

FEBRUARY 19TH, 2025

The Jay County Council met in session on February 19th, 2025, at 6:00 PM, in the auditorium at the Jay County Courthouse. Attending was Michael Brewster, Randy May, Harold Towell, Bryan Alexander, Cindy Bracy, attorney Wes Schemenaur, auditor Emily Franks, and Matt Minnich, president presiding. Absent was Faron Parr. Cindy Bracy made a motion to approve the minutes from January 8, 2025. Michael Brewster seconded the motion and the motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Additional Appropriations:

COUNTY GENERAL

1000-006-30-0046	Surveyor- Misc. Expense	\$500.00
1000-006-40-0016	Surveyor- Trucks	\$55,000.00
1000-068-30-0084	Commissioners- Repair Buildings & Structures	\$25,000.00

Brad Daniels, surveyor, explained the misc. expense was for the addition of reimbursing CDL physical and licensing for the two positions that require a CDL. The request for a truck was not included on the budget for 2025. Ms. Franks, explained the council had appropriated \$50,000 for the original deductible for the water damage. The total amount was not spent by the end of the year and needed reappropriated to pay the remainder of claims. Bryan Alexander made a motion to approve the additional appropriations for county general for a total of \$80,500. Randy May seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

LIT-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1112-001-30-0027	Contractual Services-ECI Regional Planning Dist.	\$63,000.00
1112-001-30-0027	Contractual Services-JCDC	\$100,000.00

Angela Paxson, JCDC board president, gave a brief update on their search for a new director. The agreement and \$100,000 would only be for the first six months of 2025. Duane Monroe, commissioner, spoke in favor of the additional and explained the commissioners would review their needs again in June after a director was hired for the remaining six months. The contract with ECI Regional Planning is for services through August and requires 60 days' notice to terminate. Mr. Schemenaur cautioned against terminating the contract before the close of the Owner-Occupied Rehab grant. Bryan Alexander made a motion to approve the two additional appropriations for Economic Development for \$163,000. Michael Brewster seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

PROBATION USER FEE FUND

2501-001-40-0011	Office Equipment	\$990.00
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Judge Hutchison explained the equipment would be utilized by probation for digital screening. Cindy Bracy made a motion to approve the additional appropriation for Adult Probation user fee. Bryan Alexander seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

RETIREMENT CENTER DONATIONS

4102-001-30-0211	Resident Activities	\$1,000.00
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Cindy Bracy made a motion to approve the additional appropriation for Retirement Center Donations. Michael Brewster seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

INFRASTRUCTURE

4908-001-30-0142	Repairs-Retirement Center	\$26,870.12
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Cindy Bracy explained the repairs would be for the downstairs men's bathroom. Randy May made a motion to approve the additional appropriation out of infrastructure. Cindy Bracy seconded the motion and the motion passed by majority vote, with Harold Towell opposing the motion.

INNKEEPERS TAX

7304-001-30-0027	Contractual Services	\$131,346.91
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Bryan Alexander made a motion to approve the additional appropriation for Innkeepers Tax. Cindy Bracy seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

ARP-2021 CLFRF

8950-001-30-0148	Professional Services-REA	\$2,475.07
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Cindy Bracy asked for an update on the project. Mr. Schemenaur explained there had been a meeting in January with Trevor Friedeberg from the regional READI and believe the grant was approved, but still had to go through the state approval. The advisor asked the county to polish up the request since the project was scaled back and revised from the original request. Due to the project being scaled back, there was no private dollars. However, the county could provide a letter of interest from a developer if the infrastructure is in place. At least one developer signed a letter for \$3.75 million in mixed use structures for private development. Cecil Penland, REA, has been revising the letters for the grant application before it is resubmitted to the state. There was no firm timeline given for when the project might be awarded. Mr. Schemenaur also informed the council REA was looking at revising a contract with the Redevelopment Commission for the remainder.

