Est

Martin

County

THE MARTIN COUNTY COUNCIL

BUDGET WORK SESSION

AUGUST 21, 2023

MINUTES

The Martin County Council convened in work session on Monday, August 21, 2023, in the Commissioners’ Room at the Courthouse located at 129 Main Street, Shoals, Indiana. Councilmen attending: Jordan Dant, Adam Greene, Warren Albright, Keith Gibson, Monty Gregory, Andrew Beaver, and Jim Hamby. Also attending were Auditor Michelle Norris and Greg Guerrettaz with Financial Solutions Group.

President Jordan Dant called the meeting to order at 8:36 am.

Mr. Greg Guerrettaz with Financial Solutions Group was asked by President Jordan Dant for any opening comments before the start of the meeting. Mr. Guerrettaz asked the Council to keep in mind that the growth quotient does not apply for the next two years unless it is lower than 4%. The State of Indiana put in a 4% growth quotient cap for 2024 and 2025, and 4% is the most the property taxes will go up assuming the AV goes higher than 4%.

Mr. Guerrettaz stated Martin County’s income taxes are up in total, but that does not necessarily mean the County’s share will go up that much but it is a good positive movement. Mr. Guerrettaz stated everyone wants to lower EDIT taxes, but there is no way with the ambulance, in his opinion.

Mr. Guerrettaz asked what the requested payroll increase is in the budgets. Auditor Michelle Norris responded a 5% increase has been entered. Mr. Guerrettaz stated generally the increases have been 3-4% throughout the State of Indiana because of the 4% growth quotient. Mr. Guerrettaz stated people need more than 3-4% to keep up with inflation which is 6-8%.

Mr. Guerrettaz stated FSG did an analysis which was shared with the Council, comparing the 2022 budget to the 2022 actual spent. The report shows how much of the approved budget is being spent to what was approved. Martin County overall is spending all the approved budget. In some other counties he is working with, departments do not spend all the approved budget in a line item but then ask for additional increases in the line item the next year which pads the budget.

President Dant stated health insurance costs rose 25% last year. Commissioner George stated it is expected to rise 15% this year. Councilman Hamby asked if insurance could be shopped around this year. President George stated it would be looked into.

President Dant asked if the ambulance service was now ALS to which Commissioner George responded that is correct. President Dant stated that we will now be billing accordingly, but have no idea what that will look like a year from now. Auditor Norris stated the year-to-date income from the ambulance is $230,992 which includes runs from October 2022 to present. There is no way to separate 2022 to 2023 run revenue. Councilman Gregory stated he believes it was determined in a previous meeting that it takes about $50,000 per month to run the service, which would be -240,000 when there was $450,000 paid from the EDIT fund last year, it will be within reason. Councilman Albright stated $50,000 per month does not keep equipment updated and would only be paying the bills. Councilman Gregory stated with being ALS certified we will now have more realistic numbers for next year’s budget.

Each line of the budget was reviewed of every fund. It was determined there was not enough social security or PERF budgeted for next year. Social security was $135,000 and was increased to $160,000. 2022 actual was $144,000. PERF was $140,000 and was increased to $160,000. Patients in institutions was reduced from $1,000 to $500 due to low spending in this line in 2022. Travel and education was reduced from $2,500 to $2,000. Maintenance contracts was reduced from $15,000 to $1,000 due to history of spending last year. 4-H grounds maintenance was reduced from $7,500 to $4,000. 4-H Board request was reduced from $7,500 to $4,000.

Four Rivers request was reduced from $7,500 to $500 due to the Commissioners not knowing what the service provides. Commissioner Summers has been appointed to the board for Four Rivers but has never met with them in four years. President Dant stated if we do not know where the money is going and cannot justify the expense then it should not be done. Councilman Gregory stated they could come to a meeting at justify the expense.

Historical Society request reduced from $7,500 to $4,000. The County’s documents are currently stored in the Historical Society’s building. Professional services were reduced from $40,000 to $500 based on historical spending. Matrix Phone was reduced from $40,000 to $35,000 based on spending. SIDC request was reduced from $15,000 to $10,000. Ride Solutions was reduced from $5,000 to $2,000. Office rent was reduced from $1,000 to zero due to being in other areas of the budget. Humane Society request was reduced from $20,000 to $17,000. All the County’s dogs and cats are being cared for by the Humane Society along with spay and neutering services. New Wave Internet was reduced from $15,000 to $12,000. Auditor Norris stated there is still a possibility that the fee will go up even more in the future. Cybersecurity contract was increased from $30,000 to $55,000 due to expense history. The original department request for the Commissioner’s budget in the general fund was $929,832 and after increases and reductions the Council recommendation was $907,832.

 The following were changes to the EDIT fund:

EDIT COUNTY SHARE

EMT-B2: $40,560 reduced to $38,480 Part-time EMT-P: $15,000 increased to $87,000

EMT-B3: $38,480 increased to $40,560 Driver: $31,200 reduced to $15,000

EMT-B4: $52,000 reduced to $39,000 Overtime: $94,848 reduced to $84,000

Part-time EMT-B: $15,000 increased to $46,000 Martin County Tourism: $5,000 reduced to zero

EMT-P1: $68,640 reduced to $50,000 Harris Contract: $50,000 increased to $55,000

EMT-P2: $62,400 reduced to $50,440 Martin County Marketing: $1,000 reduced to zero

EMT-P4: $62,400 reduced to $400 Workers Compensation: $125,000 reduced to $90,000

Original Department Request: $1,904,347.00 Council Recommendation: $1,842,699.

