

BE IT REMEMBERED THE HENRY COUNTY COUNCIL OF HENRY COUNTY, INDIANA, met at the Henry County Courthouse Circuit Courtroom, in the City of New Castle, Indiana on March 28, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. with the following members present: Betsy Mills, Chad Malicoat, Kenon Gray, Harold Griffin, Peggy Stefandel, Susan Huhn, Kyle Allen, Debra Walker, Henry County Auditor, and Attorney Joel Harvey, County Attorney attended via Zoom.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge led by Betsy Mills and a Prayer by Chad Malicoat.

Kenon Gray read a statement explaining the purpose of the meeting. It is to talk about proposed Food & Beverage projects and hear from some of the applicants that have applied for the Food & Beverage monies. Also it will be discussed about bonding with bond and legal counsel to help explain. Public comments will be at the end of the meeting.

Chris May from Basketball Hall of Fame stated they have a 5 year plan which began in 2017. Food & Beverage was originated for the purpose of the Hall of Fame. They have been here for 31 years and have taken care of all operating expenses. At the beginning of the long term plan the board and key stakeholders said they were not interesting in looking somewhere else, they want to make what they have in New Castle great. First thing done was a feasibility study to raise dollars and break ground as early as 3 years ago. They have called back the original architect to help with the expansion. This expansion would add 50% of the square footage that they currently have and will allow for more exhibit space, group settings and rentals. It will also allow for more technological exhibits. They currently have \$2,000,000 cash on hand that would go towards this expansion. They are just asking for the Food & Beverage to building the structure and the \$2,000,000 would go towards interior. Right now it will cost \$4,000,000 to just building the structure it will be a \$6,000,000 project. They are asking for \$3,000,000 and the Food & Beverage Board recommended \$2,000,000.

Greg York, New Castle Sports Park stated this project will bring over 100,000 people to New Castle, Henry County per year and a revenue over \$1,500,000 to \$2,000,000 per year. Will be for every sport from wrestling, football, baseball, basketball and soccer. It will have 4 little league diamonds, 4 high school diamonds and the first of these diamonds would be turf. It would have 5 basketball courts. It will also house a sports medical facility and physical therapy room that would generate around \$8,000-\$10,000 per month revenue year round. Would contain a coffee shop and sporting goods store so yearly income would come in. A management team has been formed and fund raising is going on right now. One little league diamond turf would be a \$400,000 facility and one high school turf diamond would be \$1,000,000, the facility for the offices would be \$1,000,000 and basketball, volleyball, gymnastic and trampoline facility would be a \$7,200,000 which will make it a \$16,000,000 project. Feasibility study has been done by Mayor York by talking to other facilities. He feels this would bring in more Food & Beverage tax than any project in Henry County. Kenon Gray asked if he coordinated this with the school, Mayor York explained he did talk with the schools and they chose to do their own thing. This will be a city owned facility and it will start with baseball diamonds. There will be rooms to rent for parties to help pay for utilities and other expenses. Mayor York has secured the funding for one little league turf diamond and one high school turf diamond. He has a little over \$3,000,000.00 committed to the project, he has individual and corporate sponsorship, and this money is for the baseball diamond and one basketball court. Henry County Hospital is committed to building a medical facility that will be opened 5 days a week. This will be a facility will only be opened for renting and tournaments on the weekends. Mr. Gray asked if he has been in contact with any county officials regarding running sewer and water along 103 to help with new homes, the Mayor stated that the coordination is that the city gives the county approximately \$3,500,000 - \$4,000,000 of sewer and water a year from Stonegate up 103 to 300 to Walmart to Duke energy which is going to allow new houses along 103 and that money goes into the county pockets not the city. Mr. Gray asked Mayor York about applying for the READI grant for infrastructure and what happens if he doesn't receive this money. The Mayor state that it would happen anyway, it will be funded other ways that he is looking into. Peggy Stefandel asked if the facility would eventually be opened for full time actives, the Mayor stated it would not be. Kyle Allen asked about the selling of the Westfield facility and the Mayor stated they did not have the support they needed and it was overbuilt.

