

COUNTY COUNCIL

September 14, 2023

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The Parke County Council convened in a regular meeting on Thursday, September 14, 2023 to consider additional requests in excess of the budget allowed for 2023, and to conduct such other business as may be properly brought before the Council.
- II. **ROLL CALL:** Council members present were John K. Pratt, President; Roy Wrightsman, Vice President; Jack B. Butler; James E. Howard; Cameron Martin; Rick Patton; Thomas Rohr; Mary Anne Wood, Auditor and Susan Kramer, Deputy Auditor. Also present were John Martin, Kim Shorter, Katie Potter, Jessica Lancaster, Jason Frazier, Dan Collom, Mary Alice Gregg and Jim Meece.
- III. **READING OF THE MINUTES:** Minutes from August 10th, 2023 meeting were presented for approval. A motion was made by Roy Wrightsman and seconded by Jim Howard to approve the minutes as presented and the motion carried unanimously.
- IV. **ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS:** The Council approved the request for the transfer of funds on a motion made by Jack B Butler. The motion was seconded by Tom Rohr and carried unanimously.

Be it resolved; the Parke County Council hereby approves the following requests for additional appropriations:

Amount: \$1000.00
 9108-00-03-5040
To: Marine Patrol Grant Fund - Maintenance

Amount: \$1,000.00
 4103-00-02-3100
To: National Night Out – Operating Supplies

Amount: \$62,401.00
 1169-00-02-3100
To: Local Road and Street – Operating Supplies

Amount: \$71,346.00
 8912-00-03-5050
To: 21.027 American Rescue Pl – Building Maintenance Courthouse

Amount: \$2,422.00
9173-00-02-3100
To: Drug Takeback Grant – Operating Supplies

Amount: \$8,442.00
1182-00-04-7020
To: Pretrial Diversion - Equipment

- V. REAPPROPRIATIONS:** The County paid invoices from the Indiana State Board of Account for the Examination of Records for the following Taxing Units: Greene Township, Liberty Township, North Central Parke Community School Corporation, Raccoon Township, Southwest Parke Community School Corporation, Sugar Creek Township, Union Township and Washington Township. The total cost of the audit for the above-named Taxing Units came to \$116,703.00. This was paid from appropriation number 1000-15-03-6013 leaving said appropriation number with a negative balance of \$115,093.00. During the June settlement process the appropriate amounts were withheld from the distribution to the Taxing Units. The money withheld now needs to be reappropriated into appropriation number 1000-15-03-6013. Tom Rohr made a motion to approve the reappropriation request. The motion was seconded by Rick Patton and carried unanimously.

Amount: \$116,703.00
Fund: 1000-15-03-6013
Service Contracts/Examination of Records

- VI. TRANSFER OF FUNDS:** The Council approved the request for the transfer of funds on a motion made by Roy Wrightsman. The motion was seconded by Cameron Martin and carried unanimously.

Be it resolved; the Parke County Council hereby approves the following requests for transfer:

Amount: \$350.00
From: 2100-00-03-5081
Drug Testing
To: 2100-00-02-3100
Operating Supplies

Amount: \$511.65
From: 1000-04-01-1501
Extra Clerical
To: 1000-04-01-1100
1st Deputy

Amount: \$1,020.57
From: 1000-03-01-1400
4th Deputy
To: 1000-03-01-1100
1st Deputy

Amount: \$2,742.44
From: 1219-00-01-1506
Fieldman
To: 1219-00-01-1505
Gateman

Amount: \$4,000.00
1000-16-01-1501
Administrative Assistant II
To: 1000-16-01-1802
Part Time EMT s

Amount: \$16,000.00
1000-16-01-1801
Certified EMT s
To: 1000-16-01-1802
Part Time EMT s

Amount: \$504.79
1000-15-03-5120
Unemployment
To: 1000-15-02-3010
Office Supplies

VII. JURY PAY: The Auditor presented the Parke County Clerk's certificate of jury fees collected for July 2023, in the amount of \$198.59 and for August 2023, in the amount of 317.63 and requested these amounts to be transferred to the Jury Pay Fund, pursuant to IC 33-19-8-8. James E. Howard made the motion to direct the Auditor to transfer. The motion was seconded by Cameron Martin and carried unanimously.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Redevelopment Commission (RDC): Roy Wrightsman explained that the RDC tentatively approved a revolving loan for a bakery in Lyford. It is tentative on her receiving a variance from Zoning.

