Est

Martin

County

THE MARTIN COUNTY COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING FOR BUDGETS

September 9, 2024

MINUTES

The Martin County Council convened in regular session & public hearing for budgets on Monday, September 9, 2024, in the Commissioners’ Room at the Courthouse located at 129 Main Street, Shoals, Indiana. Council members attending: Jordan Dant, Adam Greene, Warren Albright, Keith Gibson, Monty Gregory, Jim Hamby, and Sheri Bowling. 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: PUBLIC HEARING OF THE 2025 BUDGET**

President Jordan Dant opened the public hearing for the 2025 budget. President Dant stated as it was discussed in the special meeting last week and when meeting with departments regarding the budgets, the budgets were taken under advisement and final numbers were to be determined. President Dant stated there are areas of concern and FSG gave their sustainability analysis last week to the Council. President Dant stated two sustainability plans were given by FSG, the most recent being the plan which does away with opt out and adding $4,000 to the salary of each insurance eligible employee but also has the $132,000 for opt out in Commissioners’ budget in case the Commissioners were to decide either way. President Dant stated in January after the Commissioners decide regarding the opt out, the Council will do an amendment deleting one of the two.

President Dant stated some key points of the proposed budgets, larger than anticipated asks were the probation budget and the extension office. The Surveyor did not have any significant asks more or less than previous years but based on conversations President Dant had with the Surveyor prior to budget hearing, that communication was something other than what the Surveyor submitted in the budget so there needs to be further conversations about that. President Dant recommended to fellow members to do a deep dive and identify any additional areas of concern.

President Dant stated they also need to decide on raises for next year as they are currently in the budget as submitted by department and some departments requested larger raises than others ranging from 5-7%. President Dant stated the Council needs to decide what raises the County can do this year and/or afford. Monty Gregory stated he feels the raises need to be the same across the board, so no favoritism is shown. A motion was made by Monty Gregory that all departments stay on the same percentage for raises in 2025 with the percentage to be determined. Warren Albright stated the budget needs to be evaluated and cut, he believes that most of the drastic jumps need to go back to where they were, and this is not the year for a lot of big spending. Monty Gregory withdrew his motion to make all departments percentage equal for raises for the 2025 year. President Dant stated the Council will decide on that once they know the percent.

President Dant stated he would like to make everyone aware that during the meeting with FSG on Thursday the 5th the general obligation bond was discussed. President Dant stated because assessed values are going up 9% it was communicated that property taxes were going down. FSG had communicated that property tax could stay the same rate for 2025 and the County could still do the general obligation bond. President Dant stated that could be misleading and would like more information from FSG regarding the tax rates.

President Dant read notice to taxpayers for Martin County with a civil max levy of $2,880,809 with a property tax cap credit estimate of $36,000. The notice to taxpayers was also read for the Martin County Solid Waste Management District County with a civil max levy of $219,446 with a property tax cap credit estimate of $3,000. Both these notices have been posted on Gateway at: budgetnotices.in.gov President Dant asked for any public comment regarding the 2025 budget. With no public comments from the audience, a motion was made by Warren Albright to close the public hearing for the 2025 budget, seconded by Monty Gregory. All in favor, motion passed. The public hearing for budgets portion of the meeting was closed at 6:22 pm.

The regular session opened at 6:22 pm.

**RE: MINUTES**

The minutes from the regular meeting held August 5, 2024, were approved with a motion made by Jim Hamby, seconded by Monty Gregory. All in favor, motion passed. The minutes from the special session, department budget meeting, which was held on August 5th, 2024, were approved with a motion made by Warren Albright, seconded by Monty Gregory. All in favor, motion passed. The minutes from the special session held on September 5th, 2024, were approved with a motion made by Warren Albright, seconded by Monty Gregory. Adam Greene abstained. All others in favor, motion passed.

**RE: SALARY AND WAGE ORDINANCE AMENDMENT**

Community Corrections Director, Danielle Murphy, came before the Council to ask them to consider a salary and wage ordinance amendment for an employee. Director Murphy stated the Community Corrections advisory board and the local JRAC met this past Thursday. Case manager one and case manager two were discussed, case manager one works the high-risk case load, most of the pre-trials, does all the programming, and has an educational requirement in the job description. Director Murphy stated case manager one is maxed out this year at $20.20 per hour. Director Murphy stated she has pulled salary comps with surrounding counties on case manager salaries, and it was severely below the minimum of other counties. Director Murphy stated most community corrections case managers who are doing what the current case manager one is doing are making a minimum of $46,000 at an entry level.

Director Murphy stated she met with the Community Corrections advisory board and the board agreed to leave the bottom amount at a minimum of $19.24 and move the top range amount from $20.20 to $24.24 per hour at a max out this year. Director Murphy stated a salary and wage amendment is needed so the case manager one wages can be increased for the remainder of 2024. Director Murphy stated this wage is supported solely out of project income and she has run the numbers, and they are taking more in project income than what is being expended so Community Corrections can solely support the wage increase for the employee. Director Murphy stated 70% of the salary will be paid from a grant and 30% will be paid from project income; the grant does not give Community Corrections enough money every year to pay 100% of the salaries. President Dant asked if the individual was currently maxed out at $20.20, to which Director responded yes. Director Murphy asked that the salary and wage ordinance for case manager one be effective at the start of the pay period which was September 8th. A motion was made by Adam Greene to approve the salary and wage ordinance for the case manager one, seconded by Jim Hamby. All in favor, motion passed.