Mr. Guerrettaz stated in cumulative capital fund the maximum rate will be requested and only that amount can be spent. Cumulative capital fund does not affect the general fund because there is a bump in the maximum levy. There were no changes to the cumulative capital fund budget by the Council. If the appropriated lines are not spent the money stays within the cumulative capital fund. Commissioner George stated there has been remodeling done in the Courthouse with a couple of offices to go, with the remodel funds being used out of the cumulative capital fund.

The ARPA fund was discussed. The Commissioners did not request a budget for next year because there is no balance expected at the end of the year. Auditor Norris stated if a chase vehicle is bought the balance will be at $50,000. The Council asked why a chase vehicle was needed. Commissioner Roush responded that Director Osborn has been using his personal vehicle for the last year and has not claimed mileage. The chase vehicle is also a supervisor vehicle and is used to meet the medical director in Paoli and Bloomington. President Dant stated mileage needs to be turned in. Commissioner George stated they should not be asking a personal vehicle to be used to do County business.

Commissioner George stated the vehicle will be used if another paramedic is needed at the scene of an accident and whoever is at the station can take the vehicle. It will be used for business purposes for the ambulance service. President Dant stated he is on board if this is needed but his fear is that what happens when the three current Commissioners are not here to hold that accountable and there are different commissioners in office, or when Director Osborn finds his successor and the next person that comes in and assumes that is the supervisory vehicle to drive as a personal vehicle. Commissioner Summers stated he would like to wait until it can be determined if the service is going to make money. Commissioner George stated that should not be an issue since they did not get into the ambulance business to make money, they got into it to provide a service to the community. Mr. Guerrettaz told Auditor Norris to use the projected balance as of 12/31 in the budget for 2024.

The Highway Department budgets were reviewed. Mr. Guerrettaz stated the gas tax will go up a little bit. Cumulative bridge is used specifically for bridge work. Mr. Guerrettaz stated if the levy is increased that will take from the general fund so we like to give 4%, but no more, in property taxes to cumulative bridge. For example, if 10% was given then the general fund would suffer. Interest income is deposited into cum bridge also which helps the fund balance. President Dant asked if there was bridge work being performed. Highway Superintendent Scott Seals stated there is wood ordered for a wooden bridge and there was concrete work done last week. Mr. Guerrettaz suggested the Highway Department look into grants for wood bridges and talk to SIDC, there have been grants given for those.

Local Road and Street was reviewed. Mr. Guerrettaz stated this fund does not affect the tax rate and we can only spend what we have. MVH restricted was reviewed. There was a $25,000 jump in culverts to which Superintendent Seals stated it was moved from the unrestricted MVH fund to the restricted fund. Mr. Guerrettaz stated restricted funds should just be used for materials and is 50% of the revenue that is received from the State for gas tax. Those funds are moved into the restricted fund and must stay in this fund, it cannot revert to the unrestricted fund. The salaries are kept in unrestricted. Superintendent Seals stated the restricted must be used for preservation, restoration, or construction of new road or bridge.

In the unrestricted MVH fund it was found based on the past year’s spending that the utilities budget amount was not enough to cover. The request was for $12,000 but the last six months of spending was $6,659. The Council increased the request to $14,000. President Dant asked if the salaries included a percentage raise because raises were just given for the Highway Department. Superintendent Seals responded a position was eliminated within the department to be able to give those raises in hopes to keep some employees and find new employees. There were formerly ten operators with CDL positions. The Highway Department has asked for a 6% raise in the budget but is willing to take what the Council decides the overall increase will be.

Highway Administrative Assistant, Theresa Ray, stated in the 2023 budget the health insurance appropriated budget did not include the 25% increase and she will be coming to the next Council meeting for an additional appropriation. This is why there is a huge difference in the 2023 appropriated budget and the 2024 request. Ms. Ray stated gas, diesel, and oil is being moved from the restricted fund (1173) and now will be paid all from the unrestricted fund (1176), there is no longer any fuel in 1173. Worker’s Comp was reduced from $40,000 to $25,000 to be more in line with what was spent. Equipment repair was discussed. Ms. Ray stated they have already passed $42,000 this year in repairs. In 2024 they have budgeted $65,000. They are hoping repairs will be lower with new equipment. There is a grader ordered and should be arriving in November. Superintendent Seals is looking into getting rid of the smaller Gradall and getting something to replace it.

Mr. Guerrettaz stated when the budget is worked at $1.520 million, the budget has come down some. The budget may be high based on the gas tax revenue coming in. The budget looks like more than what the County can afford at first pass through.

