

Gibson County Council Regular Session Meeting September 12, 2023

The Gibson County Council met in Regular Session on September 12, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. at the North Annex Meeting Room.

Members Present: President Jeremy Overton, Vice President, Derek McGraw, Council Members: Jeff Clark, Jay Riley, Robert Schleiter, Michael Stilwell absent, and Hannah Whitehead
Also present were Auditor Mike Watkins, 1st Deputy to Auditor, Kristy York, and 2nd Deputy to Auditor, Wendy Williams, and Claim Specialist Lynda Cumberland

The Council opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Approval of Minutes - August 8, 2023, regular meeting minutes and special budget meeting were approved as written.

Treasurer / Clerk Report –reports were acknowledged by the Council.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Treasurer’s Part-Time Employee Request – Mary Ann O’Neal would like approval from the Council to hire a part-time, seasonal employee, which is written in the Treasurer’s budget. The position will begin on October 1, 2023 and work until the day before thanksgiving. The rate of pay will be \$12.50 per hour. The Council did not have any issues with this.

Sheriff Vanoven gave the Council the monthly reports; there were no questions. Today’s jail daily average was 100. Sheriff Vanoven gave a staffing report to the Council, and they have two open deputy positions; three open dispatch positions; five open corrections officer positions; one open facility officer in Community Corrections. Sheriff Vanoven gave the report on “We do Good Things”.

Health Department – Administrator Shade gave Council their monthly reports; there were no questions. She reminded everyone of COVID test kits available for pickup from their office.

EMS – Director Pond told Council he is having trouble staffing his EMS trucks. They are shutting trucks down in the areas with the least run volumes. He told Council the department was bleeding and requested help, he encouraged help on his budget. Council Member McGraw told him they have given him everything he has requested plus some. Councilman Overton gave an overview of all the Council has done to help the department. He stated the insurance plan cost the county \$22,365 per year, per person; the union employee’s contribution is \$0, whereas St. Vincents monthly insurance costs employees approximately \$550 per month. When EMS requested payment for a full 24-hour shift; the hourly rate was lowered a bit to accomplish payment of a 24-hour shift, but this still came in at a 24% raise that amounted to approximately \$11,600 for Paramedics and \$10,700 for AEMT. Even though this adjustment was made, they continue to see attrition which is being cast as the Council’s fault. Director Pond says he told the EMS employees that hourly rates were going down, however with the 24-hour paid shift, the annual rate of pay will increase by approximately \$10,000 per year. Director Pond explained that in June 2021 that things were changing in the EMS and if we didn’t change, we were going to lose people. He felt the conversation drug on too long, and in the meantime, the EMS evolved, and he feels benefits are changing in a lot of places. He feels the reason people are leaving is due to pay and comparable benefits. A Gibson County Paramedic spoke of his wife working in Pike County as a Basic EMT earning \$18.55 or \$.50 more than a Gibson County Paramedic. He feels that since he took the time to become a Paramedic and carry more responsibility than a Basic EMT, he deserves Paramedic pay, instead he is earning less than a Pike County

Basic EMT. He stays in Gibson County because of his earned years of paid time off. A Gibson County Basic EMT is currently earning \$13.02 per hour; next year it will increase to \$16.66 per hour, plus longevity. Longevity is not all worked out at this time but will be added into the 2024 wages. An Advanced EMT is currently earning \$16.66, but in 2024 it will increase to \$18.66. A Paramedic is currently being paid \$18.05 but will increase to \$20.05 in 2024. EMS employees will earn overtime in their normal schedule due to the 24-hour shift, but not including additional overtime pay, a Basic EMT will earn \$60,642 in 2024; An AEMT will earn \$67,922; and a Paramedic will earn \$72,982. Part-time employees will be raised to the positions pay rate. An example is a part-time Basic EMT will earn the same rate as a full-time Basic EMT; they hope to be able to employ more part-time employees with this rate maneuver. An EMS employee told the Council they need to get more competitive with their pay/benefits because this service must have continuing education hours to practice. There needs to be more focus on attracting young, educated people into this service. Director Pond clarified that these EMS employees are working over 800 hours more of overtime per year than any other department; he is unsure of the best way to handle this. Director Pond feels there are rumors about privatizing the service. Council Member Riley told Director Pond they have tried everything; the Council does not feel they can throw any more money into this situation; thus, they must explore other options. Council Overton asked if we are losing employees to other County's; Director Pond says we have lost employees to Posey County, Wabash County, IL (a privatized unit). Council Member McGraw wants to know what the Council is not giving the EMS, as they have been given the requested personal services 2024 budget plus some, but they are still in the meeting requesting more. Director Pond concurs with Council Member McGraw, but he wants the Council to know where the EMS stands. Council Member Clark wants all four bases staffed and if Director Pond cannot do this, the Council owes it to the people of Owensville to make sure it is staffed; they are doing everything they can do to get this done. This discussion was put on hold to go to Attorney McDonald's business regarding the EMS Promissory Note as he needed to be in court.

