

WHITLEY COUNTY COUNCIL

November 7, 2023

The Whitley County Council met in regular session at 8:00 am on Tuesday, November 7, 2023, in the Commissioner’s Room located on the first floor of the Whitley County Government Center. Members in attendance were Vice-Chair Kim Wheeler, Thomas Warner, Thor Hodges, Joan Western, Nicholas Brewer, and John Barrett, Chair James Argerbright was absent. Others in attendance were Commissioners Chad Banks, Theresa Baysinger and Rob Schuman, Auditor Tiffany Deakins, Deputy Auditor Tamela Tincher, Commissioners’ Assistant Cami Hippenhammer, Human Resources Director Jennifer Shinabery, Communications Director Paula Worden, Coroner Scott Smith, Assessor Kim Erdly, Health Director Scott Wagner, Sheriff Jason Spencer, Communications Director Janelle Schmitt, Jody Hollenbaugh, Todd Cook, Billy Maddox, Highway Director Ryan Getts, Mark Sturtevant & Tim Summers from the Maintenance Department, Judge Fahl, Jen Patrick, EMA Director Amy Biggs and Damien Stafford.

Vice-Chair Wheeler called the meeting to order and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

IN THE MATTER OF ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION REQUESTS: The Council reviewed three additional appropriation requests.

- Prosecutor Forfeiture: \$5,000 for account 21000 Operating Supplies. Jennifer Patrick was present to let the Council know that the additional will be used to purchase protective vests for the Probation department. Barrett made a motion to approve the request as presented, seconded by Hodges, passing with a 6/0 vote.
- Superior Court: \$5,000 for account 12602 Petit Jury. Judge Fahl was present to answer any questions that the Council had. Warner made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Western and passed with a 6/0 vote.
- EMA: \$5,000 for account 11512 Deputy Director. This position was re-factored earlier in 2023 and then sat vacant for a few months, so the difference from the re-factor and unspent monies was approximately \$3,382.65. However, if any overtime would be incurred Auditor Deakins suggested \$5,000 for that possibility. Western made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Barrett and passed with a 6/0 vote.

IN THE MATTER OF SHERIFF TRANSFER REQUESTS: Sheriff Spencer presented year-end transfer resolutions to the Council for approval.

• **County General**

Sheriff:

• 1000.11605.000.0105	Overtime	1000.22100.000.0105	Gas	\$3,000.00
• 1000.11608.000.0105	Holiday Pay	1000.22100.000.0105	Gas	\$5,000.00
• 1000.11901.000.0105	Court Comp	1000.22100.000.0105	Gas	\$500.00
• 1000.12107.000.0105	Dispatcher	1000.22100.000.0105	Gas	\$11,500.00
• 1000.12105.000.0105	Dispatcher	1000.24000.000.0105	Uniforms	\$12,000.00
• 1000.11605.000.0105	Overtime	1000.24000.000.0105	Uniforms	\$2,000.00

Jail:

• 1000.11506.000.0132	Confinement Officer	1000.31003.000.0132	Utilities	\$1,000.00
• 1000.11608.000.0132	Holiday Pay	1000.31003.000.0132	Utilities	\$2,500.00
• 1000.12111.000.0132	Confinement Officer	1000.31003.000.0132	Utilities	\$7,500.00
• 1000.12800.000.0132	Confinement Officer	1000.31003.000.0132	Utilities	\$1,000.00
• 1000.12800.000.0132	Confinement Officer	1000.39008.000.0132	Meals	\$1,000.00
• 1000.12705.000.0132	Confinement Officer	1000.39008.000.0132	Meals	\$2,000.00
• 1000.13200.000.0132	Confinement Officer	1000.39008.000.0132	Meals	\$17,500.00
• 1000.12501.000.0132	Confinement Officer	1000.39008.000.0132	Meals	\$16,500.00
• 1000.13500.000.0132	Confinement Officer	1000.39008.000.013	Janitor Supplies	\$8,000.00

Councilman Barrett made a motion to approve the requests, seconded by Brewer and passed with a 6/0 vote. Sheriff Spencer and Communications Director Janelle Schmitt let the Council know that the first invoice for the new Motorola Consoles has come in at \$167,818.25. Janelle will pay that from her E911 funds as well as \$32,181.75 of the next invoice with the remainder coming from the ARPA funds. Auditor Deakins did not have time to advertise the additional appropriation request so that will come to the December Council meeting.

IN THE MATTER HEALTH DEPARTMENT VEHICLE PURCHASE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

Health Director Scott Wagner was present to seek approval to trade in the Health Departments two 2012 Ford Fusions for Chevy Malibus. He has enough in his budget as of right now to be able to transfer the funds, or an additional appropriation could be completed in 2024 if they came in after the first of the year. The Council would like to allow Scott to move forward with the purchase of the new vehicles, however they would like to see if the County could get more than what is being offered for trade value on the GovDeals auction site. Hodges made a

motion to allow Scott to order the two new vehicles, seconded by Brewer and passed with a 6/0 vote. Scott went before the personnel committee and asked that his Health Educator position that had become vacant be changed to an additional nurse for the Health Department. This would allow for coverage while either or both current nurses are off for PTO and/or out of the office. The personnel committee gave a favorable recommendation for Council. Scott would not ask for the position to start before January 7th, 2024. Barrett made a motion to approve as presented, seconded by Western and passed with a 6/0 vote. Scott also would like to send back two job descriptions to WIS. He wants to update them per the new State requirements and guidelines. Warner made a motion to allow for the updated job descriptions, seconded Barrett and passed with a 6/0 vote.

