

**PERRY COUNTY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
August 24, 2023**

The Perry County Council met on the above date at 5:00 p.m. as was duly advertised. Council members in attendance were President David Etienne (DE), Keith Huck (KH), Paul Malone (PM), Stan Goffinet (SG), Kelli Harding (Kelli) and Gale Garner (GG). Sheriff Alan Malone, and Auditor Kristinia Hammack were also present. There was no *Attorney* or *News Representative* present.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA

KH made the motion to accept as amended, seconded by PM. Motion carried 6-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- a) There were no public comments.

MINUTES

- a) Special Meeting 7/18/23.

KH made a motion to accept, seconded by SG. Motion carried 6-0.

- b) Special Meeting 7/27/23

KH made a motion to accept, seconded by PM. Kelli abstained. Motion carried 5-1.

- c) Regular Meeting 7/27/23

KH made a motion to accept, seconded by GG. Kelli abstained. Motion carried 5-1.

- d) Special Meeting 8/15/23

KH made a motion to accept, seconded by SG. Motion carried 6-0.

TARA LUCAS, PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE SUPERVISOR

- a) The Health Department submitted the finalized HFI budget with the approval from the Health Board. Lucas is appearing before the Council to see if they can get it approved. A budget has to be submitted to the state prior to September 1st. All this information was emailed to the Council. DE stated it was his understanding this budget was a draft. 86 counties have elected to participate, however some will not. Lucas replied the funding amount can change based on the number of counties that participate. The Health Department has been told by the state to prepare to receive the lowest amount of funding, and that is the budget presented to the Council. DE stated he was told the Council does not have to approve a budget until the final budget due October 2nd. Lucas stated that it was not made public to health departments of the October 2nd date until this afternoon. A budget has to be submitted knowing that it will have to be tweaked by October 2nd. The initial budget does not take Council approval, only the final budget for October 2nd needs approval.

Kelli had questions about the budget but did not realize this was the final budget that had to be turned in by September 1st. It was her understanding there would be more time to go through it for more details. Lucas stated that the KPI list has a notation at the bottom stating should funding change due to a shift of counties opting in, the Health Department will put the funding into the list of KPI's; they will expand those programs even further. Lucas further said that their regional support representative said Perry County's KPI's are very detailed and one of the best she has seen.

Kelli questioned one KPI that mentioned partnering with Perry County Memorial Hospital and entering into a contract with them. She stated that it is her understanding that all contracts have to be approved by the Commissioners. Lucas replied that they are working with the county attorney. She stated that contracts do not have to be set in stone with an amount by October 2nd. The Health Department has been given a verbal commitment from the hospital CEO, Jared Stimpson. He is more than happy to work with them.

Kelli also had some questions on the salary included in this. DE asked if it included SSI and benefits in the amounts. Lucas responded no; it is base only. Lucas once again wanted to make aware that this budget was being submitted

on Friday, August 25th. She reiterated this program will not add any financial impact on the county. Zero financial strain to grow their programs.

KRISTINIA HAMMACK, AUDITOR

a) Additional Appropriations

- COUNTY GENERAL-CORONER-FUEL & OIL-
#1000.23101.00000.0007--\$400.00

There is a balance of \$121.96 left in the original appropriation. June 14th was the last time the vehicle was filled up. \$478.04 has been spent for the first six months of the year, and only \$600 was budgeted for 2023.

PM made a motion to accept, seconded by KH. Motion carried 6-0.

- COUNTY GENERAL-CORONER; AUTOPSY FEES-
#1000.31700.00000.0007--\$10,000.00

There is approximately \$1300-\$1400 remaining in the 2023 budget. The office has had sixteen autopsies already in 2023. \$10,000 should cover approximately six autopsies.

KH made motion to accept, seconded by PM. Motion carried 6-0

- COUNTY GENERAL-CORONER; BODY COOLER
#1000.44500.00000.0007--\$20,000.00

The current cooler utilized by the coroner is being used for only 1 person. A rack can be utilized to hold additional bodies; however, their office does not have the manpower to lift a body to an additional rack in the cooler.

A three-person cooler costs \$11,000-\$13,000 plus shipping and installation.

A company out of Louisville provided a price of \$17,599, which includes shipping and installation for a three-to-four-person walk-in cooler.

Taylor has been asking for this for a year, and was told last year he would be made aware when ARP funds became available to county agencies, and that was last July/August. He states he has still not received notice.

DE stated that the Spencer County Coroner does have a cooler at Chrisney that he can use. Taylor verified this but it is contingent on if she has room. In addition, the coroner's office has to transport the body there, which takes the coroner vehicle out of service. In addition, he feels this is an inconvenience to Spencer County, as they have to meet them in Chrisney to allow access to their cooler. PM asked how many times have they needed to use Spencer County, with Taylor responding three times, plus they have used Erin Fuller once who charged \$50/day for four days.

SG stated the Council normally requires bids. He asked Taylor if he had bids, which he did not but said he could get quotes. The prices he currently has are from March for single rolling coolers and the price keeps going up. Prices will be emailed to the Council.