Jason Semler of Baker Tilly explained how the bond would be issued. Right now the county has two Food & Beverage Bonds outstanding from 2012 and 2015, both have the current Food & Beverage pledged to them with a property tax back up. If there isn't sufficient amount of Food & Beverage available then the bonds would have to be paid by another revenue or a new levy would have to be put in place. The reason for using the property tax as back is a selling point to get a lower interest rate. The current bonds being looked at would be set up using any county revenues and at budget time you would have to appropriate using the food & beverage monies. The advantage of bonding is because you don't have cash on hand and you don't have to wait for the revenue to accumulate over years, also interest rates are starting to increase and it is predicted they will increase to 5-6 percent over the next few months. The only difference with bonding new monies is that you are not pledging food & beverage funds and will

still have the property tax backup. Lisa Lee of Ice Miller explained there has been several amendments to the food & beverage statute. Ice Miller is not comfortable with a direct pledge of food & beverage to the bond, but are comfortable saying you can use the food & beverage to pay the bonds. You will be using the general borrowing statute which is the same that applies to every county in Indiana. The county would be operating under the food & beverage statute for awarding the money and would have to follow those rules. Lisa Lee suggests doing an ordinance that commits those funds to pay for the projects. Jason Semler stated there is no impact to taxpayers. At this time the county is showing an increase in food & beverage. Lisa Lee explained that the statute had been changed this year to Section 8 and the Expo Center was added as an amendment to a project that needed to be funded then you could add other projects to fund. It is saying that some portion of the Expo Center needed to be funded. She feels this doesn't mean fully funded and operational, just that some funding is going to the Expo Center. Chad Malicoat stated that this is a very poorly written statute. Lisa Lee feels that the county has a good argument that the county has already given the Expo Center \$1,200,000 and that they have met the condition of the statute. Joel Harvey agrees with Lisa Lee.

Rebecca Baker from the Saddle Club explained why they are seeking the Food & Beverage for the Saddle Club, the cost to building this barn is \$273,000. This will offer a completely different arena that will be undercover for everything. They anticipate by building this arena they will be able to have an additional 8 shows.

Katie Nelson from the New Castle Little League as explained that they are wanting to renovate the lower diamonds, the cost to renovate is \$155,800. This is a 60 year old diamond and the upper diamond has already been renovated. This year they have 449 players from ages 4-12 and are all Henry County residents. These diamonds are used 6 days a week during baseball season. They are slated to host the 2022 State Little League Tourney. The board is willing to put in \$10,000 cash on hand.

Mike Bergum from Osborne Park revitalization softball diamonds project. They have been working to update the facility to make it usable, updated, safe and look good. There are approximately 450 softball players signed up for the program and they practice 4 nights and once games start they will play on all 4 diamonds 4-5 days a week. They are going to build within their budgets. They want to make the facility attractive. They are asking for \$200,000 and the project will cost \$400,000.

EDC Signage Destination, this project will place kiosks throughout the county for tourists to find destinations around the county. Also this will renovate the main floor of the Murphy Building for the Tourism Center.

Chris Williams from the YMCA is asking for Food & Beverage money to update the YMCA. The building is over 20 years old and they are running out of space. They are looking at a program to increase before and after school programs as well as early morning and late night child care. Right now they are doing a trial program with Wilbur Wright School for the before and after school program. The cost of the project will be \$1,500,000, the original request was \$600,000 and now looking at \$300,000, they have also applied for the READ! Grant as well. They will have all the money before the project is started.

Ed Hill for the Memorial Park Veterans Museum they are asking for \$4,205 to enhance security, computers/printers and some remodeling. Attendance is picking up, last year they had 120 visitors.

Scott Frost for the 200 year Bicentennial they originally asked for \$50,000 but the recommendation is \$25,000. This money will go towards the 529 Project which helps fund college for Henry County kids. This program is set by the state and their guidelines have to be followed.

