

Owen County Council
Minutes-October 12, 2021 (Regular Meeting)

Meeting was called to order by President Andy Wood.

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

Mr. Wood asked to keep Chuck Hess in their prayers as he was in the hospital.

Roll was called and Public Signed In.

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

Absent: Chuck Hess. Also present was Attorney Jim Bryan and Auditor Sheila Reeves.

A motion to approve the minutes from September 13, 2021, with a correction to the new date that had been set for October 25th (original date was 09/21/21) was made by Nick Robertson, seconded by Verl Keith.

Motion carried 6-0.

A motion to approve the minutes from September 28, 2021, was made by Anton Neff, seconded by Polly Chesser. Motion carried 6-0.

Old Business

Attorney Bryan gave a financial review of County Funds. Copies of the various reports were provided as well as the Monthly Financial Report. Noted were still thirteen funds in the red with noted update since 09/30/21. Previous discussion on closing Fund 4914 Extension Work Study is still receiving revenue so it will remain pending until further review.

Mr. Bryan related that there were still forty-nine days until November 30th and the current General Fund Balance was a negative \$355765.34; also noted was that the average \$200000 monthly revenue has not been received yet and will bring the balance down. Public Defender reimbursements and pending dormant funds will also help with the negative balances. He strongly advised that claims/expenditures needed to be watched. He reviewed Insurance and the underbudgeted amounts noting that the Liability Insurance claim is pending. Mr. Neff ask for verification of the Highway amounts that were to be split in October and November. Mr. Bryan confirmed yes on the split. He suggested that at the November Meeting that they would want to possibly consider looking at all July Claims for further reductions to the General Fund.

A copy of the 2022 Local Income Tax Distributions dated October 4, 2021, was provided for review. The new Public Safety Distribution is \$3881672, PSAP Distribution \$431297, Jail LIT \$862594 and a breakdown of the various units. Copy attached for permanent record.

Mr. Wood read a transfer request from Coroner Angela Frank in the amount of \$5000 to move from Autopsies to Part-time Help in Fund#1000. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Neff; seconded by Mr. Robertson. Motion carried 6-0.

The CASA In Kind Grant request was tabled as Ms. Eaton wasn't present. Mr. Neff is going to reach out to her for the next meeting agenda as questions are still needing clarification whether they are existing or new.

New Business

Additional Appropriation Request were presented and read by Mr. Wood. Cumulative Bridge \$28572.42 & \$30000, L&R \$100000 and \$50000, MVH \$10000, \$3000, \$300, \$1135, Drug Court \$7500 & \$350, PSAP Lit \$17177.39, Sign Fund \$25, EMS \$6041 and Sheriff Donation \$50. A motion to approve all but the Dispatch of \$50 was made by Mr. Neff; seconded by Mr. Robertson. Motion carried 6-0. A motion to approve the Dispatch-\$50 was made by Mr. Robertson; seconded by Mr. Keith. Motion carried 5-0-1/Neff as he sits on that board.

EDC-Marce King presented information on the ARPA Funds and possible ideas on how the county can invest the funds. Recommendations: 1. Coordinate the strategic investment, 2. Combine Investments, 3. Make Focused, transformative investments. Six key areas: 1. Housing, 2. Internet Service, 3. Water & Sewer Infrastructure, 4. Childcare, 5. Economic Growth, and revenue loss due to COVID. They feel by maximizing the utility of these resource the Owen County can continue it upward trajectory.

Next she provided information about Indiana launching the Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative. (READI) The initiative to encourage counties/cities/towns to partner on projects in amount up to five-hundred million dollars. The projected timeline was reviewed as well and will require the County to develop a Plan for their ARPA Funds as part of the program. Owen County is part of the Uplands Region and committees will hold meetings and present their goals to the IEDC. Continued Updates will be provided.

A copy of the Health Department Budget for Fund 9162-Emergency Preparedness Grant 93.069 in the amount of \$25000 was presented for approval/appropriations. A motion to approve \$22000 for contract services and \$3000 for supplies was made by Mr. Wood; seconded by Mr. Neff. Motion carried 6-0. Ms. Reeves noted in reference to Mr. Bryans Grant funds presentation earlier that were in the red, that there are still pending grants that will need appropriations to zero out line items.

