

# Randolph County Council

October 5, 2022

The Randolph County Council met for its regular meeting at 9:00 AM in the Commissioners and Council Room of the Courthouse with the following members present: Council President Gary Friend, Rick Brown, Tom Kerns, Max Holaday, David Lenkensdofer, Missy Williams and Beverly Fields. Also present was County Auditor Laura J Martin.

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Council President Gary Friend presided.

Pledge of Allegiance

## **Ridgeville Library – Public Hearing for budget**

Gary said the Ridgeville Public Library is restating their budget. There was an error issued by DLGF. Would anybody like to make a comment can sign their name on the paper that is on the desk and address the Council. After everyone has had a chance to speak we will close the public hearing and there will be an adoption process on October 18<sup>th</sup>. Would anybody like to address the Council regarding the Ridgeville Public Library budget? With no one coming forward, we can officially close this public hearing. The public hearing is closed. We will now open the regular Council meeting.

## **Sherri Thompson, Health Department – Part time Clinic nurse funding**

Sherri said the reason I am here this morning is to ask for some carry over money for our clinic nurse. Back in January when Wendy was out for emergency surgery, we did eventually get a part time nurse hired to help out. She did not work as many hours as we anticipated plus we had all of our mass clinics at that time for the vaccines. There was a lot going on at that time. Dianna pitched in to work extra hours at that time, to help keep the clinic going and all of our mass clinics for the Covid on top of testing, we were doing testing at that time too. The state did approve it and the Commissioner's approved it, I am here now to ask for your approval.

Gary said what are you asking for from us?

Sherri said it is carry over money.

Gary asked carry over from where?

Sherri said from our health maintenance grant.

Gary said and you want to appropriate it to what, that position?

Sherri said yes.

Gary asked is there an additional appropriation form?

Angela said there will be after you say she can do it, then I have to advertise.

Gary said how is this person working, is there any danger of them working more than 28 hours?

Sherri said yes, because right now we have the flu, were still doing the vaccine clinics, of course Wendy is back, that makes a big difference. We've got school shots, some of our immunizations didn't come in on time, so now we are kind of backed up on that. I think she was supposed to only work 21 hours and I think we figured she was working about 28.

Gary said so we are not in any danger of this turning into a full-time position on accident?

Sherri said no.

Gary said the Commissioner's were on board with this?

Sherri said yes.

Gary asked does anybody have anything?

Max made a motion to approve the request. Missy seconded. Six aye votes. Ricky abstained. Motion carried.

#### **Bennett Fuson & Grace Minkis, DEPR – Riverstart III update**

Gary asked if Bennett or Grace are here.

Laura said I haven't heard from EDPR.

Gary said any information on the Modoc issue?

Laura asked Tom Chalfant do you have any information?

#### **Report from Commissioners – Tom Chalfant**

Tom Chalfant said on the next phase of the solar farm, they are working on it. I don't have an update, we've encouraged them to bring it but they said they are working with Greg Beumer on that but I don't know any specifics right now. I might give you a little update, I thought Bennett and Grace were going to be here. We talked with Chris Beasley yesterday and Zach is on maternity leave, who's running the wind farm. Chris was filling in for him. Scott Fisher is working on the roads, he should have them all paved by the middle of October and then they are going over and working on some preliminary paving on the solar farm, there has been some roads damaged there. We agreed to have the start at least get some pavement down on gravel. It's about 8 mile that is impacted over there that they are going to be fixing and hopefully we will have some really good roads down there when they are finished. The county is going to go ahead and finish some roads, like Max's road where he lives west of 1200, we are going to pave that ourselves. The windfarm didn't really have traffic, but we are going to pave that to the county line and also the next road north 800 South we are going to pave to the Delaware County line, then 1200 and 1100 South were paving to Wayne County and maybe the Henry County line. Were going to fill in some of those holes there and have some pretty good pavement there. The last thing on my list is I'm here to ask you to reconsider the secretary for the Highway Department, to make that a 40-hour position instead of 35. She's been working 40-hours and just building up comp time which we will pay her whenever that happens. We verbally agreed to hire this engineer and we anticipate he will be starting November 1<sup>st</sup> with this joint venture with Henry County, their Council voted unanimously, their Commissioner's voted 2 to 1 to do it and we all agreed that we want to proceed. We pretty much have it worked out, it will be ½ time here and ½ time there and we we'll share equally in the expenses. We anticipate him starting November

