

Randolph County Council

September 8, 2021

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, Max Holaday, David Lenkensdofer, Missy Williams and Beverly Fields. Also present was County Auditor Laura J Martin.

Council President Gary Friend presided.

Pledge of Allegiance

Budget Adoption – Randolph County Ordinance 2021-13

Gary said we have three budgets for adoption today, we have Solid Waste, Ridgeville Public Library and Randolph County. Let's start with Randolph County. This is all of our work from the budget hearings, everyone has had a chance to review and understand the budget. Would somebody like to make a motion to pass the budget on the first reading.

Max made a motion to approve the first reading of the Randolph County Budget. Dave seconded.

Gary asked is there any further discussion? All those in favor signify by saying aye.

All aye votes. Motion carried.

Gary said we have six members today so if someone would like to, we can have a motion to suspend the rules.

Max made a motion to suspend the rules and have the second and third reading by title only and adopt the same day. Missy seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Max made a motion to adopt the 2022 budget Ordinance 2021-13. Bev seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Budget Adoption – Ridgeville Public Library Budget Ordinance 2021-12

Rick made a motion to approve the first reading of Ridgeville Public Library's budget Ordinance 2021-12. Max seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Max made a motion to suspend the rules and have the second and third reading by title only and adopt the same day. Rick second. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Max made a motion for the Council to adopt Ordinance 2021-12. Rick seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Budget Adoption – Solid Waste Budget Ordinance 2021-11

Dave made a motion to approve Ordinance 2021-11. Max seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Max made a motion to suspend the rules and have the second and third reading by title only and adopt it the same day. Bev seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Rick made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2021-11. Bev seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Adam Wilson – IT Costs Proposal for Switches & Sysaid

Adam said I think it was about 2 months ago we spoke about switches needing replaced. I got the quotes back from that and we ready to move forward as long as you are willing to approve.

Gary said one question I need to ask is you work for FiveStar don't you?

Adam said that's right.

Gary said so if you're working for us, for them, did you get any other quotes?

Adam said I did. I checked with CDW as well, they are the other company that we used for our PC's that we just purchased and they were more, by a lot. That's where I got my original quote when I told you guys that it was going to be like \$60 to \$80 thousand and it was a lot more. We actually got you a heck of a deal.

Gary said good, one more question, just for transparency, do you get a split from FiveStar for selling equipment?

Adam said no, I jut get a standard salary.

Gary said I just wanted that out there for public knowledge.

Adam said my interest is 100% making the county secure, safe and be able to work.

Missy said I really appreciate you doing that, I trust you, I just would like in the future to have those quotes.

Laura said did I not send those to you guys?

Adam said they just got the FiveStar quote.

Laura said I sent them to your email.

Gary said once we get these in, were going to be up to speed and all that?

Adam said yes, so the switches were getting are Aruba instead of Sisco, Aruba has a life time warranty on them. The guys at FiveStar that have done some stuff, they have Aruba's they put in 10 years ago and never had them replaced. I think this is going to be the best solution for the County once were done with it.

Gary asked where were you looking to pay for this out of?

Laura said the Commissioner's recommended the remaining CARES money.

Gary said I would agree

Max made a motion to approve this request and pay for it at a cost of \$51,604.70 out of the remaining CARES money. Dave seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Gary asked is there anything else for us?

Adam said Sysaid, this is software that is going to be able to track assets, it's also going to allow me to remote into computers and help people. If we get you guys some laptops I will be able to remote into them at your home to help you with stuff. It is also a new ticketing software that is a little more responsive. Right now, when people send in a ticket, I get the ticket but there is no response back to them, no reply or anything. This is going to allow for some of that, better communication on tickets and things that come through.

Gary asked did the Commissioners have a recommendation on that?

Laura said it was all out of the remaining Cares. That will pretty much use up that money.

Gary said \$3,154.00?

Laura said yes.

Bev made a motion to move forward with the Sysaid and fund it from the Cares money. Missy seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Gary said the virus breach we had, can you talk about that?

Adam said our security professionals from FiveStar came and talked with the Commissioner's yesterday and I think there is some recommendations for us to move forward with some Phishing campaigns. Basically, what that is you try to fool your own people and you find out who your weakest links are and then we do some training for those folks. That is the best way to handle that because that phishing stuff, you can only do so much as far as email filtering. If your gullible you're going to get it, right. So, we need to make people a little less gullible I think is part of it too. Something else is all of our county emails that are coming in from the county are marked as external now. I actually just spoke with one of the ladies at the Health Department, where they had spotted something. It's because in the subject line it says external on it and they know not to open it if they don't know who it's from. That helping out a little bit, that Viper software we have that we pay for, it's up for renewal in October, that allowing me to do that and some of the other stuff.

Adam said I will get back to you with some quotes on some laptops.

Bennett Fuson & Grace Minkis, EDPR – Riverstart III

Grace said I am a project developer with EDPR, this is my colleague Bennett, unfortunately Chris was not able to join us today. The goal today is to share with you all a future phase that we are hoping to develop here in Randolph County. There is a copy of the map in your folder. We're proposing River Start Solar Park III, you might be wondering what happened to II. Originally River Start I was actually a request for I and II and then we just combined that into I. So internally that is why there is a switch with River Start II. River Start III is located in Union Township just north of Modoc, sort of sandwiched between Becks landfill and US Hwy 36. We currently have 1200 acres leased and of those 1200 acres about 670 are within a fenced in facility area or proposed to be at least. The goal of this park is to begin construction fall of 2022 and then commence construction the following year, fall of 2023. With the

proximity to the town of Modoc, we will have to go before the BZA and request a special exemption because if you're looking at your map, 700 South and south of that in between Modoc, that is zoned as a limited area, so that area is what we will be asking for a special exemption for. Which will be one of the next things we will go to tackle. Right now, we're just working on spreading communication about what our next plan is with the phase, we have met with the town to let them know sort of what we are hoping to do, so that line of communication is open to them and then we have also presented to the Commissioner's.

