

**VIGO COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**Sunshine Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, September 5, 2023 at 5:00 P.M.**  
**Council Chambers – Vigo County Government Center**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

President Pro Tem Marie Theisz called the meeting to order at 5:00.

**Calling of the roll**

Aaron Loudermilk – present, Nancy Allsup – present; Vicki Weger – present; Todd Thacker – absent; Marie Theisz – present; Travis Norris – present; and David Thompson – absent.

**Communications from elected officials, other officials or agencies of the County**

Commissioner Mike Morris reported that Vigo County had recently received \$87,000 from Duke Energy for energy savings from the jail. That was deposited into the general fund. He said that next month they would like to request those funds to use to pay for the telephones and electricity bills for the County.

**First reading by summary reference of proposed ordinances and resolutions**

- i. Additional Appropriation 2023-54: LIT/PSAP – Contractual, Office Furniture and Equipment New
- ii. Additional Appropriation 2023-55: E911 – Licenses, Contractual and Equipment New
- iii. Additional Appropriation 2023-56: EDIT – Maintenance Building New
- iv. Additional Appropriation 2023-57: ARPA Grant Fund – Maintenance Building New
- v. Additional Appropriation 2023-45: ARPA Grant Fund – Recreational Trails Project
- vi. Additional Appropriation 2023-51: ARPA Grant Fund – THRIVE West Central Project – Housing
- vii. Additional Appropriation 2023-58: ARPA Grant Fund – Rose Hulman – Rose Ventures Relocation
- viii. Salary Ordinance 2023-59A: E911 – Adjust Pay Rates
- ix. 2023 Amended Vigo County Salary Ordinance

**Reports from committees**

Marie Theisz said the Salary Subcommittee had met and worked on some things and that would be addressed during discussion of the amended salary ordinance.

**Resolutions and Ordinances other than appropriations**

There were none

**Ordinances relating to appropriations.**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**i. Additional Appropriation 2023-44: LIT/Correctional Rehab – Supplement to Drug Court**

This matter had been tabled at the last meeting. Hon. Chris Newton said they are working on a new plan. Many of the services offered through the Drug Court are also offered through the Veterans Court. They felt that it might be best to streamline and try to look for new sources of revenue. They have had some good responses for grants and things that are out there that might be possible to use for next year. However, they are requesting this additional appropriation to carry Drug Court out through the rest of this year to ensure that the program continues for the people currently enrolled. All in all, the program is very successful and they feel it is a necessity to keep that Court functioning. Council had no additional questions.

**ii. Additional Appropriation 2023-54: LIT/PSAP – Contractual, Office Furniture and Equipment New**

Commissioner Mark Clinkenbeard and Jeff Fox were present for this request. This concerns the Resolution of Support passed by the Council last month for relocation of E911 to the Community Corrections Building. Estimates are completed and they are requesting a total of \$893,275 (part from this fund and part from another) to complete the work. A detailed estimate had been provided. Jeff Fox will be overseeing the project with help from Commissioner Clinkenbeard, resulting in a savings to the County of approximately \$90,000 in general contracting fees. The moving of files by Building Maintenance and the Clerk's Office will be completed tomorrow, with actual construction to start September 11. They hope for completion by year end. Jeff Fox said they had met with contractors to establish timelines and those types of things. The only concern is the possibility of delay in receiving the HVAC equipment. That is the only component that could be a problem. Marie Theisz asked if the move will still be able to take place if the HVAC equipment does not arrive timely. Mr. Fox said they haven't got that deep into it yet. They are still looking at other vendors for the equipment and elaborated on how things would work.

**iii. Additional Appropriation 2023-55: E911 – Licenses, Contractual and Equipment New**

This request is in conjunction with the prior request of LIT/PSAP regarding the relocation of Dispatch services discussed in the prior paragraph. A portion of the funding will come from LIT/PSAP and a portion from E911.

