

Owen County Council
Minutes-October 25, 2021
Public Hearing Final Adoption

The Meeting was called to order by President Andy Wood at 7pm.

Pledge of Allegiance was said, and Prayer given by Chuck Hess.

Roll was called and Public Sign In. Sheet attached for permanent record.

Present: Andy Wood, Verl Keith, Anton Neff, Polly Chesser, Nick Robertson, and Chuck Hess.

Absent: Amy Casebeer. Also, present Attorney Jim Bryan and Auditor Sheila Reeves.

Mr. Wood called the Hearing to Order.

Attorney Jim Bryan gave a brief Financial Review and noted that we were only 35 days away from the November 30th timeline. (Copies attached for permanent record) The County General Fund Balance was negative \$174458.83, LIT \$732953.18 and Riverboat \$363322.31 as of October 21st. In review of the LIT Edit Fund a total projected revenue still to come in is \$166560.34. He related that there is a need to review liability and group insurance that is currently negative, both are due and need to be paid. In review of the Riverboat Fund a chart with balances of seven-line items was presented for comparisons. How good can we get this is the question at this time, but continued efforts and hard work is necessary.

Ms. Reeves provided The Ordinance or Resolution for Appropriations, and Tax Rates was presented for review and adoption. It was noted that the Economic Development Income Tax line item was of concern. An email was provided from DLGF noting that they're not sure what happened with that line. A Motion to Adopt the Tax Rates was made by Chuck Hess with the inclusion that the Auditor fills in the number when received from DLGF; seconded by Nick Robertson.

Mr. Robertson thanked everyone for the hard work that has been put into the process, especially Mr. Bryan on his time involved and Ms. Reeves. Mr. Keith offered the same. All others agreed.

Public Comment-Barron Barnett offered again that he feels the County has too many employees and the center focus should not be on more employees.

Norman Warner asked if the process included and assured that we won't miss anything as was in the past.

Ms. Reeves offered she had worked several hours with DLGF to make sure nothing was missed. All she could offer was that she has put everything into the process and if it is wrong, it isn't because she didn't do everything required and has double checked each step with them. Mr. Neff added that there are just as many eyes on DLGF too.

Jeff Marks asked if there was a contingency plan by Council in case something needed to be corrected and or changed. Mr. Wood explained that when the last incident happened that they were informed on the last day when it was too late to change. Ms. Reeves added that additional names have been added to the 1782 Public Notice of persons so everyone can respond immediately. Prior only the Auditors Office received notice. He also added that he knows that Sheila is talking with these people every day. Today is the final adoption date, but the 1782 Notice will allow 10 additional days to respond if necessary.

Given the revenues coming into the County at this time; what do you think the Cash Balances will be in a year from now was Mr. Marks next question. Mr. Hess offered there is not any way to project those numbers at this time. Maybe for the first three months after the first of the year. Mr. Wood related due to the world issues currently going on, covid etc.—Slow is Smooth & Smooth is Fast and there is still a lot out there to move very slow and systematically in addressing the problems and not get back in the situation again.

Mr. Wood called for a vote-Motion carried 6-0. Two copies were presented for signatures.

Mr. Wood closed the Public Hearing.

Additional Appropriations were presented for approval. Mr. Hess made a motion to advertise the following for a Public Hearing at the November 8th Meeting:

EMS Cris Lunsford-\$10000, Local Road & Street-\$75000 & \$55000, and Sheriff-\$20000

A friendly motion to pull the Sheriff was made for further discussion.

Motion was seconded by Mr. Robertson. Motion carried 5-0-1/Neff noted that he didn't receive copies.

Sheriff Department request for additional overtime funds was due to the need with being short staffed currently. Following discussion, he agreed to only request \$10000. A motion to approve the amount of \$10000 was made by Mr. Hess; seconded by Mr. Neff to be appropriated from the Riverboat Fund#1191. Carried 6-0.

The next motion made was to approve the list that was tabled at the last meeting due to not being advertised ten days prior as required. Mr. Hess made the motion; seconded by Mr. Neff. Carried 6-0.

PSAP Lit-\$4400, Drug Court-\$10000, MVH-\$50000

Mr. Neff noted that the EMS Request will be brought to them at the November Meeting and that he had spoke with Beth Eaton-CASA and she will be at the meeting as well to review the In-Kind Match request.

Ms. Reeves also noted that she was to be on the Commissioner's Meeting as many of the items were IT and or Commissioners issues.

Mr. Wood commented that it has been a long time since they did not have to call a second meeting in the month, hoping to maybe not have to call one in November. A motion to allow the Auditor to proceed with any additional appropriations advertisement that may be needed to meet the November Meeting date was made by Mr. Neff; seconded by Mr. Hess. Motion carried. 6-0.

Highway-Mr. Melton related that White Road was just opened. Community Crossing is moving forward as projected. Mr. Wood offered that today was the funeral for past Highway Superintendent Russel Ross. The Highway was proud to be part of the procession. Mr. Wood also asked members to keep Ms. Casebeer in their prayers as her mom is not doing well.

Sheriff Hobbs asked if the final numbers have been received for his Funds. Mr. Neff suggested to use the earlier numbers received and that they would be close and can be adjusted on final report received.

911 Director Kathleen Lamb informed members that she has received notice from an employee that they will be leaving at the end of the month, one leaving in the Spring. This will potentially leave her four people down. Two persons have been offered the current open position. She has worked the console 13 of the last 14 days. She has asked to bring a proposal before them for a pay-rate/pay-scale consideration. Mr. Wood asked members to think on the situation. This has been an up and down area and retention is an issue. Even though she has her own funds available to fund the request, but they need to be careful/cautious not to add additional issues. Ms. Lamb gave a little review of the current pay rate and would like to at least match them with the jailers pay.

Mr. Neff asked of members to consider review of the Wage Study that had been done. Mr. Hess offered early next year and that they would also have their budget numbers too. Mr. Robertson feels that better wages are going to most likely to retain employees. This is across the board in all offices Everyone agrees that the need is there. Mr. Hess feels that Ms. Lamb should still be heard at the November/December Meeting.

A motion to call a Work Session only to review with Commissioners, Attorney and Elected Officials to be invited was scheduled for November 29th at 6pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Neff. Motion carried 6-0.

Mr. Burton asked the Sheriff, EMS and 911 how many they were down; but stated that this must be across the Board for all Departments.

A motion to adjourn was made by Chuck Hess.