Gary said I have spoken to you before, is Modoc expecting funds that are Randolph County funds for them to buy off on this. Because if Modoc doesn't go for it, there's going to be no BZA. I wouldn't think that the BZA would violate the towns.

Bennett said those conversations are ongoing.

Gary said with the Commissioner's as well?

Bennett said we approached it with the Commissioner's, we gave this presentation a couple weeks ago but those conversations are still on going with the town.

Gary said what is the contingency if the BZA says no? There's no authority from the Council or Commissioner's to interrupt the BZA's rule.

Bennett said certainly. We feel confident that we're very close in those negotiations.

Gary said the question is, is there an interruption if Randolph County Council says no were not forwarding any of our money to Modoc for any reason. It is funds for Randolph County, it's not Modoc's money. There's like 10, 20, 30% of the economic development funds that Modoc is expecting, is that correct?

Grace said we haven't set the number, it's up to what they present, if they do present.

Gary said what if we don't want to? We don't owe Modoc anything, we don't owe Ridgeville, Saratoga, all the towns, we don't owe them money. It's not that we don't help those towns, we do, we have. But the misconception to say we don't. But if it's part of this plan is Randolph County has to make sure that some of these funds go to Modoc, that needs to be exposed right now. So, my question is, is Modoc willing to hold this up as leverage to get funds that is really Randolph County funds.

Bennett said we feel pretty confident that's not going to happen.

Gary said it's been said in discussions.

Bennett asked has it been stated by Modoc?

Gary said yes.

Bennett said to my knowledge we have not had confirmation yet.

Meeks said Gary to help you out, I think the Commissioners, at least one of them have been talking to Modoc. They told them that they would really like to, if they expect something, it's going to be project specific. It's just not going to be x amount to Modoc to do whatever they want. So, if they have a project and I think they do. They have several projects actually.

Gary said it is almost as if Modoc wanted a certain percentage or they were going to block the BZA, correct?

Grace said that was never stated. We began the conversation first with the Town of Modoc as a way to encourage transparency because we were developing so close to the town. We didn't want it to appear as if we weren't trying to have an open line of communication in helping the town do to the proximity. So, it wasn't that the town approached us with that. It was that we wanted to work with them to say if you have any projects, we have this park coming through, can we help each other and get to both of our goals here. So, there wasn't any sort of approach from the town to us and were well aware at EDPR that we work with the County.

Gary said I am not anti-Modoc, I'm just kind of, it's ours first.

Bennett said you've been such great partners for the last three projects we've developed that we certainly want to keep that in mind. We feel very confident that we are close to a good solution that everybody is going to be happy with, we just don't have all the I's dotted and the t's crossed yet and wanted to make sure this was on the Council's radar so that conversations moving forward can be done and open in a transparent way.

Dave said how big is RiverStart I and II megawatt wise, is it still 100?

Grace said RiverStart I is 200 megawatts. This is 100 megawatts. So, half the size in generation and about ½ the size in land actually as well.

Dave said so we are up to about 500 megawatts with EDPR, is that correct, for Randolph County?

Grace said Headwater's I & II, that would be 400 megawatts and then Riverstart's 600. So, we are sitting at almost 600 competed right now.

Dave said then this will be 700?

Grace said correct.

Gary said what's next, what's the chain of events? There are a couple critical paths that it has to pass.

Bennett said we are hoping in the next couple weeks we'll have everything sorted out with Modoc and then we'll get on the BZA schedule to advance the special use.

Gary said once again, what's being sorted out with Modoc that we might want to know about?

Bennett said what we can have a conversation since it's still kind of in the preliminary and planning stages, after the meeting.

Gary said Mike Wickersham is here, Mike would you like to say anything regarding this.

Mike said I've had the presentation and I don't really have any question. I came in with your question that it goes to the County first. I don't have anything else from them, amounts or time lines.

Bennett said we would be happy to come back to the Council at your next meeting to give an update if that would be helpful, that way we can hopefully have a date when these conversation and plans will be finalized and then we can move forward.

Gary said there is a smoking gun out there, somebody is going to put some pressure on and say if you don't concede this, this whole thing is going to fall apart.

Bennett said we are very hopeful that's not the case, we feel very confident.

Gary said next time you come will you have more specifics?

Bennett said yes sir.

Grace asked can you just expand quickly on what's in the materials?

Bennett said so what's in the materials as were reviewing, we have a map of the site location that we have also included there, we also ran through the previous economic development agreements just to give a little bit of a refresher as to the partnership that we've had through the first three phases of the project as well as the preliminary information about the project and an overview of the company for those of you who might not be fully familiar with our presence across the state.

Gary said so, there is no proposal for RiverStart III, this is all what is already current?

Bennett said correct. As we work to finalize that we want to make sure.

Gary said how close do you come to Modoc's town boarders?

Grace said it's about ¼ mile if you drag from the intersection there of 1 and 36 in the middle of the town to this most Western portion.

Gary asked what's the setback requirements, is it ½ mile or mile?

Grace said a mile. So, everything, if you can imagine a mile radius around the town, it's sort of cuts into everything south there to 700, so about ½ of the project now is within the ag limited area.

Gary asked why is it necessary to get within an ag limited area? I mean there is so much ground out there, why is it necessary to get inside of an ag limited, is this the beginning of getting inside all of our town's limits?

Grace said the dashed red line there going east and west across, that is the transition line, that is already existing from Headwater's I. So, it's more economical to have a project immediately close to an interconnection than having it spread out far away.

Gary said I appreciate what you guys have done. I'm a little leery right now.