**iv. Additional Appropriation 2023-56: EDIT – Maintenance Building New**

Commissioner Mark Clinkenbeard said they are asking for an appropriation of \$1,536,000 to build a maintenance/storage facility on the southwest corner of the new jail property. This will house county storage, county morgue, Sheriff's Department garage and the building maintenance shop. This is deemed to be the most cost effective way to handle the immediate and long term needs. A few changes have been made to the square footage. The Sheriff's garage is a little smaller and county document storage a little

larger. The morgue space will have 960 square feet, Sheriff's garage 1,920 square feet, document storage 2,496 square feet, and building maintenance shop 1,536 square feet. They are proposing half the cost come from ARPA funds and half from EDIT. Aaron Loudermilk asked if they could get a breakdown on the cost for each of the four uses. Commissioner Clinkenbeard said they would get that. There was a short discussion. Public Defender Gretchen Etling noted that the square footage assigned for the public defender could be submitted for reimbursement to the Commission.

**v. Additional Appropriation 2023-57: ARPA Grant Fund – Maintenance Building New**

This request is in conjunction with the prior request of EDIT for the new maintenance building. See prior paragraph.

**vi. Additional Appropriation 2023-45: ARPA Grant Fund – Recreational Trails Project**

Adam Grossman and Larry Robbins were present to talk about this. Adam said he, the Commissioners and Larry Robbins had prepared a 1-year parks/trails package for ARPA money. Starting with the Riley Spur, \$525,000 would pay for the section from Lama to Canal which is about 1.6 miles. It would also pay for benches, lighting, all the amenities along with that. They are still working on the trail head that will springboard that in. He provided a map of Vigo and surrounding counties showing all the existing trails that will eventually all connect together with Vigo County being the hub. The Health Department has helped with grants. There was a brief discussion. Commissioner Mike Morris announced that the Riley Town Board had agreed that a trail head could be located at their Town Hall Building. Aaron Loudermilk asked if the demographic that would use the trail would also be the same as those using the bike park. Mr. Grossman said they really catered to two different groups. Larry Robbins said they have submitted a Next Level Trails application to the State of Indiana to extend that trail from Lama into the City of Terre Haute at 7<sup>th</sup> & Margaret. Hopefully they will find out at the end of November or early December whether or not they got that grant. It also encompasses a loop around Rea Park. Joni Wise with the Vigo County Health Department also noted that adding that in with what the Friends of Real Park and the City of Terre Haute had planned, such as pickleball courts, tennis courts, revamping the golf course, putting in an exterior track, putting in an athletic facility, only enhances the whole project and encourages healthy activities. This request is for three different projects. Secondly, with regard to a West Terre Haute loop, Duke Energy has advised that the County will be getting a grant to be able to cross U.S. 40 by Sugar Creek Scrap which will then run down to a rail bed by Old Paris Road. They will pay for that portion and Vigo County will then pick up by cantilevering over by the old ball field and connect with the Wabashiki Trail. This will be a really nice 8 foot wide concrete trail, with fencing, to hook up to existing concrete at the ball field. They will then appeal to the Town of West Terre Haute and Vigo County to replace some sidewalks to complete the look. Assuming funding is approved, the prep work could start as early as this Fall, with the majority taking place in the Spring. Third, the pedestrian walkway is well used. They have talked about an overlook at Dewey Point for years. Duke Energy vacated the concrete towers that were there with the vision of making this an overlook in the future. Approximately

\$175,000 of this ask will be used for that. This will draw people in. They have donations to pay for the engineering and design. Marie Theisz thanked all of them for their collaborative efforts.