The following are the total adjustments for the unrestricted MVH fund:

MOTOR VEHICLE HIGHWAY

Superintendent Salary: $52,749 reduced to $52,242

Administrative Assistant: $39,916 reduced to $39,531

Utilities: $12,000 increased to $14,000 Operator w/CDL (5): $47,072 reduced to $46,629

Operator w/o CDL: $46,488 reduced to $46,039 Operator w/CDL (6): $47,072 reduced to $46,629

Operator w/CDL (1): $47,072 reduced to $46,629 Operator w/CDL (7): $47,072 reduced to $46,629

Operator w/CDL (2): $47,072 reduced to $46,629 Operator w/CDL (8): $47,072 reduced to $46,629

Operator w/CDL (3): $47,072 reduced to $46,629 Operator w/CDL (9): $47,072 reduced to $46,629

Operator w/CDL (4): $47,072 reduced to $46,629

Mechanic Salary: $50,586 reduced to $50,101

Worker’s Compensation: $40,000 reduced to $25,000

Original Department Request: $1,520,467 Council Recommendation: $1,501,654

 The surveyor’s budget was reviewed by the Council. President Dant stated there has been no mileage spent this year. Surveyor Nathan Hoffman stated with the new rules on turning in mileage he does not have time to do it and the Council can keep the mileage. Mr. Guerrettaz stated he does not think the mileage can be taken down to zero. President Dant stated to leave the mileage at $2,500. Surveyor Hoffman stated a chaser vehicle is going to be purchased for the ambulance but he is driving his own personal vehicle, using his own trailer and side by side.

 Phone expense was requested at $900. The surveyor/prosecutor building is currently using Matrix phones but Surveyor Hoffman stated the Prosecutor is looking to go with another phone service in the building. Surveyor Hoffman stated he and the deputy surveyor do use their personal cell phones for business along with a hot spot. The modem for the GPS runs off a cellular network. They are currently not reimbursed for their cell phones. Surveyor Hoffman asked to change his mileage to get reimbursed for their cell phone bills. Mileage was left in the budget and cell phones will need to be addressed by the Commissioners.

 Councilman Greene stated he would like to see something cut on the deputy surveyor position. Auditor Norris asked the Council to not cut the position. The deputy surveyor does the mapping for the County and is in the Auditor’s office daily. If he were to stop mapping that would fall on the Auditor’s office, the Surveyor is not responsible to record the splits for the Auditor. Assessor Carolyn McGuire stated $15,000 is paid out of reassessment for the deputy surveyor’s salary, which was started in 2016. Prior to 2016 mapping was done on paper and the maps were not drawn correctly. Surveyor Hoffman stated there have been issues where the surveyors found a building being assessed with neighbor’s property and neither property owner realizing the error. The surveyor and deputy surveyor help the Assessor fix those issues. Assessor McGuire stated when the mapping is incorrect it is confusing to the taxpayer, which is why the Surveyor’s office is important in the mapping process.

Councilman Greene asked if there was enough work to pay for the mapping and if it was a full-time job. Assessor McGuire stated in Lawrence County every deed goes to the Surveyor before it is approved. Surveyor Hoffman stated his deputy helps him in the field and also works on mapping and split issues. Councilman Greene asked how it was a full-time job if he is helping the Surveyor. Surveyor Hoffman stated the two jobs go hand-in-hand. If they take the GPS out and shoot a cornerstone and then they come back and map that cornerstone. Councilman Gregory asked if the Assessor’s office could have a part-time person for mapping and the surveyor’s office could have a part-time person. Surveyor Hoffman stated his deputy will be a licensed surveyor once the test is taken in October and will have the same credentials as himself. The County will have two licensed surveyors for a bargain price. Surveyor Hoffman and his deputy know the history of Martin County and the history of how property was split.

Councilman Albright stated to leave the position and to move on because the deputy surveyor position helps every land owner in the County. Councilman Greene stated he felt like there is waste there and not helping the taxpayers and that is why there are four new Councilmen and at least two of them are because of the Surveyor’s office. Councilman Albright stated if you have paid for many surveys before things were updated a person would figure out it was not a waste. Councilman Gregory stated our County is way behind on surveys and we are not zoned as a County. Councilman Gregory stated they want to make sure everything is justified which is why they are going line by line in each budget. The following changes were made in the Surveyor’s budget:

SURVEYOR

Deputy Surveyor: $17,964 reduced to $17,225

Original Department Request: $64,167 Council Recommendation: $63,428

Judge Isha Wright-Ryan and Chief Probation Officer came before the Council to discuss probation budgets. Mr. Guerrettaz asked if Martin County probation user fees were down. Judge Wright-Ryan stated Martin County’s fees were up because the probation department has taken a very active role in collection and are setting hearings on collections. Mr. Guerrettaz asked how many customers the probation department had currently. Chief Probation Officer Stephanie Helton responded there is 274 customers. The assistant chief probation officer’s (ACPO) salary had to be increased because the employee is a State mandated increase due to years of service and level of experience. Judges received a 7.8% increase which is what chief probation officers were supposed to get. Because the CPO is the boss to the ACPO, Judge Wright-Ryan felt it was necessary to increase the CPO’s pay higher than the ACPO.

CPO Helton stated she has been told by her mentors that salaries should come from the general fund but in Martin County that has historically not always been the case. Judge Wright-Ryan stated they are asking for a new position for an additional probation officer. Judge stated they have created a pre-trial probation program which did not exist last year and fees are being charged. The probation department is over the allowed case numbers by a significant amount. The probation department is running with too many clients to a probation officer. If an officer is supervising low risk level risk of reoffending clients (which Martin County’s are not) the officer should not have more than 137 clients. CPO Helton and the ACPO supervise them all. The ACPO is 106 over the 137 allowed clients with a total of 243 clients. CPO Helton is 59 clients over with a total of 196 clients. That does not include the pre-trial or juvenile clients. Even with an additional probation officer with the current numbers and not including the pre-trial program that officer would be over by 28 clients.