1<sup>st</sup> and he's already been looking at a lot of projects for us to get engineered so we can start repairing our bridges. Anyway, he is probably going to create, he has made it clear he doesn't want to do secretarial work which we don't want to hire an engineer for that. So, he is going to adding to her work load also, his office will be out there, I think beside Mikes and he will be adding to our secretary's work load. I would ask that Council reconsider giving her a 40-hour work week.

Tom said I am okay with it.

Max said I think we should.

Gary said I am okay with it.

Rick said yes.

Bev said I think that makes a difference, I am okay with it.

Missy said I think it makes a difference, I still think it sets a precedence that other people are sticking to 35 hours and a brand-new person is going to 40 hours and with this additional work load. I'm okay.

Max made a motion to approve having the salary ordinance amended to allow the Highway secretary to work 40 hours a week. Tom seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Missy said I think this engineer is a great idea.

Tom said he just wants to work, he knows bridges, he's probably one of the most experienced bridge engineers in the state. Getting him ½ time for \$30,000.00 is going to be a pretty good deal for us.

Gary said that's our recognized impact, once we get the \$40,000.00?

Tom said yes, when we are all done, it's approximately \$65,000.00 and we get \$40,000 back and there are some other benefits that we are going to be paying, it's going to be somewhere around \$30,000.00.

Dave asked about this gentleman in our meeting, he came highly recommended.

Tom said his name is Joe Copeland.

Mike said I am just clarifying his affective start date, to be paid, is that immediately?

Meeks said it will be November, whatever when ever the contract gets signed. I will send out the contract to everyone when it gets finalized.

**Art Moystner, Sheriff – Hourly Differences, IP based policy manual**

Art said I was at the Commissioner's meeting yesterday with regards to the fire alarm panel that we have at the jail and replacement of it. I sent them a couple of quotes, they voted yesterday that they wanted to move forward with replacing that. The quote that I have is \$28,905.00. One of the suggestions yesterday, that Angela had and I agree is to take that out of misdemeanor. I would need Council approval to do that. I don't know that we have that appropriated currently so I would get with her afterward to see what we need to do.

Bev made a motion to approve the request to use misdemeanor funds of \$28,905.00 to pay for the new fire alarm panel. Max seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.



Art said the other thing that I am looking at, I'd sent everyone an email with regards to an IP based law enforcement policy manual. With the way things are currently in the world, one of the things that is nice with having this, is it is real time update that comes to the department heads. I know several of the sheriff's in Indiana have adopted this policy manual. I would like to pay for the first year of it through commissary, it does not meet one of the eight requirements that allows me to do so by myself, so I am here to ask the Council to agree or disagree with me in using commissary money to purchase this for one year. I would like to see how it works.

Gary asked how much?

Art said it is \$7,418.00.

Gary said this is a legal for Sheriff's and officers. It is not a county policy?

Art said it is not a county policy manual, it's a law enforcement manual that would be for the Sheriff's office. Our county policy does not address issues that we face within law enforcement, similar to the highway department, has their manual, the sheriff's department has their manual, so this would be ours. It's nice because a lot of it is already given, it tells you where the policy is coming from, whether it's a federal type issue, state issue. We can issue our own for local issues. If we want to put in any type of a policy, it tells you best practices, recommended policies. We can modify some of those to fit our department and then we can have our legal deputy look at it. I need to check with Meeks to see whether it is something that as the Sheriff, I have to run through the Commissioners or whether I can pull this policy stand alone.

Gary said I have another question on the policy. Is it open to public type of policy, since it's bought with public money. It would have to be available to anybody that wants access.

Art said I think all policies in the department are available to public access anyway. I believe any policy manual that we use would fall under public access law.