Council Member Overton says a county compensation board was organized some years ago for these types of matter; they would review proposals, not complaints. He reiterated the amount the County currently pays for health insurance; he explained that there is no flexibility to adjust this for a single employee or people that do not want the insurance, thus different compensation packages are difficult to offer. Council Member Overton will go to Pike County and have this discussion to see how they pay their EMS employees. He also explained that the entire conversation with Deaconess was borne from Director Pond bringing St. Vincent EMS model into a Council meeting. He feels Deaconess does things a bit different than St. Vincent, but Deaconess has offered some benefits to the County. They require information from EMS; but so far, EMS has not been willing to provide them with the requested information. Councilman Overton wishes to end this back-and-forth conversation. The Council feels the public safety tax will have to be enacted in the future.

OLD BUSINESS

EMS Promissory Note – Jim McDonald presented this promissory note from the Commissioners and RDC; this was presented 6-8 months ago, but it died for lack of a motion. Attorney McDonald is presenting the promissory note again. EMS is proposing to build a new EMS Base at a proposed site near the roundabout in Princeton at a cost of \$2,000,000. Promissory notes have been made for other projects when the RDC cannot fund the entire amount at one time. He wonders if the Council is going to support this forgivable loan process. This money will come from the TIF funds. Councilman Clark feels they need to look at personnel before they build a building. Council Member Clark also questioned the presented on this building because they propose to install four ambulance bays. Director Ponds says they have four spare trucks.

Councilman Clark motioned to deny the forgivable loan, seconded by Councilman McGraw. The vote to deny was 6-0.

The EMS discussion from department reports resumed.

Jail Project –George Ballard, Owners Representative told Council that footers for the jail pod have been poured. The general pod is sitting in Evansville and the next 3-4 months will be active. The jail cells are in Georgia and will be delivered soon. He invites everyone to watch the progress on the live jail camera.

NEW BUSINESS

Sheriff Commissary Disbursement Resolution 2023-01 – Sheriff Vanoven presented this resolution regarding purchases from the commissary fund; he says other counties in the state are adopting this same resolution. The resolution says the Sheriff must meet statutory requirements to purchase things. He explained that he presents the expenditures to Council twice per year and this resolution lays out how he can make the expenditures from the fund.

Council Member McGraw made a motion to approve adoption of this resolution, seconded by Council Member Riley. The vote was 6-0.

Operation Pullover Over Pay – Sheriff Vanoven gave the floor to Chief McGraw. The County and City works this operation as one unit and have for many years. This is a federally funded grant. They are having a problem getting people to work, so the State is now allowing payment at double time rates and the rates are fully reimbursed.

Council Member McGraw made a motion to approve this double time payment to county officers for working this operation pullover blitz, seconded by Council Member Whitehead. The vote was 6-0.

Pay Increase – Stephanie McKinney gave Auditor Watkins a proposal to send to Council. She is currently the Interim EMA Director and she has withdrawn from the Union. The former EMA Director has retired, but he is using his days, so it keeps him on the payroll until January, 2024. Stephanie has found a place in the budget where she can transfer money and receive the Director’s pay. She requests permission to move \$1560 or less from line 39500 Disaster Contingencies into a personal services line. Commissioner Montgomery says Stephanie has been working hard at this new position and he feels she has saved the County a lot of money.

Councilman Riley approved this out of series transfer for an increase in pay, seconded by Council Member Schleter. The vote was 6-0.

Council Member McGraw suggested that since she is filling an interim position, she should continue to receive her current pay from her current role/line and add the Interim Director line to her rate of pay. This rate of pay will begin on the date she left the union. Council Member McGraw made the motion, seconded by Council Member Riley. The vote was 6-0. She will remain Flood Plain Director and her pay will be supplemented from an Interim Director’s line.

Lake Road Tree Removal Project – Council Member McGraw has been contacted by Commissioner Burns regarding a long-term tree removal project on Lake Road. There are many trees that need to be removed for public safety along the right-of-way that encompasses 17’ on each side of the road. This is considered the first phase of the project and they will need \$54,000 budgeted. Councilman McGraw has suggested this be paid from this year only from the Rainy-day Fund; Going into the future, Commissioners will put this line into their budget. Councilman McGraw asked other Council Members to allow the 1st phase by Whitledge Tree Service; this is the only tree service that quoted this project. This situation arose from complaints over dead trees falling. They will re-bid the job each year. Councilman McGraw motioned to approve advertisement of \$54,000 as an additional appropriation in the Rainy-day budget, seconded by Councilman Clark. The vote was 6-0.