Bennett said we certainly understand, this is the first conversation of many about this project but we wanted to make sure it was on your radar as were working through everything. We wanted to give an introduction, the same introduction we gave to the Commissioner's and as we continue to work with all parties involved, we'll be sure to keep you posted and up to date as quickly as we can.

Gary said and there is no misconception that you have got give the Commissioner's every single move of this. There is no need to go anywhere unless you go through our Commissioner's first. As Mike just said, everything comes through the county first before goes. I hope that we're not being set up to not be very good partners with the town of Modoc.

Bennett said we certainly can appreciate the sensitivity, we think it is a good opportunity for everyone in the county and we want to make sure that everyone in the county feels comfortable as well.

Gary said when it comes to cities and town, Modoc's not our only one.

Mike Haffner – Bridge 304

Gary said Mike is not coming, he called me and said he didn't need to come today to get final approval of it. He is going back to the Commissioner's in two weeks. Mike (Wickersham) is there anything we need to do on 304 right now?

Mike Wickersham said 304 is going to be paid out of the Cum bridge fund, we understand that the money is there to do that and we voted to spend \$163,000 plus for the engineering on 304 and that is the Carl Street bridge in Winchester. It runs across Salt Creek on Carl Street. Bridge 308 is Short Street and it is not closed but it is going to be limited, so we're investigating, we really want to have both of those under engineering plans so that if money becomes available. 304 we're planning on Community Crossing's money but if infrastructure money would show up someplace, if we have it under engineering, we could grab that and go with it because they are both going to need replace eventually. Carl Street is closed now and 308 is limited and is getting worse. We're looking at traffic counts on each one of them, Carl Street has a 900-vehicle traffic count now. But no, you don't need to do anything as long as the funds are in Cum Bridge. As a heads up 308 we will probably ask the Council to join us in maybe using windfarm money for the engineering on 308, so we can get the engineering done and be ready to go when funds become available.

Sherri Thompson & Wendy McDavid, Health Department – Covid Clinic funding

Sherri said we are here to ask about borrowing money from the rainy-day fund to run our Covid clinic, our testing site and our vaccine site. We have been approved for \$100,000.00 grant, I've got that purchase order, I have also invoiced them for that but at this time we don't have the funds. We are here to ask if we could borrow the money out of the rainy-day fund to pay those employees and then put it back.

Gary said who are those employees you are referring to?

Sherri said those would be the ones that run the test site.

Gary said they are not our employees?

Sherri said they are contract employees.

Gary asked when do you expect the funding, is there anyway the funding could fall apart?

Sherri said no, not at this point.

Rick said it is absolutely solid. I have a list of where every county stands and you guys have actually signed and executed and invoices. A lot of counties aren't at that level yet, so were fortunate. It is just a matter of time. Normally once you invoice you're talking a week to two weeks to get that money. It is just a stop gap measure. I am going to abstain from the vote on this one.

David asked can ARPA funds be used for that?

Laura said I don't know about borrowing and paying back from ARPA. But the funds could be used for the vaccine and testing.

Max made a motion to allow the Health Department to borrow up to \$100,000.00 from the rainy-day fund to be paid back with the grant. Bev seconded. 5 aye votes. One abstention.

Rick said I do have one caveat to this, Max may want to redo the motion, \$50,000.00 is what you invoiced for, right?

Sherri said when I got the invoice, it did not have any tabs, it had one tab to invoice for \$100,000.00, so I invoiced for \$100,000.00.

Rick said we were told to invoice for the first \$50,000 and then the next \$50,000 would come half way through. But if that's what you got, we will just stay with that. It's ever changing. They possibly anticipated a reduction in testing once we got through this Delta, but I don't for see that happening at all.

Gary said tell me about the clinic, what's going on.

Wendy said the Covid test site is wild, it's been over 100 every day. Yesterday was 107 in six hours. There was five of us down there running people through, its been like that for the last 3 ½ weeks and I don't anticipate it getting any less for a while. Our vaccine clinic we're using the old Highway Department office by the Health Department and it's busy. We're busy everywhere so we are just shuffling staff to see where we can go.

Gary said can people just walk in?

Wendy said they can walk in or schedule appointment, either way. Our test site is open six days a week to make sure that we cover everybody, the vaccine clinic is open Monday through Thursday but the Health Department on Friday so I can give shots if need on Friday's or Diana.

Rick said I will give you guys credit. Randolph County, the Health Department has the most testing hours of any county that I know of.

Max asked what is your average turn around on the results?

Wendy said our rapid tests are 15 minutes. The PCR test that we send to the lab was about two or three days and since we've had more testing, it's an average of 3 to 5 days. They are moving pretty quick to get us those results.

Mindy Peed – Employee Duties

Mindy said I made some changes to a job description in my office with the employees that I lost, I have dumped all the duties onto one position and with the increased responsibility and increase in duties I'm asking that the pay be increased by \$3000.00 from my RP fund.

Gary said that is kind of a slippery slope for us. This person can take all that on. If you can give all this work to a person, what did the person do before.

Mindy said she has taken this on.

Gary said I know but if she is able to take this on, then what were they doing with their free time in the first place.

Mindy said they didn't have free time. She is doing these jobs anyway.

Gary said she is not taking them on, it's just being recognized that they were doing it anyway?

Mindy said right.

Gary said I would say we are paying for what they are doing anyway with what the current structure is, I'm a little concerned about changing job duties and adding here and there and then increasing wages because there is not one department head that doesn't do the same thing and rightfully so. I understand what you are saying. But to start with who does what so who can get more money than somebody else is never ending.

Mindy said it wouldn't be every department head because I am suing my own fund. I am not asking for county general to fund it.

Gary said but we told the Recorder in the budget no and she was using her own funds to take a part time to full time. We are leaving the pay structure where its at other than the raises that we did. That's where I'm at anyway because we didn't do any adjustments for any particular person in any particular department, we did an adjustment for everybody county wide. Even though you've got a valid concern here, my part of it is just one of 160 valid concerns of people trying to find a way to make more money.

