

Highway dept. must reduce '09 spending plan

By Debbie Lowe
Staff writer

The county council reviews and approves what each department will spend out of the county general fund every year based on department requests. The council also reviews departmental budgets not funded through county general, such as the assessors' office and county highway department. The Indiana Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF) gives final approval for all budgets individually, based on expected county revenue.

Carroll County Auditor Beth Myers reported to council members Tuesday afternoon that the county general 2009 spending plan for \$5,566,778 was approved by DLGF last week. However the state agency requires county highway to reduce its 2009 budget from the requested \$1,792,175 to \$1,697,591. Myers said the reduc-

tion is likewise based on projected county revenue.

An additional appropriation request for \$58,000 by the highway department was tabled. Myers said it is unlikely DLGF will approve an additional for a department that was required to reduce a 2009 budget request by \$94,584. The matter will be revisited at the next meeting, June 29.

Local Option Highway User Tax

Council approved 2010 LOHUT, more commonly known as "wheel tax" fees. Although the legal advertisement indicates passenger cars, trucks of less than 11,000 pounds gross weights, and motorcycles will be charged \$25 annually, council members reduced that amount to \$20 per car, which is the same as the 2009 rate.

Beginning Jan. 1, 2010, buses will cost \$35, recreational vehicles \$25, semi-trailers \$40, tractors \$30, light trailers less than 12,000 pounds \$10, heavy trailers more

than 12,000 pounds \$25, light trucks less than 30,000 pounds \$25 and heavy trucks more than 30,000 pounds \$30.

Money collected from LOHUT is used only to construct, reconstruct, repair or maintain streets and roads under the county jurisdiction, according to the adopted ordinance.

Finance committee

Council president Ann Brown presented the finance committee recommendations for 2010 and 2011 cumulative capital improvements fund expenditures. She said the proposed budget, which will be discussed with commissioners at a joint session Monday at 8:30 a.m., was designed to provide a 2010 end-of-the-year balance of \$1,071,259 after beginning the year with \$853,259.

Brown said although the fund contained a balance of \$1,071,823 at the beginning of this year, projected income and expenditures

will deplete the fund to less than \$1 million, which is undesirable. The 2011 proposed cum cap budget will leave an end-of-year balance of \$1,238,259.

"You've got to have a plan to keep the balance up," she said.

Brown recommended a five-year plan be developed beginning in 2012.

Property tax payments

Brown said she learned from county treasurer Jane Brewington that although the treasurer's office will accept early tax payments, county taxpayers are being discouraged against early payments. She explained the rationale is that although the county needs money, the owed tax amounts are not known and bookkeeping will become cumbersome when they are determined. She also said the early payments will not be able to be utilized to pay county bills and can only be invested for interest.

Other business

Ron Slavens reported from the auditors' report the County Option Income Tax (COIT) receipts have decreased 11 percent from this time last year. However, ambulance fees, Carroll Manor receipts and the cumulative bridge fund have all increased since May of 2008. He noted that cum cap is "quickly deteriorating."

Transfers approved:

- Commissioners - \$7,000 from cost of keeping juveniles to unemployment.

Additional appropriations approved:

- Recorder - \$2,500 from other services fund to redacting;
- Sheriff - \$22,500 from cumulative capital improvement fund for a vehicle.

Council and commissioners will meet in joint session Monday at 8:30 a.m. to discuss the proposed cum cap budget and other budgetary considerations. The council will meet July 21 at 8:30 a.m.

No raise for Carroll administrators

By Jennifer Archibald
Staff writer

Administrator and non-certified salaries, and final changes in the school handbooks were decided at the June 16 Carroll School Board meeting.

All administrator and non-certified salaries for 2009-2010 will remain the same as they were for 2008-2009.

The wage for students hired by the corporation for summer work was increased from \$7 an hour to \$7.50 an hour, effective July 1. The vote on the increase was four in favor, with one board member, Rick Eller, abstaining.

Substitute teachers' pay was increased from \$55 per day to \$65 per day. Superintendent John Sayers said this is the first increase for substitutes in eight years.

The board approved student handbooks for the 2009-2010 school year.

