Est

Martin

County

THE MARTIN COUNTY COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

MARCH 6, 2023

MINUTES

The Martin County Council convened in regular session on Monday, March 6, 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, Jim Hamby, and Andrew Beaver. Also attending was Auditor Michelle Norris.

President Jordan Dant called the meeting to order with the Pledge to the Flag at 6:00 pm.

**RE: MINUTES**

The minutes from the regular meeting held February 6th, 2023 were approved with a motion made by Councilman Albright, seconded by Councilman Greene. All in favor, motion passed.

**RE: AMBULANCE UPDATES**

Ambulance Director, Jeramey Osborn, came before the Council to give an update regarding the service. There were eighty-three runs in February with forty-nine of those resulting in transports. The transport rate is 59.04% and if standbys are removed the transport rate is 69.01%. Thirty-three patients were transported to Jasper Memorial Hospital with eleven going to Daviess Community Hospital and four going to IU Health. There were twelve standby runs. There have been 210 runs to date in 2023 and there were 389 runs in 2022 with a start date of August 22nd.

President Dant asked Director Osborn if revenue was generated on standby runs. Director Osborn stated no revenue is generated until the service transports a patient. Standby runs are a community service, for example the ambulance reported to a fire in Shoals today. The Service reported to the fire to make sure everyone was okay and there was no patient contact.

President Dant asked where the service was in the process of billing. Director Osborn stated the first payment was expected on February 24th but there was a document which was not signed by the correct person. The billing company is authorized to sign things on our behalf, but this paper had to have an official signature. President Dant asked the amount if known of the first expected payment. Director Osborn stated the payment is expected to be around $5,500 with another $3,500 to follow and those claims and amounts were to make sure the billing system was working correctly. Director Osborn stated the service is not doing transports at this time because he does not want the service doing services which are costing money until the service starts to generate revenue.

The medical director has signed the contract as of last week. The new medical director is approaching the hospital to see if he can facilitate the signing of the hospital’s contract. Director Osborn hopes to have the hospital’s contract signed within the next month, but he is unable to guarantee that will happen. Councilman Gregory asked Director Osborn since Deaconess announced the merger with Jasper Memorial Hospital, if Deaconess had been contacted regarding hospital sponsorship. Director Osborn stated Deaconess was contacted in the beginning, but Martin County Ambulance Service has a hospital that is moving on the contract and the medical director is affiliated with this hospital also. Director Osborn believes it will be very good for the service.

Councilman Hamby asked when medic intercepts were performed by other ambulance services if the County is billed or if the patient is billed. Director Osborn stated medic intercepts are billed to the County. A medic intercept with Jasper Memorial Hospital runs about $483 per intercept.

**RE: ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION**

Emergency Ambulance/Med Service- 1102

Heart Monitor Lease $25,000

A motion was made by Councilman Gregory to approve the appropriation in fund 1102 for $25,000, seconded by Councilman Greene. All in favor, motion passed.

**RE: TRANSFER OF FUNDS REQUEST**

Auditor Michelle Norris informed the Council she contacted the State Board of Accounts regarding a transfer that was performed last year from the EDIT fund to the General fund, which had been Council approved. State Board of Accounts stated no funds can be transferred out of the EDIT fund. SBOA stated the $25,000 had to be transferred back to the EDIT fund. While Auditor Norris was completing paperwork to correct the error, it was realized even though the ambulance contract had been paid out of the EDIT fund last year, this year Martin County is running the service and it is considered a transfer of funds. The Auditor contacted the SBOA again and was told the $450,000 the Commissioners approved for the ambulance service had to be transferred from the ambulance fund back to the EDIT fund. Auditor Norris contacted the County’s financial advisor, FSG, and FSG stated the best course of action would be to pay the ambulance salaries out of the EDIT fund. Ambulance expenses can be paid out of EDIT but funds cannot be transferred out to another fund.

Auditor Norris gave budget summaries of the EDIT fund and the ambulance fund. In the ambulance fund, once the $450,000 is moved back to EDIT, the fund will then be negative $102,234.26. Once revenues for the ambulance start to come in that will take care of the negative balance in the fund.

Another issue is that the $450,000 will only cover a little more than half of the ambulance salaries. An additional appropriation will be needed at the April meeting for the salaries out of the EDIT fund. The budgeted amount for ambulance salaries is $733,000 and overtime is projected at $83,000 for a total of $816,000 in ambulance salaries.

During the exchange of information with the SBOA, the SBOA stated the ambulance fund created, 1102 is not the correct fund number for the ambulance. The ambulance fund should be a 4000-fund number, which is a local ruled fund.