Mindy said that's not why I'm here though. I am not just trying to get more money for this person, I have actually just lost another full-time deputy and I don't plan to replace them at this point. So, I am hoping to be able to save county general, what did you say in budget hearings, \$75,000.00 for a full-time deputy. I'm asking that I get to use \$3,000.00 of my RP fund to pay a little more for the more work that this person is having to do.

Bev said there are other offices that have lost people.

Gary said I know, I'm just looking at the unpopular, the other side of why I am resistant to it myself. Not that you don't do your work and your people don't do work. It is just that this is not an isolated case in Randolph County. However, if we were to do something like this, we open the door for doing it throughout. We have the Highway Department down three for four people, we haven't raised the wage of the drivers. We have the Sheriff's Department down a couple people, we haven't raised the wage of the deputies because they've taken on other tasks. It's the philosophy thing, it's not that we don't have good people working hard. That's really why I ask what were they doing in the first place to be able to take this on. If somebody were maxed out on their job, they wouldn't be able to take it on. Then we find out they were doing it anyway, so they are being paid for what they are doing anyway. I don't expect you to fully agree with my take on it.

Mindy said the loss was a Chief Deputy, which was a full-time position that just happened a week ago. Those duties have now changed according to the job description that I had approved.

Gary said the job description is another thing, but to start changing wages. When the Commissioner's change a job description, they may have somebody else change a job description next month and then that person comes to the Council and has the same exact valid argument of raising the wages. That's one side, I personally can't for that reason, not because of the people, because it just changes to much.

Dave said I assume the Commissioner's approved the job description.

Mindy said they did.

Dave said it's a tough sell, we did raise the Highway Drivers last year.

Gary said I know we did last year, but they've lost people and we didn't raise it because they were down people.

Dave said it would be a tough argument trying to put money into this position.

Rick said so I can get clarity in my mind, were talking, were not going to fill a full-time position that exist but we are just going to give someone else more money to do those.

Mindy said right.

Rick said if they have all that work, I'm just trying to figure out why we don't just go ahead fill that full-time position that exists.

Mindy said I can do that. I was just trying to make it more efficient, so that we weren't paying a full-time person to do something that we can try to put onto someone else. I guess I can do that without extra money. I thought it was fair to try.

Rick said I was just trying to find out if there's that much more to do.

Mindy said my fear is that Odyssey will, when we switch to Odyssey, which is happening in December, I've heard other counties say that it decreases the amount of work that you have for everybody in the office. So, instead of putting on another full-time person, I'd rather take the responsibility that position had and put it on somebody else, so that there is not down time.

Rick said that makes a little bit more sense. As far as not adding a full-time person back.

Missy asked how long have you been planning this? I'm surprised that it didn't come up in our budget workshops.

Mindy said it's just been a week. Just since I lost that last full-time person.

Missy said I think in the learning curve, everybody is going to have to learn the new Odyssey system. There are always new responsibilities people take on, I wish this would have come up at the budget. I'm not in favor of it. It sounds to me that you are admitting that we don't need a full-time deputy.

Mindy said I don't know that yet, I mean we sure do, right now. We just lost a whole person that was doing a full job and my office is not slow. I don't have a time where we are not busy with customers. I guess this year is slow because we don't have an election.

Gary said as far as courts, they are in full operation. I understand that. That would make that person the highest paid chief deputy in the county, right?

Mindy said no, it would be less than my chief deputies.

Gary said everybody has heard the request, would somebody like to make a motion. Before I get to there, can your RP sustain this no matter what?

Mindy said according to the Auditor's office yes.

Gary said if you were to do this and it didn't work out and you had to come back to hiring another person, would you take this wage down for the person that just got the wage up?

Mindy said repeat the question.

Gary said if you tried this and it don't work and you have to bring in somebody else, are you willing to bring that person's wage back down?

Mindy said yes.

Gary said I'm not willing to do that myself. Would somebody like to make a motion on Mindy's request?

Max said I personally hate to second guess Mindy, I appreciate her effort to try to avoid hiring another. I am willing to try it myself. I hear you, this isn't the first time we've been approached this year to change the job description and give somebody a raise but this is a little different I think.

Gary asked is that a motion?

Max said I will make that motion.

Gary said we have a motion would somebody like to second the motion?

Max said this is with the understanding that if this doesn't work it be reverted back to the current salary.

Gary said so this doesn't die from a lack of a second. I will second it to bring it to a vote. We have a motion, we have a second for this request. All those in favor signify by saying aye?

One aye vote. Five nay votes. Motion failed.

Other Business:

Report from Commissioners

Mike said most of what we talked about yesterday was the Highway Department. I am happy to say that Mike Haffner, our Highway Superintendent has hired an assistant superintendent. His name is Cody Lester. Mike reported that our Community Crossing grant paving is going to start in September and for your information they are going to pave Old 27 South from new 27 North to Base Road South, 300 East from Union City Pike to State Road 32, 900 West from Hwy 36 to 400 South and 900 West to 1000 West on 400 South. That's the Community Crossing money that we are spending this round. Headwater's II paving has begun, we don't have an amended road use agreement, so were not sure where we stand on that paving operation. We have some idea of where they are supposed to pave and where they've agreed to pave and we've come to an agreement but we don't have anything in writing. As a security we are still holding EDPR's \$2 million in the bank until we get that amended road use agreement. In the first road use agreement, they made a deposit of \$2 million, we were going to take over the paving of the roads and then we amended that and EDPR is taking over the paving of the roads and we are going to give them that \$2 million back when we get that second agreement signed. The only other thing I have to report is the Communication Towers, we've had an issue with some of the tower construction and we don't know if it is structural or cosmetic but we have hired a third-party inspection firm that was recommended by Tower

King, our broadband people. They are supposed to inspect the towers starting a week from tomorrow. So, next Thursday and Friday is when the tower inspections are going to take place. We are trusting, we optimistically are saying that it's all cosmetic and that they'll be ready to load equipment the following week. We've reached out to the equipment company and they're going to bring their installers back to put it on the towers. Does anybody have any questions for me?