Ed Curtin, CWC Latitudes, had asked for two council volunteers to approach the City of Portland to partner on the project along with Chad Aker as the commissioner president. There was no decision made on the volunteers. Bryan Alexander noted the commissioners had ownership of the project and was looking for a commitment from the commissioners at their next meeting to move forward with the project. He also wanted to clarify it would not be a \$25 million dollar project for the county, but closer to \$3 million to get the initial infrastructure in place. Mrs. Bracy questioned if the county would still need an easement to hook up to the existing city infrastructure. Mr. Schemenaur stated they now believe the original information given to REA might not be accurate and another option might be available. The next steps would be confirming that information, if the county moves forward. Michael Brewster made a motion to approve the additional appropriation for ARP. Randy May seconded the motion and the motion passed by majority vote, with Cindy Bracy and Harold Towell opposing the motion.

9116-Community Correction Grant

9116-001-10-0017	Social Security	\$10,040.00
9116-001-10-0018	PERF	\$14,699.00
9116-001-10-0048	Executive Director	\$74,298.00
9116-001-10-0049	Health Insurance	\$2,464.00
9116-001-10-0127	Deputy Director	\$56,939.00

Cindy Bracy made a motion to approve the additional appropriations for the 2025 Community Corrections grant as presented for \$158,440. Bryan Alexander seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Transfers:

Commissioners

1000-068-10-0018 Employer PERF to 1000-068-10-0051 Workers Compensation \$10,836.00

Emily Franks, auditor, explained there were \$117,000 in claims in 2023 which increased to \$190,000 in 2024. They were trending for only about \$40,000 in claims until the last few months. There will be a safety awareness training for employees to help mitigate future claims. Bryan Alexander made a motion to approve the transfer to workers compensation. Randy May seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Highway

1176-003-10-0061 Unemployment Compensation to 1176-003-10-0051 Workers Compensation \$1,000.00

Cindy Bracy made a motion to approve the transfer to workers compensation. Michael Brewster seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

JAY COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY APPOINTMENT

Liz Lawson was recommended for appointment to the Jay County Public Library Board. Bryan Alexander made a motion to approve the recommendation as presented for Liz Lawson. Michael Brewster seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

PETTY CASH FUND- RETIREMENT CENTER

Cindy Bracy explained the department was requesting a petty cash fund in the amount of \$200 to reimburse small items purchased for the center. Matt Minnich questioned the avenues the department could use to purchase items currently and what documentation would be needed for the fund. Emily Franks, auditor, explained they had a line of credit a True Value, but other departments have credits at Menards, Lowes and Hometown Hardware. The director also has access to a Walmart and County Credit card for purchases. They would be responsible for following the county claims procedures in not paying for sales tax or other unallowable expenses. Receipts and proper documentation would be required to reimburse any expenditures of the fund. Cindy Bracy made a motion to establish a petty cash fund for the department of \$200. Randy May seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Per IC 36-1-8-3 The fiscal body of a political subdivision may establish a petty cash fund for any of its offices in a like manner to that prescribed:

(b) The custodian of a petty cash fund shall use it to pay small or emergency items of operating expense. A receipt shall be taken for each expenditure and made from the fund.

(c) The custodian of a petty cash fund shall periodically file a voucher, with all original receipts totaling the cash claimed expended being attached to it, so that the fund can be reimbursed for expenditures from it. Reimbursements must be approved and made in the same manner as is required for other expenditures of the political subdivision.”

A claim for expenditures must be prepared and filed for reimbursement to the petty cash fund. Such reimbursement shall be approved, allowed and paid in the same manner as other claims.

RESOLUTION 2025-03 DESIGNATION OF VOTER CENTER COUNTY

Melissa Elliott, clerk, came to the council to discuss the possibility of changing Jay County to a voter center county. She explained they would like to look into it this year, since it is a non-voting year. They estimate it would be cheaper option due to decreased polling rental and election worker costs. There are currently 65 out of 92 counties in the state that are voter center counties. Most people are voting early than on election day. Cindy Bracy questioned if there were any downsides to becoming a voter center county. Mrs. Elliott believed the biggest downside would be a voter not having a polling location in their specific area. However, it would be one of the items the election board would look at through their process. She estimated there would be 3-4 voting centers compared to the current 8 polling places.