**vii. Additional Appropriation 2023-51: ARPA Grant Fund – THRIVE West Central – Housing**

Mark Clinkenbeard introduced Ryan Keller, Executive Director of THRIVE West Central, who has been putting together a plan for much needed housing development in the community. Mr. Keller had put together a plan that will incentivize home builders and developers and lay a long-term foundation for housing development. Mr. Keller was joined by Jon Ford, their Director of Business Development, and Julie Hart, one of their planners. A folder containing information about the project and various studies that had been conducted was provided to the Council. They are requesting \$5 million in ARPA funds for their long term housing development and market empowerment plan. Mr. Keller gave a short powerpoint presentation explaining what they are proposing. They plan to use the home optimization market and empowerment method. They received a \$1.8 million READI grant last year and completed a home optimization study to determine the market needs and potential. The second part of the plan is the market empowerment method. This will help solve the funding gaps in projects that normally limit development. It creates and deploys buyer support programs, buyer education programs and buyer pipelines. It provides builders, lenders and investors the data they need for the projects in our county. It creates long term development opportunities that focus on the population already here and future population. They plan to invest 96.4% to builder developments and implementation. 3.6% will help launch support mechanisms such as training, and Club 720 (a virtual platform that is the foundation of long term housing and development strategies, one part of which helps first and second time home buyers with down payments). This is a multi-stage process. He reviewed each process. There will be an 11-person steering committee. The Council, Commissioners and members in the City of Terre Haute all get to pick who serves on that Committee. Next, Club 720 is launched. After that, different sites are identified for pre-development along with sites that are ready to go. Next is a comprehensive communication strategy. In March of next year, it will be time for implementation and development. Joni Wise said Montgomery County, Maryland had an affordable housing innovation that includes a law that requires developers to set aside about 15% of the units in new projects for households making less than 2/3 of the area's median income. She wondered if Vigo County would consider that. Mr. Keller said he was unfamiliar with that program but would look into it. He did say their study included housing for all levels of income. There was a short discussion.

**viii. Additional Appropriation 2023-58: ARPA Grant Fund – Rose Hulman – Rose Ventures Relocation**

Brian Dougherty, Senior Director for Rose Hulman Ventures, was present for this request. They are requesting \$500,000 to assist in creation of an innovation park. This is a multi-phased and multi-faceted project. The beginning piece is relocating and expanding the current Rose Hulman Ventures program. Rose Hulman Ventures creates professional practice experience for students using outside companies to do real,

technical work. The projects are managed by a professional staff member. They target greater than 115 individuals to get internship experiences usually spread over 35-40 different clients a year. They do not compete on cost but they are actually pretty inexpensive in comparison to others performing the same service. They help their clients find funding, mostly in the form of grants. They do pay their interns. The work they did resulted in 6 patent applications and 5 product launches for their clients. It is time to expand. By investing in resources and some new skills, they can broaden up to provide more value to more business partners which also creates the educational opportunities for the students. The current location of Rose Ventures is not conducive to broadening the project and makes it difficult for the interns to be able to come there and work during the day. Rose Hulman purchased a large piece of property across from the main campus a few years ago for development. They plan to relocate Rose Ventures at the corner of that property initially and expand into some other opportunities creating Innovation Grove. That will be a hub for all entrepreneurial and innovative activities. Rose Ventures will be the anchor. They want to create opportunities for corporate partners to come and land their people, working with Rose Hulman and utilizing Rose Hulman facilities and creating educational opportunities Rose Hulman is looking for. They are also interested in housing and are aware of the housing shortage. There is potential for people to develop mixed-use housing on the site as well. There will be increased entrepreneurship, entry support for local companies, increased full and part time employment at Rose Hulman, job growth from corporate partners, and potential for additional housing. \$6 million of Rose Hulman assets have been used so far. They believe they can raise another \$4 million philanthropically. They have \$1.5 million allocated from the first READI grant. They are requesting \$2 million from the EDA but won't know if they receive it until later, however, feedback has been very positive and supportive. There was a short discussion. When asked what they would do with the old property, Mr. Dougherty said they anticipated selling that property as part of the funding for the new endeavor.

**ix. Salary Ordinance 2023-59A: E911 – Adjust Pay Rates**

Vickie Oster, Director of E911, and Sarah Holbert, Assistant Director, were present for this request. Ms. Oster said they feel that their people were underrated on the Baker Tilly study. They have always been rated in conjunction with the Jail and Juvenile Center correctional officers. The study ranks E911 one grade below them. She feels they were underrated except for the supervisors which were moved up by Baker Tilly. She is requesting every position, except supervisors, to be raised up one level, to go to midpoint of that level, and retroactive to the first of the year. They are having a hard time getting people to apply for jobs. They have hired 17 people this year and 14 have resigned. Some could not do the job, some left for higher paying jobs, and some just didn't show up at all. They are still losing people. She has 17 trained dispatchers and 2 have resigned and will be leaving shortly. She doesn't know if a pay increase will attract long term employees but they are understaffed and need to try something. This is a nation-wide crisis. Chief Deputy Auditor Cheryl Loudermilk noted that they were also requesting that three assistant supervisors be classified as supervisors and do away with assistant supervisor positions and the stipends that go with them. She would then have six supervisors. The spreadsheet provided by Ms. Loudermilk shows the salary breakdowns

