

HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING FEBRUARY 22, 2011

The Howard County Council met in Regular Session on Tuesday, February 22, 2011 at 4:00 p.m. in Hearing Room 338 of the Administration Center. Those in attendance included President Richard Miller, Vice President Stan Ortman and members Joseph Pencek, Dwight Singer and John Roberts. Also in attendance were Attorney Larry Murrell and Auditor Ann Wells.

The meeting was called to order by Sheriff Steve Rogers and conducted by President Miller.

IN THE MATTER OF APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the January 25, 2011 Regular Meeting, having been previously submitted and reviewed, were approved on a motion made by Mr. Ortman and seconded by Mr. Pencek.

IN THE MATTER OF ORDINANCE NO. 2011-HCCO-06 – ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS:

Ordinance No. 2011-HCCO-06 – Additional Appropriations was read in full one time by Auditor Ann Wells and acted upon as follows:

		AMOUNT REQUESTED:	APPROVED:
<u>015</u>	<u>Howard County Storm-Water Fund</u>		
01522.00	PERF	\$ 10,790.00	\$ 10,790.00

In the absence of MS4 Coordinator Greg Lake, a letter from Mr. Lake was read justifying the additional request. During the 2010 budget process the line item for PERF went from 9.75% to 10%. When Mr. Lake completed the Form 1 spreadsheet, the calculation in his formula had the decimal point in the wrong place. The request was for \$1,198.84 and should have been \$11,988.40. This additional request is to correct the earlier calculation, and will be taken from the MS4 fund (015) and not County General.

A motion was made by Mr. Ortman to approve the request of \$10,790.00 into line item 01522.00, PERF, of the MS4Fund. The motion was seconded by Mr. Singer and carried.

<u>500</u>	<u>CEDIT</u>		
03701.00	New Business Employment Incentive	\$ 5,500.00	\$ Tabled

Two checks were received from previous small businesses that received grants from Howard County but were unable to stay in the downtown area. It is requested that the money that was receipted into the CEDIT Fund be appropriated back on to the New Business Employment Incentive line item.

At the conclusion of ensuing discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Pencek to table this appropriation request. The motion was seconded by Mr. Roberts and carried.

IN THE MATTER OF RESOLUTION NO. 2011-HCCR-05 – TRANSFERS:

Resolution No. 2011-HCCR-05 – Transfers was read in full one time by Auditor Wells and acted upon as follows:

	Transfer From:	To:	Amount Requested	Allowed
<u>138</u>	<u>Howard County CASA Fund</u>			
01115.00	Part-Time	01523.00 Health Insurance	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00

CASA Director Katina Silver is adding vision to her Health plan and needs a transfer from her Part-Time line item to the Health Insurance line item to cover the additional cost that was not budgeted.

The request to transfer \$300.00 from the Part Time line item, 01115.00 to the Health Insurance line item 01523.00, was approved on a motion made by Mr. Ortman and seconded by Mr. Singer.

IN THE MATTER OF A REQUEST TO REHIRE IN THE CLERK’S OFFICE:

Clerk Kim Wilson submitted a request to rehire a Second Deputy Clerk position in the Clerk’s Office. The Clerk’s office has twenty-five thousand new cases and additional help is needed in all three offices. This position was budgeted for 2011. At this time Ms. Wilson answered questions posed by Mr. Miller concerning the printing of the ballots. She informed the Council that in Municipal Districts 1-4 there are no contested races on the Republican Ballot. This would affect 25 precincts. Indiana Code states that if there are no contested races in a Municipal Primary, the County does not have to have ballots for those areas. The estimated savings of not printing ballots, coding memory packs and Auto mark cards for those 25 precincts was \$15,000 to \$20,000. Mr. Ortman believes this would be a great benefit to Howard County and requested that Ms. Wilson obtain a written notice from the Secretary of State’s Office. At the conclusion of ensuing discussion a motion was made by Mr. Singer to approve the replacement request. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pencek and carried.

IN THE MATTER OF ORDINANCE NO. 2011-HCCO-05:

Public Defender Steve Raquet submitted Ordinance No. 2011-HCCO-05, authorizing the Supplemental Public Defender Services Fund. Mr. Raquet reminded the Council of how the money is collected that goes into the Supplemental Public Defender Fund. A motion was made by Mr. Ortman, seconded by Mr. Roberts and carried to approve Ordinance No. 2011-HCCO-05.