Valedictorian, salutatorian

One of the handbook changes, effective with the Class of 2012, is that the valedictorian will be the student with the highest GPA after eight semesters, and the salutatorian will be the student with the second highest GPA. The top two students must have attended Carroll Jr.-Sr. High School during the four semesters of their junior and senior years. No other criteria will be considered. Administrators say that simplifying the criteria for the top two rankings should result in a single valedictorian and a single salutatorian, effective with the Class of 2012. In the rare case that there is a tie in GPAs for valedictorian, then there will be multiple valedictorians and no salutatorian.

Driving privileges

A new policy added to the handbook has to do with academic eligibility for driving

privileges – not just for athletes, but for all students. A student driver must have passing grades in all classes. Grades will be checked at the progress report date – four and a half weeks into the grading period. Students who are failing in any class will not be allowed to drive to and from school (during the school day) until the grade is brought up. A student who is failing but has a passing grade by the end of the nine weeks will be allowed to drive again. Board president Sam Zook later explained to the *Comet* that board members agreed in a work session that if they approved the policy, there would be specific remediation available to help students bring up grades in their failing classes.

Bullying

Extra wording was added to the elementary handbook to be in agreement with the junior-senior high handbook on the subject of harassment/bullying. One of the added paragraphs says, "Any type of harassment/bullying is strictly forbidden and (depending upon the seriousness) will receive disciplinary consequences. Students who believe they are the victims of such harassment should report it immediately to school officials."

Sayers announced that the corporation received federal stimulus money for Title I summer tutoring, which will begin July 20. This is for Title I students only. The elementary school's regular

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New gallery opens



More than 400 people came to the grand opening of the Opera House Gallery of Contemporary Art Friday night, and a total of nearly 700 visited throughout the weekend. The gallery is on the east side of the courthouse square in Delphi and is owned and operated by Delphi Preservation Society. The three resident artists are Rena Brouwer, Terry Lacy, and Alan McConnell. In the top photo, Brouwer is sketching the beautiful flower arrangement donated for the gallery's opening. At right, Lacy talks with visitors, Tony and Grace Woodruff. DPS board member Anita Werling said the gallery had a very successful opening, in terms of attendance, artists' sales, donations, and raised awareness of DPS restoration projects. A long-term project is restoring the third-floor opera house as a performing arts center. Top photo by Jennifer Archibald. Photo at right provided.



Job seekers can learn skills and network with potential employers at upcoming events

Comet staff report

With the growing number of unemployed and "under-employed" citizens in Carroll County, the Flora Presbyterian Church is responding to this need by hosting two events to assist people in preparing for employment and in finding jobs.

On July 1 job seekers are invited to the first event where they will find out about the resources and training available to build skills, write resumes, prepare for interviews, and search for

employment. This event will begin with a free meal at 6:30 p.m.; babysitting will be provided.

Everyone who attends will receive a voucher good for one interview/career "outfit" they can select at either the Thrift Shop in Flora or Deacon's Closet in Delphi on days especially set aside for participants in this event.

Assisting with the July 1 event will be WorkOne, Purdue Recruitment Office, and IVY Tech State College.

On July 8 job seekers are invited to come meet with potential employers at a job

networking event. This evening will also begin with a free meal at 6:30 p.m. with babysitting again being provided.

Dinner will be followed by a "job fair" where participants will be able to meet potential employers, pick up applications, discuss job qualifications and talk more with representatives from WorkOne.

Some of the employers that will be represented include Indiana Packers, U.S. Aggregates, Camp Tecumseh, Freedom Lawns, Alco and other area merchants and

grocery stores, fast food restaurants, area banks, and others.

Both events will take place at the Flora Presbyterian Church, 211 South Center Street, Flora. Parking is available in the lot behind the church and on the street.

"Everyone we have contacted has been so supportive of our effort," says program chairman, Barb Mayfield. "Our Carroll county businesses tell us they want to encourage job seekers, even if they don't currently have openings. WorkOne, Purdue, and IVY Tech are all going

out of their way to provide expertise to help job seekers gain fresh insights and skills they need to find employment. Even though they are all overwhelmed in their workload they were all very excited to be a part of these events."

Mayfield, an elder in the Flora Presbyterian Church, will facilitate the events.

Questions should be directed to the church office at 574-967-3907. Any area business that would like to participate in the July 8 event, should also call the church office.



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