Transfer Request:

F**rom Fund**: Emergency Ambulance/Med Service- 1102

**Fund :** EDIT- 1112

Amount: $450,000

A motion was made by Councilman Gregory to approve the transfer of funds request as presented, seconded by Councilman Beaver. All in favor, motion passed.

EDIT- 1112

From: 1112.000.3000.25 Ambulance Contract $450,000

To: 1112.000.1000.23 Director $61,539

To: 1112.000.1000.24 EMT-B1 $45,000

To: 1112.000.1000.25 EMT-B2 $42,000

To: 1112.000.1000.26 EMT-B3 $42,000

To: 1112.000.1000.27 EMT-B4 $47,000

To: 1112.000.1000.28 Part Time EMT-B $11,000

To: 1112.000.1000.29 EMT-P1 $65,000

To: 1112.000.1000.30 EMT-P2 $61,000

To: 1112.000.1000.31 EMT-P3 $66,000

To: 1112.000.1000.32 Part time EMT-P $9,461

**TOTAL $450,000**

A motion was made by Councilman Greene to approve the transfer of funds request as presented, seconded by Councilman Gregory. All in favor, motion passed.

**RE: MARTIN COUNTY ALLIANCE UPDATES**

Martin County Alliance Executive Director, Jessica Potts, came before the Council with updates from the Alliance. In September Executive Director Potts presented a revolving loan fund which would be awarded to a local business. A USDA revolving loan in the amount of $10,000 was received by the Alliance to help fund the loan. The Alliance was required to match the loan and contributed $11,000. There was $21,000 to be loaned to a business.

In February, the Alliance loaned $21,000 to Lazy Cricket Bait Company, who hopes to open for business later this month across from West Boggs Park on 231. The business will be a convenience store and bait shop. The idea for the store is when a camper is packed up, all the items needed for camping can be purchased at the store. There has been a new building built on the lot, which is phase one. Phase two will focus on the existing building on the property. This loan is helping the business get connected to the West Boggs sewer district. The loan will be paid back in one year and when the loan comes back to the Alliance next February it will be loaned out to another business.

The Alliance hosted a very successful QuickBooks training last week in which 19 people attended, with a full class being 20. An instructor came in and taught basic QuickBooks training, which is a software used by a lot of the small businesses.

The Alliance is hosting Martin County Made Day for eighth graders at Loogootee and Shoals on this Friday March 10. There will be 122 eighth graders getting out of school for the day to learn about what is manufactured in Martin County. The companies participating in the event are KCARC, SSI, SC Draperies, Country Pines Printing, and Loughmiller Design.

Executive Director Potts invited everyone to attend the annual dinner co-hosted by Martin County Alliance next Thursday March 16th. Denny Spinner, Director from the Office of Community Rural Affairs (OCRA) is the guest speaker at the event. Mr. Spinner was also a former Huntingburg mayor. The Shoals Robotix class will be giving a demonstration and the Shoals High School band will be performing.

**RE: MID STATE CORRIDOR**

Joe Lannan came before the Council to talk about the release of the four proposed routes of the mid-state corridor around and through Loogootee. Mr. Lannan stated in June a letter was submitted on behalf of the Council, Commissioners, and the City Council of Loogootee. A purpose of the letter was to let the mid-state committee know the County was forgotten and a significant portion of road space was taken from the County and the County would like to be included. The letter referenced the environmental protection act and social justice issues presented to the Amish community in accessing care to the City of Loogootee. Martin County is being looked at intensely and the impact of different routes of the corridor.

P1 route follows the original proposal with a western bypass around the City of Loogootee starting near the coon hunters club coming up to West Boggs. P2 is a study of an expansion and improvement of Highway 231 as it travels through the City of Loogootee. P3 shows an Eastern bypass and P4 shows a more extreme Eastern bypass.

Mr. Lannan stated this is a good thing for the County and as the tier two evaluation commences, the County needs to be strategic about aligning the workforce development goals, education goals, and housing and attraction goals to each of the four routes. Mr. Lannan’s opinion is that a bypass outside the County, such as the P1 bypass, will hurt the County long term. Additional studies may be needed by the County to research the impact of the chip manufacturing plant on Martin County housing.

Mr. Lannan is under contract with the City of Loogootee to negotiate regarding the bypass. The benefits of that negotiation and contracting extends to the County also. Mr. Lannan states the P2 route has a lot of merit. The route would be difficult to accomplish without strategic leadership within the City of Loogootee and partnership with some federal and state dollars, and working with the Martin County Alliance and OCRA. The letter from the County and City of Loogootee in June in which the P2 route was proposed stated if the mid-state corridor is going to come through the County for 21 miles, not to bypass the best five or six miles, the County would rather traffic be infused into the City. The Committee has taken the letter into consideration, but if the P2 route is continued to be pushed, Mr. Lannan will need help from the Courthouse along with the City of Loogootee to make that happen.