Gary asked on any of these towers that we have up already, is there any kind of agreements working, to hang broadband equipment on any of them.

Mike said to my knowledge there are no agreements but we do have a report of what we can put on each one with regards to weight and that sort of thing and height level. So, there is opportunity to lease space off those towers.

Gary said I read Rush Counties RFQ. Did you read that?

Mike said I have not.

Gary said it is kind of the concept that we've talked about. Rush County is looking to incentivize providers to provide instead of incentivizing the structure. That is something that maybe a line to consider.

Mike said that would be a preferred method from my standpoint only because the less we own, the better the County is.

Gary said I agree on that because not only that for me, it's the expertise of being in an engaged discussion at that level.

Mike said that was discussed with Tower King on the broadband. Because they're the ones that are going to know whether it's marketable to put a tower in your community. We really don't know until we put it up and then it may be too late.

Gary said it was mentioned that if Randolph County builds one, will you build the rest. Does anybody have anything for Mike?

Max asked in preparation for the paving, I notice that many of the roads had been burned, had the sod removed from the sides. Do you know whether that was our people that did that?

Mike said I don't think it was our people that did that. If it's the Headwater's II project, it would be the contractors that they've hired to do the roads. I presume that they're going to end up like the other roads, except the paving is going to be the full width of the prior paving before they tore them up. I would guess they're going to put the gravel shoulder on the side like they did the Headwater I roads. Which I think is valuable, it takes care of the water off the roads.

Minutes of July 7, 2021

Max made a motion to accept the minutes of July 7, 2021. Rick seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Ordinance 2021-14

Gary said Ordinance 2021-14 is for a part-time Veteran's Affairs officer.

AMENDING RANDOLPH COUNTY'S VETERANS' SERVICE OFFICER BUDGET

WHEREAS: There has been a change in the 2020 Salary Ordinance with regard to the Randolph County's Veterans' Service Officer Budget and it is necessary to amend the 2020 Salary Ordinance and to add the following pay in the Salary Ordinance effective beginning September 10, 2021 pay as follows:

VETERANS' SERVICE OFFICER

PART TIME VETERANS' SERVICE OFFICER

\$14.00 PER HOUR

IT IS THEREFORE ORDAINED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF RANDOLPH COUNTY INDIANA THAT:

SECTION 1. Ordinance No. 2020-15, 2021 Salary Ordinance pertaining to Randolph County's Veterans' Service Officer Budget shall be amended to read as follows:

VETERANS' SERVICE OFFICER

PART TIME VETERANS' SERVICE OFFICER

\$14.00 PER HOUR

Max made a motion to pass Ordinance 2021-14 on the first reading. Rick seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Max made a motion to suspend the rules and have second and third reading by title only and adopt the same day. Rick seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Max made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2021-14. Bev seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

Comp time report

Additional Appropriations:

Tourism

| | |
|------------------------|-------------|
| Randolph County United | \$20,000.00 |
|------------------------|-------------|

Gary asked would somebody like to make a motion?

Rick made a motion to approve the Additional appropriation as presented. Gary seconded.

Gary said this additional appropriation is really for Tourism, not Randolph County United.

Laura said the money is being appropriated to pay a claim that we have not received yet from Randolph County United to pay for the Tourism Director's salary. That is where her salary comes from.

Meeks said the Tourism tax can be used for salaries, it can be used for promoting tourism within the county. I send an email to Laura, I think I sent it to you guys that specifically says our tourism director, is for salaries for tourism. So, the additional appropriation really doesn't matter, its when they submit the claim and the claim must show that, that \$20,000.00 is used for tourism in a sense that this is for the Tourism Director's salary and all of it is 100% dedicated to tourism. No problem with the state statute at this point. It is a very specific statute and if I was making the claim, I would quote the statute on there of what they are using it for. But the additional appropriation, you couldn't pay the claim unless the additional appropriation is approved.

Gary said the additional appropriation is not for Randolph County United. It's for Randolph County Tourism.

Meeks said it is for the Tourism fund.

Gary said so, that should be changed.

Laura said it is coming out of Tourism, to Randolph County United who pays her salary.

Meeks said that additional appropriation is coming out the fund where the tax is going in.

Laura said yes.

Angela said it cannot be used for salaries.

Meeks said are you sure it cannot. It says for a director. Let me grab the statute. Meeks said IC 6-9-18-4 Tourism promotion fund. Money in the convention tourism promotion fund may be expended only to promote and encourage convention, visitor's and tourism within the county. Expenditures under this subsection may include but are not limited to expenditures for advertising, promotional activities, trade shows, special events and recreation. So that's the tourism promotion fund.

Angela said what we have is innkeeper's tax. What we collect is innkeepers' tax.

Gary said for what the Council's part of this is, we made an additional appropriation to the tourism budget. We are not saying we are approving a claim going to Economic Development. We're saying were approving \$20,000.00 to their budget as an additional appropriation. How they spend it is where it becomes legal or not legal.

Missy said are they allowed to transfer it though?

Gary said I wouldn't know why not. Meeks looked it up. How they spend it. How do you pay for a director by the way? If you don't have RCU in Randolph County and you've got tourism tax, how do you pay for a director. You pay for it out of the tax. It's just my opinion, how do you pay for a director if you don't have that director lumped into somebody else's function.

Meeks said I am certain you can use it to pay for salaries.

Gary said whether the Council votes up or down it's fine, but we are legal to approve this additional appropriation to tourism. They are the ones that have to make sure they spend it correctly.

Meeks said correct.