IN THE MATTER OF 2011 COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS:

Personnel Director Wanda McKillip submitted and distributed copies of the Council Appointments for 2011, listing the Council members and the organizations they are appointed to. A motion was made by Mr. Ortman to approve the Council Appointments for 2011. The motion was seconded by Mr. Singer and carried.

IN THE MATTER OF THE SHERIFF’S COMMISSARY REPORT:

Sheriff Steve Rogers submitted and reviewed the January 2011 Commissary Report that shows an ending balance of \$34,653.74. The report was accepted by consensus of the Council members in attendance.

IN THE MATTER OF THE STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS:

Board of Commissioner President Tyler Moore submitted the following “2011 Current Condition of the County Address for Howard County, IN” report:

“Mr. Chairman, member of County Council, elected officials, distinguished guests and fellow citizens of Howard County;

It is with great honor and humility that I come before the Council and citizens of Howard County to present what I hope will be the first of many addresses given by the Howard County Board of Commissioners regarding the current state of Howard County. For fear of potential copyright infringements and in true “county commissioner” form, I am pleased to give you the 2011 Current Condition of the County, yes, another ‘CCC’. I will begin by first taking you back about 3 years ago in January 2008, when a young and aspiring citizen was preparing for this first run at local politics. Wanting to prepare himself for the questions and debates along the campaign trail, he solicited the advice of a local attorney who was quite well-versed in local county government, and who had his finger on ‘the pulse’ of issues dealing with local government. It was at that time that this young man was given a list of ‘Major Issues Facing County Government’ to use as a guide to seek information and insight as he sought the support of friends, neighbors, and constituents in his desire to serve the county. Ironically as we fast-forward through 2009, 2010 and into 2011, Howard County Government finds this young man, his fellow commissioners, elected officials and department heads facing the same challenges – while enjoying a few small victories in these areas along the way. This list of ‘Major Issues’ included then and includes now the following: financing county government, our criminal justice system, restructuring county government, infrastructure and MS4 and economic development.

In recent years every county’s branch of local government in the State of Indiana – whether it be city, county, town or township - has experienced economic struggles, and Howard County has been no exception. And because most of the services provided by county governments are mandated by State statute, the challenges both then and now is how these county officials and departments continue to provide the level of services while functioning with less revenues. Contrary to what one might hear on the street or read in print, I believe the employees of Howard County excel in

doing just that. From the Maintenance Department working with fewer employees, department heads hiring to replace staff not increase it, our previous Sheriff and his force constantly finding cost-saving measures at the jail, our current Sheriff restructuring his force, and the due diligence of all during budget hearings, Howard County government has done the best we can to meet the needs expected of the taxpayers while working within the revenues from the taxpayers. Have our efforts been perfect? No one would claim that they have. Have those efforts met every taxpayer's expectations? Of course they haven't. Can we be doing better? Absolutely, and every department is challenged to do just that. But all have worked within their respective budgets to best serve the County and remain accountable to each of us. And with the need for additional funding sources by our departments that may be available through grants or stimulus funds, the commissioners last year enlisted the services of Amy Beechy with Project Matters to meet with each department to assess their respective and immediate needs, in order to assemble a report and potentially investigate and assist in securing potential grant or stimulus funds. This report has been completed and will be reviewed soon by the commissioners to formulate a plan to move forward. Also when many government units were faced with the possibility of a major revenue setback during Chrysler's restructuring in 2009, political barriers were set aside as we successfully partnered with the City of Kokomo, Center Township, Kokomo School Corporation, Northwester School Corporation and our state and federal legislators to negotiate a settlement with 'New Chrysler', not only securing the much needed tax revenues by those involved but also strengthening the community's relationship with Chrysler and reiterating to them our desire to have Chrysler investment in Howard County. And I would be remiss if I didn't take this opportunity to attribute most of that relationship strengthening and increased investment to all the men and women of Howard and surrounding counties that have devoted their careers to the success of Chrysler, as is highlighted in this week's 'Salute to Chrysler' publication by the Kokomo Perspective. Many thanks to you all! It was through that successful, local partnership and because of the quality of workforce at Delphi and GM Holdings that I am confident that our current negotiations with GM will result in the same manner.