In regards to the impact of keeping the bypass in the County versus outside the County, very rough calculations showing the western bypass would add modestly 150-200 homes around the St. Mary’s corridor and would take away from the potential assessed value of Martin County, because St. Mary’s Road is not in Martin County. If the P1 bypass was to continue on the western route, the data collected in the next six months needs to show how much that out of county route will hurt the County. There is precedent in communities within the State of Indiana where there is a bypass outside of the county where INDOT and the Federal Highway Commission and other organizations are able to help the county that has that net loss of proposed assessed value increase. If there were an increase of a billion or a half of a billion dollars of assessed value moving into Daviess County because of this route, that is essentially a loss in Martin County.

Mr. Lannan stated he has come to the Council with some urgency knowing those decisions will not be made for three to four years, but the data that is collected in the next six months will inform those decisions as they are being made. Mr. Lannan is looking to put together a community input session where this information is brought in front of the community in a more digestible way with some photos and a presentation as soon as next week.

President Dant stated it is very likely that the Mid-State Corridor is coming to Loogootee and up the 231 Corridor, Martin County needs to figure out how to capitalize on the corridor and prosper from this. Mr. Lannan stated conservate estimates at the Crane Naval Base says 500 jobs a year for the next foreseeable future, Martin County needs to be poised to house some of those workers.

As frustrating as this is, looking from a County standpoint instead of a personal one, Mr. Lannan states very seldomly are we given an opportunity like this to have this much conversation ability ahead of time. Councilman Gregory stated if the cost of building a house which could be $400,000 at 100 houses, the tax revenue off of those alone could change the finances of the County. In the meeting today the Council is talking about how the County is negative in the ambulance fund and it changes the whole perspective of the Corridor.

Councilman Gregory stated the corridor is coming and the County needs to be prepared for it. Mr. Lannan stated the assessed values contribute to the same general fund which are being talked today are also being talked about in the neighboring county. Martin County would hate to donate our land for 17 miles and see those $400,000 homes pop up with Loogootee water and sewer but pay taxes to Daviess County at St. Mary’s Road. Mr. Lannan stated the data is needed that will come out of the next level study to show how much losing that development is going to hurt Martin County economically.

**RE: SALARY AND WAGE AMMENDMENT PROBATION**

Chief Probation Officer Stephanie Helton came before the Council asking for a salary and wage amendment for the administrative assistant level IV position. The position had been full-time at one point, but went to part-time based on preference of the last employee. That employee has recently resigned and a full-time position is needed. CPO Helton stated the workload is there, both probation officers are well over the recommended case load. There are 211 adult offenders and 13 active juvenile probation offenders.

The department is working on close to 20 pre-trial offenders and there are pre-sentencing investigations, which has rose from 2-3 every few months to seven in the last month. Those are incredibly time consuming as are the pre-trial supervisions. The full-time administrative assistant would do a lot of the scheduling, building those profiles in the SRS system, billing, drug screening, and a multitude of other duties. These duties were under the job description of the part-time position but not being completed by that employee. The part-time position was being performed at more of a clerical role.

The employee would be paid out of the supplemental adult probation fund, 2100. The current budgeted amount is $20,384. The amended salary would be $25,480. There would be no additional appropriations needed because the additional salary can be moved from line item of the PT secretary in the fund 2100. A motion was made by Councilman Hamby to approve the salary and wage amendment for probation as presented, seconded by Councilman Gregory. All in favor, motion passed.

**RE: SALARY AND WAGE AMMENDMENT COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS**

Community Corrections Director, Danielle Murphy, came before the Council to ask for a salary and wage amendment for the part-time clerical position in the department. The employee is working 28 hours per week right now. The Community Corrections advisory board met in February and voted to move that position from part-time to full-time. Right now, that position is paid at $12.75 per hour but at full-time with 35 hours per week will be paid at $14.00 per hour. Director Murphy is not asking for an additional appropriation right now, but may need to from project income if the employee chooses to take County insurance.

President Dant asked Director Murphy if Community Corrections are paid primarily from grant funds. Director Murphy stated that is correct. The County does contribute $21,000 per year from the riverboat fund to operate the road crew and the Commissioners pay for the Community Corrections building rental. Other than these amounts, all the other expenses are covered by grants and project income. President Dant stated he sits on the advisory board for Community Corrections, along with the Judge and Prosecutor, among others. The Judge and Prosecutor have assured Director Murphy that the Community Corrections workload is going to continue to rise. Director Murphy stated there was been legislation passed as far as the reporting requirements for those on home detention which is preempted this additional seven hours needed for the clerical position. Director Murphy is going to take some of the administrative duties off of her responsibilities and move those to that clerical position that will free up her time and give her some reporting requirements also. The job description of the full-time clerical will be changing to a more administrative role with less clerical and secretarial work. The change in status will be effective on March 12th.

