

Owen County Council Budget Hearings
August 10-12, 2022

Budget Hearing were called to order at 11:30am

Members Present-

Polly Chesser, Verl Keith, Nick Robertson, Anton Neff, and Andy Wood. Also, present Attorney Jim Bryan and auditor Sheila reeves. Members absent: Chuck Hess and Amy Casebeer.

Discussion was made to allow Mr. Neff and Ms. VanDerMoere to input numbers to use during the hearings based on the motion to utilize the Cap amount of \$125000. A motion to recess the Hearings was made by Mr. Robertson; seconded by Mr. Wood. Carried 5-0. Budget Hearings will resume at 1:00pm.

Hearings resumed at 1:00pm.

A Schedule for all Departments was provided for all three days of hearings.

General discussion for each budget presented was made with changes adding and/or deleting amounts based on overall funds.

Minutes will reflect any motions made throughout the process. All other proposed Budgets are attached as presented and/or approved to present for review and public hearings.

Commissioners-Mr. Burton covered each line item noting some were moved to appropriate funds, expected inflation costs, and five percent insurance buffer. He also added that the General Fund is paying for the Jail utilities and that by adding line items and breakdowns would help in the overall funding/budgeting and problem-solving process; example if bills change an indication something could be wrong.

IT-An increase to \$95/hr was requested and increase for the newly required upgrade to windows eleven.

Cum Cap-Increase to include expected roof/wall repairs at the Health Dept.

Maintenance-reduced with a more specific amount given to individual departments.

Building-A request to increase the inspector to full-time and a pay rate of \$18.43/hr was made. This would help offset the administrator's vacation and comp time hours. A motion to approve 4-1abstain/Wood was made. Storage Units added to compensate the increased workload that she has maintained.

Surveyor-Pay was moved to proposed midpoint and \$500 added to mileage.

Highway-1176 Fund A review and change to all employee positions was discussed to allow for raises.

1135 and 1169 are State approved amounts.

Circuit Court-Raises that had been approved earlier in the year had been carried through with the proposed budgets and will continue to work on funding sources.

CASA Grant projected same amount proposed.

Public Defender-This fund receives 40% reimbursement from the State with a net cost of \$18000. Some requests may be considered as a wish list item.

Prosecutor-IV-D-County User all were accepted proposals that include wages/raises

Probation-First discussed was the Care of Patients and added/increase costs. A specific line item will be added to her fund 1000-235-39800 \$50000. All other Funds and Grants were presented noting that no more drug court monies and only one year left for justice partners.

Assessor-Dusty explained he had looked at several other counties and what they were paying for staff and noted that they are underpaid. His budget requests were reviewed and raises included per the midpoint. He requested the purchase of a New Imagery Program that will provide exceptional quality views to help multiple departments that use the system.

Recorder and Clerk were moved to Thursday's Hearing as they were not available at the time.

Treasurer-Presented proposal to add a third person back to her staff and part-time seasonal. She noted that Shelly is doing three jobs. She is not asking for more; only to put the office back where it needs to be. Auditor-based on regular meeting action to increase hrly amount for payroll position the budget reflects the increase. The Endorsement Fee Fund will offset the total amounts.

No other business came before them on this day.

A motion to recess the hearings at 5:20pm was made by Mr. Robertson; seconded by Mr. Wood. Carried 5-0.

DAY 2-August 11th opened at 8am

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

Absent: Chuck Hess and Amy Casebeer.

Recorder-Proposal included the fulltime position previously approved and the agreement to use her perpetuation fund for the added costs.

Mr. Wood asked for point of order in regard to the Cap-\$125000 and where does this reflect in the overall.

Clerk-No election Budget due to off year. Regular Budget she presented a proposal to cut one fulltime staff position to allow for raises for her staff to the midpoint. A motion was made to allow the request by Mr.

Robertson; seconded by Mr. Keith. Carried 4-1/Neff.

Recessed at 9:05

Meeting back to order at 9:15.

Sheriff-Based on the regular meeting discussion and amounts still pending. A motion to have Polly, Verl and Anton to meet on 08/17@5:30pm with the Sheriff to review the proposal was made by Mr. Wood; seconded by Mr. Robertson. Carried 5-0.

Another ten-minute break was taken.

Returned at 10:17

EMA & LEPC Budgets were presented. The Educational Component was still being discussed in regard to being fair and consistent. A motion to have Mr. Bryan draft a job description was made by Mr. Neff; seconded by Mr. Wood. Carried 5-0.

Health-Local Health Maintenance-Tobacco-Food Registration Funds were presented. The 1159 Fund included bringing back two employees to the 35-hour work week. There was some concern with it being a levied fund and what happens if not approved by the state. A motion to approve the changes was made by Mr. Robertson; seconded by Mr. Neff. Carried 5-0. All other budgets had supporting cash balances.