Tom made a motion to approve. Rick seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Art said the other thing I would bring to your attention is, I recently quoted a vehicle for the Sheriff's office to get another replacement in this year. I will share with you guys, when we did budgets, the amount I put in, obviously we were trying to figure out what it would be in cost, those vehicles have gone up about \$5,000.00 each since I put those figures down, I know what I budgeted for and for the two vehicles that the county purchases, I'm about \$10,000.00 short in that fund. I wanted to let you know that. We always buy the third one out of commissary and that cost on my end is going to go up, the additional amount I'd ask plus this \$5000.00. I don't know that I can pick up the other \$10,000.00, it's going to be above on the two vehicles that the county pays for. The other thing I had on the agenda was in regards to hourly differences, I didn't bring anything to have a long lengthy conversation about this today. What I would ask is I know when we were here for budgets I was asked to put a committee together to look at some things for longevity. I think there is some discrepancies between departments currently. I know one of the things that was commented to me when I'd ask for emergency services and getting a matrix was something to the nature of all county employee and doing things fairly. What I am asking I think there should be more of an official to me to look at some of the pay in this county and the departments and whether or not they are fair or not fair because I don't believe emergency services is the same as other positions. I believe the risk is more, I believe it has become more over the most recent years and I don't see that going away or decreasing anytime soon. I only see it increasing. I think it is something that we as a county need to look at with the employees and I don't disagree, it needs to be all

county employee positions that needs to be looked at for pay but I also think that it's unfair to treat all position similar in regards to pay raises and such and their base pays. They are not the same, some are apparently more dangerous, I guess that's what I am asking is for the Council to consider and I don't know whether it would be a Council issue or Commissioner or a combination of both but I think there needs to be some people they should look at the pay within this county very seriously because we are going to continue to hemorrhage employees in this county. We are doing it in emergency services now, ems is doing it, I am doing it, dispatch is doing it and the problem you get is when that pay is at the level it is, you are not picking the best of the best anymore. I'm in a position where I can't fill seats, that doesn't work. If something happens, it is going to cost someone a lot, whether it's in the jail or on the road and I think we need to address that issue and I think we need to address it sooner than later. Thank you for listening to me, would love to talk to any or all of you at some point in time and maybe we can come up with a solution and we can start moving forward and look at this issue seriously.

Gary said I don't ever recall the Council saying, just for the record that emergency services didn't carry more risk, I have always been at the stance that if we do longevity it include everybody and if we do pay raises it includes everybody but I have never once said that some people's jobs are equal to somebody face to face with public danger. I understand what you are saying. I don't want you to think, at least for me on the Council, I don't know the difference between the two because I do.

Art said no one on the Council said that. The only comments I heard in budget was that everyone needs to be treated fairly and equally. My point being right now and like I said in the budget hearing, with \$1,000.00 across the board pay raise, that pay raise went hourly, more so to 35-hour employees than 40-hour employees and it's happened two years in a row. The hourly rate wage is different and I have employees that work weekends, holidays, second and third shift and there is absolutely no difference between pay from one to the other anywhere and I think that is stuff we need to look at.

Max said I think we need to study it as soon as possible rather than waiting until the budget time.

Art said I would like to see more of an official committee than an unofficial committee with the Sheriff spearheading everyone else. I don't think it is my responsibility for all the other departments.

Gary said it's not, I agree.

Art said I think there needs to be an official committee, spearheaded by the leaders of the county.

Gary said we will put that on the October 18<sup>th</sup> agenda, when the Commissioner's and Council are both sitting here. It would be a good time to discuss that.

Art said I would love to be a part of that as a department head and any other department heads that want to be a part of that conversation. I will share with you that the jail is currently under some restrictions, we've had some positive tests within the jail. The staff is doing very well in trying to mitigate that. We are working with our medical provider, working with the Courts and the Prosecutor's office and the other offices within the county to try to keep this as low as possible.

Gary asked what does some restrictions mean? No visitation or what?

Art said there are restrictions on visitation, I've placed some restrictions on what I will intake. As far as that goes, I am not doing anything that would put the public at risk. Anything that would be a crime against persons, we are taking all of those still but I have placed some restrictions that I would rather not share publicly at this point. Anybody is welcome to ask me, there is nothing I have put in place that

would place anyone in the public at risk. I have three blocks that are currently under lockdown situation do to Covid.

Gary asked how are your employees doing?