Because our elected officials and department heads have history of working selflessly together for the benefit of county taxpayers, Howard County has long been the envy of county's statewide and has proven to be the leader and/or model for said counties in many areas. One area in particular is Howard County's Criminal Justice System, which includes our jail, Kinsey Center, Adult Probation and courts. Year after year Captain Vincent, his officers and his staff have received high accolades from the State for the conditions of both the facilities and inmate care – and all this while facing constant overcrowding issues and much needed upgrades to certain areas. As mentioned earlier Sheriff Talbert prided himself on many of the cost saving measures taken to assist Capt. Vincent in his needs with the facility, while utilizing the skills of those incarcerated to perform various maintenance issues at the jail. Sheriff Talbert also made it through 2010 without the immediate need to purchase any new vehicles as was typically the need in the past. Also, the Inmate Worker Road Crew continues to prove as an asset to the department with the number of hours worked throughout the community, saving thousands of dollars to entities. Consequently the continued success of this program has prompted recent discussions of the possibility of adding a second crew to further benefit our community. Again as mentioned before, Sheriff Rogers began his tenure by restructuring his force by promoting two lieutenants to captain and foregoing the need for a major, all of which will further save Howard County tax dollars. As for the Kinsey Center and Adult Probation, Brent Kelley and Don Travis continue to pursue the necessary funds and training to adequately service the needs of their departments, while saving taxpayer money. Also, the efficiencies of our courts are cause for recognition. The recent addition of video conferencing has resulted in savings of both time and money, Judge Jessup adequately handled one of the busiest courts in the state, and the Drug Court established by Judge Menges continues to help increase rehabilitation and decrease recidivism. So although our local criminal justice system is the highest set of county budget items and experiences the greatest challenges, the elected officials and department heads in these areas continue to serve to the benefit of Howard County.

Probably the hottest topic in local government at any level these days has been consolidation or restructuring. The Modernization Act was passed in Indiana to give local communities the ability and avenue, if they so choose, to investigate the possibilities of combining not only necessary services but the government units themselves with the hopes of increased efficiencies and/or possible cost savings. Howard County has experienced the benefits of such consolidations for years, while opening the doors to a few new agreements. County government has partnered with the City of Kokomo for years now through joint agreements in the Planning Commission office, Emergency Management Association, Weights and Measures department and Kokomo-Howard County Governmental Coordinating Council. And as you know, the City passed a resolution under the Modernization Act about a year ago proposing the investigation for duplicated services or provide the taxpayers of Kokomo and Howard County the possible option of consolidation. This prompted the commissioners to form the Citizens Committee for Consolidation last spring to investigate areas of government and make recommendations to the commissioners to assist in our eventual response. I wish to thank Mayor Goodnight and the City of Kokomo for their patience as the committee continues its work, and I broaden that thanks to the Towns of Russiaville and Greentown as well for everyone's

willingness to participate on the committee. Obviously it was through the work of this committee that the City and Howard County experienced its most recent joint office with the merger of Emergency Dispatch. But most of the credit and thanks for this merger goes to Nick Capozzoli and the dedicated dispatchers that faced the greatest challenges and selflessly strive to make it work. As we continue into 2011, the commissioners have recognized both the direction the CCC is headed and the time frame within which we have come and are looking into the possibility of transitioning the CCC into and under the guide of the Modernization Act. We are fortunate to have had the working relationship we have with the City of Kokomo in these ventures and know that it will serve as the foundation of the possibilities yet to come. And although the buzz word lately has been ‘consolidation’, I mentioned ‘restructuring’ as well. Many departments are finding ways to do things differently to also meet budgetary constraints. One example of this is Howard County’s previous Recorder, Linda Koontz, being her industry’s leader in the State of Indiana by implementing ‘E-Recording’ as an option that saves both time and money for her office and the customer. Newly-elected Recorder, Brook Cleaver, was instrumental in its implementation and is already finding ways to market the service for Howard County. This is another way Howard County can prove to its taxpayers that we are willing to think ‘outside the box’ to maximize services with minimal costs.

