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Gibson County Council  
Departmental Budget Meeting  
July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021

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The Gibson County Council met in Special Session on July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at 8:15 a.m. at the North Annex Meeting Room.

**Members Present:** President Jeremy Overton, Vice-President Craig Pflug (in late), Councilmen Dan Beard, William McConnell absent, Derek McGraw (in/out), Jay Riley, and Michael Stilwell. Also present: Gibson County Auditor, Mike Watkins and staff members Wendy Williams, Lynda Cumberland, and Kristy York.

Superior Court – Department 41 began the day. Judge Krieg requests that the Senior Court Reporters be paid the same rate of pay as the Bailiff. The Bailiff receives the same salary as a Deputy, providing, they meet the law enforcement requirements each year. The Senior Court Reporter has more duties than Court Reporters. Home detention has been moved to Community Corrections. Judge Krieg requests all employees move into the General Fund Budget. He explained that there are some other funds that have money available on the Circuit Court side, however paying salaries out of these funds quickly depletes the funds; Circuit Court has never paid their employees from the General Fund, thus the reason they have money left in these funds.

All Probation expenses have been removed from both courts, as a new department was created for Probation in Department 42. Judge Krieg is not requesting more people in probation. He explained the Probation Officers workload to the Council. There are 5 probation officers and each one carries approximately 125 cases each, however they should only have 80 cases each. This department carries other responsibilities aside from these cases.

The Courts have an aging vehicle, they hope to receive a grant, but they have budgeted this into Fund 2000.

Judge Krieg is requesting the Judges Supplemental pay as they have worked hard to keep the jail population down. If the Judges receive the supplemental, the Prosecutor will also be receiving supplemental pay. He explained that the supplemental money does not cost the County and requests that the Council at least vote on this. In the past, he feels Council members have worried about the State stopping the supplemental payment; he feels confident that if the State were to stop, the other funds, not general fund, could be used for these payments.

Department 38 – Pre-Trial Services has a line in their budget 38 01 05 for a caseworker. This employee is currently being paid with grant funds. Since there is no magic ball telling if the grant will be paid in 2022, they appropriated for this position for July-December 2022. The current grant will run thru June 2022.

Department 40 – Magistrate is paid by the State and no staff is being requested. The Judges have assigned Court Reporters to those positions and this department will not be requesting the supplemental pay this year or next.

Department 43 – Public Defender follows the Prosecutor for salary and 5% has been requested for this staff. Ms. Moody was able to cut her computer line in half because her equipment is new. When they move to the new building, they will need a new router and some equipment to go with it. Fund 1200 also belongs to the Public Defender. She used this fund to help pay for the murder trial, which was expensive.

Department 30 and EDIT Fund 1112 – Commissioner Montgomery and Kay Vore – A raise of \$1 per hour was added into the Commissioner Department. There is a loader coming to the Highway Department this year and billed in 2022 from Fund 1112. The Weights and Measures will also be receiving a truck in 2022. A line was added into the EDIT Fund to restore the Commissioners Minutes Books.

Councilman Overton requested a listing of equipment with miles or hours plus a 3-year replacement plan.

The Council stressed to Commissioners to get an appropriation before committing to any contract or purchase.

Department 47 EMS – Director Pond presented a slide show demonstrating the EMS profession is experiencing a shortage of people for a lot of reasons. He requested a change in their pay structure. He would like to hire more part-time people to help alleviate the overtime of the full-time employees. He would like to pay them at the same rate as full time employees without the benefits.

Councilman Pflug entered the meeting at 9:37 a.m.

Councilman McGraw exited the meeting at 9:57 a.m. He will return a bit later.

Fund 1159 Health Department does not have a 1<sup>st</sup> Deputy, but request equalization of people because they cover each other while off. They request job titles be assigned versus 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Deputy titles. She has an employee with a tentative retirement date of May 2022. She would like to get someone in to train under this retiring employee. This retiring employee is only working 4 days per week to use paid time off. This position will require training as it deals with septic tanks. Councilman Overton wondered if this Department could sustain a budget of \$471,524. They have grant money they will not be required to return, but the money must be spent on COVID. Vaccines will be required to go to the communities, and they will be required to have a mobile trailer, which will be covered with grant funds. They will be receiving \$69,000 grant anytime, which will more than cover a trailer to keep vaccines cold and provide hand washing station. These vaccines will continue for the next 3 years as COVID is not going away. They have one grant with \$50,000 remaining and request this money be used to give bonuses to the Health Department. Councilman Pflug asked Director Hornby to put a plan together to accommodate this request.

Department 05 – Sheriff Bottoms is requesting severance pay so it can be encumbered into the 2023 budget as the Sheriff's last day will be 12/31/22. He is also requesting \$1200 per year

raises for everyone. He increased the gas, and uniforms. Deputies are increasing by 2 for Courthouse Security. Vests have been added for jailers plus a new car with emergency lights. Councilman Overton feels they are making headway on the pension.

Department 32 – Sheriff Bottoms is requesting \$1200 per year raises for this department. He does not have all positions filled; they are still 9 jailers short, and they will be losing another one to EPD. He requested an increase to the medical contract thru Quality Corrections due to an increase in medicine prices. This contract will run through 2022. Council asked if prisoner meals was overbudgeted. The Sheriff explained the 2020 population was down due to COVID and they expect an increase this year and in 2022, plus this extra might be needed for the jail build transition.

Fund 1222 – Sheriff Bottoms is requesting \$1200 per year raises, maintenance has also increased.

