

Owen County Council
Minutes-September 28, 2021

Meeting was called to order by President Andy Wood.

Pledge to Allegiance was said, Opening Prayer given by Nick Robertson.

Members Present: Andy Wood, Verl Keith, Anton Neff, Polly Chesser, Nick Robertson, and Amy Casebeer.

Absent: Chuck Hess. Attorney Jim Bryan, Auditor Sheila Reeves, and Deputy Auditor Nicole VanDerMoere.

Public Signed in; sheet attached for permanent record.

Attorney Jim Bryan began the meeting with a review of funds beginning with the General Fund Balance at \$-355765.34 and 62 days left to go in the year. Utilizing the LIT Edit and Riverboat has/will continue to help with the deficit but is concerned with it being close and that everyone needs to strive to get it as low as possible. He offered that the county has made a two and half million-dollar improvement in a years' time but still has a lot to improve and needs to move toward not being in the red/negative. He added that the task at hand can be done—We are Americans/Hoosiers, and it can be done! A copy of the monthly report was provided for review during the discussion.

Workman's Compensation, Liability Insurance and Utilities were a primary focus as well. The Highway still has pending Workman's Comp and Liability Claims to be paid directly from their fund. The original amounts were paid from the County General and needs to be transferred to help with the deficit. It was related that the amount had been reduced to \$56942 per the insurance company and agreed that on-half would be paid in October and the other half in November. (\$28471/\$28471)

He next presented that the council has the opportunity to fund the Sheriff's 2022 Budget from the new Public Safety Fund and would at a minimum reduce the County General 2022 Budget by \$2,260,045. A worksheet was provided for review with the projected amounts to be received in the Public Safety Fund and Correctional Facilities Fund for an estimated total of \$3,908,712 and additional expenses to be considered.

This led to extensive conversation on what, where, and how the funds would be utilized; but it was agreed that the Sheriff's Budget will be moved to the new PSAP Fund. A break was taken with a motion by Anton Neff; seconded by Nick Robertson to allow for Mr. Neff, Ms. Reeves, and Ms. VanDerMoere to figure the exact numbers necessary to placed in the appropriate line items for the 2022 Budget. Carried 6-0. Following the break, conversation included adding in all his expenses including the four positions that have been moved into the current Correctional Facility fund, vehicle rotation, maintenance, and insurance. However, the concern was the increase in moving all the items would exceed the estimated amount of the new tax increase. Based upon all conversation a motion was made by Polly Chesser and seconded by Anton Neff to appropriate \$2,990,861 in the new PSAP Fund for all expenses except Maintenance that would retain \$150,000 in the Correctional Facility Fund. Motion carried 6-0. Mr. Hobbs offered that if any of the monies would be helpful in other areas-Highway/EMS to please consider them as well. With these adjustments the new County General total would be reduced to an estimated four million +/-.

EMS Director Cris Lunsford began with concern/aggravated with using his cash balances and the Sheriff being given most of the new tax increase monies and he hasn't gotten a new ambulance for three years. The Council has already approved a new administrative position and change to add an increase for the cost of an ambulance \$177000, and insurance The numbers were changed to reflect the necessary amounts for the 2022 Budgets for a new amount of \$1,879,580. Mr. Burton added that IPEP has a Grants Program and that some of that money could be received back. Concern for his tax rate was noted and is to work with the Auditor.

Highway Budget discussion included the new proposed Workman's Comp, Group Insurance and Liability amounts with the amounts to be paid bi-weekly to help assist with his cash fund flow. His 1176 & 1173 Funds will be split in January to cover both Funds and revenue received. In addition, his Community Crossing Grant Match will be moved to the LIT Edit Fund, but the same amount will remain in his budget to cover other expenses. Bituminous & Stone will be split in the funds as well. Adjusted amounts were entered by Mr. Neff and Ms. VanDerMoere.

A request to appropriate \$40000 in an unemployment Line Item separately was agreed in the Commissioners. All Utilities will be left as is for now in the amount of \$320000.

LIT Edit Fund-

Group Health Insurance	\$388596	
Community Crossing Grant Match	\$250000	Total LIT Fund \$1,102,354
Loan REMC	\$125000	
Loan Contract Services	\$ 65000	
Town Spencer/Gosport	\$273758	

All other Budgets and/or Funds were agreed on as is presented.

A final review with all changes will be done and sent out to everyone for the Public Hearing on Sept. 28th.

Next on the Agenda was CASA request for In-Kind Match opportunities for added funds to be given. Noted was that Beth Eaton couldn't be here tonight, but a list of options/suggestions was provided for review. Due to her absence and questions, it was tabled until the next meeting with a motion by Nick Robertson; seconded by Amy Casebeer. Motion carried 6-0.

Ms. Reeves presented a request to appropriate/approve expenses from the ARP Fund#9166 to pay for the monthly \$2500 Administrative Expenses from Barnes & Thornburg that has been retained for oversight of the County Expenses. A motion to approve was made by Anton Neff; seconded by Nick Robertson. Motion carried 6-0.

Mr. Neff presented and read the list of Additional Appropriations that will be advertised and presented at the October 12th Public Hearing. Mr. Neff made the motion to approve-accept the list except the \$50 for #4915; seconded by Nick Robertson. Motion carried 6-0. A motion to approve the Fund#4915 of \$50 was made by Nick Robertson; seconded by Polly Chesser. Motion carried 5-0-1Abstention/Neff.

Ms. Reeves noted that the list included the requests made at the prior meeting due to the paper not getting them advertised in time for the ten-day public notice. It was also explained that due to the new paper notice received that the paper would only run once a week that we are still required to meet publication notice. transfers were also presented and read by Mr. Wood. A motion to approve was made by Nick Robertson; seconded by Verl Keith. Motion carried 6-0.

No other discussion was made. Mr. Wood thanked everyone for their hard work; especially Jim for preparing the reports. A motion to adjourn was made by Nick Robertson.