

## REGULAR MEETING OF THE JASPER COUNTY COUNCIL

AUGUST 20,2024

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The Jasper County Council met this date at 6:00 P.M. C.S.T. at 910 S Sparling, Rensselaer, Indiana, with the following members present: Stephen R. Jordan, Gary Fritts, Brian Moore, Jason Arnold, Eric Kidwell, Paul Norwine, and Jacob Misch. Also present were Auditor, Donya G. Jordan, and Deputy Auditor, Treasure Gilbert. Those present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mr. Fritts. Mr. Fritts led the meeting because, Mr. Jordan was not there at the beginning.

MINUTES: Mr. Arnold motioned to approve the minutes from the Joint Session with the Commissioners on Tuesday, July 16,2024, Mr. Misch seconded and the motion carried.

Mr. Moore motioned to approve the minutes from the Council's regular meeting on July 16,2024, Mr. Kidwell seconded and the motion carried.

Mr. Fritts said they were going to start with the budget hearings and do the transfer and additional appropriations afterwards.

### OPENING OF THE 2025 BUDGET HEARINGS

CORONER ANDY BOERSMA: Mr. Boersma said that if they could have a Chief Deputy, he found a way to fund that position. He said they have the amount that is set aside for the part-time deputies and with a Chief Deputy, they would be responding to the calls more than the part-time deputies. He said they can take money from the clerical line and deputy training lines to cover it. He said they are at 59 calls for the year and they didn't hit that total until October last year. He said prices for autopsies are going up to \$3,250.00. He said he doesn't do more than he feels necessary but, the State would prefer them to do everyone. Mr. Arnold asked why the request for transport fees went down. Mr. Boersma said that is because of the new county van.

AUDITOR DONYA JORDAN: Auditor Jordan said she asked for 10% raises and kept everything else the same. She said they originally requested a salary for an 8<sup>th</sup> deputy but, she said they no longer need that position. She said she requested funds for a part-time position for when she has to come in to help next year.

EMA DIRECTOR KAREN WILSON: Ms. Wilson said she asked for a 10% salary increase and reminded the Council that the State pays 50% of her salary, based on her annual assessment that she's always made. She said they also pay 50% for up to three employees, full-time or part-time. She said her other budget requests stayed the same as this years' but, she did add a vehicle repair line for the new vehicle she is getting from the Sheriff. She said everything was the same in her LEPC fund. Mr. Fritts asked if she could explain her investment. She said they have \$10,000.00 of their LEPC money invested. She said it's earning 5% interest for six months at a time. She said if all of their facilities comply and the reporting is done, they earn \$5,200.00 a year.

SHERIFF WILLIAMSON: Sheriff Williamson said in the Sheriff's budget in County General, he's asking for 10% salary increases and there were some pay differentials he would like. He said he would like to ask for more for their Administrative Assistant since she is making the same as the Assistant Service Officer. He would also like to ask for more for the Civil Processor and the Full-Time Court Security because, they are both ILEA graduates and have more credentials. He said they asked for an increase in Garage & Motor and Insurance. He said their deductibles have went up \$1,000.00. He said they had three or four accidents this year.

For the Jail budget in County General, the Sheriff said they asked for salary increases and more in overtime. In the LIT Economic Development fund, the Sheriff asked for an increase of \$12,500.00 for their maintenance agreement and LPR camera costs. In the LIT Special Purpose fund, the Sheriff asked for an increase in Jail Meals. He said they are feeding inmates for about \$7.50 a day but, the costs keep escalating. He said they typically have 70-80 inmates but, 82 is the highest day average they've had. In the Statewide 911 fund, the Sheriff said he would like an increase of \$1,000.00 for the Dispatcher Supervisor.

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TRANSFER: There was a transfer request from the Sheriff to transfer \$15,675.85 from the Garage & Motor line to the Vehicle line. Mr. Moore motioned to approve the transfer for \$15,675.85, Mr. Misch seconded and the motion carried.

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS

COUNTY GENERAL: There was an additional appropriation request for \$5,000.00 for overtime. Sheriff Williamson said this is for the dispatchers. There was also a request for \$20,000.00 for Liability Insurance. Mr. Arnold motioned to approve the additional appropriations for Overtime for \$5,000.00 and Liability Insurance for \$20,000.00.

