

VIGO COUNTY COUNCIL
Sunshine Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 7, 2023 at 5:00 P.M.
Council Chambers, Vigo County Government Center

Pledge of Allegiance

President Todd Thacker called the meeting to order at 5:00.

Calling of the roll

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

Public Comments

- a. Terre Haute North High School Engineering Class – Winds of the Wabash presentation.
Jason Gibbons, an instructor at Terre Haute North High School, introduced his Engineering Class and their presentation of Winds on the Wabash. Owen Martin said his class had chosen this project that could completely offset the County's electricity bill. This is more efficient than regular turbines and works with lower winds. They intend to utilize local construction companies to build this. They would like to construct a prototype on county land and can be built anywhere that is available. They described how this works and the benefits it provides versus wind turbines. There was discussion about the specifics of the project. President Thacker said the Council would have to consult with the legal department to see what would need to be done to provide land where the prototype could be built. While no action can be taken tonight, President Thacker indicated that with some further research this week, that perhaps some type of action could be voted on and taken at next week's meeting.
- b. Joe Shackelford, in his capacity as Chairman of the Honey Creek Fire Protection District and representing the Honey Creek Department of Fire & Rescue Services, Inc., said he was here to express concern of any future 100% tax abatement granted to new industrial park tenants. The current fire protection district tax rate is \$0.33 per \$100 of assessed valuation. If a 100% abatement is granted, the District cannot collect those tax monies for 10 years. Also, if a 100% tax abatement is granted to a new tenant, existing tenants are then forced to absorb all of the cost for fire and rescue services in the entire Industrial Park Complex. A recent abatement to Steel Dynamics for a \$325 million investment would have generated \$107,250 per year for the Honey Creek Fire Protection District. A proposed new tenant is being considered with a reported \$1 billion investment and over 600 employees. While this would be a great asset to Vigo County and the surrounding areas, if a 100% tax abatement for this proposed new project was granted, the tax revenue for the fire district would have been \$330,000 annually. They respectfully request the County Council not abate any further for any future

fire protection district taxes to help ensure the necessary resources are available to protect the investment the new tenant will make both in terms of personnel and property. The District and the fire department are dedicated to providing the level of service required to retain existing tenants and attract future new investments to the Industrial Park. They cannot maintain the standard of service without the Council's continued support.

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

- a. Sherri Kelly, Vigo County Drug Court Coordinator, gave an update on the program. They are currently funded by a SAMHSA Grant that will run out in September of this year. She also talked about some of their other funding, including what the County provides. She gave a short history of the Drug Court. Drug Court provides case management services. They currently have two case managers plus her. Per the SAMHSA Grant, they were supposed to have 4. They provide 1-1 guidance for their participants, helping them with housing, referral to appropriate treatment and monitoring of that treatment, help them overcome any barriers they may have (i.e. transportation, phone service, help with job applications/resumes). Participants are required to complete community service or give back projects. Their goal is to get people back to being productive citizens of the community. They do supervise their community service since Community Corrections no longer provides that service. Random drug screening is performed at least 10 times a month, with the participants being responsible for the cost of that screen (currently \$15 per screen or a total of \$150 per month on top of their Drug Court User Fees). Drug Court has to absorb the cost of the screens for probationers since Community Corrections no longer does. They also have status hearings for their participants to check on their progress and incentivize them for their hard work. She talked about their funding and where it comes from and the grants they have applied for. She did note that there had been issues with collecting user fees in the past but they discovered most of the problem was where the funds were applied when paid in to the Clerk's Office and have brainstormed on how to solve this and feel like they have found a solution that seems to be working. She talked about what the financial impact would be if the County took over funding the program. She said if she reduced her salary by \$5,000, maintained the 2 case managers they currently have and add no others and estimating that each case manager made \$40,000 per year, the following is the financial impact for the county: salaries - \$120,000; Social Security/FICA - \$9,180; PERF - \$17,040; and Insurance (assuming that every person would need family insurance) - \$87,669; for a total of \$233,889 per year. Their current rent of \$30,626 annually, an average of \$5,000 annually for utilities, \$2,000 for supplies, \$1,500 annually for copy machine rent, \$5,000 for travel and mileage for all their training would need to be added in for a grand total of \$278,015. For comparison, the cost of incarceration for 50 participants for a year would be \$600,000. There was a lengthy question and answer session. She said this program will not produce revenue but it will hopefully produce citizens that can give back to the community.

