Est

Martin

County

THE MARTIN COUNTY COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

May 6, 2024

MINUTES

The Martin County Council convened in regular session on Monday, May 6, 2024, in the Commissioners’ Room at the Courthouse located at 129 Main Street, Shoals, Indiana. Council members attending: Jordan Dant, Adam Greene, Warren Albright, Keith Gibson, Monty Gregory, Jim Hamby, and Sheri Bowling. Council member Sheri Bowling was caucused in by the Republican party on April 25th to replace Andrew Beaver. Also attending was Auditor Michelle Norris.

President Jordan Dant called the meeting to order with the Pledge to the Flag at 6:00 pm.

**RE: MINUTES**

The minutes from the regular meeting held April 1, 2024 were approved with a motion made by Councilman Hamby, seconded by Councilman Gregory. Councilwoman Bowling abstained, all others in favor, motion passed.

**RE: PROBATION CASE MANAGER & LEAD COURT REPORT/SUPERVISOR**

Judge Isha Wright-Ryan came before the Council to request a part-time case manager for the probation department. Judge Wright-Ryan stated Chief Probation Officer Stephanie Helton has come before the Council two other times requesting funding for a probation case manager and at budget time last year to request another probation officer. Judge Wright-Ryan stated the demand is high in the Probation Department and a case manager would not require the mandatory salary of a probation officer. Judge Wright-Ryan presented the job requirements of the case manager to the Council.

Councilman Albright asked if the probation user fee funds could be used to lessen the burden on the general fund. Judge Wright-Ryan stated during budgets last year the financial advisor advised that probation user fees not be used to pay salaries, but the Council decided to leave the probation administrative assistant’s salary in the budget which holds the probation user fees. Judge Wright-Ryan stated there is $5,175 which was budgeted for a part-time position in the supplemental adult probation fund, which has not been filled, and she would be willing to use to commit towards a part-time case manager. Councilman Albright stated there are times another fund can be used to lighten the load on the general fund. Judge Wright-Ryan stated they are lightening the load by paying for the administrative assistant from user fees. Auditor Norris stated the salary for the administrative assistant for 2024 is $28,665, which is paid out of supplemental adult probation. Judge Wright-Ryan stated that amount is essentially what she is asking to come from the general fund for the part-time case manager.

President Dant stated it was recommended the $28,000, which is currently being paid by user fees, and this new position be paid out of general fund. Councilman Albright asked if there were other things that could be paid out of the supplemental adult probation fund which are currently being paid out of the general fund. President Dant stated he was informed by the Auditor last week that the CDs will mature in July and September, which will result in interest payments of over $50,000, but that is not a long-term solution. Judge Wright-Ryan agreed and stated she is asking for a solution for this year. President Dant stated he has spent time calling other counties and the case load has increased across the State, which Judge Wright-Ryan has shared previously. President Dant stated the Court has problems with retention and the case load is piling up.

President Dant asked the Judge if she had someone in mind to fill the case manager position. Judge Wright-Ryan stated there were people Chief Probation Officer Helton has in mind to reach out to who might be able to fill the position. Councilman Greene asked if a trial period of six months would help. Judge Wright-Ryan stated she understands this may not be a long-term solution and this may be temporary; she will be back during the budget process to ask for a third probation officer because that is what is ultimately needed. Councilwoman Bowling asked if there would be trouble hiring someone for a temporary position. Judge Wright-Ryan stated that is unknown, she still has a bailiff position open all year and has not been able to fill the position due to lack of applicants. Councilman Albright stated the case manager position needs to be taken to the end of the year and they will know at budget time whether it will be funded next year. Councilman Albright stated the position should be funded until the end of the year, to which Councilman Greene agreed. A motion was made by Councilman Greene to approve funding the position until the end of the year at part-time 28 hours per week, seconded by Councilman Gregory. All in favor, motion passed.

Judge Wright-Ryan presented to the Council a job description for the lead court reporter/supervisor position. Judge Wright-Ryan stated she has had a lot of turnover in court reporters this year. There is one court reporter who has been here for thirteen years and there was discussion at the beginning of the year to promote her to lead court report/supervisor which did not accompany a raise at that time. Judge Wright-Ryan stated there was a need within the Court for someone to be in charge; everyone being the same level does not work well. Judge Wright-Ryan stated the job duties are listed as part of the job description and with her taking over the lead court reporter/supervisor role her duties have increased. Judge Wright-Ryan stated the employee is currently at $19.66 per hour and the Judge stated she would like the opportunity to increase the range up to $22 per hour. Judge Wright-Ryan stated if this person were to leave the position the Court would be severely impacted. Judge Wright-Ryan stated she spoke to another court reporter from another county last week and that person is making $8 more an hour than Martin County court reporters. Councilman Albright stated the raise would amount to $4,000 to keep an employee.

Councilman Gregory asked when the job description for a court reporter was created. Judge Wright-Ryan stated the job description has been part of the Court’s handbook and has a written date of April 2017. Judge Wright-Ryan stated she has been speaking to HR Director Amy Rincker regarding revising the job description to account for the lead court report/supervisor role. Councilman Gregory stated he feels like the revision needs to be done to be able to give authority to the supervisor. A motion was made by Councilman Albright to approve the salary increase lead court reporter/supervisor with a range from $19.66 to $22 per hour, seconded by Councilman Gibson. All in favor, motion passed.