Art said they are okay so far. I worry about them but they are doing okay with it, they are managing it well. We are limiting contact within those blocks as much as possible, we still have standards that we have meet. We are fulfilling our obligations there and trying to keep everyone safe, I am having daily conversations with our medical staff, medical provider to make sure we are doing everything we can do to mitigate the situation and to keep everyone as safe as possible. Art said one of the things that is helping a lot is the video system that we put in with the courts and the attorneys are utilizing it.

Gary said the body scanner up and running?

Art said it is and it is working well. All of that stuff has come in handy, it was good to implement those.

Missy said I want to thank you for coming to the job fair.

Art said they had a nice group that came out, of course it is always nice to interact with the high school kids, to let them know some of the job opportunities. I think they had a good turn out and it was a good day.

#### **Other Business:**

##### **Minutes of August 3, 2021**

Rick made a motion to accept the minutes of August 2, 2021 as presented. Bev seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

##### **Bridge #308 funding for engineering \$192,450.00**

Gary asked where is this funding being secured from?

Angela said the Commissioner's ask if it could come from Windfarm, if you do not agree with that they would use EDIT, but they wanted you to have the windfarm discussion at your meeting today.

Tom said infrastructure is what that money is for.

Max said I think it would be fine.

Rick said yes.

Bev said I agree.

Missy said I agree but this \$192,450.00, when the engineer that we are hiring comes on board, what should we see in some of these fees for engineering. Will he take the place of some of those?

Tom Chalfant said he can do some of the smaller ones. Perry Knox could answer that, the projects that are Community Crossing or federal aid would still be done by an outside engineer. Perry looked at our top ten bridges that need replace and he thought he could do seven or eight of those in house and then the others would have to be out sourced.

Mike Haffner said this one is in town and so it is a lot different on the utilities and everything.

Bev made a motion to use windfarm funds for the engineering cost of \$192,450 on bridge #308. Max seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

### LIT Tax increase

Gary asked for thoughts on the LIT tax increase.

Missy said I think we need to do some kind of an increase whether it is that full amount or part. I think we're going to have to if we're going to meet our budget and our obligations.

Gary said for everybody, to get the LIT tax through for use on January 1 it has to happen this month, by the 31<sup>st</sup> of October.

Bev said I know it is probably something that is necessary, I personally am not in favor of it. I do understand that it's a source of more funding.

Rick said if I was to vote in favor of it, I'm going to vote to go with the full of what we have left.

Gary said .075?

Rick said right, what I see going on in Washington right now, if that stuff gets passed, there are going to be so many taxes on the American people. Can they afford another one? Right now, I am very hesitant to raise any taxes after what I see going on in Washington because if they're going to pass the \$3.5 trillion that is going to trickle down to affect the American people on a daily basis on their taxes, I'm not sure they can absorb another one. I'm hesitant right now.

Max said we've been fortunate in the last year or two in having funds available to us that we normally don't. That's going to dry up and we've got to take care of the County. I think we have an obligation to do what is best for our people and the county. It's a tough decision. Whether we do it in time to take advantage of it for next year or whether we don't, we are going to have to some time.

Gary said if we don't make it by the October 31<sup>st</sup> deadline, then it becomes, if we get it enacted through the year, October 1, 2022 is when it becomes effective.

Tom said that is what we are here for is to make those decisions are not always pleasant. Art's conversation with what he was just saying regarding pay. I'm definitely in favor, I still like, if we do it the ½ percent, leaving something on the table for later. I would be at .05 percent. Personally, I don't think we have a choice budget wise. Especially, we're just getting to where we are not going to have basic services in the county.

Gary said we are not allowed to run on a deficit.

Tom said like Max said we been working with funds that we've been getting extra. We've been fortunate with the wind funds and some of these other funds but that's not operating funds. We have to write a budget that will operate the county just like those funds don't exist. So, yes. Also, we've had a lot of shifts in the last two years on how our taxes are collected and this isn't necessarily 100% new taxes on the county, it's kind of the shifting of taxes that were taken away from us, out of our budget and shifted to a different funding source.