- b. Chris Switzer said he was here tonight to respectfully request a Resolution of support from the Council to enable the Commissioners to move forward engaging contracts and negotiations with potential ARPA recipients. He then had Rachel Leslie with RJL Solutions present their Plan of Action with respect to the ARPA funds. She briefly reviewed the plan that set out the requirements/duties of the stakeholders/recipients of the funds, the roll of the Commissioners, how the Council will be engaged, and keeping the lines of communication open not only with the government leaders but also the public. President Thacker expressed appreciation for the Plan of Action so everyone has a better understanding of what is going to happen. The question was raised whether the fees incurred by the County for Baker-Tilly and RJL Solutions would be eligible for payment with the ARPA funds. The answer was yes. Discussion continued.
- c. Chris Switzer said the Commissioners had located a possible location for Vigo County Dispatch. It is the old former FBI building across the parking lot to the west of City Hall and the Court House. They have looked at the building and asked various contractors for opinions as to what might need to be done and a rough cost estimate. Before any further action can be taken, they need to obtain two appraisals in order to make an informed offer. Right now, they are only saying there is interest in the property. Aaron Loudermilk asked if there were any additional locations being considered at this point. The second and/or third floor of Community Corrections had been discussed but had been determined by all that it would not be a good fit. There was a short discussion. Mr. Switzer said right now this is the building they are looking at. There are different sources of incomes that could be used to pay for this that did not include increasing taxation. Aaron Loudermilk asked if any feedback had been received about the particular location. There was a lengthy discussion. It was clarified that this is just permission to obtain appraisals at this point. There was also discussion about what improvements/changes/renovations would need to be made if plans moved forward with purchasing the building for Dispatch. It was noted that when the time actually did come for Dispatch to move, Chief Keen of the Terre Haute Police Department had graciously offered use of their facility during the actual move to keep from having service interruption of 911.
- d. Auditor James Bramble distributed a list of the encumbrances from last year totaling \$3,513,852.14. The bulk of that was in EDIT (\$2,253,000) and was for the Community Crossings Grant, the Springhill project, and Clinton Road.
- e. Chris Switzer said it had been announced today that there will be a determination or decision with regard to Markle Mill Dam on how to move forward next week. He noted the Commissioners have received a grant to take care of about 50%-60% of demolition of the dam if that is the route chosen. They have also applied for a second round of funding that would take care of an additional 30% of the grant. So, if that is the route chosen, County will have to pay about 10% for dam removal. The application process to get permitting is about 6 months long. In that event, the Commissioners would have to come back about July or August for

additional funding. He estimated the amount they would be requesting would be \$10,000-\$20,000.

- f. Council – Update on Baker Tilly Salary study. President Thacker said there had been two Committee meetings since last month. It was decided to share the study with the department heads (which has been done). During the first or second week of April, Baker Tilly will be here for meetings with the department heads. Kara Wright will coordinate the times for meetings. There are still decisions to be made with timing and how to reach certain levels of pay. Kara Wright mentioned the possibility of doing a market study for elected officials had been brought up. Because of the situation where chief deputy positions pay rates are based on a percentage of the elected official, the situation could arise where the pay for that position will either be stagnant because the study shows the rate of pay should be more but can't be done because the percentage would be less money and put their pay rate in proximity with other people with less responsibilities, or, in the alternative, if the pay rate were increased, they would be earning nearly as much as the elected official and that comes with its own set of problems.
- g. Auditor Jim Bramble advised the Council that going forward, the numbering system for Appropriations was going to be adjusted to make things easier.

First reading by summary reference of proposed ordinances and resolutions

- i. Resolution of Reallocation 2023-04: Area Planning – out-of-series transfer
- ii. Additional Appropriation 2023-21: Seized Assets – purchase of equipment
- iii. Additional Appropriation 2023-25: LIT/Public Safety – Mental Health America
- iv. Additional Appropriation 2023-26: ARP Grant Fund – Culvert & Drainage Projects

Reports from committees

There were none.

Resolutions and Ordinances other than appropriations.

- i. **Resolution of Reallocation 2023-04: Area Planning – Out-of-Series Transfer**

Jared Bayler said they had encumbered money for this year in their budget under Service Agreements to pay for two iPads, keyboards and service agreements. It was determined this year that this purchase would need to be paid for out of New Equipment. This transfer is being requested in order to pay for the purchase. Council had no questions.