Judge Wright-Ryan stated based a review of the numbers the criminal filings are up compared to the civil docket. There have been two criminal jury trials this year already. They have already spent more than what was in the budget for those things. In the Judge’s option she does not see their budget going down as it relates to public defenders, probation, and jury trials. The filings are up.

CPO Helton stated her probation department is not discharging anyone from probation if they owe fees. That has not occurred previously. Ms. Helton is about 1/3 of the way through 2019 and has 297 which were discharged and should have not been due to owing fees. They have been collecting fees not just for probation but also for the Court. The Clerk is bringing in more money because people are being notified if the fees are not paid a hearing will be scheduled because money is owed to the County.

The following are changes to the probation department budget:

PROBATION

Probation Officer: $56,770 reduced to zero

Original Department Request: $185,568 Council Recommendation: $128,798

Judge Wright-Ryan stated there are people ordered to probation who must be supervised by probation and we do not have a probation officer to supervise them, which becomes very problematic. CPO Helton stated the beginning balance in supplemental adult probation was $108,000 in January and today’s balance is $110,000. The collections for the first six months were $21,968. Mr. Guerrettaz stated there is a $81,000 budget in 2100 but is only expected to bring in $40,000. Mr. Guerrettaz stated in other counties he is seeing where the revenue is not sufficient. In Martin County it looks like 2100 will be out of balance based on the numbers given. Judge Wright-Ryan stated the revenues are up compared to what it has been. Mr. Guerrettaz stated it may not be enough to fund the $81,000 budget. Mr. Guerrettaz stated 2100 is a standalone fund as long as it stands alone and in other counties it is unable to standalone and is shifting over to the general fund.

Councilman Gregory asked if a third party could help with collections. Judge Wright-Ryan stated the issue was not the collections, it is the supervision of the probationers. The probation department officers cannot manage the case load of the people on probation. Judge Wright-Ryan stated she informed the Council of the collections to let them know they were working on that, but that is not the reason for the new officer. The reason is to supervise the people on probation. They are over what statute says they can be on supervising those people. Judge Wright-Ryan’s mentor is in Fountain County and they are also a one judge County of similar size. There are three probation officers in Fountain County and the judge there states they are not managing with three probation officers. Martin County has two probation officers. Judge Wright-Ryan stated statutorily they have more probationees than the probation officers can manage. CPO Helton stated she also has juvenile cases which are a case load in themselves. Crawford County has three probation officers and they are also a one judge county. Crawford County wrote three PSI reports last quarter and Martin County wrote nine. Daviess County has seven probation officers with their CPO and they wrote nine PSI reports. Martin County is doing more work than other counties. Martin County is getting it done because CPO Helton is working until seven or eight at night and working on weekends. CPO Helton stated she wants things to run correctly, she does not want someone on probation and no one to know about it.

There was an error found in fund 2100 in social security and perf lines. The lines should have been $2,000 each but had entries of zero. The Council agreed to correct to $2,000 for both lines. Auditor Norris stated the probation administrative assistant line request was updated to $28,600 by CPO Helton last week, which new forms were just provided today to the Council. Judge Wright-Ryan stated that increase was requested to be able to provide a salary range, right now the administrative assistant is the lowest paid person in the whole building at $14 per hour. Judge Wright-Ryan stated she would like to set it at $15 for a minimum and up to $18, which is a full-time position. Judge Wright-Ryan stated the money is in the budget to cover the increase for 2023.

The following are the changes to fund 2100:

SUPPLEMENTAL ADULT PROBATION

Social Security: $0.00 increased to $2,000 Furniture: $4,000 reduced to $2,000

PERF: $0.00 increased to $2,000 Security Equipment: $5,000 reduced to zero

Office Supplies: $5,000 reduced to $3,000 Uniforms: $0.00 increased to $2,000

Telephone/Pagers: $3,000 reduced to $1,500

Travel-Probation: $5,000 reduced to $3,500

Equipment Repair: $2,000 reduced to $500

Original Department Request: $81,840 Council Recommendation: $74,340

Judge Wright-Ryan stated she put pay increases for court reporters at the same percentage as the probation department which was 7.8%. Judge Wright-Ryan stated the public defender fees line has about $10,000 left for the year out of $150,000 in the general fund. She will have to start using the supplemental public defender fund. Councilman Gregory asked at what rate the public defenders are paid. Judge Wright-Ryan stated they are mandated by the State to pay $100 per hour and the criminal filings for Martin County are up this year. Judge Wright-Ryan stated Martin County participates in a program in which they are reimbursed public defender fees at 40% only on felony cases. The report was filed last week to get that money back.

 A need for a bailiff for the Court was discussed by Judge Wright-Ryan and the Council. This would be a part-time position. Mr. Guerrettaz stated his suggestion to Council would be to address insurance increases, payroll increases, take new employees in total under review and decide those.

The follow were changes made in the Count’s budget in the general fund:

CIRCUIT COURT

Maintenance Contracts: $500 increased to $2,500

Contract Services: $2,000 decreased to zero

Furniture & Equipment: $1,500 increased to $5,500

Equipment: 4,000 decreased to zero

Original Department Request: $349,326 Council Recommendation: $349,326

The alcohol and drug program was self-sustaining, the money that was collected paid for the program. There was a $400 fee to participate in the program. Judge Wright-Ryan decided to close the program. The Council decided not to appropriate any money in this fund due to the program closing.