**RE: UPDATED SALARY AND WAGE ORDINANCES**

Auditor Michelle Norris stated on salary and wage ordinance amendment 2024-15, which lists the lead court reporter/supervisor, there is also an amendment for the Human Resources Director. Auditor Norris stated the previous hourly rate was $18.00-$19.66 and the Commissioners are asking for an amended hourly rate from $18.00-$23.00. Auditor Norris stated Human Resources Director Amy Rincker is going to a part-time status working fifty-nine hours every two weeks and therefore will not receive any benefits or opt-out pay. Auditor Norris stated the Commissioners agreed to increase her salary due to dropping down to part-time status. A motion was made by Councilman Gregory to accept the salary and wage ordinance amendment for the human resources director with a range from $18.00-$23.00, seconded by Councilman Hamby. All in favor, motion passed.

Auditor Norris stated the second salary and wage ordinance amendment, 2024-16, is for the case manager probation. Auditor Norris stated the Judge had mentioned she would pay $5,175 from the supplemental adult probation which is fund 2100 and the remainder from the general fund. A motion was made by Councilman Greene to approve salary and wage ordinance amendment 2024-16 for the probation case manager with a salary range of $20.00-$24.00, seconded by Councilman Gregory. All in favor, motion passed.

**RE: COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS FY 2023 ANNUAL REPORT**

Auditor Norris stated the Community Corrections fiscal year 2023 annual report was sent by Director Danielle Murphy for the Council to review. The report has also been submitted to the Commissioners.

**RE: SAMARITAN ADVISORY COUNCIL APPOINTMENT**

Auditor Norris stated Director Murphy reminded her that Andrew Beaver was the Council’s representative for the Samaritan Advisory Council and another appointment will need to be made as his replacement. Auditor Norris stated the Advisory Council meets quarterly and the next meeting is in July. A motion was made by Councilman Albright to appoint Councilwoman Bowling to the Samaritan Advisory Council, seconded by Councilman Hamby. All in favor, motion passed.

**RE: ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS**

General Fund- Fund 1000

Circuit Court- 1000.232

Lead Court Reporter/Supervisor $1,500

A motion was made by Councilman Greene to approve the additional appropriation for the Circuit Court for $1,500, seconded by Councilman Hamby. All in favor, motion passed.

Highway

Community Crossings Matching Grant- Fund 9127

Paving Project $1,478,855.70

A motion was made by Councilman Greene to approve the additional appropriation for the Community Crossings Matching Grant fund 9127 in the amount of $1,478,855.70, seconded by Councilman Gregory. All in favor, motion passed.

ARPA American Rescue Plan Act- Fund 8951

Supplies $77,661.09

Miscellaneous Expense $8,810.70

Capital Expense $60,000

Auditor Norris stated she was asked at a previous meeting to bring a plan of how the Commissioners planned to spend the remaining ARPA funds. Auditor Norris stated she has spoken to the Commissioners was told based on Ambulance Director Jeramey Osborn’s estimated expenses for the ambulance, which was given at the last Council meeting, two loans to the Recycling Center which amounts to $10,000, and the ladder for the jail Auditor Norris has estimated funds needed in supplies and miscellaneous expenses. Auditor Norris stated the Commissioners requested the remainder be appropriated to capital expenses for either renovations or the purchase of property. President Dant stated he would like a detailed listing for the capital expenses expected expenditures and is not in favor of approving the appropriation until more information can be given. A motion was made by Councilman Hamby to approve the appropriation for supplies in the amount of $77,661.09 and miscellaneous expense in the amount of $8,810.70 and to table the request for capital expense, seconded by Councilman Gregory. All in favor, motion passed.

Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency- Fund 8920

Capital Expense $100,000

Auditor Norris stated a federal grant was received in 2022 to assist low-income counties. Auditor Norris stated Martin County was eligible and the grant does not require matching or required spending obligations. Auditor Norris stated $50,000 was received in 2022 and another $50,000 was received in 2023. Auditor Norris stated this $100,000 is what the Commissioners are requesting be used to purchase the Shoals Recycling Center, the parking lot, and the grass lot next to the recycling center. President Dant stated the sales agreement will outline that the money due to the County for health insurance will be paid back from the proceeds of the sale. President Dant stated the Recycling Center may be doing better after this transaction but does that not mean it is operationally doing better. A motion was made by Councilman Gregory to approve the additional appropriation to the local assistance and tribal consistency fund in the amount of $100,000, seconded by Councilman Greene. All in favor, motion passed.

Cumulative Capital Development- Fund 1138

Courthouse Improvements $29,000

A motion was made by Councilman Greene to approve the additional appropriation for the cumulative capital development fund in the amount of $29,000, seconded by Councilman Albright. All in favor, motion passed.

**RE: SURVEYOR**

President Dant stated as there has been talk about additional positions needed in the Court and budgets, he wanted to mention it has been communicated by the Surveyor that he could drop down to a surveyor only department. President Dant stated it is something to keep in mind as these new positions are coming to the Council, that should be another bucket of funding that would be available. Councilwoman Bowling asked if the Surveyor would drop down to just himself full-time if a part-time person would be needed, to which President Dant stated potentially.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:48 pm with a motion made by Councilman Gibson and seconded by Councilman Hamby, all were in favor and the motion passed. The Courthouse will be closed on Tuesday May 7th for the primary elections and Monday May 27th in observance of Memorial Day. The next regular Council meeting will be held Monday, June 3, 2024, at 6:00 pm.

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Jordan Dant Adam Greene

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Warren D. Albright J. Keith Gibson

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Monty Gregory Jim Hamby

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Sheri Bowling

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Michelle Norris, Martin County Auditor