

Owen County Council  
Meeting Minutes-April 12, 2021

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

Pledge of allegiance was said, prayer was given by Nick Robertson.

Roll was called all members were present; noted Chuck Hess by Zoom.

Attendance Sign in Sheet attached for permanent record. Zoom Attendees are noted on the sign in sheet.

A motion to approve the minutes from March 8<sup>th</sup> as presented was made by Anton Neff; seconded by Polly Chesser. Motion carried 7-0.

#### Old Business

Mr. Wood related that Tim Berry with Crowe LLC is ready to present a Report to the Commissioners and Council Members. A date has been set for April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30pm at the Courthouse. All Elected Officials and Department Heads are encouraged to attend, as well as the public.

Councilman Anton Neff had provided a breakdown of possible cuts to reduce the 2021 Budget per the State cuts. A motion was made by Anton Neff; seconded by Verl Keith to reduce the General Fund Regular Wages Line Item 1000-11300 by \$33250, the FICA by \$2565, the Perf by \$3754 and \$10769 from Courthouse Security Perf 1000-12300 for a total of \$50338. An estimated amount of \$18000 will be transferred to Other Services Line Item to cover the costs for Paycor Contract. Motion carried 7-0.

Information regarding the American Rescue Plan (ARP) had been received from Baker-Tilley and provided to members for review. Attorney Jim Bryan added the importance of the Grant Funding Processes and the burden to prove that monies are spent right. No pre-approval process is being required so setting a procedural checks and balances process is an absolute must. The claims/expenditures regarding the monies will be handled through the Auditors Office. Mr. Neff stressed that they needed to take their time and not rush with spending the funds; extremely important to be cautious. Webinars and NaCo will be offering guidance and what other counties are doing. Updates will be provided at the next meeting.

Mr. Wood provided a review of the Council held Work Sessions regarding PTO/Comp time and 911 Director Kathleen Lamb's request that had been made at the previous meeting. At this time, it was agreed to have Attorney Bryan draft some policies addressing the issues to be presented at the May or June Meetings. Mr. Robertson thanked Ms. Lamb for her patience while they were working on this.

#### New Business

President Wood opened a Public Hearing for Additional Appropriations.

County Highway Superintendent Greg Melton presented a request to use monies from the MVH Fund Cash Balance to 1173-23200 in the amount of \$25000. The monies were received from a previous insurance claim re-imburement and it was needed to replace the expenditures that had already been made.

A motion to approve the claim was made by Chuck Hess; seconded by Anton Neff. Motion carried 7-0.

Mr. Wood closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Melton then presented two transfer requests for the MVH Fund. The original request forms presented were for \$100000 each. However, Mr. Melton explained that in review of his budgets and cash balances that he is asking for only half of that for each transfer: MVH Equipment 1176-20700 to 1173-20700 \$50000 and MVH Bituminous 1176-23700 to 1173-23700 \$50000. A motion to approve both transfer requests was made by Chuck Hess; seconded by Nick Robertson. Motion carried 7-0.

Ms. Reeves provided an update on his Funds Balances due to monthly distributions that had just come in. The 1176 & 1173 Funds will be increased \$128569.64 and \$31784.24 will go in Fund 1169. A negative balance of \$848 in Fund 1135 will be receiving monies that have been applied for by Mr. Melton.

Mr. Melton provided updates about the road conditions in relation to the storm and losing a culvert on Owl Hollow Rd. He also related that he had saved about \$130000 by doing work on Steubenville Rd themselves. Mr. Neff reminded members that the Highway had lost revenue in 2020 due to Covid and that they should look at the ARP monies to help possibly offset some of his lost revenue.

Mr. Wood asked that the Highway be put on the Agenda monthly to keep up with the changes and needs.

911 Director Kathleen Lamb related that it was Telecommunications Week and that she has planned events all week long to support her Crew and acknowledge their hard work and dedication to the job.

PTO Buy-out request was tabled per the Work Session action taken.

The Additional Appropriation request that was given will at the next Council Meeting in May to allow for proper advertising.

Radio Project- Ms. Lamb related that she had presented a proposal for a new Repeater System update to the Commissioners for approval in the amount of \$35814.17 in which she had written and received a Grant for the project. She also related that she has the annual maintenance upkeep already in her funds/budget.

Next she presented a written proposal/request to add an employee as part of a TAG Shift Floater to offset the overtime that is currently being acquired by all staff. She has the money within her budget to support the request through 2025. Mr. Neff suggested to review the health insurance numbers (seems high), offset of OT net costs, leave enough emergency monies to cover some. She will review and give an updated report.

A Transfer Request from Statewide 911-Dispatch Fund 1222-39000/Insurance to PSAP-LIT 1235-39000 was presented. A motion to approve was made by Chuck Hess; seconded by Nick Robertson. Motion carried 7-0. Lastly Ms. Reeves related that a State Audit was being performed on her Funds. Herself and Ms. Lamb were trying to find copies of all the documents being requested but are not having much luck, Ms. Lamb has reached out to Barry Ritter to see if he has any documents, Mr. Neff will look also.