ALCOHOL & DRUG PROGRAM

Director: $28,000 decreased to zero

Scheduling Coordinator: $6,000 decreased to zero

Original Department Request: $34,000 Council Recommendation: $0.00

Judge Wright-Ryan stated there is money received by the Clerk for jury fees. There have been two criminal jury trials and one civil jury trial so far this year. There is currently $6,600 in the fund but Judge Wright-Ryan stated she just had a jury trial. Councilman Albright stated the general fund must cover the jury fees when the fees do not cover the cost.

 Fund 9141 Indiana State Opioid Response is a grant. Mr. Guerrettaz stated the grant money will be about half of what was received this year and should carry on. This is another fund counties are using to provide DARE programs and going to the school.

 Soil and Water budget was reviewed line by line with no changes. The salary was reduced to reflect a 5% increase.

SWCD

SWCD-Secretary: $29,041 reduced to $29,034

Original Department Request: $34,741 Council Recommendation: $34,734

The Recorder’s budget was reviewed and the following cut was made:

RECORDER

Software Update: $18,096 reduced to $13,000

Original Department Request: $93,748 Council Recommendation: $88,652

The Prosecutor’s funds were reviewed line by line with no changes made. Councilman Greene asked if the custodian for the courthouse could be utilized to clean other offices, such as the prosecutor’s office. The Prosecutor’s office has budgeted $2,000 per year for cleaning services. Councilman Albright stated that would have to be decided by the Commissioners.

The Assessor’s budgets were evaluated. Mr. Guerrettaz stated reassessment does take from the same levy as the general fund. Assessor Carolyn McGuire stated Martin County assessments have increased by 15-20% which is more than most of the counties in the State. Assessor McGuire stated there has been a lot of new construction in the County which has caused the increase.

 Assessor McGuire stated the deputy level 2 and 3 can be decreased to zero because the assessor deputy is not a level 2 assessor. Assessor McGuire asked the Council to move the $1,000 down to office supplies. The following were changes to assessor and reassessment funds:

ASSESSOR

Assessor Salary: $39,684 reduced to $39,569

Deputy Level II & III: $1,500 reduced to zero

Office Supplies: $500 increased to $1,500

Original Department Request: $86,225 Council Recommendation: $85,610

REASSESSMENT

Clerical: $5,000 reduced to $2,500

Deputy Surveyor: $15,000 increased to $15,750

Sales Disclosure Database: $2,500 decreased to zero

Professional Services: $100,000 decreased to $60,000

Original Department Request: $275,566 Council Recommendation: $231,316

The Council requested a copy of the pictrometry contract to see the payment schedule, which comes out of the reassessment fund.

The Martin County Solid Waste budget was reviewed by the Council due to the County being required to submit the budget on Gateway for the State. Bookkeeper June Eckert stated the revenue year to date is $237,685.88. Ms. Eckert stated the loan from German American bank of $90,000 did not happen until July and is not counted in the revenue. There is other income reported of $135,000 in which a $30,000 revenue replacement from ARPA funds and Loogootee city gave $15,000. The Community Foundation gave a grant of $37,500 towards a new bailer.

 Ms. Eckert stated there were a lot of equipment problems last year and they spent almost $200,000 on a new bailer. Ms. Eckert stated $25,000 was paid in August towards the bank loan with $1,200 of interest. President Dant asked what were the plans to pay back the loan. Ms. Eckert stated the bank wants the balance by next July. Director Janell Freeman stated there is a lot of business lined up in cardboard, which is $95 per ton right now. They have gone from one truck a week to three trucks a week. A truck averages 40,000 lbs.

 The Clerk’s budgets were evaluated. The following adjustment were made in the general fund of the clerk’s budget to reflect the 5% possible increase:

CLERK

Clerk Salary: $39,600 decreased to $39,569

Original Department Request: $106,330 Council Recommendation: $106,299

Clerk Julie Fithian stated she receives $500 per year for being on the election board. She wanted to verify that money could be paid and was not considered a second lucrative position. Mr. Guerrettaz stated it would be best to consult the County attorney with that question. Clerk Fithian stated she would like to give the election judges a raise. She is cutting out two judges because those are allowed to be eliminated. She is down from 34 judges to 32. Previously the Democrats made $100 per day and the Republicans made $80 per day. The Democrats will make $15 more per day and the Republicans $10 more per day. The difference in pay is because the Democrats must come to the Courthouse at the end of the night with the Republican judge. If that were to ever change, the rates would be flip-flopped. Whichever party is in charge, the other party must come back to the Courthouse so it is ensured there is no tampering.

Clerk Fithian raised the absentee board expense line because in the Fall of next year she is thinking of having two absentee boards, currently there is only one. Next year will be busy and is too much work for two members of one board. An absentee board consists of two people working 25 days at eight hours a day, which is 400 hours per board per election. The primary election will only have one board at 400 hours but the general election will have two boards which will be 800 hours.

The Council asked the Auditor to find out from the State Board of Accounts if the clerk voter registration per diem is taxable. President Dant stated he has understood that per diems are not taxable. President Dant stated if it is taxable it needs to be called something else.

