMEMBER FLEMING MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE EXPENDITURE OF A SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF $16,350.00. THE GRANT IS FOR RECYCLING EQUIPMENT. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER DAVISSON. THE MOTION PASSED.

FIRST READING AND CONSIDERATION OF AN ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION WENT BEFORE THE COUNCIL AT THE REGULAR JULY MEETING. THE ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION IS FOR THE GENERAL FUND CHILD SUPPORT DEPARTMENT IVD DEPUTY PROSECUTOR IN THE AMOUNT OF $8,600.00 AND THE COUNTY IVD INCENTIVE FUND FOR IVD ATTORNEY SUPPLEMENTAL $15,750.00. THE PURPOSE IS TO REARRANGE THE

PAYROLL DISTRIBUTIONS TO THE TWO ATTORNEYS DUE TO THE ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES GRANT ENDING ON JUNE 30, 2026.

FIRST READING AND CONSIDERATION OF AN ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION WENT BEFORE THE COUNCIL AT THE REGULAR JULY MEETING. THE ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION IS FOR THE LAW ENFORCEMENT CONTINUING EDUCATION FUND IN THE AMOUNT OF $5,000.00. THE PURPOSE IS TO FUND CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS.

SALARY ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

COUNCILMEMBER GILBERT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING 2025 SALARY ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS:

1000.10901.00000.0009 ATTORNEY	$84,224.00
1000.13003.00000.0660 ATTORNEY	$19,516.00
1000.10213.00000.0009 ATTORNEY	$10,920.00
1000.13002.00000.0660 ATTORNEY	$10,378.00
8895.13004.00000.0000 ATTORNEY	$46,950.00

THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER SHELL. THE MOTION PASSED.

DEPARTMENTS

CLERK STEPHANIE ROCKEY – UPDATES ON NEW LAWS AND THE VOTER LIST MAINTENANCE PROJECT.

SHERIFF BRENT MILLER – UPDATE ON STAFFING

HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT RICK VOYLES – UPDATE ON HIGHWAY ACTIVITIES.

ATTORNEY ALYSSA COCHRAN

ATTORNEY COCHRAN GAVE INFORMATION ON THE NEW OPEN DOOR LAWS THAT TOOK EFFECT ON JULY 1, 2025 PERTAINING TO INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED ON BOARD AGENDAS AND WEBSITES RELATING TO ELECTIVE OFFICIALS WHO ARE APPOINTED TO VARIOUS BOARDS SUBJECT TO OPEN DOOR LAWS, AND LIVE STREAMING THE MEETINGS.

JENNIFER BOWERS ASKED IF THE ECONOMIC GROWTH PARTNERSHIP WAS INCLUDED IN THE OPEN DOOR LAW REQUIREMENTS. ATTORNEY COCHRAN DECLINED TO PROVIDE LEGAL OPINION OR ASSESSMENT AS TO HOW OPEN DOOR LAW APPLIES TO OTHER ORGANIZATIONS.

GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE

ZACH RICHARD FROM KNAPP-MILLER-BROWN STATED THE COUNTY IS LOOKING AT A 14.5% INCREASE IN PREMIUMS ON ANTHEM INSURANCE. RICHARDS HAVE SUBMITTED INFORMATION TO NATIONWIDE BENEFITS, UNITED HEALTH CARE AND ANGLE HEALTH FOR THOSE COMPANIES TO SEND QUOTES.

BOARD COMMENTS

COUNCILMEMBER ARMSTRONG – ASKED ABOUT 4H BUILDING. COMMISSIONER EWEN STATED THE FUNDS ARE BEING HELD UP AT THE STATE LEVEL DUE TO AN INDIANA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION.

THE COUNCIL AND COMMISSIONERS RECESSED FOR 15 MINUTES.

DARREN BATES – DATA PITSTOP

DARREN BATES APPEARED BEFORE THE COUNCIL TO GIVE INFORMATION ON SENATE BILL 1 THAT WAS PASSED THIS YEAR BY THE STATE OF INDIANA. MR. BATES STATED THAT THERE IS A LOT OF UNKNOWNS WITH THE BILL AND THE LEGISLATORS ARE NOT ABLE TO GIVE ANY ANSWERS TO COUNTIES ON HOW IT WILL AFFECT THE REVENUES THE COUNTIES RECEIVE. SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

*IN TWO YEARS, THERE WILL NO LONGER BE A COUNTY WIDE INCOME TAX. INDIVIDUAL TAXING UNITS WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR PLACING THEIR OWN INCOME TAX RATE.

CURRENTLY THE COUNTY IS .5% AWAY FROM MAXING OUT THE INCOME TAX RATE; WITH ~~THE NEW LAW THE COUNTY IS .05% AWAY FROM MAXING OUT.~~

*SOLAR & GEOTHERMAL DEDUCTIONS WILL NO LONGER BE AVAILABLE.

*HOMESTEAD WILL BE PHASING OUT.

THE COUNTIES WILL HAVE TO FIGURE OUT NEW WAYS TO GENERATE REVENUE. RURAL COUNTIES WILL SUFFER, AND THER ARE STILL MANY UNKNOWNS ABOUT THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION AND IMPACT OF THE LAW. COUNTIES SHOULD THINK ABOUT MAXING OUT THE LOCAL INCOME TAX RATE FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS TO GENERATE REVENUE TO PLACE INTO A "SAVINGS" FUND FOR ANTICIPATED FUTURE REVENUE DECREASES. BATES WILL CONTINUE TO FOLLOW-UP WITH THE LEGISLATURE ON OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE APPLICATION OF THE NEW LAW.

THE COUNCIL AND COMMISSIONERS THANKED MR. BATES FOR HIS TIME.

WITH THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS AT HAND, COUNCILMEMBER SHELL MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER FLEMING. THE MOTION PASSED.

COMMISSIONER EWEN MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE COMMISSIONERS. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER CARDWELL. THE MOTION PASSED.

COMMISSIONER PHILLIP MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

COMMISSIONER TODD EWEN

COMMISSIONER TONY CARDWELL

ATTEST: _____

AUDITOR KYRA STEPHENSON