

**PERRY COUNTY COUNCIL AND TELL CITY COMMON COUNCIL
JOINT MEETING MINUTES
September 12, 2023**

The Perry County Council met at 5:30 p.m. as was duly advertised. County Council President David Etienne (DE), Stan Goffinet (SG), Keith Huck (KH), Paul Malone (PM), Kelli Harding (Kelli), Earla Williams (EW), and Gale Garner (GG) were in attendance. Also in attendance were Mayor Chris Cail, Tell City Common Council Members John Little (JL), Gary Morton (GM), and Larry Kleeman (LK). Auditor Kristinia Hammack and Clerk-Treasurer Connie Berger were also present.

The meeting opened with all present reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

- a) JH made a motion to adopt the agenda, seconded by LK. Motion carried 3-0
- b) KH made a motion to adopt the agenda, seconded by SG. Motion carried 7-0.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **2024 DISPATCH BUDGET DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL**

Mayor Cail presented the 2024 Dispatch Budget for discussion along with copies of the Budget distributed by the Tell City Clerk-Treasurer.

- a) **COLLECTED BY PERRY COUNTY AND DISTRIBUTED TO CITY OF TELL CITY--\$617,952.00**
- b) **COLLECTED BY CITY OF TELL CITY--\$13,500.00**
- c) **CITY OF TELL CITY SHARE ON DISPATCHING--\$217,293.00**
- d) **TOTAL FUNDS COLLECTED FOR DISPATCHING--\$848,745.00**
- e) **2024 PROPOSED BUDGET--\$921,906.00**
- f) **FUNDING SHORTAGE--\$73,161.00**

GM asked if the proposed \$73,000 shortage is for next year or this year. Clerk-Treasurer Connie Berger responded it is not based on last year, it is based on the income. GM asked why the discrepancy? Mayor Cail responded salary increases for dispatching salaries and 75% of the Assistant Chief's salary, as he oversees dispatch. The majority of the Assistant Chief's job duty is dispatching. This was never included in the budget in the past and should have been.

PM asked if this budget included the wages of the Record Clerk? Chief Derrick Lawalin replied no, only the Records Coordinator position.

PM questioned if the 75% of the Assistant Chief's work is PSAP? Chief Lawalin replied yes.

Clerk-Treasurer Berger stated that after the previous night's Common Council Meeting, the Record Clerk's position was moved to the Tell City Police Department, as well as amounts for the following were lowered:

- Clothing
- Holiday
- FICA & Medicare
- INPRS

Kelli mentioned she did not see the Assistant Chief's position in the previous budget. Is this something new to the budget? Chief Lawalin replied yes, the City is giving up a police officer to perform dispatch duties.

KH stated his only concern he has is that the Assistant Chief is not dispatch certified. He feels that the 75% is a little high for this year. He asked if his certification will be complete in January 2024? Chief Lawalin stated the Asst Chief is currently enrolled in the class.

LK stated he noticed the share of Troy has been reduced to one-half of last year's amount as well as Cannelton is one-half. What is the reason for those reductions? Mayor Cail directed this question to the County for response. DE stated this was a result of Tell City's portion was \$150,000 less, and it was brought to the County Council's attention there was no way Cannelton and Troy would go for this, so their amounts were reduced in half. Kelli asked if this will be automatically done in the future? She feels it should return to the full amounts next year. LK also mentioned that Tell City's share was reduced by \$5000. He asked why? Mayor Cail responded this is from the formula created by Luke Thomas. Tell City's share decreases each year.

County EMA Director Steve Hauser explained that the agreed amount share by the City of Tell City in 2022 was \$305,238.00, and the actual amount paid was \$146,092.49 which was less than half of what they agreed to. When the County went to the Town of Troy and Cannelton, they said why should we pay the full amount when Tell City is only paying half of their amount. The following year Cannelton agreed to \$12,500 and the Town of Troy agreed to \$3000. LK asked where the 2023 figures come from? Hauser replied they are actually from the 2023 budget due to numbers were not known that Tell City's share would be \$146,092.49 until January 2023. Tell City's share for 2024 will not be known until January 2024. That left \$159,145.51 that the City of Tell City did not have to pay. PM asked if this \$159,145.51 is in a reserve or did it go in City General? Clerk-Treasurer Berger responded it is in City General.

SG stated in the \$400,000 wages, he would have liked to have seen this amount broken out with the titles of the employees. Clerk-Treasurer Berger responded the \$400,000 is 8 dispatchers. They are paid the same salary unless they are under probation, plus their overtime. SG questioned how the raises were determined, with Berger stating there is a 5.5% increase to bring the wages up to the medium salary of other local departments. KH asked if the clothing and holiday pay was based on 8 or 9 employees. Berger stated that the Records Coordinator is included in those items.