**RE: TRANSFER REQUEST**

The following transfer request was submitted to the Council for approval from the Auditor:

From: 1000.002.1000.12 Deputy Auditor $1,200

To: 1000.002.3000.11 Postage $1,200

A motion was made by Warren Albright to approve the transfer request from the Auditor, seconded by Adam Greene. All in favor, motion passed.

**RE: ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS**

**Opioid Settlement Unrestricted**

Fund 1238

Bailiff Training $2,500

Bailiff Equipment $2,500

Auditor Norris stated the Commissioners had approved opioid settlement unrestricted funds to be used for bailiff training $2,500 and bailiff equipment $2,500. Auditor Norris stated the Court has recently hired a bailiff. A motion was made by Warren Albright to approve the additional appropriation in the opioid settlement unrestricted fund for $5,000, seconded by Monty Gregory. All in favor, motion passed.

**ARPA American Rescue Plan Act**

Fund 8951

Miscellaneous Services $8,622.78

Auditor Norris stated the Commissioners had approved at their August 20th meeting to pay the Core Facilities invoice, which also included the architect expense, from ARPA. A motion was made by Warren Albright to approve the additional appropriation from ARPA in the amount of $8,622.78, seconded by Monty Gregory. Jim Hamby voted nay. All others in favor, motion passed.

**Cumulative Capital Development**

Fund 1138

Facilities Repair $27,500

Auditor Norris stated during the Commissioners’ March 5th meeting they approved $20,000 from the cumulative capital improvement fund to be used by the Sheriff’s Department for water line repair for the jail. Sheriff Greene stated zero has been spent so far on the repair because there have been supply issues. There have been water line issues since the approval by the Commissioners, but they have been doing patch jobs. Sheriff Greene stated last week there was a major water line blow out and a local company came but could not do the job as fast as was needed so the Sheriff’s Department put thirty-six-man hours into the project and got it working again which prevented inmates from having to be moved to another facility.

Auditor Norris stated $7,500 is to repair the automatic interior doors at the Courthouse. The Commissioners approved replacing the operators on the doors for around $6,500 and M&M Electric will have to run 120V to the new operators. A motion was made by Jim Hamby to approve the additional appropriation for cumulative capital development fund for $27,500, seconded by Monty Gregory. All in favor, motion passed.

**EDIT County Share**

Fund 1112

Health Insurance $160,000

Auditor Norris stated there is only $101,947 left in the health insurance budget for the remainder of 2024; last month health insurance from EDIT was $62,342. A motion was made by Sheri Bowling to approve the additional appropriation in EDIT for $160,000, seconded by Adam Greene. All in favor, motion passed.

**RE: SHERIFF STAFFING ISSUES AND OVERTIME**

Sheriff Greene stated he is having staffing issues at the Jail; they have been needing employees to work over 40 hours per week. Sheriff Greene asked the Council for approval to pay overtime instead of earning comp time. Sheriff Greene stated that currently the 911 center is being run with four employees. Sheriff Greene stated he has one employee who has over one hundred hours of comp time which is impossible to use when they cannot take off. Sheriff Greene stated there is a deputy who is also qualified to be a dispatcher and has been filling in when possible. The Council asked Sheriff Greene for an estimate of what the additional cost of overtime would be. Sheriff Greene stated the dispatcher range is currently from $15.00 to $21.22 per hour, pay is based on experience.

A motion was made by Sheri Bowling to approve overtime for the Sheriff’s Department for additional hours worked due to staffing needs effective September 8th, seconded by Monty Gregory. All in favor, motion passed.

**RE: SPECIAL SESSION**

President Dant stated a special session meeting date needs to be set to review budgets. The Council decided to hold the special session on September 16th at 5:30 pm.

**RE: SHOALS BANK BUILDING**

Adam Greene asked Warren Albright if he was in favor of a bank going in the former Old National Bank Building in Shoals. Warren Albright stated it is the decision of the Commissioners, but if there is a bank interested, he would be willing to listen to what they have to say. A motion was made by Adam Greene that no future spending be done on the former Old National bank building until everything is vetted, seconded by Jim Hamby. All in favor, motion passed.

Sheri Bowling asked what banks were interested in the building. Adam Greene stated there are three banks interested but he is not at liberty to state which those are at this time. President Dant asked Adam Greene if he is speaking to banks on behalf of the County. Adam Greene stated he is working with the Alliance to find a bank for Shoals, but work was done privately because he was also trying to buy the building to rent to a bank.

Taxpayers Stephen Shout and Robert Bratton came before the Council to express concerns regarding overspending.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:03 pm with a motion made by Jim Hamby and seconded by Monty Gregory, all were in favor and the motion passed. There will be a special session of the Council held on September 16th at 5:30 pm and the next regular Council meeting and budget adoption will be held Monday, October 7, 2024, 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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Monty Gregory Jim Hamby

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Sheri Bowling

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Michelle Norris, Martin County Auditor