Gary said I agree. What is the thought of Council, if we get it to go, do we want to push it to get it through for January 1? October 18<sup>th</sup> we are having a joint meeting, we have ten days available between now a public hearing, I think mathematically we have to have one more meeting to do it and that's providing that nobody doesn't agree to suspend the rules and then that would cause it to continue on.



Missy asked what is your thoughts Gary?

Gary said I think we have to do it. I don't want to go all the way, I'm like Tom, I think there needs to be some room left for other Council's, other elected officials to have some input as we all pass through. I think we have to do something. The monies that we have, we've been doing a lot of things was a onetime deposit into the treasury, it's not going to be coming back. Last year we got our budget secured by \$300,000.00 of permit fees that came in and that is not happening now. The tax shifts that the state makes, that we have to follow. Starting this year, we are going to lose property tax and then \$100,000 the following year, their going to remove it all and that is 1% of our budget.

Rick said Dave mentioned something about some funds to get us through?

Gary said I can't speak for Dave.

Rick said I just remember what he said last month. I would kind of like to know what sources he's talking about.

Gary said those sources would have to be out of the windfarm funding. That's the only actual revenue and EDIT it at \$600,000.00 right now.

Rick said is there any funds in this rescue plan that we are going to be able to utilize?

Missy said that is only a band aid.

Gary said the problem with the rescue plan is, who is going to be eligible for that funding. I would make a case that everybody that works for Randolph County is an essential employee.

Rick said I would agree.

Gary said you've got to have everybody or you wouldn't have them anyway. Not in the same category as emergency services but everybody is essential if they've got a job out there. That goes for all the people that had to work through the pandemic. What percentage point, Tom likes 25, I like .05.

Max said originally last month, I was thinking all the way but based upon what's happening, like Rick was mentioned I think ½ would be good this point.

Gary said Rick if you were to make the decision would you be okay with .05%.

Rick said I would agree with Max if we could lesson the impact and still do what we need to do, it would be .05%.

Bev said no more than .05%.

Missy said nobody likes to raise taxes but I thin ½ percent, .05%.

Tom said made a motion to raise the LIT tax by .05% and take the necessary steps to make it affective on January 1, 2022. Max seconded.

Gary said I will vote yes.

Missy voted yes.

Bev voted no.

Rick voted no

Max voted yes.



Tom yes.

Gary said that is 4/2 yes votes. The motion carried. That will start the process. The public hearing will be October 18<sup>th</sup>. Can we do that?

Meeks said I will get the notice to Laura today.

Laura said I can ask the News Gazette to push it through.

Gary said will you just let us know and a calendar of dates when events have to happen.

Meeks said if you can't get it on the 18<sup>th</sup>. What alternative date do you want?

Gary said as soon as possible. Can we make everything happen?

Meeks said you are going to have to have two other meetings. Let's just schedule them right now. At the regular meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> you can vote on it that day and then you need two more dates. I would probably say the 18<sup>th</sup>, October 25 at 7 pm as an alternate date for the public hearing and if we get it in on the 18<sup>th</sup> then the 25<sup>th</sup> would be your second meeting. Then we could do October 27<sup>th</sup>. Then once it gets passed, Laura can send it to the state.

Laura said all these dates are going to be 7:00 pm?

Gary said yes. Laura will send a schedule out to everybody.

**Additional Appropriations:**

**Tourism** \$20,000.00

Rick made a motion to approve the additional appropriation for tourism. Gary seconded. 3 aye/2 nay/1 abstain. Motion failed.

**Solid Waste**

Recycling \$24,000.00

Missy said I was just wondering when I heard that yesterday, they seem like in their budget analysis, they had a rather large amount. I was wondering why the county is paying the \$24,000.00 when they have excess funding.

Laura said that is coming out of their funds.

Max made a motion to approve. Bev seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

**General**

IT – CARES Switches \$54,758.70

Missy made a motion to approve the additional appropriation as presented. Max seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Gary said on Microsoft office and laptops, you were going to have some quotes for that. You were on the agenda; did you know that?

Adam said I did. We had talked briefly about some laptops for elected officials. I went to three different companies, basically I gave them the details, I wanted to see what they were going to give us. I gave you quotes for the three different styles of machines that they gave us. My requirements were that they all be

the same size as this and that they be able to be mobile and usable for out elected officials as our main computer.

