

# Superior court budget 'not up for further review'

By Debbie Lowe  
Staff writer

Carroll County Council met Friday for a second day of 2009 budget hearings. Judges from both courts were among the department heads to present 2009 spending requests. One of the two was adamant there would be no reductions to his requests.

Carroll Superior Court Judge Jeffrey Smith, who is running unopposed for another six years in office this fall, presented his spending plan to the council and indicated he is not willing to negotiate line item increases. He explained salary increase requests

were based on what court employees would have made had they been given raises for the past five years, plus a raise for 2009. He said all spending requests were based on five years' expenditures. The budget request amount was \$18,606 more than was appropriated in the 2008 amended budget.

Council member Carl Abbott said there would be no more income for the county to spend in 2009 than there was in 2008. He said the council did not chastise any department by not granting line item increases, however all requests could not be filled.

"That's my only response," he said.

Smith said the goal for the home-detention program was to be self-sufficient, however an income reduction is expected for the fund because neighboring counties are no longer using and paying for Carroll County services. He said a personnel shift as a result of attrition would help the program's financial situation.

Circuit court judge Donald Currie, after presenting a circuit court budget which was \$25,816 more than the 2008 appropriation, was questioned about the need for the level of public defender and indigent counsel spending request from joint courts.

"Are we making a good attempt

to determine if people really deserve a public defender?" asked Ann Brown.

Currie said defendants swear under oath and their word had to be taken as truth. He added however that he questions them when he believes a full accounting of their resources was not given.

The total requested, including increases, for the public defender position funded through joint courts was \$85,970, \$15,000 for the indigent counsel/part-time and \$77,000 for additional pauper counsel. The total increase for joint courts from the 2008 amended appropriated budget was \$145,778.62.

Currie said there were plans to re-establish a Public Defender Council, which would provide 40 percent reimbursement of the cost of public defenders hired if requirements were met. (According to the Indiana Public Defender Commission Non-Capital Reimbursements chart located on the Web site, <http://www.in.gov/judiciary/pdc/>, dated June 26, 2008, Carroll County received \$134,854 in public defender cost reimbursement from the state, beginning in 2001 until the county public defender commission was dissolved in 2006.)

A public defender commission  
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## City council to advertise amended budget

### Pearson opposes proposed assistant expense

By Debbie Lowe  
Staff writer

After a lively, lengthy discussion, with plenty of questions, about what is in store financially for the municipality, Delphi City Council members reached a consensus to re-advertise the proposed 2009 budget, thereby beginning the adoption process for the second time. The measure is allowed due to a budget adoption extension to Dec. 1 recently approved by the Indiana Department of Local Government Financing.

Council president Carolyn Pearson requested the special meeting at the Aug. 4 council meeting when the adoption process was delayed. Pearson said at the time she was not comfortable with creating two new administrative assistant positions, one in the police department and one in the city building, while eliminating the grants coordinator position and eliminating dispatch services.

Pearson began the discussion about the positions at the Monday night special meeting.

"It scares me to death that we have a budget that is so iffy," she said in reference to a lack of contract with the county to assume dispatching duties for a stated amount of money.

Pearson said if the county needed more than the \$50,000 set aside for the service, the city would be forced to do an additional appropriation out of the city's general fund to cover the cost.

Mayor Randy Strasser said he has met three times with sheriff Tony Burns and E-911 director Jay Dee Cree. He

said they were all in agreement with the \$50,000 figure.

"I'm not hearing anything back that they will need more than \$50,000," he said. "As long as Jay Dee's needs are satisfied, Tony is satisfied with it."

Strasser said it could be January or February before implementation of the combined service plan is complete. Pearson noted there is no money appropriated in the proposed 2009 budget for the city to continue the service past the end of the year.

Pearson said she was concerned that money to support the one administrative position was to come out of the wastewater and water departments. She said she did not understand how those departments would benefit from the position.

"It seems like a lot of money coming out of those

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## Brooks Center hosts grand opening



Brooks Center, the 12,500 foot multi-agency facility located at Vine St. and Prince William Rd. in Delphi, began providing services Aug. 6 but hosted a grand opening Saturday morning. The center was created to offer services of several agencies, including Area IV Agency on Aging and Community Action Programs, Family Health Clinic of Carroll County, CDC Resources, WIC and WorkOne. Supervisor Julie Novak, pictured in front of the facility, said the project was a culmination of three years of bringing the right parties together to offer a comprehensive slate of services to Carroll and surrounding counties' residents. She said the Family Health Clinic expects to double the number of patients seen at the former location on US421 within three years. "This is the next level of the continuation of care," she said. The project was funded by North Central Health Services. Comet photo by Theresa Replogle

## Burnett's Creek Arch restoration impeded

By Theresa Replogle  
Contributing writer

According to Carroll County Highway Superintendent Ron Francis, restoration of Burnett's Creek Arch could be put on hold.