Gary said so really on this right here, it shouldn't say additional appropriation for Randolph County United. This additional appropriation is for tourism. Randolph County United is a vendor of the tourism.

General

| | |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Group Insurance | \$300,000.00 |
| Employee Separation | \$20,000.00 |
| Comp/Video Equipment | \$17,000.00 |

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

Airport

| | |
|-----------------------|------------|
| State and Federal tax | \$4,000.00 |
|-----------------------|------------|

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

Airport

| | |
|------|-------------|
| Fuel | \$60,000.00 |
|------|-------------|

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

American Rescue Plan

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| L& M Water District Loan/Grant | \$296,500.00 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|

Gary said this is coming out of the ARPA fund.

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

Sheriff's Non-Reverting

| | |
|-----------|-------------|
| Equipment | \$10,000.00 |
|-----------|-------------|

Gary asked what equipment are you buying, Sheriff?

Art said uniforms.

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

Transfers:

| | | |
|--------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| General Treasurer | From: | To: |
| \$600.00 | Postage | Clerical Help |

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

Gary said for discussion, how do they have \$600.00 extra in postage?

Angela said they brought a part time person in to replace a deputy that resigned.

Gary said I get that I just wonder how it is that there is \$600.00 extra dollars in the postage account.

Angela said I do not know.

Gary said that is something to think about when we get into the budget. That's a lot of overage on postage.

Tourism

Randolph County United \$20,000.00

Meeks said here's what I think. Under 6-9-18-1 it says application of this chapter a county can impose an innkeeper's tax. Innkeeper's tax is on taxes of lodging under 6-9-18-3. In the one that I just quoted which is 6-9-18-4 it says any taxes levied under subsection 3 of this chapter the county treasurer shall establish a convention tourism promotion fund so the innkeeper's tax goes into a promotion fund and then the promotion fund may be used. Money in the promotion fund or money transferred to such fund may be expended only to promote and encourage convention, visitors and tourism in the county. Expenditures under this subsection may include but are not limited to expenditures for advertising, promotional activities, trade shows, special recreation. So, when I read only to encourage convention, visitors and tourism within the county, if you have a county tourism director that would be what it would fall under. So, the promotion fund is established because you have an innkeeper's tax.

Gary said if the claim comes in for other than salary, it comes in for cost allocation of office and this, this and this. If there was no other unit to put them with they would have a salary coming out.

Meeks said it was 15 years ago, I argued that I thought they should use the money for because it would be easier to track. It is difficult to track if your putting money into a promotion fund but I'm using it for a billboard here and a convention there as opposed to just saying hey I'm going to allocate all \$20,000.00 for salary. If that person is a dedicated person, that's all they do, I thought it was easier to account for. If it is an additional appropriation, you are just saying you can use an additional \$20,000.00 out of the promotion fund. Then they will submit a claim and that claim needs to specify it's use for one of those purposes in that statute.

Gary said I don't think this is written correctly, Council is approving an additional appropriation into the tourism fund. For them, they then submit a claim, not Randolph County United. Tourism submits a claim to Randolph County for the funds and the chain of events sends it over.

Rick said let's go back to what Meeks read. Did you or did you not say it could be used for salaries?

Meeks said I am certain it can be used for salaries. Having a full-time person to promote tourism in the county, yes and a part time person to promote tourism in the county, I'd say yes. So, as long as that person is dedicated, hypothetically let's say that person's salary is \$50,000.00 and they use \$20,000.00 out of the promotional fund. They better make sure 40% of their time is used for the promotion of tourism activities within the county.

Gary said we will table this for a month.

Dave made a motion to table this additional appropriation until next month. Max seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

General Veterans
\$6000.00

Secretary

Part time VSO

Gary said this has to do with the Ordinance that we passed.

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

| | | |
|----------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Superior Court | | |
| \$3,500.00 | Pauper Transcripts | Bailiff Clothing Allowance |

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

| | | |
|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Circuit Court | | |
| \$1000.00 | Pauper Attorney | Per Diem Bailiff |
| \$7000.00 | Pauper Attorney | Professional Svcs |

Max made a motion to approve both of these transfers as presented. Missy seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

| | | |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Circuit Court | | |
| \$10,000.00 | Pauper Attorney | Law Books |

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

LIT Tax

Gary said we discussed at the budget hearing, we are going to discuss the LIT tax in Randolph County. Anybody want to start a discussion on this?

Dave said is it on the agenda?

Gary said no, but any Council business is allowed.

Missy asked exactly what does this mean percentage wise. On every dollar of income, what does the increase mean?

Gary said .25. Randolph County has .75 available to tax to the adjusted gross income on the IT40. We discussed in the budget hearing about wages and about the need to raise the LIT tax. So, this discussion is are we going to, are there votes here to do it and if do it, it has to be done by October 31st to be active by January 1st.

Meeks said if you change the LIT between October 1 through October 31st, those become effective January 1. Anything after October 31 would become effective October 1 of the following year. So, if you did it in November then nothing is going to happen until October 1, 2022. We had to do that last year, we had to have several special hearings. If you did decide, there is lots of moving parts so I would need to have an idea.

Gary said you wasn't here during our budget, we couldn't give raise and there was a lot of discussion about raising it, as a matter of fact we asked Angela to go down and tell us how much we had available to raise. There was some discussion about raising the whole $\frac{3}{4}$ percent.

Meeks said there are things you can shift too, to get the county more money, not necessarily other taxing units. We discussed that at the last one.

Gary said that is not favorable, to limit pct and taking it over to LIT. Which is $\frac{1}{2}$ percent.

Missy said help me in laymen's terms, if I make \$40,000.00 working in Randolph County, tell me what I'm paying in LIT tax not and what I will pay if it went to .50 or if it went .75.

Meeks said we can get Jason to revisit. If you're an average wage earner without dependents, it's going to be different than a wage earner with dependents. It would be whatever your adjusted gross income is and then you'd take .25% of it if you up it a quarter.

