

JULY 19TH, 2023

The Jay County Council met in regular session on Wednesday, July 19, 2023, at 6:00 PM, in the auditorium at the Jay County Courthouse. Attending were, Harold Towell, Cindy Bracy, David Haines, Matt Minnich, Randy May, attorney Wes Schemenaur, Auditor Emily Franks, and Jeanne Houchins, presiding. Cindy Bracy made a motion to approve the minutes from the executive session and regular session on June 14th, 2023. Faron Parr seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Additional Appropriations:

COUNTY GENERAL

1000-232-30-0021	Circuit Court- Postage	\$1,000
Faron Parr made a motion to approve the additional from County General- Circuit Court. Harold Towell seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.		
1000-068-30-0073	Commissioners- Burial of Soldiers	\$5,000
Faron Parr made a motion to approve the additional from County General-Commissioners. Matt Minnich seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.		
1000-380-20-0040	Jail- Medical & Hospital	\$75,000
Faron Parr made a motion to approve the additional from County General-Jail. Matt Minnich seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.		

DRUG FREE COMMUNITIES

1148-001-30-0126	Jay County Organizations	\$15,477.83
Cindy Bracy made a motion to approve the additional from Drug Free Communities Fund. Dave Haines seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.		

JURY FEES

2503-232-10-0089	Circuit Court-Jurors	\$10,000
Dave Haines made a motion to approve the additional appropriations from the Jury Fee Fund. Harold Towell seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote. Cash will need to be moved to cover the additional appropriation.		

RETIREMENT CENTER DONATIONS

4102-001-30-0211	Resident Activities	\$2,000
Cindy Bracy made a motion to approve the additional appropriation from the Retirement Center Donations. Faron Parr seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.		

TITLE IV-E REIMBURSEMENT

8891-001-30-0087	Pauper Counsel	\$250
Cindy Bracy made a motion to approve the additional appropriation from Title IV-E fund. Harold Towell seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.		

TRANSFERS

1000-622-20-0022 Co. General- Retirement Center (Gas, Lube & Oil) to 1000-622-30-0046 (Misc. Expense) \$2,000
Faron Parr made a motion to approve the Retirement Center transfer. Randy May seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

1138-001-40-0022 Cum Cap Development (Equipment) to 1138-001-30-0084 (Repair Buildings & Structures) \$17,850
Cindy Bracy made a motion to approve the transfer from Cum Cap Dev. Dave Haines seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

1181-001-20-0075 County Plat Book (EGIS Plat Supplies) to 1181-001-30-011 (Professional Services) \$286.
Dave Haines made a motion to approve the commissioner's transfer. Faron Parr seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

PERMANENT TRANSFER

Dave Haines made a motion to approve the permanent transfer of \$10,000 cash from County General (1000) to Jury Fees (2503) to cover the additional appropriation. Matt Minnich seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

CF-1s

The following compliance forms for county granted abatements will be verified by the following council members:
Minnich Poultry, LLC and Reier Pullets- Cindy Bracy
Next Era Energy- Dave Haines

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Heath Butz, administrator, came to the council to discuss the new local public health funding from the state. He has learned most counties are opting in to the new program which makes it more likely the county will receive the minimum amount of \$222,698.25 instead of the maximum amount of \$296,931 for 2024. The health maintenance and trust funds will no longer be funded, if the county opts into the new funding. The department has been looking at new positions with the funding including a school health liaison who will be a link between the health department and the school. The job would include any schools in the county including private schools. All screenings and initiatives on the new health program would be handled by the liaison. They are also considering adding a health educator position. They will do stand-up programming for their health department. Mr. Butz is hoping the new program would increase the overall health of the county. Jay County is currently ranked 90th out of 92 counties on obesity, 75th for smoking, and 77th in infant mortality. The position would work with other health entities in the community including the Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition, Purdue Extension, Department of Child Services, YSB,

Healthy Community Alliance, Pregnancy Care Center or other organizations in the public health realm. The new position would also coordinate getting people connected to the right resources or services.

