

Owen County Council
Minutes-April 11, 2022

Meeting was called to order by President Polly Chesser.

Pledge of Allegiance was said, and opening prayer was given by Nick Robertson.

Members Present: Polly Chesser, Verl Keith, Anton Neff, Andy Wood, Amy Casebeer, Nick Robertson, and Andy Wood. Also, present Attorney Jim Bryan and Auditor Sheila Reeves.

Public sign in sheet attached for permanent record.

A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Chuck Hess; seconded by Nick Robertson.

Motion carried 6-1/abstention Andy Wood.

Old Business

A financial review for all funds was given by Attorney Bryan, relating that all major funds have a positive balance. The current County General Fund balance as of March 31st was \$10,081,501.03. May 19th is the Settlement date expected at this time. He also stressed the importance of having positive cash balances on June 30 for the 2023 budget that is used by DLGF. A copy of first quarter expenditures was given for review that are projected to have negative balances based on current expenditure rates. Inflation costs for materials/goods is also of concern for many departments. All summary reviews will be attached for permanent record.

Jail review related the fifteen-million-dollar project cap that is be cash being considered at this time would require for the county fund balances to be as high as possible to receive the best interest rates.

Mr. Bryan reviewed options in moving forward to help with the balances. An opportunity to utilize the ARPA and EDIT Funds to pay down some current debts/negative funds was discussed. The first motion was to have Mr. Bryan prepare a Resolution for the May Meeting to use the EDIT Fund to pay the \$185000 Truck Loan that had not been done: per SBOA Audit Report. Motion was made by Nick Robertson; seconded by Anton Neff. Motion carried 7-0.

The next motion was made by Anton Neff; seconded by Verl Keith to allow Ms. Chesser to go before the Commissioners and request an ARPA Modified Plan for "Lost Revenue" to allow flexibility in proposed plans, debt/expenditures and help reserve a higher cash balance in the general fund. This would also help assist with possible/proposed salary increases for employees. Motion carried 7-0.

2022 Compensation Structure-An updated Committee Overhaul Report was provided by Mr. Neff for review. Mr. Neff and Ms. Chesser reviewed the committee meeting that was held on March 29th. Education components, job description reviews, and policy updates would allow department heads to have additional resources in selecting candidates for employment. The current focal point was to bring all employees up to midpoint before longevity. A motion was made by Chuck Hess; seconded by Anton Neff to bring all up to minimum at an estimated \$114250. Concern that there are still a few areas/positions with specific descriptions that will need further review and some budgets that wouldn't support increases. Mr. Bryan offered that it is of concern and/or doable for some departments but concerned on the outside funds. Mr. Hess withdrew his original motion based on conversation. A new motion was made by Mr. Hess; seconded by Andy Wood to allow department heads to review over the next thirty days to see what impacts it would have on each of them and options to consider, with a possible implementation by June 1st. Motion carried 7-0. Mr. Neff will send out the information for review and further discussion on May 19th at 9am.

Public Hearing-

Additional Appropriation request for the Circuit Court-presented by Donna McElroy was withdrawn as only transfers would be needed to support the approved pay raises. The necessary transfers in the amount of \$10456.99 were approved with a motion from Chuck Hess; seconded by Nick Robertson for wages/perf/fica from Fund 1000-235 to same line items in 1000-232 and the start date of April 17th. Motion carried 6-1/against Anton Neff.

Auditor's Additional Appropriation-A motion to approve funds in the amount of \$13156.67 from the Endorsement Fee Fund 1150 to transfer/apply toward the full-time position in the Treasurer's Office-\$9156.67 and Asset Management Plan-\$4000 was made by Chuck Hess; seconded by Anton Neff. Motion carried 6-1/against Nick Robertson.

Public Hearing was closed.

Clerk Lesliann Burton presented a request for \$6303.27 to replace the funds that were used to pay-out an employee that had left with vacation/personal/comp time. It was agreed that this was not an issue that she had created only inherited. Discussion of creating a policy that would require department heads to come before the council and must wait until monies were exhausted before any new hires. Mr. Wood thought there was already a policy for maximum times allowed for accrual, while all agreed that it is a time management and enforcement issue. Current policy has a hard cap that has been set. A motion was made by Andy Wood; seconded by Chuck Hess to do a modification to the current policy stating that transfers of employees from one department to another will be paid from the one they are leaving. Motion carried 7-0. There are other departments currently with the same issues that will need to be addressed. Mr. Bryan will have the updated policy at the May meeting. Continued conversation was where to pay the current request from. Mr. Hess made a motion to pay the amount of \$6303.27 from the Riverboat Fund; seconded by Andy Wood for discussion purposes. Mr. Wood asked was it allowable to be paid from the prior office. Mr. Wood withdrew his second based on discussion. A Final motion was made by Chuck Hess; seconded by Nick Robertson to pay from the reassessment fund/transferred to the Clerks Fund and Ms. Reeves was to see if the amount could still be encumbered with available monies as the time was earned in 2021. Motion carried 7-0. There was question on having a copy of the current signed policy for the comp-time management. Mr. Burton added that if there were a time-management system this would eliminate these continued issues and he has some proposals for them. Ms. Reeves will also start providing members copies of vacation/personal/comp balances.

