

VIGO COUNTY COUNCIL
Sunshine Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 2, 2021 at 5:00 P.M.
Council Chambers, Vigo County Annex

Pledge of Allegiance

President Aaron Loudermilk called the meeting to order at 5:00.

Calling of the roll

R. Todd Thacker –present, Travis Norris - present, Marie Theisz - present, Vicki Weger - present, Brenda Wilson – present, David Thompson - present, and Aaron Loudermilk - present.

First reading by summary reference of proposed ordinances and resolutions

- i. ROC 2021-052, Resolution 2021-20: Great Dane, LLC – 10-year real and personal property tax abatement
- ii. ROC 2021-047, Additional Appropriation 2021-26, Non Reverting Juvenile Justice Care of Prisoners Fund
- iii. ROC 2021-048, Additional Appropriation 2021-27, Highway
- iv. ROC 2021-049, Additional Appropriation 2021-28, Cumulative Bridge
- v. ROC 2021-050, Additional Appropriation 2021-29, LIT/Special Purpose
- vi. ROC 2021-051, Out-of-Series Transfer: Vigo County Council – reallocation of appropriation from Coronavirus Relief to Payroll, FICA and PERF
- vii. 2022 Salary Ordinances
 - a. General Employees
 - b. Merit Officers
 - c. Elected Officials
- viii. 2021 Salary Ordinance Amendments
 - a. General Employees
 - b. Merit Officers

Public Comments

There were none.

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

Commissioner Mike Morris gave an update regarding the Indiana Railroad and Riley Spur. Negotiations have come to an end. This is a 6-mile piece of property costing around \$250,000. It will be rail bank per Federal law so that a rail line could be put back in the future if the railroad desired and they would reimburse Vigo County. He does not foresee that happening. He said he would like the Council to consider funding that out of EDIT and/or the Recovery Plan monies.

Rob Roberts of the Vigo County Prosecutor's Office then spoke about a compensation committee that had been formed to interview various vendors to perform a new compensation study and give a committee recommendation for selection to the Council. The committee was made up of department heads and others that had volunteered to investigate, study and research different organizations. After several lengthy meetings, research and interviews, the Committee has unanimously decided to recommend Baker Tilly as the best organization to perform the compensation review. The individuals on the Committee are happy to make themselves available for any questions/discussion from anybody either tonight or by email or direct contact. President Loudermilk, also a member of the committee, stated that he agreed with Mr. Roberts' assessment of how the group interacted with the vendors and supports what he is saying in terms of the group's recommendation for Baker Tilly as the vendor and moving forward with them. There was a brief discussion during which it was noted that the Committee had interviewed the current vendor, Baker Tilly, and a group known as Archer. Vicki Weger asked about the length of time they would take to complete the study. Mr. Roberts said that they indicated that they could start possibly as early as December or the beginning of January and be done with it in 5-6 months. That would put it right on target for the budget process of 2022.

Marie Theisz said that, as discussed before, she would like to investigate and explore putting together a tax abatement scoring system somewhat similar to what the City uses. This would be beneficial to the county and to prospective and existing businesses when considering a tax abatement request and would help with consistency. She would like to present something by the January meeting and would welcome any feedback or concerns.

Reports from committees

There were none.

Ordinances relating to appropriations.

**i. Resolution 021-20; ROC 2021-052: Great Dane, LLC –
Declaratory Resolution for the Designation of an Economic
Revitalization Area on Application of Great Dane, LLC**

Matthew Johnson, Great Dane Plant Manager, was at the meeting to speak about this request. He explained about the products manufactured here. There are 9 Great Dane plants in the United States. They all have the two major processes of assembly and fabrication. It is Great Dane's plan to consolidate all nine fabrication operations into one location. This one location would then do all the fabrication of the two major components, plus all the parts with it, and ship back to all the other assembly plants for them to be able to assemble into the trailers. That is what this project entails. This would bring a lot of high-skilled jobs to this location. This is a \$50 million dollar project that would be spread out over three years in different phases. They currently have about 400 employees today averaging around \$20 per hour. This expansion would add about 125 jobs and the pay range would be from \$25 per hour to the upper \$30s depending on the type of job, especially when you get into the robotics and operations. This addition would raise the wages in the whole plant. From a Great Dane perspective, they prefer

Terre Haute for several different reasons. Terre Haute's performance is in the top tier of the company plus it is central for shipping to the other locations in the United States, has a high production quality and there are strong community connections. They would start production and bringing in equipment early next year for Phase I of the project and they would start ramping up production next summer. This would be a lot of renovation to the current campus because they want this to be a state-of-the-art facility. There was some discussion and it was noted that they would be using local union labor in all areas possible. They have already started working with local companies to evaluate and even begin work on existing areas. There was also discussion about traffic flow, working with local educational institutions and hiring of local employees.

ii. Additional Appropriation 2021-26; ROC 2021-47: Non-Reverting Juvenile Justice Center Care of Prisoners