Max asked will they have Microsoft office on them?

Adam said yes, they will have Microsoft office on it and we are moving to Office 365, relatively soon and so everybody will have an Office 365 email that will be tied to that computer. There is going to be some back-end work that were doing right now to make it so when you sign on your computer, you're also signing on your email. So, when you bring up your email, your in.

Gary asked what kind of money is the county going to see to get Microsoft licensing throughout?

Adam said we already did that, that was part of another thing that we've already done. Its right at \$12,000.00 a year. To do office 365. We're doing the cheaper licenses for almost all the employees and then if we decide we want a license for the actual application for some of the employees, that will be just a little bit more.

**Cum Bridge**

Bridge 304 Engineering	\$163,875.00
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Bev made a motion to approve the Cum bridge additional appropriation. Tom seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

**Cum Bridge**

Community Crossings Match	\$108,752.56
Community Crossings Match	\$94,496.88
Community Crossing Match	\$81,436.69
Community Crossing Match	\$65,885.95

Missy made a motion to approve. Rick seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

**American Rescue Plan Fund**

Sheriff's Body Cams	\$291,408.00
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Gary asked how is the grant coming on that.

Art said Indiana is funding that grant, do I need to tell you anything else. I put in for a rural grant, I haven't heard back from it yet, the other grant is the funding that came down from, it was \$30 million that was given to the state, they still haven't given any guidance on how to even apply for that grant at this point. We still have no information, I know Mr. Lenkendorf and myself have both been trying to get information on it and neither one of us have been successful. The Commissioner's passed this yesterday, I believe it is just earmarking those funds if they're needed. I haven't been invoiced, we don't have the equipment yet but I've asked them to invoice at the minimum for this year to at least get this going, the only thing we are going to be invoiced for this year would be the bodycam/taser package. Then it will probably be sometime in February or March before we receive an invoice for the in car systems.

Gary asked are we sure that if the grant pays for it, we can pay the ARPA funding back?

Art said I believe so, but I think one of the things that the reason I'm asking to do the minimum is we are just earmarking at this point. The minimum bill will be about \$35,000.00. We would pay that and then I

would apply the grant towards the rest, we would still end up with a balance because the most I can foresee us getting back is about \$100,000.00. Like I said the one from the state in full disclosure, it is an empty prospect at best to think we're going to max that because they literally left \$10 million for every other agency in the state of Indiana with the exception of State Police. There is a lot of people trying to get a piece of that pie.

Gary said until that comes in we still have to take care of this issue. Would somebody like to make a motion for the additional appropriation for the body cams?

Bev made a motion to approve this additional appropriation as presented. Max seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

<b>Transfers:</b>	<b>From:</b>	<b>To:</b>
\$5,500.00	GIS Coord/IT Admin	Comp Equip/Microsoft

Gary asked is this your department Laura?

Laura said yes, we were originally using money to pay for our GIS Coordinator, we had some money left in that fund. When Adam gave you the quote for Microsoft, we didn't appropriate enough money there, so we were just going to transfer the additional needed out of that line.

Max made a motion to approve. Rick seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

\$1000.00	Postage	Office Supplies
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Tom made a motion to approve. Missy seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

**Citizen Comments (3-minute limit)**

None


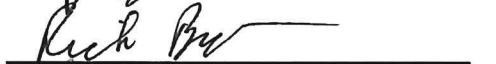
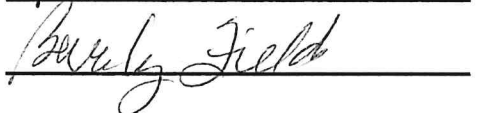
Bev said I went to conference and it was good. I think one thing specifically I came away with is that there was one county in particular said in order to really watch the line on additional appropriations, they are requiring their office heads to meet with their liaison and the liaison has to approve it before it is submitted. It is just another check point.

**Adjournment**

Rick made a motion to adjourn. Bev seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Reviewed and accepted this 8 day of February, 2022.

RANDOLPH COUNTY COUNCIL

  
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*R. Max Holiday*  
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ATTESTED: *Laura J Martin*  
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Laura J Martin, Auditor