

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**BEECH GROVE FIRE, POLICE, DISPATCH UNIONS SUPPORT DISPATCH TRANSITION**

*Accelerated implementation of House Bill 1204 helps solve \$1 million property tax revenue reduction mandated by House Bill 1001*

**Beech Grove, IN – October 5, 2009** – In order to achieve the \$1 million property tax revenue reduction legislatively mandated by House Bill 1001, the Wright administration has reached an agreement with the local fire, police and dispatch unions that the City's 2010 budget will fund eight dispatch positions until December 31, 2010.

The Beech Grove Professional Firefighters Association Local 416, Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 86 and the Beech Grove Emergency Communications Employees Association support the accelerated implementation of House Bill 1204 that requires Public Safety Answering Points – dispatch agencies – be reduced to no more than two per county by 2014. The unions' support of the acceleration of this process includes the transition of Beech Grove's dispatch agency by the end of 2010.

"Tough times demand tough decisions. Beech Grove's \$1 million property tax revenue loss for 2010 as a result of tax caps required by House Bill 1001 is a permanent fiscal change. Permanent fiscal change requires permanent structural change. With my administration and the unions in agreement, the transition of Beech Grove's dispatch agency is expected to be completed by the middle of 2010," Mayor Joe Wright said.

"In light of House Bill 1001, we sometimes are forced to make difficult decisions. Through working together, we were able to achieve a mutual agreement," Beech Grove Professional Firefighters Association President Brian Butler said.

According to the plan approved by the unions, a generous severance package (balance of pay as of December 31, 2010 including benefits) will be provided to any of the eight dispatchers employed when the transition occurs.

"With property tax cuts Indiana taxpayers demanded being provided by House Bill 1001, municipalities are faced with doing more with less. We have to live within our means, just as our citizens have to do every day.

"As city leaders, the challenge is to continue providing the same or better City services with fewer funds while maintaining our fundamental priorities. The answers lie in lean services and greater resource efficiencies," Wright said.

According to the mayor, despite the significant challenges of solving a million dollar property tax revenue reduction in next year's budget while maintaining essential city services, the 2010 budget reflects and protects Beech Grove's fundamental priorities.

"Public safety, protection of our surplus, a balanced budget, and retention of quality services through better efficiency of available resources remain intact. Our citizens deserve nothing less," Wright said.

The 2010 budget reflects raises for police officers, firefighters and dispatchers, in accordance with their contracts. The pension base for both police and fire will be at a five percent raise. There will be no new hires in either department, which had been a third year contract commitment. Three percent raises will be provided for all non-public safety staff.

Mayor Wright will present the proposed 2010 City budget to the Beech Grove City Council tonight at 7:00 p.m. at the Hornet Park Community Center, 5245 Hornet Avenue.

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For questions, interview requests, contact:  
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