

**PERRY COUNTY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING
SEPTEMBER 16, 2020**

The Perry County Council met on the above date at 5:00 p.m. as was duly advertised for the public hearing on the 2021 proposed budgets. Council members in attendance were: President David A Etienne, Pro-tem Luke Thomas, Charles Baumeister, Lynn Fulkerson, Earla Williams, Danny Bolin, and Steve Goodson. A representative from the Perry County News was also present.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS

Several elected officials, department heads, and representatives of other various agencies receiving county tax dollars were present. They spoke concerning their 2021 budget requests in the following order:

DEPARTMENTS

PERRY COUNTY CLERK

Clerk Rachel East informed the Council that there will be no election next year. Her postage line item was not enough for this year. Also, she said her one deputy position went from full time to part time position. She has not hired anyone yet because she does not have a working computer for them. Rachel said she would like to make a proposal to the Council regarding some incentives for the part time positions. She said she is happy with her part time position. She is proposing to give them some holiday pays as an incentive to work.

PERRY COUNTY CORONER

Warren Taylor, Coroner, said the Council makes cuts to this budget every year. He said he is asking for no increase for the Coroner position but for his deputy positions and would like to add on another deputy. They are part time and work weekends and holidays. Warren said a Deputy Coroner makes 1.58 to 1.62 per hour when on call. He always has two to go out when there is a call to help out, especially when having to transport a body. He would also like to bring the deputy's base salary up to 1.95 per hour. He would like to see a pay raise for them. Warren talked about the rest of his budget line items for next year.

COUNTY EXTENSION

Cathy Boerste, Extension Educator CED, explained that Purdue is the umbrella that supports 4-H with a variety of services. She thanked the Council for this year's budget especially for the summer employee position. The County 4H Fair was virtual this year and it went great. Cathy said they created educational videos for classrooms and they have offered programs in multiple formats. She said the staffing is a critical need. There is no increase in the contractual contract with the agents for next year. She said they hope to be back to normal on traveling next year. The 4H and Extension continue to need support. David thanked Cathy for facilitating meetings during the pandemic.

VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE

Veterans Service Officer, Kevin Herp, reported that in 2019 the County had 1287 Veterans. They help to bring in \$7.6 million in revenue from their pensions they spend in the County. He said he has created a Facebook page for Vets and currently has 376 members to get information out to. Kevin said he has also implemented a new program that sends documents he needs directly to the State. The State is paying for this bill for the program and not the County. This will save on paper for printing and postage for mailing. He also has set up a work station in his office for Veterans to use for doctor visits that are virtual and they have no other access to computer. Kevin said once they can transport again, he will be taking Vets to appointments to Louisville, Evansville, and Owensboro which they have not done before. He is also looking at Perry County Hospital and VA Healthcare to go there instead of somewhere else. This will help generate money for the hospital. He will work with Brian Herwig on this. He said he has hit the ground running and plans on keeping it that way. He would like to make this position full time again. He would like to be available 5 days a week to help Veterans

with benefits and services. Steve welcomed Kevin in taking this position. He also would like to see they approve this for full time.

ELECTION BOARD

Clerk Rachel East informed the Council that her part time position was being paid \$14.91 per hour which is higher than any other part time position. She plans on lowering it for her new hire.

PROPERTY REASSESSMENT- 2015

Assessor Mendy Lassaline talked about a new program she is looking into for her office and be more proactive going forward. This program is X-Soft CAMA. She said the State did away with the Sales Disclosure program and Thompson Reuters (tax program) keeps changing all the time. Mendy said this would be a 5-year contract to pay off.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

William Marcrum, Health Officer, came before the Council about the salaries of the Health Nurses and the jobs they are doing. He said they are hard working and dedicated. He said he has checked with surrounding counties on wages and said we are behind. They are: Spencer \$49,000 year, Dubois \$50,000, Gibson \$48,000 and Posey \$45,000. Will said they could go somewhere else so he is pleading to pay them what they need. Sara is behind from 6,000 to 11,000 dollars of the ones doing the same job. Brian Herwig said he totally supports this because we need to keep them.

HIGHWAY-Restricted and Non-Restricted, LOCAL ROAD AND STREET AND CUMULATIVE BRIDGE

Steve Howell, Highway Superintendent, read all the changes they made to their budgets. In the Cumulative Bridge budget and the Local Road and Street budget, all is the same. In the Motor Vehicle Highway Non and Restricted budgets, we put a percentage on salaries and divided into both budgets. Steve mentioned that with their CDL testing, DOT changed rules that there will more testing and more often and also check everyone each year. The price has gone to \$90.00 per test. In the Surtax and Wheel tax budget, they added Health Insurance to relieve MVH and also put Bituminous in this budget. He said there is extra in Community Crossings for next year.