Francis explained at Monday night's county commissioners meeting a property owner who owns the land adjacent to the restoration sight is unwilling to allow county representatives on his property to survey or work on the project. He said the individual was angry at past commissioners who fired his son from county employment. The county vacated a road next to his property at about the same time, which also displeased the resident. Francis said the man expected a public apology in print from county leaders about the job termination of his son. He

further expected the county to resume maintenance on the half-mile road.

Francis said the restoration of the arch is a federal historic project, which means the county can condemn the property.

Commissioners' attorney Barry Emerson said the first thing commissioners would need to accomplish was to determine if the project is in the public interest. After that determination, the county could begin legal proceedings.

Commissioners will investigate before taking further action.

**County recycling program**  
Commissioners approved a change in the payment method for the solid waste district recycling grant. Funds for the program were forwarded to the City of Delphi in the past, according to street superintendent Aaron Lyons.

He said the county also paid \$304 each month to Delphi for fuel. The total stipend will be sent to Carroll County Recycling Cooperative, which is managed by Flora officials.

**Courthouse maintenance**  
County council member Steve Ashby requested commissioners repair the roof on the courthouse to avoid paying for continued repairs due to water damage on the third floor. Ashby also said the building needs to be tuck-pointed. He recommended commissioners advertise for bids for the work.

Emerson recommended commissioners engage an engineer to inspect the building to determine appropriate bid specifications and warranties.

**Highway department**  
Commissioners will interview representatives from engineering firms to provide services for Bridge 147 at

The Landings. Francis said work on Wilson Bridge is nearly complete. The bridge is now open to traffic.

A culvert on C.R. 825N, east of Yeoman, is expected to be set by Friday.

Design bids for the county road extension of SR75 will be advertised.

Francis said his department is down to three people and pot hole filling has abated. He said workers are assigned to chip and seal projects while the weather is good. Pot holes can be filled in cold weather.

**Other business**  
Commissioners approved a request from the coroner for morgue improvements. Floor damage and air conditioning will be repaired plus a table will be purchased.

Coroner Jerry R. Reinke explained the \$3,000 improvements will allow autopsies to be done in the county, thereby

saving money.

"Sounds like a good idea to me," commissioner Bill Brown said.

Bids were opened for the construction of the Yeoman Community Building/EMS Garage project. Town engineer Ken Smith said he would present a report at the next commissioners meeting.

Carroll County Heritage Transportation representative Brian Stirm will post signage in county right-of-ways to mark the Potawatami Trail of Death through Carroll County. The 23 signs are black and iridescent white.

Commissioners will move to resolve a nuisance complaint against a resident by neighbors in the Horseshoe Bend area. Unlicensed vehicles, junk, weeds and debris are the basis of the complaint.

The next meeting will be Sept. 2 at 9 a.m.

## Chamber pitches new program to Camden

Comet staff report

Carroll County Chamber of Commerce Director Sana Booker explained that a lot of "good things are happening with the Chamber" at last Thursday night's town council meeting.

She explained the Chamber's new Business Partner Program and the extra marketing and resources it provides. To date, 11 businesses are participating.

"We hope businesses will be drawn to our program by the great services that we provide," she said.

She also reported that attendance at the second annual Legislative Dinner was 150

with U.S. Representative Joe Donnelly, State Senator Brandt Hershman and Steve Representative Rich McCain speaking.

Upcoming Chamber events include a golf outing on Sept. 10, the annual meeting Oct. 23 and a men's celebration dinner in November.

**Economic development**  
Council President Pete Wagoner stated that the county council raised the Economic Development Income Tax (EDIT) from .1% to .15%.

"Our support for the increase is not because we think anyone wants to pay more taxes, but we support the tax because the county needs to focus on attracting companies

that will pay sustainable wages.

"The county has not adequately funded economic development, he said. Camden is seeing people move out of town because their jobs are in other counties and the price of fuel is causing a hardship.

"The county has to get serious about creating decent jobs in Carroll County," Wagoner said.

He agreed with the Carroll County Economic Development Corporation's original priority list of projects and said he would not support changes in the rankings of those projects which include the extension of county road 75 north of Camden.

The Indiana Department of Transportation recently awarded the county a \$1.2 million grant for a study of the county road 75 extension.

"This is definitely good news for Carroll County," said Wagoner, "but it does not guarantee that the project will be completed."

The Hoosier Heartland Highway, rail connection and utilities to the site will make the area north of Camden a good location for new companies.

Ken Smith is looking for possible grants to extend Camden's utilities north.

**Grants**  
Work has begun on 13 Camden residences that qualified

for improvements through an Indiana Housing Grant. This is the second year for the program in Camden and there are already seven homeowners interested in the town pursuing a third grant next year.

Smith reported on the status and timetable for the wastewater upgrade project. He said a pre-bid meeting will be held at 10 a.m. Aug. 28 in the town office. Bids will be let on Sept. 11.

Smith also asked if council members would be willing to take NIMS training as an eligibility requirement for applying for a particular grant to help fund restrooms for the community building.

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