of current, 25<sup>th</sup> percentile and midpoint. Ms. Oster also said that their salaries do not come from the general fund, they come from LIT and from State 911 funds. This would not cost the County anything because their money comes from those two funds only. Lengthy discussion continued.

**x. 2023 Amended Vigo County Salary Ordinance**

Marie Theisz said the salary subcommittee had met to address any issues that had been noted in the study and make recommendations for the changes to the full Council. Chief Deputy Auditor Cheryl Loudermilk reviewed the changes discussed at the subcommittee meetings. The Commissioners requested their Administrator rate be adjusted. It had always been based on the rate of the Council Administrator. Baker Tilly rated the pay rate one step down. The Committee recommended changing the grade from a 10 to an 11. The Surveyor spoke for his Chief Deputy Surveyor and the Chief Deputy Recorder. Those two Chief Deputies had been rated lower than the other Chief Deputies of all other departments. Those grades had always been the same so it is being recommended that those be adjusted to be the same grade for all Chief Deputies. In the Auditor's Office, the Staff Accountant and Financials Grant Administrator came back at a grade 9. Not sure why they were not compared to the Finance Deputy in the Treasurer's Office with a grade 10. The responsibilities totally resemble one another. She talked about the duties and responsibilities of those positions. Years ago, there were additional people who are no longer there and additional duties have had to be absorbed by the current staff. The tax supervisor was down 2 grades compared to what came back from a Clerk supervisor and 1 step lower than supervisors in other departments. 2 deputy auditors were rated lower than the rest and perform the same duties. The payroll administrator takes care of 600-700 employees. In comparison to other payroll administrators, the pay grade is too low. These are in line with other departments with none being requested higher than the same position in other departments. It is being recommended that those 4 positions be raised to their comparable grades. Next, Building maintenance workers were previously considered LTCB's which also included some of the highway guys and deputy surveyors. They all made the same hourly rate. Building maintenance and surveyors came back at a lower grade in the Baker Tilly study. The Surveyor had talked to HR and Baker Tilly and got his adjusted before we reached this point. This requested adjustment for building maintenance is not what Highway has been changed to now but the original pay grade assigned to Highway in the study. It is being recommended to the full Council that this pay grade be raised. Also, there had originally been a mistake on the IT pay grades but it had been corrected. There had also been a clerical error on an Office Manager position in Parks but it had been caught and corrected by HR. These are all recommended corrections that will be brought to the full Council for a vote. Marie Theisz asked if these have to be approved/decided on before the final amended ordinance is prepared? Council Attorney Michael Wright said they would impact what goes into the final amendment. The Ordinance that has been prepared has been updated to reflect those recommendations and detailing that it is committee action and not action taken by the full Council yet.

Council Attorney Michael Wright said that each year the Council adopts a salary ordinance that governs how employees are paid over the course of the entire year. With the study from Baker Tilly and the desire to amend the 2023 Ordinance, he has prepared