Sheriff Sam Hobbs presented a request for use of the Jail LIT Funds and Jail Housing Funds to bring his Funds out of the negative. He had incurred expenses from 2020 due to not receiving the additional appropriations that had been requested and needed repairs already to date in 2021. Review of the allowable uses for both funds was discussed and a motion was made by Chuck Hess; seconded by Anton Neff to have Sheriff Hobbs submit the two Additional Appropriations and proper advertising for the May Meeting for the funds needed to cover the shortages. Jail Housing Fund 4906 #13732.96 and Jail LIT \$40000. Motion carried 7-0. He will also look at his other line items and present any additional requests upon review.

It was also discussed that the Jail LIT funds could be used for salaries up to 20% and should be considered to help address the shortage in the County General Fund. Further discussion will be made at the next meeting. Commissioner Burton reminded members that Fund also has monies obligated to Garmong and RQAW. Lastly Mr. Wood thanked Sheriff Hobbs and his entire Staff for their assistance to the Driver Family during the loss of Deputy Driver. Mr. Hobbs asked that everyone keep them in their prayers as it has been a difficult time.

Health Department Christine McBride and Dr. Wells presented a request for part-time monies to cover an employee that was currently out for medical reasons. They had funds in a line item that were available to cover the costs expected. Mr. Neff will prepare a Salary Draft Ordinance that will include the rate and classification. It will be added to the April 22<sup>nd</sup> Agenda for further discussion/approval.

Employee Payout-Mr. Neff related that the request was per Policy and made a motion to pay Mr. Minton out the accrued vacation/personal/comp time in the amount that was owed from Fund 1000-11300 Maintenance.

If the amount exceeds the current line items funds available; the difference is to be paid from Riverboat. Ms. Reeves will have payroll figure the exact amounts. It was seconded by Polly Chesser. Motion carried 7-0.

Ms. Reeves presented the 2020 CASA Grant Agreement for review. Director Beth Eaton has informed her that they had not received the matching funds in the amount of \$3000 as was agreed to by Council. A motion was made by Chuck Hess; seconded by Nick Robertson to appropriate the Matching Funds from the Rainy-Day Fund to Fund 1212. Motion carried 7-0.

Next Attorney Bryan had provided a BZA Membership Requirement per Subdivision Ordinance 20 and IC 36-7-4-902 for the Board of Zoning Appeals. A current vacancy on the Board is a Council Appointment. A motion to appoint Corbin Abrell was made by Anton Neff; seconded by Chuck Hess. Motion carried 7-0.

Next was review of the County Financial Reports for the Month of March and the deficit of 1372856.30 in the General Fund as well as others. Discussion included the current status, cuts needed for the remainder of 2021 and the 2022 Budget. A review of the current expenditures exceeding the revenue, noting the 5100 & 5200 Funds for payroll/health insurance expenditures, no 2020 encumbrances or appropriations that added to the deficit, costs of materials has increased 30% for highway and sheriff department supplies, looking at spending habits, focus, and develop solutions in moving forward.

A Hiring Freeze was discussed and will be addressed at the next meeting and following review of the Crow Report. Mr. Melton, Sheriff Hobbs, Ms. Robertson, and Ms. Reeves all have vacancies either advertised and/or need advertised immediately. Council members acknowledged that some departments such as first responders and like positions will be exempt. Attorney Bryan will prepare a Resolution to be considered. Mr. Bryan reviewed the 14 Statutory Requirements for the Budgetary Process that includes deadline dates for review, submissions, and adoptions. The Hearings scheduled in August will require additional meetings to better prepare for them. Ms. Reeves was asked to provide additional reports that shows the percentages used year to date and prior years expenditures for comparisons. An expected cut for 2020 and 2021 is estimated to be at least 20% based on the current balances.

No additional comments were made from Elected Officials or Department Heads.

No public Comments were made.

Ms. Reeves presented a request to continue with the updating of County Ordinances through American Legal in an estimated amount up to \$3620. The amount could be paid from her Official Records or Other Services line items. No action was required by council.

A motion to approve the Salary Compensation Summaries that were presented was made by Chuck Hess; seconded by Anton Neff. Motion carried 7-0. Mr. Wood will sign the summaries.

Ms. Reeves informed members of the AIC Dinner on May 18<sup>th</sup> and asked anyone that wanted to attend to let her know so she can make the reservations.

Mr. Wood acknowledged a "thank you" letter from the Food Bank to the Council for their Grant Allocation.

Ms. Reeves related that they have continued in moving forward with providing the requested information to Paycor. She also related that her employee-Sherry Booher has worked stressfully to do both jobs and asked if a bonus could be considered. No discussion was made except in reference to the county financial situation.

Commissioner Burton noted that the EMS Building had been written up by the State Fire Marshalls Office due to no prior follow-up and maintenance being done. They will be preparing contract costs to be presented.

No other comments were made by Council.

A motion to adjourn was made by Chuck Hess; seconded by Polly Chesser.