As we discuss consolidation and duplicated services, one department that both cities and counties across the state that has been the fastest growing and closest monitored in recent years is the Municipal Sanitation and Sewer System department, or MS4. Although there’s been a federal mandate for improved water quality nationwide since the late 1970’s, it wasn’t until the 2000’s that it experienced greater emphasis. That emphasis resulted in the formation of MS4 departments in every local unit of government to establish and maintain certain standards and practices for the quality of water, while educating the general public of those standards. MS4 director, Greg Lake, and his staff were finally audited late last summer, and I am pleased to report that the audit resulted in outstanding marks and rave reviews from the State’s MS4 Department. Because of the success of this recent audit and the ongoing efforts of our department, Howard County is also looking at finally assisting Darrough Chapel, an area of our community that has suffered with water quality and septic issues for years. Darrough Chapel was a major concern and pet project of my predecessor, the late Paul Raver, and again with the great partnership and assistance of the City of Kokomo, we may now be able to bring much needed relief to this struggling area. The first flush is in sight! So this too has been an area investigated for potential consolidation between City and County since 2009 and could very well prove to be the next successful venture both units pursue. And since the county’s water quality is affected by runoff from our paved surfaces (or roadways), I would like to take a moment here to address Howard County’s overall infrastructure. The Howard County Highway Department office has continued to successfully meet the challenges determined by both Howard County’s needs and the State of Indiana’s wants. Highway Director, Ted Cain, takes pride in this crew and in our roads – and it shows. Ted has demonstrated time and again how tight of a ship he runs, while maintaining the bridges and roads of Howard County in a manner that’s second to none. Are there struggles getting to the number of roads that need attention at times? Sure there are, and Mr. Cain recognizes this. But he and the men and women of his department are an even further example of utilizing limited resources to the fullest, while still implementing additional cost-saving measures. And with the apparent ‘unwritten’ working relationship County Highway has had for years with the City Street Department, both can serve as a model of how we can work together toward common goals.

Lastly is the area of Economic Development. Recognizing the County’s lack of an economic development department yet desire to play an active role in the same, then-Commissioner Dave Trine made it a priority to allow Howard County to play a more active and direct role in stimulating economic growth. Although county government still supported the efforts of the City of Kokomo’s Development Department and The Greater Kokomo Economic Development Alliance, Howard County created a small grant program in 2010 using EDIT funds and modeled after one of Kokomo’s programs as a way to help small businesses locate to the downtown area. Since its creation, the county has funded at least 6 local businesses with start-up or rent assistance, with two additional applications currently being reviewed. Although just a drop in the bucket compared to funds that many of these businesses have been awarded by other sources, I feel the county’s use of Economic Development Income Tax for its intended purposes to support both large and small business to make perfect sense. And on the larger scale, Howard County’s relationship with the City of Kokomo and GKEDA in economic development initiatives in larger projects will continue to improve as all involved strive toward a common goal and our lines of communication are strengthened. The only way Howard County and its citizens will survive and thrive is to work together to promote development and to support retention. As that young man proclaimed back during his campaign, ‘We’re all in this together!’

So as I close I am reminded of the words of a wise Jedi Master who once said, ‘Do, or do not. There is no try!’ Has Howard County ‘tried’ to minimize its costs in light of reduced revenues? No, it has ‘done’. Has Howard County ‘tried’ to maximize the efficiencies in its criminal justice system? No, it has ‘done’. Has Howard County ‘tried’ to

work toward reduced government and combined services? No, it has 'done'. Has Howard County 'tried' to maintain a level of quality in its departments and roads? No, it has 'done'. Has Howard County 'tried' to help stimulate our economy and help secure jobs? No, it has 'done'. Ladies and gentlemen, that young man who sought the opportunity to serve his county and its constituents stands before you now both proud and humbled to have been given that opportunity and is thankful for this opportunity to have addressed this great County today. May God bless you; may God bless Howard County; and may God bless America. Thank You.

IN THE MATTER OF A REASSEMENT UPDATE:

County Assessor Jamie Shepherd submitted an update of assessment matters to the County Council. The Department of Local Government Finance offers monthly parcel and date review progress maps through their website. They have given milestone markers that have to be accomplished for the 2012 / 2013 reassessment and trending. The first milestone was December 1, 2010, to have 25% of the parcels site inspected and data collected. Howard County was at 38%. The next milestone is May 1, 2011, to have 50% of the parcels inspected and data collected. At the end of January, Howard County was at 48%. Ms. Shepherd reminded the Council that the Assessor's office has to do a site inspection of each Howard County parcel that is sold. They are currently sharing a vehicle with the MS4/Surveyor office but they need increased access to a vehicle in order to complete the site inspections in a timely manner.

At this time, condolences were expressed to Councilman Jeff Stout and the family in the passing of his mother.

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time the meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m. on a motion made by Mr. Pencek and seconded by Mr. Ortman.

HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL:

RICHARD A. MILLER, PRESIDENT

STAN ORTMAN, VICE PRESIDENT

LESLIE ELLISON, MEMBER

JEFF STOUT, MEMBER

JOSEPH PENCEK, MEMBER

JOHN ROBERTS, MEMBER

DWIGHT SINGER, MEMBER

ATTEST:

ANN WELLS, AUDITOR
Howard County Council Meeting February 22, 2011