AGENCIES

RIDE SOLUTION

Becky Guthrie with Ride Solution said they asked for an increase over last year. Public Transportation is important in every county. There are generally lots of rides, but during the pandemic, the rides were down. Yet they were considered essential workers. They would get people to doctor appointments, dialysis, trips to nursing homes. They also have lowered prices to help those that need the trips.

PERRY COUNTY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Chief Financial Officer, Jim Childers, addressed the Council concerning the EMS budget in the Commissioners budget in LIT-Public Safety fund. He said there is an increase in what the county supports. When the August report was submitted, they were over the subsidy that was set for this year of \$185,000.00. Jim said there is a lot of bad debts from the EMS runs, a lot of unpaid charges. For 2021, they boosted the EMS salaries and hope to reduce overtime for next year. He said there is also an increase in cost of drugs. Jim said that the loss for 2020 is more than \$191,000.00 but not looking for more money this year.

PERRY COUNTY 4-H FAIRGROUNDS

Sara Hubert and Kyla Schroeder, representatives of the Fairgrounds, thanked the Council for their continued support. Kyla said 2020 has been a trying year. We were unable to host the Perry County 4H Fair which brings in revenue for them. Other events were cancelled also because of the pandemic. They want to keep the facility up and going. They still have ground maintenance and bills to pay. She said they especially need the funding for next year for the facility and programs.

SOUTHERN INDIANA RESOURCE (SIRS)

Melissa and Cheryl with SIRS thanked the Council also for their support. Right now, they service 58 adults with disabilities to help them engage in the County and 43 children. They have an 85% staff retention rate. They said they would like to expand their services from 3-day week to 4-day week and into the evenings. The contributions will help with this. SIRS has purchased \$5,000 of PPE supplies for their staff. They lost more than \$222,000 in revenue during the pandemic. They are also partnering with child care to help them and other organizations.

COUNCIL ON AGING

Jesse Watkins with Council on Aging, came before the Council and said how 2020 has been a challenge. There were no 2 days alike. He said they have added 2 vehicles to their fleet making it a total of 5. They have received money from INDOT for 6th vehicle but not sure if they are going to do that. There was an increase in the number of trips last year with an average of 100 trips or so a month. Jesse said they are transporting people not utilizing others because they are handicap accessible. Section 5310 allows them to be the only ones to provide this according to State. The drivers did receive a pay increase to be more competitive. 90% of their transportation is to nursing facilities. They are also pushing Resource referral to connect people to help in areas of house cleaning and such. In 2021, they plan to go to homemaking services. Jesse said they are requesting \$30,000. They have big plans.

WILLIAM TELL SENIOR CITIZENS

Brenda Powers spoke for the William Tell Senior Citizens. She said she wondered why they never received any funding in the past. They are a non-profit organization run by a Board of Directors. They serve 80-85 people per week and they opened their doors on July 11th following CDC guidelines. Individuals play cards, bingo, line dancing and on Saturdays they have a band. They have been doing this since 1966. Brenda stated everything is expensive and they cannot do fundraisers because of COVID. They are the only place that has recreational functions for seniors. It keeps them active, gives exercise and they provide meals. No one gets paid there, they are all volunteers. All the money they make, goes to the center. It is open to all ages, not just seniors. Any money from the County would help.

PERRY COUNTY 4-H COUNCIL

Pam Hilgenhold, 4H Council Board President, wanted to explain what goes on with 4H. She thanked the Council for their commitment. She said COVID had affected them greatly. She said they have no income from the fair this year. 80% of 4Her's completed this year. They still had to pay for ribbons and judges even with it being virtual. The kids learned to make a positive impact from this year. Pam said they have 87 volunteers plus 50 hours of donated time a year which counts to about \$95,000 of free labor. Meredith Hubert also spoke saying how they planted flowers at the nursing home, seen residents in their windows and also helped with giving food. They learned to adapt this year.

LIFESPRING

Clinical Director, Christine Beeler, said Lifespring serves 11 counties in Southern Indiana. They are the 2nd largest facility in Indiana. They plan to extend to outpatient programs in the next year. During COVID, the programs for emergency, now extends to teachers. They have staff going to homes and taking food. Also, they are involved in the community with different agencies and groups. Their amount is \$98,141 which is set by the State.

