

Owen County Council
Minutes-November 8, 2021

Council President Andy Wood opened the meeting at 7pm.

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

Roll was called; all members were present except Chuck Hess. Auditor Reeves was also present.

Public Sign in Sheet will be attached for permanent record.

A motion to approve the Minutes from 10/12/21 Regular Meeting was made by Verl Keith; seconded by Anton Neff. Motion carried 6-0.

A motion to approve the Minutes from 10/12/21 Public Hearing was made by Verl Keith; seconded by Anton Neff. Motion carried 6-0.

A motion to approve the minutes from 10/25/21 Public Hearing was made by Verl Keith; seconded by Anton Neff. Motion carried 6-0.

A brief Funds and Financial Review was given by Mr. Wood and Ms. Reeves. Copies of the October Monthly Reports were provided for review as well as Attorney Bryans Funds Report.

CASA Director Beth Eaton presented and reviewed her request for Matching Grant Options. Her and Commissioner Burton explained that many of the items have been made available already that will assist in providing the dollar amount needed for additional monies/match. IT-Forthphaze has donated a Printer and the Cares Monies will purchase two Laptops. A motion to allow Mr. Wood to sign the Letter was made by Anton Neff; seconded by Nick Robertson. Motion carried 6-0.

Mr. Wood opened the Public Hearing for Additional Appropriations. A motion to approve the advertised amounts of: Riverboat/Cash \$ 10000 to Overtime Sheriff-1191, Local Road & Street/Cash \$ 75000 to Stone & Gravel 1169-23500, \$55000 Bituminous 1169-23700, and PSAP Lit/Cash \$1000 to 1235-37000 was made by Anton Neff; seconded by Verl Keith. Motion carried 6-0. Public Hearing was closed at 7:31.

A motion to Transfer .12 from 1235-36220 to -46000 was made by Anton Neff; seconded by Nick Robertson. Motion carried 6-0.

A motion to advertise for Additional Appropriations at the December 13th Meeting for Jail Housing/Cash 4906 \$3119.47, Fund 9154/Cash \$ 60000 to 9154-37000, EMS 1151/Cash \$10000, and Local Road Street/Cash \$150000 to split for Stone & Bituminous was made by Anton Neff; seconded by Polly Chesser. Carried 6-0.

Mr. Wood moved Assessor Kenny Anderson up on the agenda. Mr. Anderson presented a request to replace two employees that have left. He feels that both were essential positions. A copy of a Wages and monies available to pay for one position was reviewed. A second request to have Tyler Technologies finish the new construction permits in the amount of \$11500. It was agreed that the funds were available to do transfers to pay for the contract services. No action was needed for the agreement and 2022 has already been budgeted to incorporate the changes, pending State Budget approvals.

911 Dispatch Coordinator Kathleen Lamb presented a 2022 Raise Justification and Proposed Matrix Table for Members to review. Letters of support from Charles Hallom, Michael Browning, Daniel Rhinehart, Tina Booe, Stan Frank were also presented as well as some Staff Members that were present. The Matrix was based on Levels and obtaining core certifications. Mr. Wood asked would they get to level one in their first year-reply was no. Based on years of service to dispatch amounts would be different for each employee. Ms. Lamb's proposal would fund the increase through 2025 with her current Cash Balance; however, she did ask that Council would move the lowest paid employee to the new PSAP Tax Fund. The Training Budget would stay the same with this proposal. Ms. Lamb feels that this would also help attract/retain new employees. The Staff are all extremely dedicated to serving their community. Polly Chesser commented that they are the heart of an