ELECTION EXPENSE

Election Clerk: $32,400 decreased to $31,941

Clerk Voter Reg. Per Diem: $0.00 increased to $1,220

Original Department Request: $91,420 Council Recommendation: $92,181

Community Corrections Director Danielle Murphy stated the grant amounts which were submitted, the State did not approve any expansions and cut $4 million from Community Corrections budgets throughout the State for 2024. The jail treatment grant did not get approved by the State for 2024 and the State reverted to 2023’s budget numbers for 2024. Director Murphy was asked about the possibility of using community corrections to maintain and upkeep the mowing and trimming at the fairgrounds. Director Murphy responded they can, but her concern was that if they made a commitment to the mowing but would not have people to do the mowing Community Corrections would not be able to fulfill their commitment.

The Community Correction’s budgets were reviewed by the Council. After discussion of all the funds and budgets the following is the only change made to the budgets:

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS DONATION

Miscellaneous Expense: $2,500 decreased to $500

Original Department Request: $2,500 Council Recommendation: $500

 The Sheriff’s budgets were reviewed by the Council. After discussion of all the funds and budgets the following is the only change made to the budgets:

SHERIFF

Sheriff Salary: $107,304 reduced to $98,362

Original Department Request: $809,827 Council Recommendation: $800,885

 Sheriff Josh Greene stated the Council had approved the deputies, correction officers, and communications officers a 20% raise last month, which did not include the Sheriff. The Sheriff had asked for a 20% increase in his salary for 2024.

 Sheriff Greene stated they ordered F150s last June and still have not received those. Now there are price increases. He is looking into Rams and Chevys right now. Sheriff Greene stated they had previously had a good rotation with every other year trade in and they were basically paying them to drive the vehicles. Sheriff Greene stated the F150 he traded in this year, the County originally paid $32,000 and they were given $34,500 as trade in after driving it for almost three years. Now they cannot get a new Ford truck to replace it. Sheriff Greene does not know what the trade in value will be on those trucks or if the trade in value given a year ago will be honored. The mileage on the F150s which should have been traded in last year range from 38,000 to 85,000. They were originally 25,000 to 45,000. If Ford does not back the dealership on the original trade in value given, Sheriff Greene stated he could see the County not getting the original trade in values. The Department is three trucks behind in the trade in rotation.

 Mr. Guerrettaz stated in the 911 fund, 1222, there has only been $80,000 of revenue so far in 2023, which would be $160,000 for the entire year. Current year to date spent is $125,000 so the fund balance is decreasing fairly quickly. Mr. Guerrettaz stated there is about three years of sustainability with the current expenses and revenue in the fund.

The coroner’s budget was reviewed by the Council. The following changes were made which were changed to reflect a possible 5% increase in salaries:

CORONER

Coroner Salary: $6,779 increased to $6,780

CPO Deputy Coroner: $2,840 increased to $2,842

Original Department Request: $47,969 Council Recommendation: $47,972

 Jessica Potts, Executive Director of the Martin County Alliance, presented the budget for economic development. The Alliance is not asking for any increase in the amount given to the Alliance as compared to last year. They are hoping to make up any increases in costs from contributions from the private sector. In the last year, 41 businesses have partnered with the Alliance, these partnerships were new to the Alliance as of last year. The total contributions for those partnerships totaled $19,300. The Alliance is also asking communities within the County to become partners. Director Potts stated the town of Shoals is the only community in which the Alliance has had any success with a community contributing.

 The Auditor’s budget was reviewed by the Council. President Dant asked the Auditor how her department was in regards to staffing. Auditor Norris stated the office is fully staffed. In last year’s budget vs. expense report, it shows not all the budget was spent in a salary for a deputy auditor. Auditor Norris stated this was because she tried not to fill the position for three months to see if less staff was feasible. Auditor Norris stated she and the accounts payable deputy were both overwhelmed with the workload. Mr. Guerrettaz commended Auditor Norris on the improvement in the last year. Due to the Auditor’s increased workload and multiple meetings, the Council recommended for the Auditor meeting admin line to be increase an additional $737 from a request of $1,763 to $2,500.

AUDITOR

Auditor Meeting Admin: $1,753 increased to $2,500

Original Department Request: $164,153 Council Recommendation: $164,900

The Tourism budget was reviewed by the Council. No changes were made to the $25,000 total budget requested.

 Public Health Nurse, Julia Albright, presented the Health Department’s budgets to the Council. Mr. Guerrettaz asked Nurse Albright how much the grant from the State will be for next year. Nurse Albright stated originally, they were given a range of $131,250-$175,000 depending on whether other counties opted into the program. Nurse Albright stated so far at least 70% of the counties have opted into the program. Mr. Guerrettaz stated now counties are having a discussion on how to integrate that because there are restricted and unrestricted parts of the program. For the Health fund itself, if it goes up it will consume more property taxes. The Health fund consumes from the general fund like the reassessment fund. Mr. Guerrettaz stated the discussion is- does the County keep the levy the same, do we cut the levy, or do we increase the levy. Most counties are saying not to increase the levy because of the new money.

Nurse Albright stated it was first told to them that the county match had to be 30% of the average of the last three years spent. Mr. Guerrettaz stated the budget in 2023 was $70,000 and 2024 proposed budget is $81,000. Mr. Guerrettaz stated at this point in time the health fund will need property taxes to fund the budget at the requested level. Mr. Guerrettaz asked if some of the salaries, as long as they do the job, could be moved over into the unrestricted fund. Nurse Albright stated the only salary they will have in the health fund will be Dr. Sutton’s salary. Dr. Sutton has been very part-time with the department but is retiring from private practice and will be spending more time with the department. Nurse Albright stated they did add a board of health member stipend for 2024. The members attend up to four meetings a year. Nurse Albright has budgeted $50 per meeting for those members for their time. Nurse Albright stated most counties do pay their board of health members a stipend.