Courthouse Security Committee: Did Not Meet

Solid Waste District (SWD): Tom Rohr updated everyone on information that he had obtained at the last SWD meeting. These are Parke County's statistics. E Waste – 8,328 lbs. – 2023, Tox Away – 58,365 lbs. –

2022, Recycling Bins – 204 Ton. This is for a grand total of 236 Ton of material that doesn't go to the land fill or in the ditches here in Parke County. The Cost is 4.51 per person in Parke County to SWD. However, they are currently billing us for 2.50 per person in Parke County. Thus, we are getting \$72,900 worth of services for \$40,000.00. Mr. Rohr also reminded the group that the next Tox Away Day is this Saturday, September 16, 2023. Tom also let everyone know that costs continue to go up but SWD continues to use their cash balance to offset increases currently.

Planning and Zoning Board: Did Not Meet

IX. DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:

- **Dan Collom, Commissioner:**

- Barricades in the town of Bridgeton during Covered Bridge Festival. Mr. Collom provided a map of proposed barricade locations (which would restrict motor vehicle traffic) and which ones would be manned by a Sheriff's Deputy and which ones would not be manned. This is in response to a concern for public safety for pedestrians. The cost would be for the Deputies. Three Deputies each day for the ten days which would be 6,000.00. Dan Collom is providing the concrete barricades at no cost. Six households will be affected and those individuals will have passes to get in and out. Clarification was made by John Pratt and Jason Frazier that only Special Deputies are allowed to be paid and Reserve Deputies are not allowed to be paid. The County Council gave their approval to try this year as a trial run on the use of barricades.

- **Jason Frazier, Sheriff:**

- There is a jail officer that will be out on Military leave until December. There are a couple of individuals that had approached the Sheriff and expressed their interest in working part time to fill the void. Sheriff Frazier would like to pay the part time the same as the full time and wanted to know if he could pay that out of the overtime line. Roy Wrightsman pointed out that the part time people do not get paid the same as the full-time individuals. It has not been practice in the past to hire people to fill in for a person on Military Leave. It was also pointed out that Sheriff Frazier can have mandatory overtime.
- The Jail Cook is off on Medical Leave and the Part Time Cooks will be filling in.

- **Katie Potter, Assessor:**

- Reassessment is finished in Reserve Township and Reassessment has now started in Adams Township. Reassessment will finish up in Rockville Town with Commercial only as the state requires a certain amount of each class code and the biggest percentage of Commercial property is in Rockville Town.
- Everything in the Office is going well and deadlines are being met.

- **Kim Shorter, Treasurer:**

- Tax Sale is tomorrow. There were initially 200 parcels in the Tax Sale but as of this morning we are down to 100 parcels.
- The Fall Installment of Property Taxes are due November 13th and the office is gearing up for Fall Tax Collection.

- **Jim Meece, Commissioner:**

- The Courthouse drive is finished and the new sod is done. It all looks good.
- The HVAC system is working on one compressor, the other compressor is in need of a slide valve which may correct the problem and they may get some more time out of it. The HVAC system is over 20 years old and will need to be replaced. They are currently waiting on numbers from Irish Mechanical for replacement but as it stands at this moment the amount looks to be in the \$300,000.00 range.
- There was a fire alarm that went off in the Courtroom. It was found to be a laser in the ceiling and it was set off. It is unclear what set it off but Don Pruner is contacting the company to have that laser replaced.
- Mr. Meece and Jason Frazier had been talking about overtime pay for Deputies. Meece understood that Longevity was put in as an incentive that instead of having an incentive have a tier level in the pay. The Council just wants to follow the law and that is all they want to do is follow the law. Mr. Meece will try to contact an attorney to find out what the law is that governs this situation.
- The Commissioners are now in the process of updating the handbook. Some gaps have been identified in the handbook and those gaps need to be addressed. The Commissioners are working with the same person that they worked with the first time to address those gaps.
- The Jail project for the siding has been approved by the Commissioners and that project will begin in March or April. That way when they start, they can work continuously until the project is completed. The Council inquired as to what this project was to entail exactly. Meece said that initially that they thought that they would have to repair the entire façade. As it currently stands, the Recreation area will need to be covered with metal and the balance of the work is to use the same façade and fix only the problem areas which will be much cheaper than originally thought. The gutter is actually attached to the building so the water was getting in under the stucco and causing a mold issue. They are also going to look at the roof while they are there. They are going to grade the grounds around the Jail as well to have the water run away from the building and to ensure that this doesn't happen again.
- Jim Meece once again brought up the topic of storage of records. He had previously mentioned using the Rockville Town Hall once the Town has vacated the building but they have now reached out to Old National Bank to see about using their vacant building here on the square. He has also heard that there may be another building on the square becoming available as well. If we can get all of the records out of the Courthouse, we might be able to move the Prosecutor's Office into the Courthouse and get the Health Department out of the basement as well.

