

THE NEW ALBANY CITY COUNCIL HELD A PUBLIC HEARING ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2023 AT 6:45 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, ROOM 100, NEW ALBANY CITY HALL, 142 E. MAIN STREET.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Council Members Mr. Dickey, Mr. Phipps, Mrs. McLaughlin, Mr. Turner, Mr. Blair, Mr. Aebersold, Mr. Applegate, Mrs. Griffith and President Collier.

ALSO PRESENT: Ms. Stein, Mrs. Moeller and Mrs. Glotzbach

President Collier called the public hearing to order at 6:45 p.m. She asked if anyone would like to speak on the following:

**A-23-04 An Ordinance to Fix the General Fund and
Other Budgets for the Year 2024**

Ms. Joyce Riley, 3218 Hickory Grove, stated that she was present to give her view of why she believes the 2024 animal shelter budget shouldn't be adjusted. She said that it should stay as the animal shelter wants. She stated that she doesn't agree with the notion that the service area will actually decrease by 53% and that the shelter is not in need of the same funds due to this reduction. She said that the reduction in the service area, to her, is only a theory. She stated that we don't have a lot of vans that patrol the area like the police and sheriff's deputies do, we have a van that makes a call when asked to do so. She said that she guesses that the county commissioners haven't had time to present a plan for caring for the county residents' homeless animals or the unwanted pets. She stated that they need time and she guesses that you could say tough because there has been such a ruckus between city and county, but that is not why the shelter is there and that is not the function of the shelter, the shelter is there to help the animals. She said that the shelter is being operated by the city but it was built by city funds, county funds and a very special one-third donated funds from the Floyd County Animal Rescue League. She stated that the very name of the Animal Rescue League embodies an idea that she thinks is being brought down by way of thinking. She said first, the meetings that the county wanted apparently didn't get them because they wanted important data expenditures. She stated that they managed to get them somehow because the next year they based what they were going to pay on what the expenditures were from the year before from the budget. She added that not even then would they pay all of it. She said that the City of New Albany then stepped in and did what they had to do. She stated that they took care of the shelter, they took care of the wages and took care of the animals; they did whatever was necessary. She said that we can't continue to put the animals in such a precarious situation. She stated that the divorce of the county and city seemed to be final and the county is pulling out from what she has been reading, but the city is picking up the shelter tab for the rest of the year. She said that now we have some councilman, but not all, thinking that we should perhaps slash the budget because of the theory of 53% less area that we have to cover. She stated that we know things need to be done down there because the building is aging. She said that it was built in 2000 so we need to make sure that the roof, the air, the insulation and all things pertinent to the operations are in order and can stay in order with the lack of funds that is being presented to the city from the county. She stated that we also need to take care of the staff financially because those people do a job that not many of us want. She said that they love those animals. She stated that on the adopted pages before the pandemic, you would see photo shoots of adoptable animals and those were probably done by the same person that cleaned up their cage the morning before or the day before. She said that staff is the only love that those animals see and feel because she thinks during the pandemic, they closed off the volunteers, but that may be something that has started again, she is not sure on that. She stated that we need to do the right thing by the animals and the shelter. She said that we had a common partner in this crisis and she would like to see them used if we can legally, and that is the Floyd County Rescue League. She stated that they help build the shelter, they have expertise in operations, they can bring foresight and they could also possibly work out a deal for the city and the county to work together. She said maybe not in the same capacity that has just ended, but they may be able to guide everyone because the animals are going to lose if we don't and we don't want to go back. She stated that she is old enough to remember the pound over the hill on Main Street and what it represented, and it was basically a place where animals went to die. She said that it was awful and the Floyd County Animal Rescue League probably was the one that stepped in there and started thinking that they had to do something. She added that she knows because she was there in the beginning. She stated that the Animal Rescue League that is there

now is far beyond what she could have ever imagined and she would like to see us use the Animal Rescue League to get together and figure out how to handle everything that needs to be done. She said that this is so new that the ink hasn't even dried on the ending of the contract and we haven't even gotten a final thing from the county, although she does understand that Dr. Al Knable said that they are going to get together and finalize everything. She stated that we need to make it amicable in order to save as many animals as we can because if we don't, we have done not right by the people that help build that shelter. She said that there were a lot of people, a lot of donations, a lot of yard sales, a lot of Harvest Homecoming things and a lot more things that she is not even familiar with. She stated that the Animal Rescue League was there from the beginning and she hopes that they can be of help to us in trying to work out this problem, but she doesn't think that it is time to slash the budget on the shelter. She said that she can see talking about it next year after we see where we stand on everything, but not this year because there are too many unknown factors.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

Jennie Collier, President

Vicki Glotzbach, City Clerk