KH asked Commissioner Cole, who was in the audience, if this is something ARP could possibly look at? Sherri Flynn, member of the ARP committee, who was also in the audience responded. She stated that ARP committee was not made aware when money would be opened up to county agencies. This information was given to one individual member who is no longer an ARP member, and this information was not passed on to the committee. She did not want it to sound as if the ARP committee was unresponsive. ARP was opened back up to county official last fall and funds were disbursed/released in December of last year. Taylor questioned how county officials were notified, as he did not receive a notice. Flynn responded it was announced at a meeting and put on the website; they did not notify every county official. SG asked Taylor if he worked with anyone as to where the money would come from to purchase a cooler? Taylor responded no. SG thought maybe it could come out of Tribal.

Commissioner Cole asked for clarification regarding the current cooler. If it had a rack, would it accommodate two bodies? Taylor responded it can hold three bodies. He further stated there is a lift in the coroner's office, but it is situated where it cannot lift into the cooler. DE stated if we have a cooler that accommodates three, he does not understand why we are not using it. If the lift is reconfigured to place bodies in the cooler, this will take care of the problem. The cooler is in good working condition.

SG made a motion to table this request until the next meeting to allow other Council members to visit the coroner's office, seconded by KH. Motion carried 6-0.

- Coroner Taylor has received two grants from CCMS, which is the Coroner's Case Management System through the State Department of Health in the amount of \$500 each. This is not cash money; it has to be used for equipment.
- COUNTY GENERAL-CLERKS OF CIRCUIT COURT; WARRANTS #1000.22300.00000.0001--\$623.94
Clerk Rachel Roark appeared requesting an additional appropriation to purchase checks for child support. At last year's budget, the State of Indiana was going through a new child support system with pilot counties. This system is now not being rolled out indefinitely. Checks were supposed to be sent by the state, but now they are sent by the county. Roark budgeted for a lower number of checks, but now needs to purchase more checks to last through the end of the year.

KH made a motion to accept, seconded by Kelli. Motion carried 5-1 with PM abstaining.

- COUNTY GENERAL-COMMISSIONERS; CARE OF PATIENT INST #1000.39106.00000.0068--\$82,525.63
This is for juvenile detention at Vincennes. This amount is for expenditure for June and July. The county is averaging \$40,000/month for the last three months. The county has already spent \$153,000, with only \$70,000 budgeted. With five more months in the year, that would be an additional \$200,000 for a possible total of \$353,000 if the charges stay the same as they are now. This is a huge hit to County General. Kelli asked if there is any reimbursement from the state or anyone we can call? Hammack was not aware of any. Kelli will contact the State Board of Accounts and check on this.

PM made a motion to accept, seconded by SG. Motion carried 6-0

- COUNTY GENERAL-CIRCUIT COURT; PAUPER COMPENSATION #1000.31104.00000.00000.0232--\$115,000.00
Kelli stated she was in attendance at the Commissioner's meeting and some of these bills are from 2020, 2021, and 2022. She had a conversation with the Judge for quarterly payments or options for a certain amount of time to invoice. Kelli can talk with the Pauper Board to see if they have any ideas of how to get this under control. She would like to get it where the county is paying bills for the year we are in. Maybe the Pauper Board can be approached to have a discussion. Currently pauper fees can be billed up to 45 days after the case is closed, so if the case goes on for two years, they then have 45 days to bill. Hammack stated the county can get reimbursed up to 40% by the State but the bills must be paid in order to get this reimbursement.

KH made a motion to approve, seconded by PM. Motion carried 6-0.

- CUMULATIVE CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT- COURTHOUSE; SOFTWARE MAINTENANCE #1138.36500.00000.0161--\$4,347.28
Auditor Hammack stated the Cumulative Cap fund #1138 account 36500 Software Maintenance was budgeted for \$195,000. She has added up all of the county software contract amounts, and she does not feel enough money was originally appropriated. She feels that Steele Benefits was not included in this amount. The county pays Steele Benefits \$750/month along with \$1100/year for open enrollment. As of the date this information was printed, there is a claim docket for \$3000 set to pay, leaving \$9002.72. We have An Island \$8100/quarter, and have one more quarter to pay them. There is still \$5250 left to pay Steele Benefits, which totals \$13,350.00, and there is only \$9,002.72 left in the budget, leaving this short \$4,347.28 to the end of the year. Possibly prices came in higher than what they were at budget time.

SG made a motion to approve, seconded by GG. Motion carried 3-0.

- PLATBOOK FUND-AUDITOR; EQUIPMENT REPAIR #1181.44500.00000.0000--\$5,899.00
Auditor Hammack stated this is coming before the Council for the paperwork for the purchase of the new copier. The purchase was already approved, but this is only the paperwork. \$5,899 is being paid out of Plat Book.

