

The Crawford County Council met in a Regular Session at 6pm on January 14, 2025. The council members present were Riddle, Smith, Breeding, Stevens, and Scott. Members absent were Stroud and Mason. Also present was Auditor Marples, Chief Deputy Auditor Phelps, and Attorney Reger.

**Solid Waste Appointment** – Meetings 2:30pm second Tuesday of the month. Motion to appoint Linda Smith made by Stevens, seconded by Scott, Smith abstained. Motion approved with a vote of 4-0-1.

**Indiana District 15 Appointment** – Motion to appoint Shawn Scott made by Breeding, seconded by Stevens, Scott abstained. Motion approved with a vote of 4-0-1.

**2025 Budgets** – purpose to raise questions or concerns for anyone who may or may not have been present.

**Coroner Allison Howell** – proposes change to Part time help from \$0 to \$50 a day, 20 days a year, which equals \$1000 a year. Office supplies budget approved was \$275 but does not have a computer, radio, or camera. Quotes for between \$4000 and \$5000. For everything, approximately \$8000 is proposed. Autopsy only \$5000 was budgeted. Each autopsy is approximately \$2000 each. Last year 12 autopsies were done. Proposes \$24,000. Auto Maintenance budgeted was \$0. The current 2010 Dodge caravan is not reliable. Didn't start during the last two calls. Health concerns riding in the same airspace as a decomposing body. Proposes for \$50,000 for a new truck with topper. Provided Quotes. Nothing budgeted for auto maintenance and will need something in there for things such as tires. Riddle asked if that would cover any outfitting of the vehicle, and she confirmed. Scott asked if ambulance declared as surplus could serve, and the answer was no.

**Assessor Mike Carlisle** – Assessor Dues went up. Short 61. Asking for 100. Proval software was \$15900 raised to \$17300. Data fees went up \$90 times 3. Acrobat reader went up \$270. Beacon software was \$600 this year and is \$804 additional \$2000. Total for \$2100. The funding is Reassessment fund 1222 account Repair and Maintenance 000-30-3100.

**EMS Director Tim Farris** – Repair account reduced from \$25000 to \$15000. Not just trucks come out of there, things like buildings and equipment. Annual PMs are required, and cost will be around \$8200 to \$8500. Requesting to consider adding \$10,000 back to that line to cover those maintenance charges.

**Highway Department Superintendent Chance Bender** – did not put on additional encumbrance from last year's budget. It was approved to purchase a dump truck to replace the one that was totaled. Insurance settlement of \$64,000 into Highway escrow fund. Appropriated remainder of money out of Cash Balance and need to encumber the last of the funds for when the truck is completed the claim can be paid. Federal bridge payment is due July 31, 2025. Winter Operations didn't upgrade but due to weather it cost approximately \$76,000. Don't expect again. Community Crossings obligation from last year and second part coming this year. Has financial commitment letter due for next application. Quote proposal bridge with Breeding Excavating approximately \$36,000. Quote for lumber approximately \$4000 and extra for incidentals. 2023 Budget asked council 3 title changes and were adopted but were not put back on this year. Asking to restore the shop foreman's pay and the shop technician's pay. Truck Driver's number entered incorrectly, changing from 5 to 6.

**EMA Director Aaron Bye** – Asked to reconsider Part time pay for \$25000. The Deputy Director works 2 days a week volunteering in the office.

**Clerk Lisa Holzbog** – Dispute about which monthly budget reports she received. Asked for 1119, 8895, and 8899 and will come back on a different day to discuss the other 3 but will discuss 1000 and 1215. Dispute over claims that were labeled incorrectly were discussed. Fund 1000 asked for part time records clerk and would like to appoint Jana Jones. 1215 is off year because no election but there is no off year, and this is now clean up time to prepare for the next one. Old records need to be destroyed. Paid out of perpetuation previously. Scott asked if it was previously approved with the stuff that was scanned last year and the was denied that it was included by Riddle.