Personal Service Transfer Requests:

1000-0005 General Sheriff requests	from	11312 Captain	\$3,000
	Into	11300 Part-time	

1000-0005 General Sheriff requests	from	11002 Communications Officer	\$5,000
	Into	11300 Part-time	
1000-0005 General Sheriff requests	from	13900 Sergeant	\$10,000
	Into	11300 Part-time	

Council Member McGraw made a motion to approve these transfer requests, seconded by Council Member Schleter. The vote was 7-0.

1000-0380 General Jail requests	from	11804 Dentist	\$1,000
	Into	12303 Overtime	
1000-0308 General Jail requests	from	10201 Corrections Officer	\$40,000
	Into	12303 Overtime	

Council Member McGraw made a motion to approve these transfer requests, seconded by Council Member Riley. The vote was 6-0.

Out of Series Transfer Requests:

Fund 1000-0104 General Election request	from	26000 Office Supplies	\$ 1,000
	Into	31500 Travel	
Fund 1000-0301 General EMS request	from	32100 Ambulance Repairs	\$3,000
	Into	22201 Tires	
Fund 9122-Community Corrections Grant Fund	from	12206 Facility Officer	\$21,346
	into	33801 Equipment Leasing	
	from	12303 Overtime	\$12,000
	into	35101 Utilities	

Council Member McGraw made a motion to approve the out of series transfer requests, seconded by Council Member Riley. The vote was 6-0.

Additional Appropriation Requests to Advertise –

Fund 1000 GENERAL LOC 0007 Coroner	Other Services/Charges	\$ 30,000
Additional Autopsy Cost (currently running a deficit of \$12,000)		
Fund 1000 GENERAL LOC 0068 Commissioners	Other Services/Charges	\$ 80,000
Care of Patients/Inmates Invoicing remaining for 2023; this is for juvenile incarcerations.		
Fund 1000 GENERAL LOC 0503 Landfill	Other Services/Charges	\$ 10,454
Contract Services Invoicing remaining for 2023; some of 2022 invoices were just received this much was left over from 2022.		
Total General Fund AA Requests:		<u>\$120,454</u>

Council Member McGraw made a motion to approve advertisement of additional appropriations, seconded by Council Member Riley. The vote was 6-0.

Fund 1000 GENERAL LOC 301 EMS	Supplies	\$ 22,000
This line will run out of funds most likely by mid-October for fuel/gasoline.		
This request to advertise was denied, Council requested EMS transfer from vacant positions.		

Fund 1174 Medical Care for Inmates	Supplies	\$ 400
	Other Services/Charges	<u>\$ 1,500</u>
	Total AA:	\$ 1,900

Cash on hand: \$557; this fund accumulates money each month.

This will get the fund appropriated for what has been spent to date + \$500

Council Member McGraw made a motion to approve advertisement of additional appropriations, seconded by Council Member Whitehead. The vote was 6-0.

Fund 2510 Sheriff Law Enforcement Training Fund Other Services/Charges \$1,200
Cash on hand: \$1,657

This will get the fund appropriated for what has been spent to date + \$500
Council Member McGraw made a motion to approve advertisement of additional appropriations, seconded
by Council Member Riley. The vote was 6-0.

Additional Appropriation Resolution – these additional appropriations have been advertised.

Fund Name: GENERAL Fund
30000 Other Services/Charges \$ 500
Fund Name: LIT Correctional/Rehabilitation Facility Fund
40000 Capital Outlays \$656,650
Fund Name: Clerk's Records Perpetuation Fund
30000 Other Services/Charges \$ 22,780
Fund Name: Jail Bond Construction '22 Fund
10000 Personal Services \$ 8,060
30000 Other Services/Charges \$ 27,709
Fund Name: Opioid Restricted Fund
30000 Other Services/Charges \$ 98,715
Fund Name: Opioid Unrestricted Fund
30000 Other Services/Charges \$ 7,552

Appropriation Reduction Resolution

Fund Name: GENERAL Fund
Other Services/Charges \$ 500
Council Member McGraw made a motion to approve the Resolution, seconded by Council Member Clark.
The vote was 6-0.

Council Member McGraw motioned to adjourn the regular meeting.

Minutes from the September 12, 2023, meeting

Jeremy Overton, President

Jeff Clark, Council Member

Robert Schleiter, Council Member

Hannah Whitehead, Council Member

Derek McGraw, Vice- President

Jay Riley, Council Member

Michael Stilwell, Council Member

Attest: Bristy York
Michael A. Watkins, Gibson County Auditor
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