

APRIL 9, 2025

The Jay County Council met in session on April 9th, 2025, at 6:00 PM, in the auditorium at the Jay County Courthouse. Attending was Michael Brewster, Randy May, Harold Towell, Bryan Alexander, Faron Parr, Cindy Bracy, attorney Wes Schemenaur, auditor Emily Franks, and Matt Minnich, president presiding. Bryan Alexander made a motion to approve the minutes from the joint and regular session on March 12th, 2025. Michael Brewster seconded the motion and the motion was approved by unanimous vote.

COUNTY GENERAL

1000-068-30-0051	Commissioners- Professional Services	\$3,760
Bryan Alexander made a motion to approve the additional appropriations for county general as presented. Faron Parr seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.		

LIT- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1112-001-30-0027	Contractual Services- ECI Regional Planning	\$3,000.00
An additional appropriation for contractual services with ECI Regional Planning District for help with Community Crossings Grants for Bryant, Pennville and Salamonia were presented for council approval. Faron Parr made a motion to approve the additional appropriations as presented. Bryan Alexander seconded the motion and the motion passed by majority vote with Harold Towell opposing the motion.		

ARR-2021 CLFRF

8950-001-30-0148	Professional Services- REA	\$2,200.06
An additional appropriation for two invoices from REA related to the 68 A development was presented for council approval. Bryan Alexander made a motion to approve the additional appropriation as presented. Faron Parr seconded the motion and the motion passed by majority vote with Cindy Bracy and Harold Towell voting against the motion.		

Bryan Alexander gave an update on the most recent 68 Acre Ad Hoc Committee. The meeting was with members from the Jay County Council, Jay County Commissioners, Jay County Auditor, Jay County Redevelopment Commission, Portland City Mayor, Portland City Clerk Treasurer, Portland Redevelopment Commission along with Ed Curtin from CWC Latitudes, and Cecil Penland from REA. They are going to greenlight the survey work in the next week and get results in the next 60 days for what is needed. It will provide a more accurate number for all parties involved to be able to make a decision. The biggest problem right now is whether the READI 2.0 money will be released by the state. The thought of the committee was to let them do the survey work and to see what can be done with and without the READI monies. He informed the council he believed the meeting was a good step to get all the parties informed and at the table.

8950-001-30-0148	Professional Services- Ritter Strategic	\$4,500.00
An additional appropriation for an invoice to Ritter Strategic Services related to the Countywide Radio system was presented for council approval. Michael Brewster made a motion to approve the additional appropriation as presented. Faron Parr seconded the motion and the motion passed by majority vote with Harold Towell voting against the motion.		
8950-001-30-0239	Jay County Redevelopment Commission- 68 Acres	\$1,281,946.07

An additional appropriation for the amount of the interlocal agreement with the Jay County Redevelopment Commission was presented for council approval. Bryan Alexander made a motion to approve the additional appropriation as presented. Michael Brewster seconded the motion and the motion passed by majority vote with Harold Towell and Cindy Bracy opposing the motion.

TRANSFERS

County General- Treasurer 1000-003-20-0011 (Office Supplies) to 1000-003-30-0016 (Equipment Repair) \$1,000.00
Bryan Alexander made a motion to approve the transfer for the treasurer's office. Michael Brewster seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

County General- Superior Court 1000-201-10-0039 (Wages-Overtime) to 1000-201-10-0064 (Translator) \$2,000.00
Faron Parr made a motion to approve the transfer from Superior Court. Randy May seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

JAY COUNTY REDEVELOPMENT ANNUAL- TIF REPORT

The 2024 Jay County Redevelopment Commission annual TIF report was presented to council for their review. The report is required to be submitted to the DLGF Gateway portal by April 15 annually. Emily Franks, auditor, reviewed the report including members, balances, revenues, expenditures and parcels for the year of 2024. Faron Parr made a motion to accept the report as presented for submission. Randy May seconded the motion and the motion passed by majority vote with Harold Towell voting against the motion.