INDIANA 15 REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Lisa Gehlhausen with Indiana Region 15 appeared before the Council saying they are not asking for an increase from 2020 amount. They are asking for the same \$10,830.00. She serves in six counties in our region with 21 towns and several cities in those counties. She said they value the County's participation and continued support. They use the money to write grants for cities and towns at no cost. In 2021, they are looking at traffic counts, Tell City Comp plan, improvements to Tell City Utility Department – pumps near the floodwall, Can Clay clean up, Rome Courthouse Preservation, Cannelton Gym Improvements, PCDC Innovation, and center in former Swiss Plywood. She said we have partnered since 1973 and she enjoys serving Perry County.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON BUDGETS

There were no other comments on the 2021 budget requests. The hearing was closed.

FIRST READING OF 2021 BUDGET REQUESTS

President David Etienne conducted the first reading of all 2021 departmental budget requests as follows:

<u>Department</u>	<u>Total Budget Request</u>
Clerk of Circuit Court	\$ 194,541
County Auditor	\$ 185,236
Treasurer	\$ 122,025
Recorder	\$ 101,152
County Sheriff	\$ 559,044
County Surveyor	\$ 9,898
County Coroner	\$ 75,613
County Assessor	\$ 122,991
Prosecuting Attorney	\$ 72,476
Extension Service	\$ 133,380
Veterans Service	\$ 31,317
County Council	\$ 40,818
Election Board	\$ 21,540
Commissioners	\$2,209,593
Animal Shelter	\$ 35,000
Planning & Zoning	\$ 15,700
Courthouse	\$ 132,128
Circuit Court	\$ 606,195
Emergency Management	\$ 139,901
Jail	\$ 527,794
4-D Child Support	\$ 104,669
Soil Conservation	\$ 36,333
Parks and Recreation	\$ 154,608
County General Total	\$5,631,952
Health Department Fund	\$ 284,623
Cumulative Bridge Fund	\$ 306,700
Property Reassessment – 2015	\$ 183,752
Cumulative Capital Development	\$ 218,422
LIT Special Legislation	\$ 933,000
Clerks Record Perpetuation	\$ 4,400
Sales Disclosure-Co Share	\$ 500
Emergency Planning/Right to Know	\$ 3,967
Enhanced Access	\$ 16,452
Identification Security Program	\$ 2,700
Local Road & Street	\$ 443,767
LOIT Public Safety – County Share	
Sheriff	\$ 272,450
Commissioners	\$ 535,375
Jail	\$ 233,023
Highway Administration	\$ 113,975
Highway Maintenance & Repair	\$ 304,977
Highway General & Undistributed	\$ 809,015
Hwy Restricted-Administration	\$ 62,707
Hwy-Restr-Mnt and Repair	\$ 459,871
Hwy-Restr-General and Undistr.	\$ 325,732
Plat Book Fund	\$ 4,800
Riverboat – County Share	
Commissioners	\$ 9,400
Courthouse	\$ 20,000

Sex & Violent Offender-Sheriff	\$ 1,450
Supplemental Public Defender	\$ 3,950
Corner Perpetuation – Surveyor	\$ 5,000
Co Election Official Training-Clerk	\$ 600
Co Election Official Training-Auditor	\$ 600
Co Election Official Training-Treasurer	\$ 600
Co Election Official Training-Recorder	\$ 600
Co Election Official Training-Surveyor	\$ 600
Statewide 911	\$ 283,321
Supplemental Adult Probation	\$ 74,669
Jury Fee	\$ 3,000
Pretrial Diversion	\$ 67,918
Surplus, Surtax & Wheel Tax	\$ 250,000
Jail Operations	\$ 242,250
Inmate Housing	\$ 54,550
Perry County Recycling Management	\$ 524,481
Airport Authority	\$ 48,905
Airport Authority – Cumulative Building	\$ 40,000

The total of all budgets that was read was \$12,801,884.00

The next meeting will be the all-day budget preparation on Tuesday, September 22nd and Wednesday, September 23rd and Thursday, September 24th at 8:00 a.m. all three days at the Armory Annex building.

There being no further business, Luke made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Danny seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0, with adjournment at 6:35 p.m.

Minutes approved this 24th day of November, 2020.

President, Perry County Council

*Minutes prepared by:
Pamela L. Goffinet, Perry County Auditor*