HIGHWAY TRANSFERS & TRACTOR/MOWER PURCHASE: Ryan Getts Highway Director spoke with Council to seek approval for an additional appropriation request to purchase two new tractors/mowers. Last year a mower was purchased that does not suit the needs of the Highway Department and is unsafe for use on our county roads. Ryan has been able to get a good deal with MORE Farm Store to trade in the unusable mower and obtain the two that will work for the needs of the department. The total amount of the additional appropriation will be \$120,689.52, this has not been advertised for yet, but will be ready to be signed off on at the December meeting. Hodges made a motion to approve the request, but wanted to let everyone know that he uses the local dealer as well for transparency, seconded by Warner and passed with a 6/0 vote. Upon review of the rest of the year for budgets it was noticed that three transfers needed to be completed to cover two-line items for supplies as well as the under budgeted group insurance. Barrett made a motion to approve as presented, seconded by Hodges, and passed with a 6/0 vote.

IN THE MATTER OF CORONER VEHICLE RADIO: Coroner Scott Smith was present to seek approval to purchase a mobile radio for the Coroner's vehicle. Scott did reach out to the local CopsGear and ask about a quote on a refurbished radio; however, he never received that quote. The cost would be \$6,089.14 that would need to be advertised for an additional appropriation request to purchase. Smith was able to answer questions that the Council had regarding the need for a new radio. Barrett made a motion to approve the advertising and purchase of the radio, seconded by Warner and passed with a 6/0 vote. Scott will also be needing an additional appropriation for autopsies, that will come in December with the radio additional.

ARPA RESOLUTION FOR DISPATCH CONSOLES: At the October meeting the Council voted to use ARPA funds for the purchase of new dispatch consoles for the new jail. Auditor Deakins has presented the ARPA Resolution 2023-15 that needs to be signed by the Council for the appropriation of funds in the amount of \$471,273.

IN THE MATTER THE SOLID WASTE JOINT BOARD APPOINTMENT: Council needs to appoint someone to the Solid Waste Joint Board according to the interlocal agreement. Commissioners have added Jon Myers as their appointment to serve. Warner nominated Nick Brewer because of his financial background from working at the bank, seconded by Western and passed with a 5/0 vote, with Brewer abstaining.

IN THE MATTER OF PART TIME PAY: Human Resources Director Jennifer Shinabery was present to see if the Council had any additional questions regarding her suggestion to make a part-time pay wage scale that would match the full-time hourly rates. This will allow department heads to still be able to decide the rate but give the option to match what the full-time rate is. The personnel committee did not have a vote on this at their meeting, however they feel this is the best option. Barrett made a motion to approve the request as presented, seconded by Brewer, and passed with a 6/0 vote.

IN THE MATTER OF THE 2024 COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE: Councilman Brewer stated that he would like to see the meeting times change so that more of the public could attend if they would like. Western stated that she did not think that it would be beneficial to change times, Wheeler agreed with Western stating that the Mayor has moved the City meetings to the evenings and they have not seen a change in attendance. Barrett made a motion to keep the schedule as presented and keep the time at 8:00 am, seconded by Western, passing with a 4/2 vote with Hodges and Brewer against.

IN THE MATTER OF EMS FUNDS: Commissioner Banks stated that the Commissioners have been running in the red in their EMS line item as they had to cover \$25,000 for EMS that they did not have budgeted. The Community Foundation has written a check to cover those funds and the Commissioners are seeking approval for the \$25,000 check be appropriated into the EMS line item to bring it out of the red. Warner made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Brewer and passed with a 6/0 vote. Banks also gave the Commissioner report.

- There has been discussion of the option to add an EMS LIT to help cover the expenses for EMS.
- There was a graduation for the first round of JCAP participants, with Alyssa Hodges doing a great job running that program.
- Wednesday November 8th there will be a Veteran Treatment Court graduation at the Peabody Library that he encourages people to attend.
- Commissioners had accepted the \$46,500 bid for roof repair for the Thomas Marshall home, however, have decided not to accept the bid for the remainder of the work. Commissioners along with Maintenance would like to complete some of the work themselves and re-bid the rest.

- Commissioners have only received one of the two requested appraisals for the possible second drive for the new jail.

IN THE MATTER OF MINUTES: Council reviewed the October 3, 2023, regular meeting minutes. Councilman Hodges made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Barrett, and passed with a 6/0 vote.

IN THE MATTER OF PUBLIC COMMENT: Council wanted to remind the constituents to vote as it was Election Day for the City, as well as thank a veteran for Veterans Day.

There being no further business and no further questions or comments from the public, Vice-chair Wheeler adjourned the meeting at 9:35 a.m.

WHITLEY COUNTY COUNCIL:

ABSTAIN
Chair James Argerbright

Kim Wheeler
Vice Chair Kim Wheeler

Nicholas Brewer
Nicholas Brewer

Joan Western
Joan Western

Thomas Warner
Thomas Warner

Thor Hodges
Thor Hodges

John Barrett
John Barrett

Attest:

Tiffany Deakins
Tiffany Deakins, Auditor