Joe Peacock for the Knightstown Wireless Project. This is for free Wi-Fi that will extend along US 40 and around the town square. Ninestar has reached out to them and will work with Knightstown to extend the coverage of the free Wi-Fi, this is a two phase project. With the free Wi-Fi they can create a landing page that will allow merchants in town to place ads on this page and when people drive through town and have their phone they can target those people for ads. They will also help students that have to do online classes to have internet at their homes. They are requesting \$51,250.

Rusty Conner from Middletown Detrick Park is looking to replace all the wooden bleachers at Middletown Park with aluminum ADA bleachers. They are requesting \$48,000.

Holly Lee for the Kennard Crusaders is requesting \$20,000 to build a building that will hold the Kennard pantry that helps with food, clothes and school supplies for families. This will also help with the fund raisers that they do yearly.

JR Martin from the Expo Center was there to answer any questions the council may have. They made the full request for Phase II not realizing they could have lowered their amounts. They are now asking to help fund Phase II to build a barn that would allow them to have livestock shows for 4-H. They have dropped the square footage and would be 100x275 square feet. For a steel frame would be \$1,700,000 and a wood frame construction would be \$1,500,000.

and this would be with a gravel parking lot. They currently have the money for flooring and siding in the budget for the current building. They will be short approximately \$200,000 to finishing the building which would be HVAC and the sprinkler system.

Kevin Ritchie from the Knightstown Tourism Office is asking for \$5,280 to cover rent for one year. Corey Murphy stated that this is a private owned building and does not qualify for Food & Beverage money.

Jeff Ray spoke for the Honey Bee Trail project and they are requesting \$848,000. This is a shovel ready project and they can apply for federal funding. They can lower their request to \$165,000 if all other funding they have requested come through.

Travis Weik thanked the board for all the work they have done with their recommendations for the Food & Beverage money.

Corey Murphy encouraged the council to bond, this is a way to make Henry County better. He told the council to be bold and invest in Henry County.

Ed Tarantino asked the council to reconsider the recommendation of the Food & Beverage Committee and look into giving money to the Expo Center for the completion of the project. Tom Saunders agreed with Mr. Tarantino.

Betsy Mills has heard feedback on funding for renovating the historic shelter house at Memorial Park. She stated that this is county owned and would be a wise investment to put the money into the park.

Susan Huhn and Chad Malicoat would like to see work done at Memorial Park on the Shelter House and Ponds.

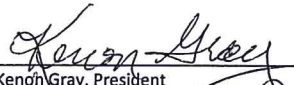
Chad Malicoat stated he is concerned with bonding he is worried about if times get back and we lose the Food & Beverage then the council will have to implement a new tax, he would suggest using cash on hand and using the 150% coverage in the bond that puts it over \$5,000,000. He suggested funding the smaller projects with the cash on hand.


Susan Huhn stated they needed to come ready on March 31, 2022 with a list for bonding and a list for cash on hand. Kenon Gray agreed.

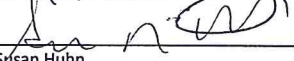
The Trojan Lane project was reduced by the committee because they eliminated the endowment. Chad Malicoat has a concern with their sustainability.

Peggy Stefandel thanked everyone for all the time that has been put into this. She ran for this position thinking that she would only vote for the county needs not the county wants. She has four projects that she is in favor of, these projects fulfill the needs not the wants. She is not personally in favor of bonding. With the way the world is going we do not know what the future holds.

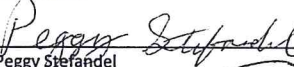
A motion was made by Chad Malicoat and seconded by Betsy Mills to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.


Kenon Gray, President

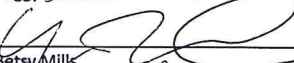

Harold Griffin

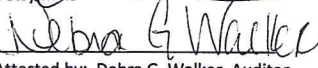

Susan Huhn


Chad Malicoat


Peggy Stefandel


Kyle Allen


Betsy Mills


Attested by: Debra G. Walker, Auditor