President Dant asked what was paid out of contractual services. Nurse Albright stated that is where Hoosier Uplands is paid for providing services. Nurse Albright stated she is paid by the County for the emergency preparedness portion but she is employed by Hoosier Uplands for her primary job. The environmentalist and vital records employee are with Hoosier Uplands and any new employee hired will be hired under Hoosier Uplands.

Nurse Albright stated the accreditation fees are budgeted for $5,000 but if they do have to become accredited that amount will not even be enough. Nurse Albright believes the cost is around $25,000. They have no plans to pursue that until it is a requirement. Mr. Guerrettaz asked if that could be cut out in order to keep the budget similar to 2023. Nurse Albright stated it could be cut out but if they would have to be accredited, they will have to come and ask for an additional appropriation for those fees. President Dant stated the Health Department will have to come to the Council anyway since $5,000 would not be enough to cover the accreditation.

Nurse Albright stated another addition to the 2024 budget which was not in the 2023 budget is the malpractice insurance for Dr. Sutton. The hospital had covered the malpractice insurance for Dr. Sutton in prior years. Auditor Norris has spoken with Strawn’s Insurance Agency and was told Dr. Sutton could be added to the County’s policy for $375. Nurse Albright asked to decrease the malpractice insurance from $2,000 to $500.

Councilman Albright asked Nurse Albright if a drug prevention program could be funded out of the new health fund. Nurse Albright stated the new health fund or the 9103 grant fund can provide educational programing for the schools. The first year for the Governor’s public health commission, when you consider what they are taking away, which is the local public health fund and the trust fund, they are only getting about an additional $80,000 which is not going to fund more than a couple of positions that first year. The next year the funding doubles and they should be able to do increased programming. The big focus with the State is fatality prevention. They plan on having programs on suicide prevention and reviews. The already do fetal and infant death reviews with the State. They will also be looking at maternal mortality and trying to do things to prevent those pregnant women from dying during childbirth or in the weeks and months after childbirth.

Nurse Albright stated in the future they would like to re-start the kid’s health fair. All the agencies that deal with kids would come in one day a year and would have fun activities for the kids. There would be door prizes given away. Presentations would be given, such as self-defense. That was spear headed under the Prosecutor’s office previously through a grant and that grant has gone away. They would also like to do an adult health fair again. There will be a community baby shower which will be held in November.

The following are adjustments in the health fund:

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Accreditation Fees: $5,000 reduced to zero

Malpractice Insurance: $2,000 reduced to $500

Original Department Request: 81,740 Council Recommendation: $75,240

 The Treasurer’s budget was reviewed by the Council and no changes were made. The Council asked Mr. Guerrettaz if funds could be invested in CDs. Mr. Guerrettaz stated the State will allow Counties to invest for up to five years but Trust Indiana is liquid and have a 5% interest rate. The Council will follow up with the Treasurer regarding investing some funds.

Emergency Management budgets were reviewed by the Council and no changes were made.

Ambulance budgets were reviewed by the Council. Director Jeramey Osborn stated medical supplies as well as the fuel has increased for next year. As they are ALS, they will be doing transfers and bring in more income, which will cause an increase in fuel and supplies. Director Osborn stated travel expenses could be reduced from 5,500 to $2,500 because he was unable to find the time needed to attend many conferences this last year and does not foresee next year being different. Director Osborn asked that telephone be reduced from $3,900 to $2,600, which includes a cell phone and hot spots. The hot spots are needed for the cardiac monitors so the monitors can fax to the hospitals. Director Osborn asked that hospital and director sponsor be dropped from $12,000 to $9,000. The medical director agreed to a rate of $750 per month. Director Osborn stated intercept fees could be reduced from $5,000 to $2,500 due to the service now becoming a paramedic service, but there still may be times that a paramedic intercept may be needed.

 The following were the changes in the ambulance budget 4002:

AMBULANCE SERVICE

In Service and Recruiting: $2,000 reduced to $1,500

Travel Expenses: $5,500 reduced to $2,500

Telephone: $3,900 reduced to $2,600

Hospital & Director Sponsor: $12,000 reduced to $9,000

Intercept Fees: $5,000 reduced to $2,500

Original Department Request: $494,479 Council Recommendation: $484,179

The following changes were made in the Commissioners’ budget in EDIT earlier in the morning. These are the ambulance lines which were changed:

EDIT COUNTY SHARE

EMT-B2: $40,560 reduced to $38,480 EMT-P4: $62,400 reduced to $400

EMT-B3: $38,480 increased to $40,560 Part-time EMT-P: $15,000 increased to $87,000

EMT-B4: $52,000 reduced to $39,000 Driver: $31,200 reduced to $15,000

Part-time EMT-B: $15,000 increased to $46,000

EMT-P1: $68,640 reduced to $50,000 Overtime: $94,848 reduced to $84,000

EMT-P2: $62,400 reduced to $50,440

 The salaries were changed to reflect what the employees are currently making. Part-time EMT-B was increased from $15,000 to $46,000 because there are EMTs working just one shift a week which are two part-time EMTs who are working half of a regular shift. Director Osborn stated he has two paramedics who are working one day a week. For the EMT-P4 line Director Osborn stated he would like to take that line and move it to the Part-time EMT-P. Director Osborn would like to increase the line from $15,000 to $87,000 to cover the two part-time medics and possibly find another part-time medic to cover shifts. President Dant figured the two parts of the ambulance budget expenses to be a total of $1,212,226. Mr. Guerrettaz stated revenue after eight months was estimated to be $230,992. For a year that could be estimated at $345,000 of revenue and up to $400,000 with ALS billing. $600,000-$800,000 will be consumed by EDIT, which is the rest of EDIT.