KH stated he feels the 75% of the Assistant Chief's salary is high. He would like to see it a 50/50 split. Mayor Cail responded that 75% of the Assistant Chief's time is spent in dispatch. The only way to fix this would be for the City or County to hire someone who oversees dispatch and then the Assistant Chief would be freed up to do City work.

DE asked with this being September, does the City have a good estimate of what their expenses will be for the year 2023? LK responded through August 30th, total expenditures are \$461,493.34, which is approximately 59% of the budgeted cost. Through August 30th, 8 months out of 12 months is 66% of the year. Approximately 7% underspending but he feels there were expenditures that were incurred in August that will be paid in September.

LK stated he would be comfortable for Tell City to pay 50% of the Assistant Chief's salary. Mayor Cail polled the City Council, and JL and GM would go along with this. This is a compromise on the City's part. Kelli elaborated that Tell City's share of dispatch was \$217,293 and it came in at \$146,092.49. She further stated that she appreciates all that the City does. She did ask that if at the end of the year, insurance does come in at a lower amount, would Tell City be willing to set aside a reserve to help with next year? The insurance amount is currently at \$54,000 and the unknown to the end of the year could take it up to the whole \$150,000. If it would end at \$75,000 and \$150,000 is budgeted, she would like to see a compromise.

Auditor Hammack asked for a clarification on the -\$31,055. Clerk-Treasurer Berger stated this amount comes from the projection at this time last year. Hammack asked if the -\$73,161 would have to be committed now or could it wait until January, February, or March? This -\$73,161 is only an estimate, what if it comes in less or comes in more? Hammack further stated that with the City having the projection for \$617,952, we're not going to run short \$73,161 in January, February or March. KH interjected that the City wants a commitment today. Hammack asked if County would make a commitment up to \$73,161, what if it is more? Berger confirmed they

budgeted on the upper end. Hammack then responded there is no way you will know if you will need the \$73,161.

Auditor Hammack stated that the local agreements entered into with Cannelton and Troy for 2023 were completed this April. Is this something the County should be contacting them now about for 2024? KH feels this agreement between the City and County should be done in July and not September. Berger stated the agreement says that the budget is to be done by August 1, however this is nearly impossible due to not receiving the numbers needed for budget until August 1. Hammack said what if the numbers do not run short? Kelli responded this is maybe where the reserve comes in. KH stated there is not a reserve now. Mayor Cail responded there is really not a reserve, it goes back in the City's General Fund. It just lowers the City's \$217,000 share.

Mayor Cail asked if anyone needs more time to review the information? Kelli stated she would like to have more time to review.

Previously LK made a statement regarding the Assistant Chief's wage amount to 50%. Mayor Cail asked the City Council if this is something they want to do, or go with Chief Lawalin's recommendation of 75% of wages. LK stated he is doing this under the assumption that the budget as presented is accepted. He is not making a motion to lower the Assistant Chief's salary and then the County come back later and want other changes. Mayor Cail stated he would like to see the 75% of the Assistant Chief's salary put back in the next time.

Chief Lawalin would like to see a plan developed for hiring an individual from outside the police department, instead of paying the Assistant Chief, having a police officer there and someone who is familiar with dispatching. KH stated possibly form a PSAP Advisory Board to try to figure out if this is something for them to come up with. Commissioner Rebecca Thorn stated possibly there is a grant that can be applied for.

LK made a motion that the City budget 50% of the Assistant Chief's salary in the PSAP budget for 2024, provided the County adopts this as their budget with no other changes, seconded by GM. Motion carried 3-0.

DE asked the County Council if they are ready to vote on this budget. PM stated he would like to see any funding shortfall, the first place to go to would be that excess. Mayor Cail stated there is no excess, it goes back in the City's General Fund. It just lowers the City's share.

KH made a motion that the County Council approve the budget with the adjustment of Assistant Chief's salary to 50%, seconded by EW. Kelli would like to have more time just to review the information. Motion carried 6-1.

LK made a motion to approve the budget, seconded by GM. Motion carried 3-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m. CST.

JL made a motion on the City's behalf to adjourn, seconded by LK. Motioned carried 3-0.

PM made a motion on the County's behalf to adjourn, seconded by EW. Motion carried 7-0.

Minutes approved this 19th day of October, 2023.

President, Perry County Council