emergency, Sheriff Hobbs agreed they are the heart of the calls and is trying to prevent burnout. A motion to approve the request was made by Verl Keith; seconded by Polly Chesser. Continued discussion from Amy Casebeer asking about the continued training and that she has the money for that-reply yes. Ms. Chesser asked what the base was now-\$15.39 would take up to \$16.80/hr. Mr. Neff offered that with Fica/Perf/Holiday Wages the cost would be \$36027 for a starting person. Mr. Wood added that the proposal would give an increase of nearly \$7000 to one. They are looking at a broader picture and/or across the board approach and wanted more time to digest the proposal. Mr. Neff added that he is not in favor of the motion. She reminded them that this was not the first time she has asked this year and permission to come back at the next meeting. At this time Mr. Wood called for a vote; 2-4 against Robertson/Neff/Wood/Casebeer. Motion died for lack of a majority vote. Members all agreed that raises are needed for all employees. Additional conversation continued later in the meeting reviewing options and comparing raises that have been given to other agencies while they only got a .25. She has cash balances, has worked hard to keep employees and the need is great. Commissioner Burton related that he supports but the need to be cautious. Mr. Hobbs it would benefit the county to go ahead and initiate. Dispatcher Allan McBride related that he has been here and dedicated through many situations while dispatching and it is extremely tough at times, and he had come here tonight expecting a vote in favor of the proposal. Other dispatchers present agreed. Verl Keith and Andy Wood thanked her for her presentation.

Highway Greg Melton gave a brief update on the Roads. Mr. Neff asked him if he could start providing them with a list, he agreed to do so. Mr. wood thanked him for his diligence on maintaining his budgets, he in turn thanked several that has helped with the process.

Sheriff Hobbs presented an Independent Contractors Agreement for a Kitchen Employee that had been presented to the Commissioner's and for transparency here to the Council. No action was required. He next related that he has made some technical changes to the staffing structure. He has vacated the combination rank of Captain/Detective position and add a 3rd stand-alone Sergeants Rank. A motion to approve the changes was made by Nick Robertson; seconded by Verl Keith. Motion carried 6-0. Compensation Summaries will be presented at the next meeting.

EMS Director Cris Lunsford didn't have anything to present.

EMA Director Jack White presented three Grants. He apologized that he was not aware of the process required until he received Attorney Bryan's email. One Grant was for Emergency Management Salary Award Letter for \$18391 and runs from October 1, 2021, through September 30, 2022. The second Grant is an Emergency Management Performance Grant in the amount of \$40000 and runs from October 1, 2021, through September 30, 2022. This award amount has been approved for the purchase of a new truck. The last Grant was for the Hazard Mitigation Plan that is required with an in-kind match of \$6486 that is being met by local participation that provides the necessary input to complete the plan. He also related that he is working on scheduling a Tabletop Training Exercise with Co-Alliance Country Mart. He will let them know the date scheduled.

Probation Officer Donna McElroy had provided an Additional Appropriation request that was previously discussed and approved for advertisement.

A motion to approve and allow Mr. Wood to sign the Salary Confirmation Summaries was made.

Health Dept. Administrator Christine McBride provided information about monies that has been received in the amount of \$48000. It is yet to be determined on expenditures but does have to be Covid related. She will work with the Auditor to prepare budgets for all their Grants and present them at the next meeting.

Commissioner Burton gave an update on the status of the Health Department Building and that he had met with an Engineer on Friday, and they have deemed the building structure safe to be in. At this time, they are awaiting confirmation if it is considered Historical before any repairs can be made.

He also related that the Highway staff are working out of the Armory due to Black Mold in the Garage and work/repairs are being done to correct the issue.

Public-

Barron Barnett provided statistics regarding inflation rates and compensation.

Jeff Marks first commented that First Responders are all important. Last PSAP Tax gave a little breather, Mr. Lunsford added that he has trouble recruiting employees. He feels they need to figure out balance need for public safety.

Mr. Wood welcomed Newspaper Reported Nicole DeCriscio Bowe back to covering the Council Meetings.

Based on further discussion by members it was also decided that a second meeting this month on November 29th was not needed. A motion to cancel was made by Mr. Neff; seconded by Ms. Casebeer. Carried 6-0.

Ms. Reeves provided copies of the 1782 Email Notice that had been received stating that 2022 budgets were expected after the holidays. She was concerned with the timing and possibly needing to call an emergency meeting as they have only ten days to respond if any changes are deemed necessary. A motion was made by Anton Neff; seconded by Andy Wood to give the Auditor the discretion to advertise as needed. Carried 6-0. Copies of Vacation/Personal/Comp-time Balances were provided for their review.

No other business came before them. A motion to adjourn was made by Nick Robertson.