**Auditor Wendy Marples** – Will be getting quotes from CPA for 941s to submit to the IRS. Chief Deputy Phelps mentioned consulting with the last Auditor and confirmed it was being done how she did it but they are still running into issues. Will sit for 2 or 3 hours on the phone with IRS. Misapplied payment from 2022. Stevens recommended that Kaylee Gildersleeve has a contact that may be able to help us. Might be asking for HR money back. It was cut when she took office.

**President Chad Riddle** – discussed email being sent out that speaks about claims being filled out properly and submitted in time to make sure the Auditor's office can pay things in a timely matter. Will look into these things the department head brought to them. They will not be making big money decisions in a short amount of time. Scott asked that the Department heads understand their budget and bring to the council the things that are beyond their control. If you ask for an additional request, there is an appropriate time frame and give the professional courtesy to show up and ask in person to explain reasoning. Spoke about speaking with Chance regarding the bridge and asked if the lumber from Jasper a special lumber was. He said it's treated but not treated. He was trying to clarify if we can use a sawmill in Crawford County instead of Jasper.

**Minutes** – will bring to next meeting.

**Amended Salary Ordinance** – Sheriff's pay should have been 91756, part time pay for Clerks perpetuation 13 027, and the other part time pay at 12.88. Park Manager 24720. Health Nurse 41465. Health specialist 38,189. Office Manager 32,888. Highways administrative assistant changed to Administrator. Truck drivers 5 or 6. Lead Mechanic changed to Shop foreman and correct salary. Riddle asked if how this would change the number that was approved for budget. Auditor Marples will have to do an additional for the Sheriff's pay. Submit to Gateway, advertise, then bought back to sign. Spreadsheet wrong but information in Gateway right. Employees' payrates were correct and they got paid correctly. The spreadsheet was input incorrectly. Discrepancy with Highway department still.

**Economic Development Contract** – Approved during budget. Commissioners signed. Attorneys have no objection. \$216,000. Motion to approve made by Breeding, seconded by Stevens. Motion approved with a vote of 5-0.

**AIC Agreement** – Jacque Clements \$6500. Scott asked questions about using someone else and if they advertise quotes out. Contracts are usually just given to them. If both parties are happy, they don't look for any other person. Rates are the same, just the dates have changed. Motion to approve made by Breeding, seconded by Stevens, Scott abstained. Motion approved with a vote of 4-0-1.

**Highway Department** – Dump truck remaining balance \$133,900. The delivery date was changed a few times. Cash Balance is a little over \$180,000. Money is there, just need to do an encumbrance from last year to this year. Motion to approve made by Stevens, by Smith. **Motion approved with a vote of 5-0.**

Additionals for \$347,122.48 in fund 1138. Winter Operations \$50,000. Tabled. Community Crossing Grant \$730,825.50. Only new spending is within Community Crossing because it can be 12 to 18 months before awarded. **Motion to approve made by Stevens, seconded by Breeding. Motion approved with a vote of 5-0.** Bridge Fund \$45,000. Money is there, just asking to move the money from the Cash account to the Line. Motion to approve made by Stevens, seconded by Scott, Breeding abstained. **Motion approved with a vote of 4-0-1.**

**Lorch Naville Contract** – No changes but would like to consider  $\frac{1}{2}$  hourly rate when traveled. Charges \$195. Only charged Mileage before. Breeding recommended to keep him and pay the additional  $\frac{1}{2}$  hourly travel rate. Discussion about travel pay for county employees. The Auditor Office will verify what the state mileage is. Motion made by Stevens to pay the negotiated contract rate but only allow the state recommended mileage rate, seconded by Breeding. Motion approved with a vote of 5-0.