 President Dant asked Mr. Guerrettaz how long the County can realistically sustain with these numbers. Mr. Guerrettaz stated he has not revisited that, but they will. Mr. Guerrettaz stated the Council did not like the option last year which was to do a countywide EMS LIT which is collected 100% to go toward the EMS. Mr. Guerrettaz was proposing a switch of LIT rates. Councilman Albright asked if there was any way the township trustees could be asked to contribute to the ambulance. Mr. Guerrettaz stated his understanding is that townships are responsible for fire but are not responsible for EMS. President Dant stated the County was fortunate enough to be able to utilize the ARPA funds for the upfront and initial costs of the ambulance and now it is real. Councilman Hamby stated it will be a two-year process to figure out the real costs of the service. President Dant stated he would rather be making a plan to do something now rather than waiting until we are in a corner. Councilman Albright stated these numbers are not running a business, the numbers are just keeping people in a seat. Mr. Guerrettaz stated this year it is too late to do any changes in the LIT, the Council would need to be considering it for next year. Mr. Guerrettaz stated the only breathing room the County has is that EDIT did go up, but EDIT funds are shared with other units.

 Mr. Guerrettaz stated the budget must be advertised for ten days prior to the public hearing for budgets on September 18th so the Council only has a few weeks to finalize the budget. President Dant stated he does not believe the Council can pinpoint a salary increase until the budget sustainability comes back from FSG. The Council decided on a salary target of 5%. The Council stated the Sheriff’s department employees who received a raise last month will not receive a raise at the beginning of the year.

 The Council discussed the addition of the full-time probation officer and part-time bailiff. The full-time probation officer salary was $56,770 with benefits is about $85,000. Mr. Guerrettaz stated that salary is more than the county will receive in the growth quotient from property taxes alone, which will be about $70,000. Mr. Guerrettaz stated he is not sure that will work. Councilman Greene suggested they revisit that in a year. The Council decided the bailiff is needed for security for the Court and asked Mr. Guerrettaz to calculate that into the budget sustainability model.

 President Dant stated the Sheriff had put in a salary increase of 20% because he did not get the increase last month. Mr. Guerrettaz asked if the Council was okay regarding the out of County income. Councilman Beaver responded that was the agreement between the Council and the Sheriff that if 20% raises were given, the Sheriff would maintain the out of county inmates at 30 inmates. The Council decided to run the budget with a 10% wage increase for the Sheriff.

 The Council reviewed the Extension budget with Extension Director Dena Held. Director Held stated there is a need for a second extension educator. The minimum for an educator is $22,890 for a single educator. The second educator would cost an additional $73,365. Martin and Union Counties are the only counties with a single educator.

President Dant asked about the program assistant line and stated under $8,000 has been spent in 2021 and 2022. In 2023 the budget was $15,819 and so far about $7,000 has been spent. Director Held stated they are up in exhibits in the fair and have 1,000 exhibits. The program assistants come in the Summer and help with the County and State fairs. Director Held stated ideally there would be one part-time person two to three days a week year-round. The balance of the program assistant budget would be the high consumption time in May, June, and July. In 2022 only $8,000 was spent because of turnover, she cannot keep people because the wage is so low. Director Held stated the position pays $11 per hour right now and has figured in $15 per hour into next year’s budget. Director Held stated there are 214 club members. The following adjustments were made to the extension budget:

COUNTY EXTENSION

Extension Office Manager: $32,681 reduced to $31,941

Program Assistant: $25,000 reduced to $20,000

Contractual Services: $96,255 reduced to $22,890

Telephone: $1,200 reduced to $700

Original Department Request: $167,581 Council Recommendation: $87,976

 The Veterans Service Officer budget was reviewed by the Council. No changes were made except to reflect a possible salary increase of 5%.

VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER

Service Officer Salary: $11,388 increased to $11,958

Original Department Request: $15,228 Council Recommendation: $15,798

General Fund Original Department Requests: $4,330,095

Council Recommendations: $4,220,977

All Funds Original Department Requests: $12,265,855

Council Recommendations: $12,024,226

 Mr. Guerrettaz stated after the adjusted numbers are put into the budget, he recommends the Council come back together to go over the sustainability model and approve the amounts for the advertised budget in Gateway.

 With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:37 pm with a motion made by Councilman Beaver and seconded by Councilman Albright, all were in favor and the motion passed. There will be a special session held on Wednesday, September 6th at 5:00 pm to discuss budget sustainability with Mr. Guerrettaz. The next regular Council meeting and public hearing for budgets will be held Monday, September 18, 2023, at 6:00 pm.

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Warren D. Albright J. Keith Gibson

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Andrew Beaver Jim Hamby

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Monty Gregory

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Michelle Norris, Martin County Auditor