Ordinances relating to appropriations.

OLD BUSINESS

- i. **Salary Ordinance 2023-02; ROC 2023-01: Clerk – Salary Increases**

No one was there to speak further on this request.

ii. Salary Ordinance 2023-03; ROC 2023-01: Clerk – delete part time positions and add full time positions

No one was there to speak further on this request.

iii. Salary Ordinance 2023-04; ROC 2023-01: Election Board – salary increases

No one was there to speak further on this request.

iv. Salary Ordinance 2023-05; ROC 2023-04: Juvenile Justice Center – Salary Increases

Norm Loudermilk, Executive Director of the Juvenile Justice Center, said he felt this does not have anything to do with the Baker Tilly study. President Thacker said that it does and the Baker Tilly study did, in fact, indicate that there should be parity with other correctional officers. Mr. Loudermilk said that retention bonuses and stipends had not been addressed in the study.

v. Salary Ordinance 2023-06; ROC 2023-04: Juvenile Justice Center – Stipends & Retention Bonuses

This discussion was included in the prior request. See above.

vi. Salary Ordinance 2023-07; ROC 2023-06: Coroner – Add Chief Deputy Coroner Position

No one was there to speak further on this request. Council Attorney Michael Wright said that he had done some further research on the statement that the chief deputy coroner position had existed before and was held in the past by a former Terre Haute City Police Officer Kevin Mayes. That is, in fact, true but Mr. Wright nor Mr. Mayes do not believe that his salary when Mr. Mayes held that position was a percent of the elected Coroner's salary. Mr. Mayes had more responsibility on the call-outs. He made sure there was coverage when needed and if there was no coverage, he was the one who covered.

vii. Additional Appropriation 2023-22; ROC 2023-09: Jail – Staff Increases

This is the appropriation to fund Salary Ordinance 2023-08 that was passed last month.

viii. Additional Appropriation 2023-23; ROC 2023-09: Sheriff – Additional Staff

This is the appropriation to fund Salary Ordinance 2023-09 that was passed last month.

ix. Salary Ordinance 2023-11; ROC 2023-10: Prosecutor – Amend Deputy Prosecutor Base Salary

Terry Modesitt, Vigo County Prosecutor, reviewed the information he presented last month regarding the fact that open positions cannot be filled because the pay rate is too low and other counties in the State far exceeded what Vigo County could offer. They would also like to add percentage increases for certain positions.

x. Salary Ordinance 2023-12; ROC 2023-10: Prosecutor – Add Deputy Prosecutor Percentage Increase

See prior request.

xi. Salary Ordinance 2023-13; ROC 2023-10: Prosecutor – Add Deputy Prosecutor Positions (3)

This discussion was included in discussion of prior request. See above.

xii. Salary Ordinance 2023-14; ROC 2023-10: Prosecutor – Add 2 Legal Secretary Positions

Mr. Modesitt said that one of these positions would be for a Juvenile legal secretary and the second position is for a community service coordinator. The Community Corrections board voted to do away with monitoring community service, so the Prosecutor's Office is going to try to perform the monitoring in order to keep community service in operation. There was a brief discussion.

xiii. Additional Appropriation 2023-24; ROC 2023-11: Juvenile Court – Staff Increases

This is the appropriation to fund Salary Ordinance 2023-01 which was approved last month.

NEW BUSINESS

i. Additional Appropriation Ordinance 2023-21: Seized Assets – New Equipment

Prosecutor Terry Modesitt said these funds are seized through different raids and drug busts and those type of things and are not direct tax dollars. The funds are used solely to purchase new equipment for law enforcement (Vigo County Sheriff's Office and Terre Haute Police Department). They just have to have the funds appropriated so they can be used. The question was raised whether it was typical to use the funds for the Terre Haute Police Department and it was confirmed that it was used for all law enforcement.

ii. Additional Appropriation Ordinance 2023-25: LIT/Public Safety – Mental Health America