Fund 1175 Misdemeanant request for a new vehicle. The Sheriff is hoping for 2 new vehicles: 1 from General Fund and 1 from Misdemeanant. Councilman Overton requested a vehicle list with mileage.

4913 Project Income and Fund 9121 Community Corrections Grant - Director Michael Owens told Council the equipment leasing is up due to the new judicial policy. They have 50+ home detentions and will have 50 on work release; the Judges are utilizing these programs more. This is helping Community Corrections as there are user fees of \$15 per day. These user fees deposit into Project Income and make up 53% of their budget. The 6/21 user fees set a collection record. Alcohol monitors are averaging 50 per month. This department hires from off the street, not from the Sheriff or Jail Department. Director Owens offered the work release program to the County Officials, as this department needs some work to keep them busy.

Department 29/31 – Andy Schafer is requesting a full-time addition to his staff due to the new proposed Probation Building. At one point, he had a crew of 5, now he has only 3 employees.

Fund 1169/1176 Highway Department – Superintendent Johnson along with Bookkeeper, Juli Shade explained the budget to Council. They have moved a few items between 1169 and 1176 (or 1173) as some allowable expenses can be paid from 1169. They will be going through the County Attorney to purchase new equipment; Sourcewell is also being utilized, which eliminates the bidding process. Councilman Overton requested an equipment list with hours/miles and a prioritized replacement list. Councilman Overton also reminded them to keep an eye on their fund balances. Councilman Pflug requested a list of chip/seal and paving projects, so the Council is aware of the projects they have going on. Superintendent Johnson explained there are 65 miles per township receiving projects this year.

The meeting recessed for lunch. Councilman McGraw returned to the meeting after lunch.

Department 04/Fund 1189 - Recorder Thompson told Council that Fund 1189 has the funds to pay for salaries next year because they have their office up to date.

Department 03 – Treasurer O’Neal told the Council she might have a retiree next year; she would like to train someone in this position for at least 6 months. Job descriptions were provided for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Deputies. She would like to hire a part-time employee that can move into the 2<sup>nd</sup> Deputy position.

Department 06 – Surveyor Martin is requesting \$1 per hour increases in pay plus a part-time employee raise to \$12.50 per hour. He also explained an update to their phone caused an increase in this line.

Department 02 – Auditor Watkins explained of a possible retiree in this department in 7/22, thus an additional employee was added to the budget. He has requested \$1 per hour increase for this department’s employees; plus added a part-time line in the amount of \$16,000; \$30,000 was added for a software upgrade.

Department 46/Fund 1152 – Director Hedges requested \$1 per hour pay increases. He also requested his travel budget be reinstated. He told Council that sirens should be inserted into someone’s budget to replace the aging storm warning sirens. There are no grants available for these warning devices. Director Hedges wonders if the benefit outweighs the cost of these sirens as there might be better items available for this public warning and most counties are shifting to these new systems. This department needs storage; he requests a building from CARES Act money with a training center and an ambulance base. He also requested the Council consider increasing his employee to a 1<sup>st</sup> Deputy.

Department 01/Fund 1119 – Clerk Morrow told the Council, thanks to a state grant, all the county’s election equipment has been replaced. Fund 1119 pays an Archivist and requests a \$2.50 per hour raise. Clerk Morrow also informed the Council of a scanner the department is renting to own. He welcomes other departments to use this scanner.

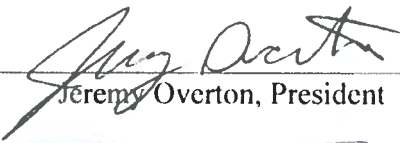
Department 27 – Director Pickersgill reviewed his budget with Council, no major changes are requested.

Department 08 and 50 – Prosecutor Cochren presented budgets consistent with the last 5 years. They are implementing a new discovery system. He is requesting a 5% increase in personnel, across the board. In addition, he requests his Deputy Prosecutor’s be increased to \$75,000 consistent with the amount of pay the contracted/part-time Public Defender Attorneys are receiving annually. He feels his Deputies are very dedicated to the county on a 24/7 basis. Prosecutor Cochren has included the supplement in this budget request in Fund 8895, however he asked the Council to please award his Deputies before awarding him the supplement. They are also requesting part-time position be restored. This position has been open since 9/2020 because no one will answer the call at \$10 per hour. They request this position be raised to \$15 per hour for 24 hours per week. They will receive 66% reimbursement. The alternative is to hire a full-time person with benefits.

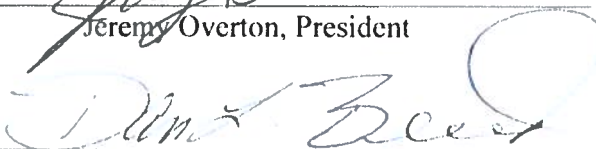
Hopkins Park – Will Neiderhaus explained to Council that with the new development at the park, their expenses will be increasing, thus they are requesting \$35,000 which is an increase of \$5,000.

This session on budgeting ended at 2:30 p.m. The next session will be held on August 10, 2021.


Minutes from the July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Departmental Budget Meeting.

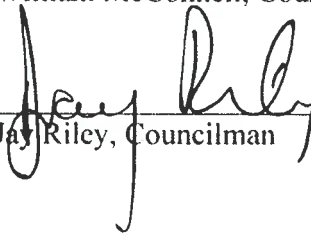
  
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Jeremy Overton, President

  
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Craig Pflug, Vice-President

  
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Dan Beard, Councilman

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William McConnell, Councilman

  
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Derek McGraw, Councilman

  
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Jay Riley, Councilman

  
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Michael Stilwell, Councilman

Attest:   
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Mike Watkins, Gibson County Auditor