Director Murphy stated in the last week there have been five to six people added to community service, last year there was none. Director Murphy looks for community service to increase. Director Murphy states she tries to keep as many community service clients working within the County as possible. There are clients who live outside of Martin County and she only gives the option to work outside of Martin County as a last resort. A motion was made by Councilman Beaver to approve the salary and wage amendment for Community Corrections as presented, seconded by Councilman Gregory. All in favor, motion passed.

**RE: COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS ANNUAL REPORT**

Director Murphy presented the Community Corrections annual report to the Council. A point of interest is the cost analysis for Community Corrections. The cost for the Department of Corrections to put an inmate in prison right now is about $55 per day. The cost analysis for Community Corrections in 2022 showed that home detention costs were a little over $9.00 per day. Home detention saves taxpayer money versus sending an inmate to the Department of Corrections.

**RE: COURTHOUSE SECURITY COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT**

Sheriff Josh Greene stated two years ago the Indiana Supreme Court mandated for all Courthouses to have a security plan. Even though it was mandatory there are only 22 of the 92 counties who have established the plan. The State is putting more pressure on the law enforcement side and the court side for the plan to be in place. Sheriff Greene started to work on the plan last summer and has dozens of pages typed. There are a lot of administrative pieces to the plan the Sheriff’s department has no control over. The plan creates a standard operating procedure on how things operate in the Courthouse. Councilman Albright volunteered to be on the committee. A motion was made by Councilman Greene to appoint Warren Albright to the Courthouse security committee, seconded by Councilman Gregory. All in favor, motion passed.

**RE: SHERIFF UPDATES**

Sheriff Josh Greene stated there are currently eighty inmates with forty of those being from Vigo County. President Dant asked how staffing was at the jail. Sheriff Greene stated all the full-time positions have been filled and the jail can now get by without the need for overtime pay and can go back to comp time. There are open part-time positions all over the department.

Councilman Gregory asked about the department’s trucks. Sheriff Greene stated the car involved in the accident a few weeks ago probably will be totaled. The insurance adjuster of the woman who caused the accident came by and stated the car was totaled, but the official report has not been received. Councilman Gregory asked if the car would be replaced with another car or a small SUV since it was a transport vehicle. Sheriff Greene stated he will have to look to see where funding can be pulled from and see what the insurance reimbursement will be. That car is a 2014 and Sheriff Greene doubts they will get anything near the cost to replace the vehicle. The vehicle market is high right now. Sheriff Greene asked the insurance adjuster to let him know the buyback value of the car. The department has another car that matches the totaled car and the totaled car has had a lot of money put into it in the last year including a new transmission in November. It may make sense to buy the car back for spare parts for the other vehicle. Sheriff Greene stated he was told by the Ford dealer that there would be a build date in April for the F250s and a build date in May for the F150s.

Sheriff Greene asked if the Council had plans to do anything formally about the 450 closure. The highway will be shut down for 6-8 months, with no bypass or runaround, right before Fred Sims Road. Sheriff Greene stated the farmers had been blamed for not allowing the run around. Sheriff Greene has talked to the farm family and the family was in favor of a bypass. Sheriff Greene stated he spoke with the Commissioners and the State highway performed a study and the traffic which goes through does not warrant a bypass. The closure is cutting off a large portion of the County and when emergency personnel go to service that closed portion of the County the personnel is cut off from the other side of the County, if needed. Councilman Albright stated there will be three school buses which will have to drive around into Lawrence County to get past the closure. Sheriff Greene asked the Council to officially join the Commissioners to try to obtain another solution rather than a full closure. The Council agreed they would be willing to officially reach out to representatives and INDOT. Sheriff Greene stated he planned to reach out on the public safety side.

**RE: SHOALS PUBLIC LIBRARY FUNDRAISER**

Shoals Public Library Board member, Mary Smith, came before the Council to invite everyone to their annual fundraiser on Thursday March 9th from 3:00 pm-7:00 pm. It will consist of a soup supper and silent auction. The funds will be used for improvements at the library.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:22 pm with a motion made by Councilman Gibson and seconded by Councilman Beaver, all were in favor and the motion passed. The next regular Council meeting will be held Monday, April 3, 2023, at 6:00 pm.

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Jordan Dant Adam Greene

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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