Coroner-Ms. Frank began with stating that the county needs to consider a fulltime coroner. Her request included raises for her deputy coroners and was set at the midpoint amount. She was also instructed to contact the Health Dept. to see if any monies were available to assist with supplies.

Council-Budget presented included a \$500 increase in conferences.

Recessed at 11:35.

Returned at 12:30

Extension-Budget proposals was noted that Purdue reimburses the county 50%.

Temporary Recess at 1:45 and reopened at 1:52.

Soil & Water-Council reviewed the proposed budget and made adjustments with insurance, utilities and new windows request. Mr. Bryan is going to further review the agreement between them and the county.

Break at 1:30 and back at 1:38.

Sheriff Recall-Positions/Wages were once again reviewed and input into the system for a total of \$3185607.

Tourism-Jason gave a brief report and offered handouts about their office. Budget request same as last year.

Chamber of Commerce-Marce King presented their proposal and offering what they have done for the county. Her passion for the job and is an investment to Owen County. She added that they have asked for the last two years for a \$10000 increase for her salary and been denied. They are respectfully asking again as the workload has increased tremendously. It will be revisited on Friday during budget summary. Mr. Neff noted it was a small price to pay for what we get. Also noted was that they haven't paid any monies toward the loan and receive \$84000 Lit Edit monies.

Recessed for the day at 3:15pm

Day Three Budget Hearing August 12th, 2022, opened at 8am.

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

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

911-Ms. Lamb began with a review of a spreadsheet reflecting call volumes per population versus other counties. She has included a proposal for a salary increase for her position that has been previously promised to be reviewed/discussed. She was asked if she could sustain the raise, so noted. A motion to approve the request to \$54416 was made by Mr. Robertson; seconded by Mr. Hess. Carried 4-2. She related that her loan balance would be paid off in 2028 that will help with sustainability for raises.

A WTH Bill is still pending payment while a determination is being made whose it is and/or who uses it?

Another motion was made to proceed with OT/PT switch by Mr. Wood; seconded by Mr. Neff. Carried 6-0.

Mr. Wood took a moment to recognize Anton, Nicole, and Sheila for all of their work that has been put into the budgeting process so far.

EMS-First wanted to verify that a new position that had been added a couple of years ago has not been spent. He has hired an individual at this time to start shortly. He had recently been approved pay increases for his employees and those were reflected in his budget presented. He requested to make a change for a paramedic position. Motion made by Mr. Robertson; seconded by Mr. Hess for the change. Carried 6-0.

His Budget also reflected to add a third shift. A motion to proceed was made by Mr. Neff; seconded by Mr. Robertson for the shift to be added. Carried 6-0.

Discussion on his Tax Revenue was also touched on. He understands that it will be reduced this year and has agreed to help with expenses and proposal as possible due to his high cash balance.

Break at 10:15 and back at 10:42

Sheriff-Mr. Neff is still working through appropriation numbers and down to the last group and figuring ranks. All other Funds were reviewed.

Lunch Break was at 11:52 and back at 1:04.

Mr. Wood had to leave.

Sheriff Continued- A recess was taken at 1:14 to allow the raises to be confirmed in the Regular Meeting proposal for the rest of 2022. Meeting back at 1:15.

A motion to advertise for a public hearing was made by Mr. Hess; seconded by Mr. Robertson for the proposed raises. Recessed at 1:16

Re-opened Hearings at 1:16.

Elected Officials-Mr. Robertson offered that he feels raises should be given to Elected Officials. No further discussion was made.

Highway-Mr. Melton came before Council again to ask if they would reconsider staff position changes and proposed raises. He feels they are at a crash and burn point with staffing issues. Position changes were offered and entered in the system. A new amount was also requested to include a raise for the Superintendent to \$60000. A motion for the new "true" budget was made by Mr. Robertson; seconded by Mr. Hess. Motion Carried 3-2/Neff-Keith.

Added conversation in review was made by Mr. Robertson regarding the Treasurer in possibly removing the part-time. Mr. Robertson also felt no increase of \$10000 for Chamber.

He then added he felt that at least the five Courthouse Elected Positions of Clerk-Recorder-Assessor-Auditor-Treasurer should be given a \$4000 raise. He made the motion, and it was seconded by Mr. Hess for discussion. This then would reflect changes in chief deputies' salaries and there are other officials. Ms. Chesser and Mr. Neff both strongly disagree with giving themselves raises. Mr. Robertson withdrew his motion.

Surveyor changes were proposed to leave at the current amount not the increase to midpoint.

Ms. McElroy noted that YouTube had stopped and Ms. VanDerMoere state WIFI had also and that she couldn't access her system.

Mr. Hess commented that this was the first time in all his years on Council that they had a 3rd Day for hearings. It was agreed to allow the Auditor, Mr. Neff, and Ms. Chesser to input numbers and distribute to everyone for review before the September Meeting.

Mr. Bryan added financial comments with upcoming and/or pending projects including ADA Compliance, Comprehensive Plan, and Jail Project.

No other comments were made and a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Hess.