Commissioner Chris Switzer introduced Myra Wilkey who would be talking about a potential \$14 million project and they are about \$1 million short. There are a lot of proponents for a diversion center in Vigo County and this \$500,000 request would fund that center. She will also be talking about building 42 very low income housing units and her funding has fallen a little bit short on that as well. So the ask may be \$750,000 from the County. While this does qualify for ARPA, this would come from outside the \$5 million the Commissioners have set aside for housing under their ARPA plan. Myra Wilkey, Chief Executive Officer for Mental Health America for Central Indiana, and their consultant with ALK Development, Andrea Kent, gave a short presentation on Mullen Flats and the diversion center. Ms. Wilkey had distributed a copy of the PowerPoint presentation and a copy of The Economic Burden of Untreated Mental Illness in Indiana authored by Senator Mike Crider. The estimated total economic burden of

untreated mental health in Indiana is \$4.2 billion. She briefly reviewed the breakdown of how that total was reached. She talked about the initial projects of Youltry Village and Liberty Village. Mullen Flats will be located just west of Liberty Village. Andrea Kent said that this project had secured all the needed funding with the exception of tonight's request. Myra Wilkey gave details about the layout of the building and the diversion center, the criteria that would be in place, and the various services that will be offered. They are partnering with Next Step Foundation, who started the program by creating the Clear Program. She explained how the Clear Program worked. The build out of the detention center is not eligible for any grants they have received but if they create it simultaneously with Mullen Flats, there will be a savings of about \$500,000 making the cost of the build-out of the diversion center \$500,000. They are requesting \$500,000 from public safety funds and \$250,000 from ARPA. The City Council would match \$250,000 from the County. Andrea Kent reviewed where their funding was coming from and how it was being spent. She also talked about their timeline and the closing on financing and schedule deadlines. The Closing on financing is set for April 3, 2023. Aaron Loudermilk said that he was supportive of this project but he wanted to know why there was such a big monetary difference in the ask from the City versus County. During meetings with the Mayor and the Commissioners, it was discussed how the public safety funds would be a good fit for the diversion center build out, and then the City and Commissioners would split the housing request. The comment was made that it seemed during these kinds of projects, the County is always expected to contribute far more than the City. President Thacker asked to see letters documenting the support from the different entities they have. There was some discussion about how people qualified to come to the center. It was also noted that the housing/diversion center would not be used for out-of-county people, just Vigo County residents. In again discussing why the County's ask was three times what the City was going to contribute, it was noted that during talks about 3 months ago, it was pointed out by the Mayor that the County received the largest amount of public safety funding and that the County should pay for the diversion aspect since the City contributed the property, the cleanup and was matching the housing amount. Mr. Switzer said he did point out to the Mayor that the City had received substantially more than the County in ARPA funds. Mr. Switzer also said that the Commissioners would not pass a resolution of support until the Council decides what it is going to do. While it is felt that this is a great opportunity, there is displeasure that meetings started months ago but the County was not included and wasn't approached until it was crunch time and the money is needed immediately. Discussion continued.

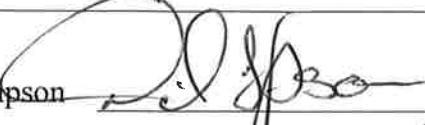
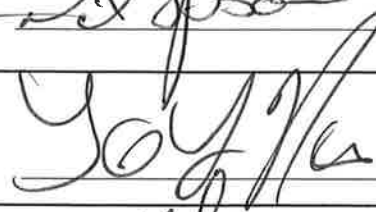
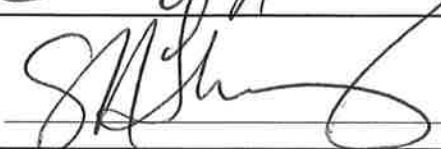
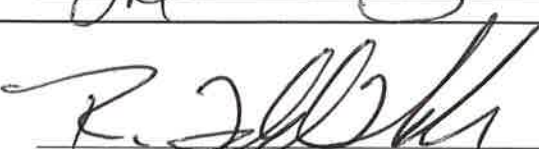
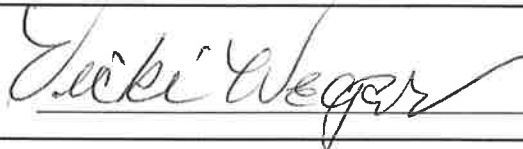

iii. Additional Appropriation Ordinance 2023-26: ARP Grant Fund – Culvert & Drainage Projects

Commissioner Chris Switzer indicated they would like to withdraw this request for the time being and will make the request at a later date.

Vicki Weger made a motion to adjourn the meeting. David Thompson seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote of 6-0, the motion was unanimously approved and the meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE VIGO COUNTY COUNCIL
SUNSHINE MEETING
MARCH 7, 2023

Presented to the Vigo County Council, read in full and adopted as written this 11th day of April, 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	
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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