Highway Superintendent Greg Melton provided an update to Bridge#16 that is still pending Commissioner action and that the bridge does remain closed, Community Crossings Roads, Kelly Rd., Surber Rd., Camp Otto Rd., and White Rd. Mr. Melton related that they are working together to try and make things work. Prices are still going up on materials and they are trying to stay within the confines of their budgets.

An Additional Appropriation request was presented and read. A motion to advertise for \$50000 from Fund 1176-Cash balance to Gas/Oil/Lube was made by Mr. Neff; seconded by Mr. Robertson. Motion carried 6-0. Ms. Reeves also noted the challenge of advertising for Public Hearings, need five days prior to Wednesday Paper for the ten days' notice.

EMS Director Cris Lunsford gave an update relating that they have had 2737 runs to date, anticipates 3300*/-/. He is short three full-time and six part-time staff. It is tough getting applicants and feels salary is a main reason why. Mr. Neff feels that he should go ahead and order an Ambulance as it would not be in until next summer. Mr. Lunsford is hesitant and wants to make sure Budgets go through. His Additional Appropriation for a full-time Administrator is to be entered on Tuesday; although he is concerned with hiring someone and then budget not be approved and must let go. An additional appropriation request for the repair of an ambulance is expected to be presented at the next meeting.

911 Director Kathleen Lamb related that she had only received six applications for her two open positions and feels that the salary amount is a big hindrance. Mr. Wood added that this is a real problem for Owen County. An Additional Appropriation for \$4400 was presented and approved with a motion from Mr. Robertson; seconded by Mr. Neff to cover the J&K Bill to be submitted. Carried 6-0.

A correction later in the meeting was made to rescind the original vote and offered for the proper Funds to be used; The monies would be from 1235-Cash to 1222 Contract Services. Mr. Neff made the motion to rescind and correct; seconded by Mr. Robertson. Motion carried 6-0.

Mr. Neff asked how the change with the new number was going, Ms. Lamb related direct calls are going down. She also added that the hope is to install more in-bound to the Jail.

EMA Director Jack White had presented a request to appropriate \$250 for batteries from Fund#4900-20100. A motion to approve the request was made by Mr. Robertson; seconded by Mr. Neff. Motion carried 6-0.

Probation Director Donna McElroy related that Kathy Hendricks would be retiring on Friday and that this would leave them one person short. She asked if Council would approve for a part-time person one day a week-being Ms. Hendricks, with the extra monies available in her grant. Mr. Neff offered that she had a pool of hours of 1700 in part-time help and felt she could hire if she stayed within the limit of those hours. Multiple Fund Transfers were presented to correct line items and balance funds in the amounts of \$301.59 #8904, \$1120.17-9153, \$.10-9155, \$973.72-9153, and \$6066.06-9153. A motion to approve the amounts was made by Mr. Neff; seconded by Mr. Keith. Motion carried 6-0.

An Additional Appropriation for \$10000-Drug Court 9110 was requested. Mr. Robertson made the motion to advertise; seconded by Mr. Neff. Motion carried 6-0

Mr. Neff made a motion to approve the Salary Confirmation summaries that were presented; seconded by Mr. Robertson. Motion carried 6-0.

Elected Officials

Mr. Lunsford and Mr. Melton both noted that they had applied for IPEP Grants that had been made available by our Insurance Company. Updates will be given at the next meeting.

Public Comments

Jeff Marks asked for an explanation/clarification on what is an Additional Appropriation. Mr. Wood started with budgets versus funds, transfers, and appropriations. Mr. Bryan gave a detailed review of the process required to requests and basically it is an authorization to spend cash from budgets. Transfers are to move funds from line items, not asking for additional monies. Beth Wood also was going to ask the same.

Attorney Bryan re-emphasized the need to stay on task over the next 49 days for the projected budgeting.

Council Members

Mr. Wood reminded members of the Final Adoption Meeting to be held on October 25th @ 7pm. He asked for members again to keep Mr. Hess in their prayers.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Robertson.