**Attorney Reger** - \$200,000 for Sheriff vehicles from ARPA. Underwire to make a decision and over a series of meetings the Sheriff discussed the community need. It was advertised. It was his belief that the commissioners would be onboard as well but didn't have time to solicit that information. His opinion they vehicles can be purchased but need for transparent with state board of accounts but prudent to keep money just in case they come back and say they want the money back. Breeding talked about waiting until audit to verify with state board of accounts. Auditor Marples mentioned that she has an issue with this because if she pays it and they come back and say they want it back, it comes back on her. Breeding thinks he can buy what he needs but Sheriff Howell would like the council's opinion. Breeding doesn't think they violated any laws, and the state wants us to spend it. Auditor Marples provided email exchange to Attorney Reger and stated that the Council President Menke did have them at the last meeting and thought he gave them to him. Auditor's office also asked State board of Accounts the same question in a different way after the last meeting just to make sure. Riddle asked Sheriff Howell if he took the quotes to the commissioners at the December meeting. Sheriff Howell stated no but they were present at the Council Meeting. Discussion about obligation requirements.

**Coroner Allison Howell** - laptop, camera, and office equipment. Motion made by Scott for \$1500 for the camera and laptop moved from County General to Coroners Budget, seconded by Breeding. Motion approved with a vote of 5-0.

**Attorney Reger** – Did not have copy of the emails regarding the \$200,000 until this meeting and that was the reasoning for his previous opinion. Hopes State Board of Accounts will take into consideration that the council acted at the last minute without an opinion from them. Hopes it helps them get the vehicles. They did not have an obligation from the Commissioners. He asked Menke for a copy of that communication after the last meeting and wasn't given it until just now. Attorney Reger will take over the communication with State Board of Accounts but in the meantime the opinion has to be yes because that's the way we were on December 30, 2024. But it would be prudent to know that we are going to be transparent with them and they may ask for the money back. Breeding pointed out that we did this correctly with the ambulances and thought that the money was all gone but they found \$200,000. So they think they should be able to keep the money and apply it to EMS.

**Sheriff Howell** – Would like the council to entertain dropping the first year pay for deputies and taking it off of the pay matrix because it's low and can't get applicants. Riddle asked if they did this would his budget still be okay through the year. He said they should be because they haven't had anyone in these positions. Mentioned this would raise it but would still be \$8000 to \$9000 less than some of the

surrounding counties. Currently the pay is \$36,070 and \$43,602. Motion to approve made by Breeding. Auditor Marples interjected and stated that if they change that they will have to change the pay of the Matron position as well because she's paid the same as the first-year deputy. Which would put her salary more than an elected official. Sheriff Howell mentioned that there is an Indiana Code for that. Council worried about snowball effect. Sheriff Howell mentioned not every office should be equal and Auditor Marples agreed. Sheriff Howell mentioned the Matrons hours being 40 hours a week and her holidays are based off of emergency service holidays, and a lot of work to go along with it. Breeding asked about the "lateral", but Howell described why it doesn't work. Discussion about executive session. Breeding asked about leaving pay as is but having a sign on bonus. Breeding mentioned a bill to cut a billion dollars out of state funding. Discussion about SROs being paid with School grant and what happens if the school loses the grant. Commission Dale said if they cut it, we will have to cut positions.

**Parks Director Jadin Wolf** – Happy with budget. October given grant but don't have anywhere to put it. Auditor Marples detailed issues with financial software company and treasurer's office not being up and running. Recommended she either hold onto it or put it in the vault. Doesn't think she should hold an \$11,000 check so will bring to the vault and tell treasurer to not deposit it. Discussion about how to pay vendors for items or she pays, and the auditor's office can reimburse her. She will be ordering online so she will have to pay. The grant is for security cameras. Discussion about Harris financial system issues occurred. Got a grant from the health department recently. Would like to start taking donations for things like the arena. Doesn't have a way to deposit donations and use them. Auditor Marples discussed a receipts line for donations. Doesn't need council approval. Discussion about how to raise money. Will get her Chris Temple's number to her for guidance. Confusion about an electrician who called about getting into parks building and generator. Commissioner Crecelius wanted to investigate using it as an emergency shelter. She was onboard with this.

Being no further business to come before the council, Breeding made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Stevens. Motion approved with a vote of 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:07PM

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Wendy Marples, Crawford County Auditor