The department will be allowed to do utilize pass thru funding. Their idea is to help fund those who are already doing the work in the community. The entities receiving the money would still county towards meeting the required core health requirements. Every year they will be allowed to take 10% out for capital expenses and bank it towards a new building. Mr. Butz has been working with the state to look for new opportunities for programming. He worries if the county does not opt into the program now, the money might not be available in the future. He also advised the council the Health Board make up has been changed July 1, 2023 to 5 commissioner appoints and 1 fiscal body appointment. Another change will be the largest city in the county will give 3 recommendations to the commissioners for appointments. Cindy Bracy questioned what the next steps were to opt into the program. Mr. Butz indicated a form will need to be approved and signed by the commissioners by September 1, 2023. It is a two-year commitment and will need to be redone again after the two years.

AMENDMENT ORDINANCE 2022-11

The personnel committee has made the recommendation to amend Ordinance 2022-11 to allow those positions already funded in the budget to hire without receiving approval from the personnel committee. It would not impact a new position which would still be required to seek approval from the personnel committee and council prior to hiring. Matt Minnich questioned if the exit interviews were still be completed by the departments. Jeanne Houchins indicated most had been completing the form with the exception of those who are quitting without two weeks' notice.

CITIZEN CONCERNS

Two residents from the area of 200 E and Treaty Line Road in Pike Township came to the council to express their concerns regarding a potential new solar farm project. They recently had two surveyors from Skycrest Solar, Invenegy surveying on their property line. Their concerns included when or if they would receive notification of a new project and the setbacks for a solar farm. Mr. Schemenaur, county attorney, informed them it would be a lengthy process of noticing and hearings first through the Jay Portland Building & Planning and the Jay County Plan Commission. The company is most likely first surveying to see if the property would be suitable for a solar farm. The council would only become involved in the project if the company seeks an abatement. The council recommended they start with building and planning regarding the requirements and process for noticing and approval.

Richard & Janet Emery, 4625 S 700 E Portland, came to the council to express their concerns over a recent incident in the early morning hours of June 14 related to the sheriff's department. There were two impaired individuals hanging around their property in which he called 911. One individual was belligerent and tried to get into their home and one individual ended up passed in the yard. They were told by dispatchers the county officer on duty was busy on a call and a Portland Police Officer had been called to the scene. The deputy on duty had been on a call to transport an individual to Ball Memorial Hospital in Muncie for a psychiatric hold. The couple indicated it took roughly 30 minutes for the Portland Police Officer to respond and close to an hour for a Jay County Sheriff's deputy to arrive on scene. Mr. Emery questioned the council who was in charge of scheduling citing only one deputy was on duty at night but had heard from another source on June 21, 2023 during the daytime 7 county officers showed up within 10 minutes of the incident.

Jeanne Houchins who had spoken to the sheriff about the incident, stated if the officer was not required to take the psychiatric hold transport to Ball, they would have answered the call. The practice of other departments picking up emergency calls is not that uncommon of a practice. She also referenced the amount of time it would take to get to the call geographically as they lived in the far southeast section of the county. Mr. Emery again questioned why seven officers were able to come during the day and why they did not schedule more during the night shift. Ms. Houchins stated the administrative officers on duty during the day were not necessarily road officers. However, they might go out depending on the severity of the call. Mrs. Emery expressed her frustration about no one taking any responsibility for the incident after speaking to the Sheriff on two separate occasions. Mr. Emery echoed his wife's sentiments in that no one was seeming to understand their frustration over the issue. He had also asked for charges to be pressed on the individuals for trespassing which he felt Sheriff Newton discounted. Cindy Bracy suggested the chief deputy on call should be the one to take the prisoner to Muncie or fill in for the deputy to allow one deputy to be available for calls. Ms. Houchins added part time merit deputies have been hired as of the first of July. Mr. Schemenaur answered the council body is very limited in that the council can only express their concerns with the elected official.

With no further business for the council Faron Parr made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Matt Minnich seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

JAY COUNTY COUNCIL

NAY

AYE










ATTEST: 
JAY COUNTY AUDITOR