CASA Director Beth Eaton had contacted Mr. Burton to relate that they had been offered free office space at the Tivoli and would be presenting information to the Commissioners at their next meeting.

A motion to appoint Barbara Winders as the Council-Library Board Appointment was made by Chuck Hess; seconded by Andy Wood. Motion carried 7-0.

EMS-Cris Lunsford related that he had applied for an allowable reimbursement in the amount of \$14000 for Fuel Tax. Mr. Neff noted it could be used to offset costs with Sheriffs Department.

Regarding raises he was preparing numbers for part-time and full-time positions.

Bid Specs for a new ambulance were to be presented to the Commissioners on May 18th.

He has a current vehicle being in the shop, and the new vehicle he is having problems getting lights and sirens. Lastly he related that National EMS Week is May 15th-21st and he will be holding the first annual banquet on May 18th at 6pm.

Highway Greg Melton offered updates on current road projects, and he also has lost two additional drivers and doesn't have any applicants.

Mr. Hess asked why Departments are placed on the agenda if they don't have anything to present. It was agreed that if they didn't have anything to present.

911 Director Kathleen Lamb related that it was National Week for 911 and that she would be doing things for her employees. She has a former employee returning in May. Continued Radio Project, back-up system and CAD server work is being done.

Sheriff Hobbs offered that he had received State notice on a salary increase in the amount of \$3195.60 that will be effective starting July 1st. A motion was made by Anton Neff; seconded by Chuck Hess to wait for an additional appropriation at this time as he could possibly have the funds necessary to transfer as he has had several employees leave. Motion carried 7-0.

A motion was made by Andy Wood; seconded by Chuck Hess to allow Polly Chesser to sign all the Salary Confirmation Summaries that were presented. Motion carried 7-0.

Mr. Bryan presented Resolution 2022-005 that allows the Cash Balance to be moved to Fund#1112 from the LIT Edit-7332 \$389691.68 that is a pass-through fund only. A motion to approve was made by Chuck Hess; seconded by Anton Neff. Carried 7-0.

Resolution 2022-006 per SBOA the Original Cares Act Funds were to be deposited into the County General Fund. A motion to approve the transfer in the amount of \$95557.22 from Fund 8902 was made by Chuck Hess; seconded by Verl Keith. Motion carried 7-0.

Elected Officials

Christine McBride with the Health Department provided a written summary regarding the condition/concerns of the Health Department Building. After review of the letter, it was related that they would/could possibly need funds in the future if they were to have to relocate. Mr. Burton related that they were trying to eliminate and/or consolidate expenses and that they have been asked three times to move back to their office. She was instructed to come back next month with possible options of current monies that could be used toward relocating. An emergency Health Board meeting has been scheduled for the 29th. Letter attached for record. Coroner Angi Frank asked about the Premium Pay for her staff; specifically, why they had not been informed or heard from anyone of what's going on. Mr. Bryan related that the pay amount had been approved by the commissioners and council as approved by the Federal guidelines. Specific Buckets had been approved and the number of hours worked were set at a minimum of 800 hours and that none of hers have those and nothing was processed by the auditor based on that. She had provided a packet that morning for them to review a summary of all the time that each of them put into a case. The current pay system only pays by each run; not total hours involved with all the job. She related that they should consider restructuring the payroll system for her staff. Ms. Chesser agrees that there were others who didn't meet the minimum number of hours and that should look at it at their next meeting to see if there is anywhere else to consider paying them from. Ms. Frank apologized for being so upset and she is only looking out for her employees. Mr. Hess asked for a copy of who was paid out to be provided to them. Copy of summary will be attached for permanent record.

Allan McBride asked about the Holiday Pay Policy and where they were with reviewing it. Further related was that some employees were/weren't paid, and that fair is fair and should be reviewed. Ms. Chesser said they would take a look at it further at their May Meeting.

Brett Stutsman thanked he would like to commend council for looking at options for the use of ARPA Monies. Norm Warner echoed Brett's comment. He asked about how to obtain County Ordinances regarding trash. He was directed to Suzanne in the building department.

Lastly was from Nicole DeCrisso from the Evening World wanted to add a friendly note that the meeting had started 4-5 minutes early and that is illegal and violation of code.

A motion to adjourn was made by Chuck Hess.