Gary said 1% would be \$400.00. Right?

Meeks said it is very difficult to tell everybody's situation. Last time I told you to get Jason involved to kind of give you some scenarios of this is what you'd generate. If that's what you want, you would probably need to tell him today.

Angela said it is really hard to get him right now, which is unusual because of all the ARP.

Dave asked have we determined what ARPA money is the loss that the balance we have can be used for yet?

Laura said the lost revenue can be used pretty much for about anything we need it for.

Dave said so that could be used next year potentially for salaries?

Gary said it's not that easy.

Laura said I have not requested salaries but pretty much everything I've requested from Barnes & Thornburg, they've come back with only from lost revenue. So, all the items, like Adam had asked me about IT equipment for the switches and stuff and they said only from lost revenue. I will be glad to ask that question, but I don't have the answer for that today.

Dave said we are going to have to determine how to use that money by 2026?

Laura said I think we actually have to tell them how we are going to spend it before that but we have until 2026 to actually use it.

Gary said we can't lose site of the fact that Commissioners have to be on board, they're more in charge of it than we are. The way that works the Commissioners are basically the Sheppard of the ordinance, they will make the recommendation for something to be spent. The Council's input is the up or down on the appropriation. They highly recommend we all work together. But the way it is legally set up is, the Commissioner's set the Ordinance, Council has nothing to do with that ordinance. So, they will actually approach the Council with an expenditure that they would like to use it on, the Council in this particular case can say yes or no. On the EDIT fund, they completely control that, we have to say yes, if the money exists. On the ARPA funds, we get to say yes or no on our feeling for the expenditure. If we want to use it for wages or this or that, the Commissioners have to also agree.

Dave said I agree, I know that.

Gary said it is not 50/50 in my view, it's like 60/40. Sixty percent of the authority of this fund rests with the Commissioner's. That's really a technical thing but it takes both Council and Commissioners.

Missy said we are looking at a longevity to support salary and wages for county workers. That's why we're looking at the LIT tax. Some of those funds are going to come and go as Covid comes and goes.

Gary said that's correct. This is something that's controlled in the controller account.

Rick said I don't actually see that fund as a long-term solution. I think this is it, that's the last go around we'll see of any Covid money. As everybody knows I've stood up here and banged my fist before about raising taxes but if we're going to raise them, my vote would be to raise them. I don't like raising taxes, I haven't voted for a raise in taxes but if we're going to do it, do it so we'll have some money to work with.

Max said after this year, it's painfully obvious that we're going to have to do something. We can't continue to shove off expenses onto one-time income type of things. I'm not real anxious to talk about taxes but we need to. I'm of the opinion of let's talk about it once instead of doing it a quarter percent one year, quarter percent another year, let's just do it and prepare ourselves for the future.

Dave said I think you know where I stand. We've got our population keeps decreasing and we're putting more burden on the balance of people here and a lot of those people are still struggling today. I'd say when we have schools at 70% reduced or free lunches in just about every school in this county, the people just can't stand another tax increase. Right now, we've raised taxes three times in the last five years. What I'd like to see is to maybe just delay a year to have this discussion again and to use some of those ARPA funds because if we raise, all the cities and towns will get money also and I've never heard from the cities and towns through the county to say they need more money. When we raise taxes we probably should invite them to be part of the discussion because they're just as important to that tax increase as we are. I like the idea of having Jason do an analysis for this increase of whatever percent you guys decide you want to do. I do know Randolph Eastern is having a public hearing tomorrow night about raising taxes over there for their STEM program.

Gary said how can they do that?

Dave said it's outside the levy. Those people are going to get hit. That's where I'm at.

Rick said if we can do something not to raise taxes, I'd be for that, you guys know that.

Gary said governance is not easy, I think we're there, I hate it but I think we're there. Next year's budget is not going to be any better, if not worse. Really, the hard thing is, we're making up for losses that are imposed by the State of Indiana's legislation when they make changes.

Max said our health insurance is costing us.

Gary said our loss in restating the farm ground is costing us, the loss of personal property equipment, business personal property is going to cost us 1%. All the constant changing and there's an influx right now of, not an influx but a push of the County income tax. Dr. Deboer, if you're not familiar with him, he is a pretty good tax analyst, that what used to be a lower tax, is now a higher LIT tax, property taxes keep falling, if we don't raise our LIT taxes to keep up with the needs of Randolph County, we will have to cut employees. We cannot not cut employees. If we don't raise that LIT tax next year, we will cut employees for 2023. There is no way around it. We are barely making it now.

Dave said if we use some of that ARPA money.

Gary said that's true too, but that doesn't go on.

Dave said that is \$2 million, that's a lot of money to be dedicated towards something.

Gary said I agree, a lot of that money has to be infrastructure, broadband, water, sewer.

Dave said it can't be used for broadband right now, I don't think because it has to have 100 up/100 down. That takes fiber optic.

Gary said I would have to vote for it, I don't want to but I would vote for ½ percent and leave ¼ left, again like Rick or Max was saying to not meet again.

Dave said would you put all that money into county general?

Gary said I would put it all into LIT tax, the cities and towns will get relief too.

Dave said would you put part of it into rainy day, ¼ percent raises \$500,000. Is that just the counties portion?

Gary said yes.

Meeks said the counties portion for a 1% increase last year was 2.2 on the certified shares. If you put into additional EDIT revenues it went to 2.5 for 1%.

Gary said EDIT revenues take it out of the Council's ability to appropriate it.

Meeks said yes, I'm just saying you get a little bit more if you put it into EDIT, \$300,000.00 more.

Gary said if you put it into public safety.

Meeks said all the townships got it and the cities got a little bit more. According to Jason's analysis last year.

Dave said I guess we really wouldn't need Jason's analysis this year.

