

**JOINT WORKING SESSION
TIPPECANOE COUNTY COUNCIL
TIPPECANOE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
AUGUST 21, 2003**

The Tippecanoe County Council and Tippecanoe County Commissioners met in a joint working session on Thursday, August 21, 2003 at 3:30 P.M. in the Tippecanoe Room in the County Office Building. Council members present were: President Connie Basham, Vice President Ronald L. Fruitt, Jeffrey Kessler, Betty J. Michael, Jeffrey A. Kemper, and Kathy Vernon. Commissioners present were: Vice President Ruth E. Shedd, and Member John L. Knochel. Others present were: Auditor Robert A. Plantenga, County Attorney David W. Luhman, Commissioners' Assistant Jennifer Weston, and Secretary Pauline E. Rohr. (Councilmember David S. Byers and Commission President KD Benson were absent.)

Various Department Heads were also present.

Vice President Shedd called the County Commissioners to order.

President Basham called the County Council to order.

COIT DISCUSSION

Auditor Plantenga explained that we set aside \$3.8 million to fund the Homestead Credit but, due to a change in the calculation formula, the State Auditor approved our billing at approximately \$1.5 million which gives us an additional \$2.3 million to distribute to the taxing units. Tippecanoe County's additional share of approximately \$897,000 brings out total 2003 COIT amount to approximately \$5.1 million. Auditor Plantenga said he expects the COIT to be the same for 2004 unless the Legislature changes the formula back to the way it was. If the conservative approach is taken, adding \$800,000 would bring our 2003 COIT amount to \$3 million and lower the amount necessary to cut from the 2004 Budget to approximately \$4 million.

REVENUE DISCUSSION

Revenues from departments were briefly reviewed. It was noted that Jerry Bean, the Prosecutor, has been contributing \$125,000 of Diversion Funds to the General Fund but did not submit that revenue for 2004. Because the Auditor was written up by the State Board of Accounts for the ongoing debt in the Drug Grant Fund last year, Mr. Bean said plans to apply the Diversions Funds to the Drug Grant to get that account into the black.

2004 ALLOWABLE LEVY

Auditor Plantenga: Based on an allowable tax levy and the projected miscellaneous revenue, the 2004 budget requests of \$31,107,765, must be cut by \$4,852,730.

CUM BRIDGE TAX RATE DISCUSSION

Commissioner Shedd said the Cum Bridge Tax Rate can be lowered by the Commissioners without a public hearing, but she wants to see how the budget numbers work out before making any decision on the Cum Bridge rate or interest.

Over \$1 million of revenue was generated for the 2003 General Fund Budget with a lower rate and retaining the Cum Bridge interest.

Commissioner Knochel said he is not opposed to discussing a lower rate but the new US 231 Bridge at an estimated cost of \$9 to \$12 million has not been paid for yet. In addition, the State will relinquish approximately 13 bridges to the County when the US 231 Project is complete. A Major Bridge Fund would establish a tax that would benefit only 4 to 5 bridges in the County.

The approximate balance in the Cum Bridge Fund is \$27 million.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The County Council's Budget has a line item of \$125,000 to pay delinquent Institutional Care bills.

The Translator position in the Ancillary Department is a new position request.

Cary Home' Budget includes the increase of the Secretary from 32 hours to full time status.

The Prosecutor is requesting the reinstatement of the Deputy Prosecutor and File Clerk cut for 2003.

Councilmember Kessler said we have to flat line the budgets, but Councilmember Vernon didn't think that was a realistic option. She said Retirement costs have increased. Councilmember Kessler said personnel costs are 73% of the total budget. He thinks the Council may have to streamline departments and cut personnel.

Auditor Plantenga said only \$9 million of the 2004 Budget requests are not personnel costs. The Council will need to cut \$4 to \$5 million.

Councilmember Kessler observed that the County may not have the money for the match required for Federal grants.

Attorney Luhman interjected that, if the Sheriff's pension costs are greater than 10% over last year, the County can apply for an Excess Levy.

ADJOURNMENT

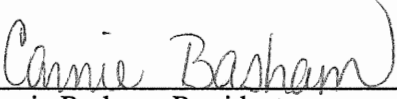
- Commissioner Knochel moved to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Shedd; motion carried.

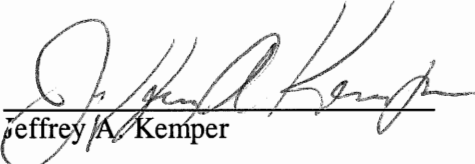
Councilmember Vernon said the Council needs to encourage department heads to suggest cuts to their budgets.

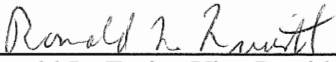
ADJOURNMENT

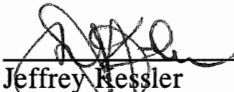
- Councilmember Kemper moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilmember Fruitt; motion carried.

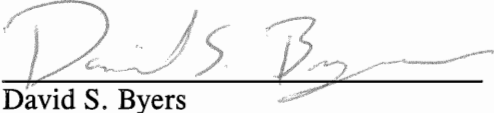
TIPPECANOE COUNTY COUNCIL

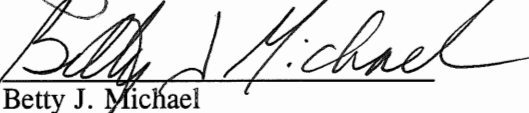

 Connie Basham, President

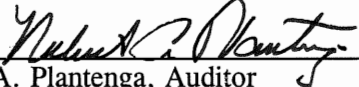

 Jeffrey A. Kemper

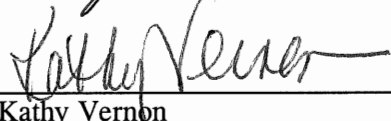

 Ronald L. Fruitt, Vice President


 Jeffrey Kessler


 David S. Byers


 Betty J. Michael

Attest: 
 Robert A. Plantenga, Auditor


 Kathy Vernon