KH made a motion to approve, seconded by SG. Motion carried 6-0

- RIVERBOAT-COMMISSIONERS; CONSULTING SERVICES #119131101.00000.0068--\$18,178.71
This amount is needed due to a bill received from Waggoner, Irwin & Scheele for the wage study that was performed in 2022. The bill was received in February 2023 and paid out of 2023 appropriation, which then runs things a

little short. Also, the Council approved an additional appropriation for Baker Tilly.

SG made the motion to accept, seconded by Kelli. Motion carried 6-0.

b) TRANSFERS

Circuit Court

FROM: 2100.00316.00000.0232 Chemical Testing Fee \$10,000.00

TO: 2100.21301.00000.0232 Chemical Test \$10,000.00

This transfer is to cover supplies and testing throughout Cordant for the Probation Department's clients.

PM made a motion to accept, seconded by GG. Motion carried 6-0.

COUNCIL

- a) The Commissioners approved at their last meeting the proposed revisions to the Personnel Policy Handbook. Vacation/personal time is being changed as to how it is accrued. Currently the employee works the entire year and then earns vacation time the following year on their anniversary date. With the new policy, employees will earn 1/12 of their vacation each month beginning January 2024. This new policy is good for new hires, as they do not have to wait to have time off. Current employees will still earn their vacation time they are allotted in 2023, and also begin earning 1/12 of their vacation.

Verbiage was also cleared up as to reporting to the Administrator position, which was absorbed in the Auditor's office. In 2024, it will now be Payroll/ HR Administrator. The verbiage for exempt employees was cleared up to state they are not awarded comp time, but are allowed flexibility in their schedules.

Research was done with the Fair Labor Standard Act and the State Board of Accounts. Based on the private sector, a salaried exempt employee would not clock in and out. However, based on Indiana Code 5-11-9-4 trumps this. Exempt employees in government do have to log their time, but are not paid off of time worked.

County vehicles were not allowed to leave the county without the Commissioner's approval. Verbiage was cleared up stating county vehicles can only be used for county business.

Kelli asked if this policy was reviewed by the county attorney? Hammack replied yes, Kelli Wilgus kept really good notes which cut down on the county expense. It was then sent to the county attorney for review, and then to Waggoner, Irwin & Scheele. The committee did all the work and they were basically reviewing.

SG made a motion to approve, seconded by Kelli. Motion carried 6-0.

- b) While reviewing the Personnel Policy Handbook, it was brought to the attention and based on the State Board of Accounts investigation that there is not an on-site supervisor at the Health Department. The health officer verbally stated he does not look at timecards, does not sign timecards, nor will he be doing this. With a non-exempt employee, you have to have an on-site supervisor verifying the time. A revision was made to the position of the Public Health Nurse Supervisor is now the Supervisor of the Health Department.

KH made a motion to accept, seconded by PM. Motion carried 3-0/

- c) According to Indiana Code 6-1.1-17-3-6, it is required that the County Council at their first meeting in August are to review the estimated property tax levy limits and the estimated reductions to budgets due to circuit breaker amounts for each non-binding taxing unit. It is the Council's recommendation that the budgets remain at or below the state average growth quotient and to keep in mind that revenue lost from property tax caps must be captured by the taxing unit.

The Council may make recommendations based upon it review, but such recommendations and comments are entirely non-binding. The Council's input is therefore proffered in an advisory capacity.

DE made a motion on behalf of the Council that the budgets remain at or below the state average growth quotient, keeping in mind that revenues lost from property tax caps must be captured by the taxing unit. Seconded by PM. Motion carried 6-0.

- d) Auditor Hammack notified the Council members that their 2024 Budget Packets will be available for pick-up on September 7th.
- e) She wanted to commend the Assessor's office and the Auditor's office for the diligent work that has been done. Legislation made a lot of late changes, and due to these late changes, the Auditor's office did not receive the rollover numbers

from the Assessor's office until August 1st. Technically August 1st is the day the Auditor is supposed to submit certified assessed values for 2023/pay 2024. The Assessor's office and Auditor's office worked diligently to have everything entered in LOW with numbers from both offices matching exactly by August 11th. The process was started August 7th and the process was completed August 15th, eight days where typically the office has the whole month of July to do this. Hammack worked with DLGF (Department of Local Government Finance) because TIF's have been dissolved, and all paperwork had to be in line before assessed values could be certified. Assessed values were certified by August 16th. It was a very quick turnaround with a lot of hard work with offices working together. The Auditor could then proceed with budget and will have books available to Council members on September 7th in order to review them before the first reading of the budget on September 13th. Budget workshops are the following week, September 19-21.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:22 p.m. CST.

KH made a motion to adjourn, seconded by GG. Motion carried 6-0.

Kristinia Hammack announced that a Special Meeting for the first reading of the 2024 budgets will be September 13, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. The next regular meeting of the County Council will be held on Thursday, September 28, 2023, at 5pm CST.

Minutes approved this 24^h day of August, 2023

President, Perry County Council

*Minutes prepared by:
Kristinia L. Hammack, Perry County Auditor*