Whereas, Indiana Code 3-11-18.1 allows counties to adopt the vote center model, and

Whereas, the County Council of Jay County approves the designation of Jay County as a vote center county and,

Whereas, the county election board has the responsibility for properly drafting a vote center plan for Jay County, which will take effect upon unanimous vote of the county election board and making sure the plan is properly filed with the Indiana Election division; Be it so resolved by the Jay County Council of Jay County that Jay County is approved to operate as a vote center county, upon the required approval and filing of the county vote center plan.

Bryan Alexander made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-03. Michael Brewster seconded the motion and the motion passed by majority vote with Cindy Bracy voting against the motion.

RITTER STRATEGIC SERVICES- COUNTY WIDE RADIOS

Emily Franks, auditor, explained the commissioners had approved an amendment with Ritter Strategic Services at their meeting on February 10th, 2025. The amendment was to include the option of a standalone system to include non-emergency services for an additional \$40,000. The commissioners’ recommendation was to pay the additional expense from Economic Development windfarm as was used for phase one. She will advertise the additional appropriation out of that fund for March unless the council would prefer a different fund be used. Bryan Alexander and Cindy Bracy spoke against the amendment due to the additional expense to review the additional option after already getting a recommendation from a professional. Matt Minnich explained as a member of the stakeholder group, they had agreed the IPSC system seemed like the best option until the cost had been reported. He added for \$40,000 and a couple more months, the county would be able to make a complete decision between the two. Michael Brewster also spoke in opposition of the amendment while he understands having options, the users of the system are against a standalone system. The auditor will put the additional appropriation in for March out of Economic Development Windfarm for a vote.

SALARY AMENDMENT ORDINANCE 2025-03

Emily Franks, auditor, presented ordinance 2025-03 an amendment to the 2025 salary ordinance. The amendment includes small changes to the county fringe portion of health insurance including a .25 cent increase monthly to the HRA plans and a \$6.50 reduction for the traditional plans. A credit has been given by PHP that would take a one-time reduction of \$362.90. The amendment also included language for reimbursing CDL physicals and licenses if required to be held for their job as well as a boot reimbursement for surveyor and highway employees who average at least 20 hours a week up to \$100 every two years. Lastly a clerical error for the part time rate for the assessors’ office, a rate added for Recorder’s perpetuation fund for the recorder to pay part time, and a change from 40 hours a week to 35 hours a week for the community corrections administrative assistant. Bryan Alexander questioned the additional cost to the county for the changes. Ms. Franks explained they should all be a savings to the county outside of the CDL physical and licensing reimbursement which

was already approved earlier in the meeting. Bryan Alexander made a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-03 as presented. Michael Brewster seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

PTRC SUPPLEMENTAL ALLOCATION

Emily Franks, auditor, gave a brief overview of the county Property Tax Replacement Credit making up 24% of the county's Local Income Tax Rate. The county had received a supplemental distribution of \$181,965 in 2023 and \$644,438 in 2024. She estimates an additional \$800,000 will be distributed to the county for 2025. The council can allocate the distribution for not more than three years after the money is received, if no action is taken, the entire amount will be available in the ensuing year. The rate will already be higher for qualified properties this year due to an increase of \$1,047,839 over the prior year. A list of unknown factors moving forward include; the 2026 LIT distribution, assessed values for next year, pending state legislation affecting levy, tax assessments, deductions and credits. She explained depending on those factors it might be best to use the supplemental next year to offset the decreased credit rate to the taxpayer. Bryan Alexander made a motion to retain the additional PTRC supplemental monies for 2025. Cindy Bracy seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

REMOTE MEETINGS






Cindy Bracy requested the county look into a policy to allow members attend meetings remotely. Mr. Schemenaur agreed to send a sample policy for members to review for their next meeting. He also added members would need to be able to be seen and heard on in person and on the livestream or recording.

With no further business for the council, Michael Brewster made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Bryan Alexander seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

JAY COUNTY COUNCIL

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ATTEST: 
JAY COUNTY AUDITOR