Norm Loudermilk, Executive Director, explained that this request was necessary in order to repair the ceiling in the recreation/gymnasium area and repair of a call box that had been damaged by a storm earlier in the summer. He provided pictures of the items needing repair and quotes he had received to make those repairs. He noted that after talking with the Commissioners, they had agreed to pay half the cost of the repair to the ceiling. The difference in the amount requested tonight, after the Center paid their half, would be used for clothing and supplies for the detainees that needed to be replaced. It was noted that the money in the Non-Reverting Fund (from which this appropriation is being requested) is not taxpayer dollars but is money paid to Vigo County for housing out-of-county detainees. Those monies are to be used for things like what is being requested here. He currently has about \$135,000 in this Non-Reverting Fund. There was lengthy discussion about funds that had previously been requested and what those funds had been used for. Brenda Wilson asked whether there was any insurance that might cover the damage to the call box. Mr. Loudermilk was unaware of any and noted that if there was, the deductible would outweigh the cost of the repair. Discussion continued.

iii. Additional Appropriation 2021-27; ROC 2021-048: Highway

Larry Robbins, County Engineer and Highway Director, said that this request is for money from the sale of surplus equipment earlier this year where they had received \$45,800. He would like to transfer that down to the New Equipment line in order to purchase new equipment, such as crew trucks so they can get rid of some of the older half ton crew trucks as well. The other part of the request for \$4,549 was money received from scrap material over the course of the year. This money would be used to purchase safety equipment such as boots, cones, jackets, etc. for his employees.

iv. Additional Appropriation 2021-28; ROC 2021-049; Cumulative Bridge

Larry Robbins, County Engineer and Highway Director, explained that this concerned a bridge project that came in a little over budget for a number of reasons (i.e. inflation, increased supply costs). There is no federal assistance with this so the County bears the burden of the cost increases with local money. He talked about his current budget and the projects that are coming up. The current balance in the Cumulative Bridge Fund is

\$2,921,923 so there is plenty of money to cover this request. This would cover the shortfall for the bid plus the bridge design projects that come in monthly.

**v. Additional Appropriation 2021-29; ROC 2021-050;
LIT/Special Purpose**

Council Administrator Kylyssa Miller advised that she had noticed the payment for the construction fund for the jail project was not made in 2020 and it has not yet been made in 2021. The Financing Agreement with the jail states that we are to contribute \$5,000,000 each year to the Jail Construction Fund. There is a sufficient balance in the fund to cover both annual contributions but the Council needs to appropriate this money for the 2020 amount since that prior appropriation died December 31, 2020. There was discussion about how this occurred. When you enter into a lease agreement bond, you cannot make a bond payment until after you occupy the building. We were collecting income tax dollars in 2020 and 2021 which allowed us to use those contributions to offset what the debt would be so we would not have to finance as much.

**vi. Resolution of Reallocation of Existing Appropriation 2021-19;
ROC 2021-51: Vigo County Council**

Council President Aaron Loudermilk said this concerns the employee bonus that had been discussed at prior meetings. A schedule had been provided showing calculations in \$50 increments from \$1,000 to \$1,500. The top half of the sheet shows a table calculated with 550 employees showing total expenses for the bonus, FICA and PERF for each amount. The bottom half of the sheets shows similar calculations for 483 full-time employees which is the number of current employees continuously employed since December 31, 2020 through mid-October. There was a discussion about setting parameters for eligibility. Todd Thacker asked if bonuses had ever been paid before and if there were any legal issues in doing this. Council Attorney Robert Effner stated that he had not researched it, but based on the basic statutes he is aware of that gives the Council the right to set compensation, he knows of no reason why this cannot be done. Discussion continued.

**vii. 2022 Salary Ordinances
a. General Employees**

This Salary Ordinance is set up to show a 4% increase across the board. New changes for this year have been highlighted for review, along with a sheet indicating each of the changes. David Thompson asked Rob Roberts with the Prosecutor's Office to approach the podium to discuss the personnel changes approved for the Prosecutor's Office. The original request was for two Deputy Prosecutors and one legal secretary. One legal secretary and one Deputy Prosecutor was what was approved. However, when Mr. Roberts discussed this with Terry Modesitt, the Vigo County Prosecutor, their preference would be for two Deputy Prosecutors and omit the legal secretary due to the heavier caseload and new rules imposed by the State. There was lengthy discussion about this.

b. Merit Officers

This Salary Ordinance was prepared and shows a 4% increase and contains the changes approved for this year's budget regarding numbers, clothing allowances and stipends and those changes have been highlighted.

c. Elected Employees

This Salary Ordinance has been prepared showing the 4% increase for elected officials with the exception of the Sheriff which is paid at the same rate as the Prosecutor.

viii. 2021 Salary Ordinance Amendments

a. General Employees

b. Merit Officers

Council Administrator Kylissa Miller stated that the amendment would be a paragraph that would be added to the 2021 salary ordinance. As previously discussed when talking about the reallocation of moneys for this purpose, parameters need to be set, amounts need to be determined. Ms. Miller also noted that it was her plan to have her laptop working and at the meeting so that any changes decided upon could be made and then the Ordinances printed off for signature that night.

Brenda Wilson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:05 p.m. David Thompson seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote of 7-0, the motion was unanimously approved.