- **Mary Alice Gregg, Recorder:**

- Mary Alice currently has two part time people working for her scanning and indexing the books in the Recorder's Office. She has hired a company that will be coming in the first week of November. It is US Imaging and they will scan all of the books. This will cost approximately \$200,000.00. They will work 24-hour shifts, we only have to supply the room, they hire only Veterans. These Veterans are bonded and background checked. Mary Alice has talked to Don Pruner and Jim Meece and they are going to use the State Board of Accounts room. US Imaging will bring their own table, equipment and it will take them approximately a week to scan all of the books. The Recorder's Office will still have to do all the indexing but all of the data will be there. All the data is stored on the cloud and if there is ever a fire, or other natural disaster all the data will be safe.

X. NEW BUSINESS:

• Budget

John Pratt read a letter from the Parke County Council regarding the 2024 Budget. In the letter, the Council wanted to assure the taxpayers of Parke County that they continue to be diligent with their tax dollars and that the Council continuously looks at spending levels and make prudent decisions to efficiently operate County Government. Some of the highlights from the letter are as follows:

- Total anticipated budget for 2024 is \$20,392,630.00
- Salaried full and part-time employees, with the exception of County Commissioners and County Councilmen, can expect a 7% raise. Merit Deputies can expect an increase of \$7,000.00.
- Hourly highway department and EMS employees can expect an increase of 1.25 per hour.
- County Commissioners and County Councilmen will receive an increase of \$200 in 2024.
- \$2,000.00 bonus to Sheriff's department public safety employees from the ARP fund. And continuation of stipend system for Sheriff deputies that rewards the merit deputies who achieve higher levels of training and use that training to teach their fellow officers.
- County highway funding of \$6,236,884, an increase of nearly 12% year over year. This constitutes 32% the total county budget.
- Significantly increased health department funding due to the Health First Indiana program. The health department funding is increasing by over 328,000.00.
- A maximum of 5% increase in county employee health insurance costs.
- Continued utilization of user-fee supported funds to help offset the burden on tax supported funds.
- The Council thanked all of the employees of Parke County for their hard work, efficiency and diligence in living within their means.

Roy let the Councilmen that in their packet is a two-sided sheet with a summary of the budget. Mr. Wrightsman went over the summary with the group and fielded any questions.

• Budget Adoption

Roy Wrightsman made a motion to approve Ordinance Number 2023-05 which is the Ordinance for 2024 Parke County Budget. Tom Rohr seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

• Salary Ordinance

Roy Wrightsman reviewed the Salary Ordinance provided to each Councilman in their packet. With no questions regarding the Salary Ordinance – Ordinance 2023-06, Jack B Butler made a motion to approve the Ordinance 2023-06 with Roy Wrightsman seconding the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

• **Innkeeper Tax Fund**

Roy Wrightsman stated that in previous discussions regarding the Innkeeper Tax Change that a portion would be distributed to the local fire departments based upon their run volumes. Bob Clutter, the attorney for the Parke County Council wrote the Ordinance – 2023-04 and established a non-reverting fund and the guidelines in which the money would be distributed. Roy then read the Ordinance to the group. With no questions regarding Ordinance 2023-04 Roy Wrightsman made a motion to allow the adoption of Ordinance 2023-04, same day, same meeting. Cameron Martin seconded that motion and it carried unanimously. Mr. Wrightsman went on then to make a motion to adopt Ordinance 2023-04 with Jack B Butler seconding the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

XI. OLD BUSINESS:

- No old business to discuss.

XII. GENERAL BUSINESS:


- Roy Wrightsman had been contacted by Jason McHargue at the Courthouse regarding the security cameras. One of the cameras on the south side of the square had failed and Jason McHargue and Randy Cleaver had found a camera at a lower cost however, it is not compatible with our current system. Thus, Jason and Randy have gone back to our current supplier and with Roy's recommendation, they are going to start a replacement plan on our current system. With that request, a replacement plan has been submitted and Roy went over the parameters of the replacement plan.

AYE

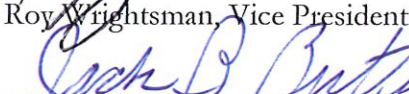
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John K. Pratt, President



Roy Wrightsman, Vice President



Jack B. Butler



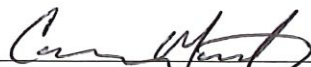
Jim Howard



Rick Patton

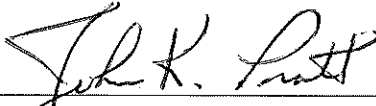


Tom Rohr



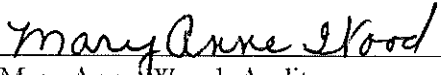
Cameron Martin

ADJOURNMENT: Having no further business to come before the Council, the motion to adjourn was made by Jack B. Butler and seconded by Cameron Martin. The meeting adjourned at 10:28 a.m.



John K. Pratt, President

ATTEST:



Mary Anne Wood, Auditor