LIT SPECIAL PURPOSE: There was an additional appropriation request for \$120,000.00 for Jail Meals. Sheriff Williamson said they talked about this earlier but, the inmate population and the costs for food have went up. Mr. Norwine motioned to approve the request for Jail Meals for \$120,000.00, Mr. Kidwell seconded and the motion carried.

COUNTY GENERAL CONTINUED: There was an additional appropriation request for \$5,000.00 for vehicle repair in the Emergency Management's budget. Ms. Wilson said this is to replace the lights and radio system on the vehicle that the Sheriff will be giving to her. Chief Wallace said she can't drive the vehicle with the red and blue lights on it because, that's against the law. Ms. Wilson said she is waiting for an estimate but, she thinks it will be around \$2,500.00, she asked for more just to be safe. Mr. Jordan motioned to approve the request for Vehicle Repair, Mr. Moore seconded and the motion carried.

There was an additional appropriation request for \$10,000.00 for Indigenous Pauper Burial. Auditor Jordan said the Commissioners requested this to pay for the recent burial they had. Mr. Boersma said they had to bury the remains of someone until they found someone to claim them. Mr. Boersma had requests for \$5,000.00 for Autopsy, \$5,000.00 for Pathologist, \$5,000.00 for Transport Fee and \$750.00 for Film & Development/Processing.

Mr. Arnold made a motion, Mr. Norwine seconded, there was a unanimous vote opposed to the request for \$10,000.00 for Indigenous Pauper Burial.

Mr. Misch motioned to approve the requests from the Coroner for \$15,750.00, Mr. Arnold seconded and the motion carried.

There were two requests from the Commissioners' budget for \$15,000.00 for Workmans Comp Insurance and \$40,000.00 for Liability Insurance. Auditor Jordan said these costs went way up and they didn't budget enough for it. Mr. Moore motioned to approve the requests in the Commissioner's budget, Mr. Jordan seconded and the motion carried.

LIT EMER MED SERVICES: There was an additional appropriation request for \$275,000.00 for Jasper Co EMS. Mr. Moore said this request is to get them through the rest of the year. He said part of this is because, they had to raise the wages since everybody else keeps raising wages and they were losing employees. He said there's also some contracts due and those costs have gone up as well. Mr. Moore motioned to approve the request for \$275,000.00, Mr. Arnold seconded and the motion carried.

LIT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: There was an additional appropriation request for \$55,000.00 in the Consultants line. Auditor Jordan said they have been paying a lot out for Solarpack to the attorney and they didn't get the money from Solarpack for the last two years. She said they have since received those payments. Mr. Jordan motioned to approve the request for \$55,000.00, Mr. Arnold seconded and the motion carried.

GEN LOCAL HEALTH MAINT 2015: There was an additional appropriation request for \$34,992.09 in the Vehicle line. Ms. Louck said the State wanted her to spend down this fund so, the Commissioners approved a new vehicle purchase. Mr. Moore motioned to approve the request for \$34,992.09, Mr. Kidwell seconded and the motion carried.

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NWISWD: Auditor Jordan said last year, the numbers for the Northwest Indiana Solid Waste District's 2024 budget were not posted. They have requested \$506,050.00 to finish out the rest of the year. Auditor Jordan said this money comes from tipping fees so, it is not County money. Mr. Kidwell motioned to approve the request for \$506,050.00, Mr. Norwine seconded and the motion carried.

LIT DISCUSSION: Mr. Fritts said they were going to hold off on the LIT discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENT

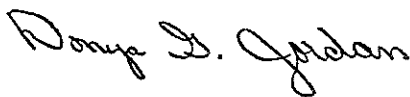
SCOTT WALKER: Ms. Gilbert read Mr. Walker's comment from the Zoom chat, "While we're approving budgets, how about approving some money for a modern audio system, this tin can and string we have now doesn't work too good out in the country." Mr. Moore said he agrees and the Zoom system doesn't work well. Ms. Gilbert said they just replaced the laptop and she just ordered an adapter that seems to be the issue. She also said the sound guy was supposed to show up tonight but, he did not.

There being no further business, Mr. Moore motioned to continue the meeting to Wednesday, August 21, 2024, Mr. Misch seconded and the motion carried.



Stephen R, Jordan, President

ATTEST:



Donya Jordan, Auditor of Jasper County