a new ordinance that reflects that it is amending the 2023 salary ordinance based upon the report received from the professional organization engaged to assist in the compensation analysis and the other considerations that the Council is obligated to look at after regarding the fiscal impacts to the County. The Ordinance details the steps already taken in 2023 regarding the Public Defender's Office, the Prosecutor's Office, the Highway Department, and the other departments that have been dealt with independent of everything else. The Ordinance makes clear that it does not impact those previous decisions except for the office workers in those departments who were not part of those changes. It does contain language regarding new employees and where they would be rated for the first six months of employment. He addressed and incorporated all the stipends, clothing allowance, and tangential pay related to the Assessor's Office for various certifications. He believes it to be in good form for adoption. Cheryl Loudermilk said everything is based on the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile as she had been instructed to do for 2023. Marie Theisz said when the subcommittee met, they did not make it official but it was suggested that is where they would like to go. 25<sup>th</sup> percentile for 2023 starting with the date of July 1. Vicki Weger said they had tried to make the employee raise this year as much as they possibly could. She said it may be difficult to manage the other requests from the departments for their budgets for 2024 but the employees were a priority. They did not feel it could go all the way back to January 1. Marie Theisz emphasized that this is the recommendation but it was not final at this point. She said with the new year, they would also be looking at the insurance contribution for the new year and would like to have each employee receive a copy of their entire benefit package value. She also stressed that the Council had to look not at just this year but also moving forward and the sustainability of the budget. There was discussion about the impact of the raises beginning at the first of the year and July 1 and what could be expected moving forward, including raises for 2024. Lengthy discussion continued. Michael Wright said the Ordinance to effectuate decisions is ready and decisions as to when everything starts have been left blank so that when those decisions are made they can be easily inserted and the document finalized and executed. The decision has to be made next week. It will not be easy but the Council has to do what is right, keep staff, and keep everything sustainable.



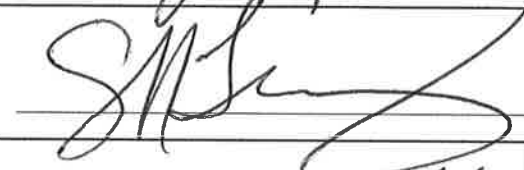

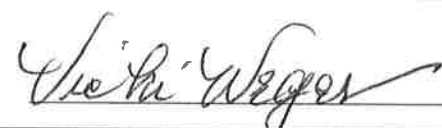
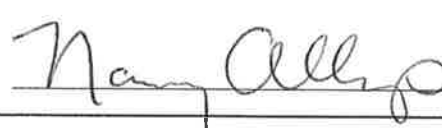
**Public Comments** Elizabeth Stiverson of the Clerk's Office made several comments about how long the Clerk's Office has been asking for raises and been told no or to wait. Terri Stranahan of the Assessor's Office asked about longevity. Michael Wright said longevity remained in the salary ordinance.

Marie Theisz noted that City Councilwoman Tammy Boland, Vicki Weger and Todd Thacker had been recognized at the labor leaders dinner the previous evening for community service and dedication.

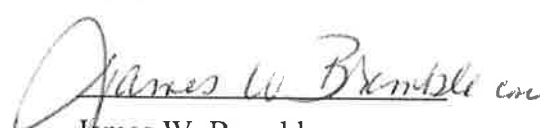
Travis Norris made a motion to adjourn. Vicki Weger seconded the motion. Upon a unanimous vote by all, President Pro Tem Theisz adjourned the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

**MINUTES OF THE VIGO COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**SUNSHINE MEETING**  
**SEPTEMBER 5, 2023**

*Presented to the Vigo County Council, read in full and adopted as written this 10<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2023.*

Aye <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Absent <input type="checkbox"/>	David Thompson	
Nay <input type="checkbox"/>	Abstain <input type="checkbox"/>		
Aye <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Absent <input type="checkbox"/>	Travis Norris	
Nay <input type="checkbox"/>	Abstain <input type="checkbox"/>		
Aye <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Absent <input type="checkbox"/>	Marie Theisz	
Nay <input type="checkbox"/>	Abstain <input type="checkbox"/>		
Aye <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Absent <input type="checkbox"/>	R. Todd Thacker, President	
Nay <input type="checkbox"/>	Abstain <input type="checkbox"/>		
Aye <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Absent <input type="checkbox"/>	Vicki Weger	
Nay <input type="checkbox"/>	Abstain <input type="checkbox"/>		
Aye <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Absent <input type="checkbox"/>	Nancy Allsup	
Nay <input type="checkbox"/>	Abstain <input type="checkbox"/>		
Aye <input type="checkbox"/>	Absent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Aaron Loudermilk	
Nay <input type="checkbox"/>	Abstain <input type="checkbox"/>		

*Attest:*

  
James W. Bramble  
Vigo Auditor