JAY COUNTY SOLID WASTE APPOINTMENT

Randy May originally appointed to the Jay County Solid Waste board in January is unable to make their scheduled meetings. Harold Towell offered to take over his appointment of the Jay County Solid Waste. Cindy Bracy made a motion to appoint Harold Towell to the Jay County Solid Waste District Board to replace Randy May. Bryan Alexander seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

JAY COUNTY COUNTRY LIVING FINANCIAL REVIEW

Emily Franks, auditor, provided five years of financials to the council for their review following the meeting in March 2025. The financials included the revenue and expenditures by department and account. There was a separate section of costs associated with the running of the facility paid out of other funds. Mr. Minnich had requested the number of residents on RCAP during the time to help understand the increase in RCAP revenue. The number of residents has remained relatively steady over the last five years, but the number on RCAP have increased from the end of 2022 through 2024. At the same time, the amount received through private pay has decreased in comparison. Mrs. Bracy explained that RCAP had not always been applied for when residents moved in, but that is now handled immediately.

Bryan Alexander asked Mrs. Bracy for her point of view on the center as she has spent the most time on the center. Cindy Bracy reported that all but one resident is paying at the facility. Previously, there had been no staff training, or safety and discipline protocols which are now in place. They are working on a partnership with Second Harvest to lower their food costs, which was one of their largest expenses. However, the partnership is new and is not reflected yet in the budget. John Hemmelgam, director Building & Planning, had toured the

building for maintenance items needed. She feels confident the department is on the upswing between 2022 and 2024 and they are headed in the right direction.

Mr. Alexander asked to see the study completed by the committee and would like to see the plan over the next five years. As otherwise they would just be going off thoughts and feelings. Mrs. Bracy added they are looking to create a friend of the center, non-profit, to remove some of the burden off the taxpayer. Mr. Alexander also questioned if there was a way to leverage services or the facility to help more than 30 residents. Mrs. Bracy relayed her vision for the center that included a partnership with the food bank and health department for people in the community to get food at the facility and open the facility for events for the community. She would also like to see a tiny home village on the property. Mr. Alexander clarified he wanted to know what could be done with the current facility. Mrs. Bracy explained some rooms could serve as doubles, which would be a max of 40 residents under the current configuration.

Harold Towell who is also a member of the Jay County Country Living advisory board expressed concerns he had with the facility including a capacity of more than 20 residents, stating there seemed to be increased issues at 25 residents. He also expressed concerns over financial losses at the center, type of residents housed, back accounts and lack of following rules put in place by the county. Mr. Towell urged those that had not been to the home to tour the entire facility. He added the board had been asked for a projection that had still not be completed. Mrs. Bracy explained the director would have some projections at their next board meeting, but it would not happen overnight. She added while it was a service, they would to their best to break even. Lastly, explaining they did not want to bring in additional residents while trying to fix what was broken.

A brief discussion was had over water problems at the facility. It was unclear whether there were additional water issues besides the arsenic being removed. Mr. Towell believed there was an issue with the number of people allowed to use the well on the property. Mrs. Bracy will check with the Jay County Health Department on the matter. Michael Brewster questioned the number of full time and part time employees, noting over \$150,000 spent in part time wages in 2024. The superintendent is a full-time position along with three other full-time employees. The remaining employees covering nights and weekends are part time. Ms. Franks explained the director continued to be paid out of the director account regardless of part time status.

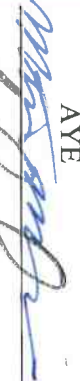
Matt Minnich summed up the discussion with his thoughts. He noted that both county time and money had been spent on the matter. There were concerns brought up by Mr. Towell that he would like looked into more. The facility is an older building and asked if the county was prepared to maintain it. He cited that those points would need to be answered if the council decides to continue funding the facility. However, if there were ways to repurpose the facility or think outside the box for more revenue, he would be interested in hearing those suggestions. There has been improvement in the number of those paying and the number of residents, but there are still seeing similar losses to 2021. Lastly, he spoke on potential liability concerns that should be addressed at some point to see if it can be made better or would remain a liability. At that point it would be what level of risk would everyone accept for the facility.


With no further business for the council, Michael Brewster made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Harold Towell seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:06 p.m.


JAY COUNTY COUNCIL


AYE


NAY












ATTEST: 

JAY COUNTY AUDITOR