Gary said I don't. Mayor do you mind, I don't want to put you on the spot, but what do you think?

Mayor said I think you are banging your head against the walls every year and it's just going to continue to be a problem. The state every year finds more ways to take money out of our pockets and their basically, just like the wheel tax, if you don't max it out, we're not going to provide you anymore income. I think it is getting to that point. There's a shift. I don't like it but it will benefit the cities and it will allow us to do some things that we can't do now. I'm fighting blight and with limited resources, I think it will allow us to do things we can't do currently.

Gary said plus your fighting economic obsolescence on your property taxes.

Bob said exactly, so yes that tax, like you said property taxes, less money, you go the other direction. I think that's what they are expecting us all to do. It's not good.

Gary said I think we should begin the paperwork for ½ percent LIT increase. Or prepare the department heads to cut personnel next year. I hate to say it, everybody is important but I don't know how we would not.

Dave said I don't agree with the last half of your statement just because I think we have the funding to make it through next year. I don't think it's fair to tell the department heads they're going to have to cut automatically.

Gary said that extra funding is not continuous funding.

Dave said I agree with that but what I don't agree with is that if you've got monies available to us, use those first and then go for taxes. That's all I'm saying.

Gary said that's fair. We have money in windfarm, we could take \$1 million dollars if we could get the Commissioner's to do it. I've not talked to them, I'm not saying they wouldn't. There's EDIT funding that could go into the county other than other places. Your right on that. But I do believe we could get by one year. That's a true statement.

Missy said we have some positions right now that are unfilled. Do we put a hiring freeze until they come and tell us, explain why they need to fill that position that they didn't have filled before?

Gary said I don't think we could put that on, I think the Commissioner's would have to put that on. Those positions not filled are already budgeted in the budget. If you look at the County Highway, their funding comes from Motor Vehicle Highway, it's a different funding source. We're better off if they are actually fully staffed. I wish they would get fully staffed. Their contribution to the health plan, if they are fully staffed is \$100,000.00. Without their staffing, we feel that in the county general. It's the aggregated cost divided by the amount of employees in there. Just like if the Sheriff were to go up one person and that person is on health insurance, that would be out of county general but if it were out of a different fund it would help that aggregate go down. That's the discussion, that's everybody's input, what do we want to do as a council?

Missy said I think we need to raise the LIT tax. I would like to see some numbers, let's say your adjusted gross income was \$37,000 or \$40,000, what does that mean you're going to pay. I agree with you Dave that there are a lot of, 70% across the county, I think is a little high. According to schools it is, it's not 70% average across. Some of them are really high which pulls that average up there. It's income, the average adjusted income, so some people qualify for those programs basically don't claim any income at the end of the year. I'd be interested in the numbers.

Gary said basically it's the adjusted income time .025, ¼ percent. It's not on gross wages.

Meeks said to do an average like that I don't think you can, it's not more than \$200.00.

Gary said Jason took the average of the wages, \$2.2 million per 1% and divided it back for every quarter.

Meeks said I looked at Jason's analysis and he didn't give an analysis of what a \$50,000 or \$40,000.00 person would be.

Gary said you just can't nail that down. You just take an overview.

Meeks said take page 1 of your tax return and add .5 to that and then you'll know.

Bev said I can feel how it affected our tax return this past year from the previous year. I think I am on board with Dave. If it's possible to postpone it until the next year. I would be more in favor of that.

Rick said I just need to decide to either do what Dave is talking about, use what funds we've got to get through and then see where we're at or do we just bite the bullet and do it. I still need to think about that a little bit.

Gary said I think we just need to bite the bullet.

Max said I do too. We've heard from us, how about somebody out there in the audience. What would you have to say about this? Todd what do you think?

Todd said there will probably be a lot of daggers coming out when I say this, I listen to what goes on year-round. I hear a lot of things that government is doing that's not really a function of government. There's are luxuries and stuff that we do every time they come in. There's a need there but I don't know if that would get you over the hump. But over the year, like Life stream, that's a good thing but its not a function of government to help fund it. You had a discussion about going to 40-hour work weeks, that's a big difference. I think your comp-time, is that part of that budget discussion.

Gary said no, it's unfunded.

Todd said the part I never understood about that is, they accumulate the hours this year but then if they get a raise, they cash it in at a higher rate.

Gary said its actually their money that were holding on to because they worked it and they didn't get paid for us using their money. It goes both ways.

Todd asked what are other small counties doing?

Gary said I don't know, I don't investigate them very often.

Dave said I was going to bring that up today. AIC has a nice summary report book that Laura's got a copy of. I went through and ran the county populations from 20,000 to 30,000, there's 19 total counties in that grouping and were right up at the top on almost everything out of those 19 counties for salaries and different things. I would advise that each one of us get a copy of this.

Laura said I told Dave when the new one comes out I would order each of you a copy.

Dave said it is very helpful to answer some questions about where we're at. It's a very good booklet.

Gary asked does anybody want to make a motion to raise the LIT tax. This is the meeting to do it in.

Max said I have no objection to putting it on the agenda for next month.

Gary said Laura please put the LIT tax on the agenda for next month.

Meeks said just to be clear Max, if you put it on the agenda, I just want to make sure everybody is clear that it is perfectly fine, we will probably not have enough time to raise the LIT tax by October 31st unless, we will have to have a hearing, a public hearing and you will have to have three readings. So, you will need to be prepared to have a bunch of meetings in October. The public hearing takes 10-days to advertise. I just want to make sure if you guys did decide, which is fine, I mean it would just go into effect October 1st, 2022.

Max said we were already talking about delaying it a year.

Meeks said I just wanted make sure everybody is clear.

Gary said if we decide basically in October it could be done.

Meeks said you would be having a lot of meetings in October.

Art Moystner, Sheriff

Art said I have a couple things that I need some direction from you guys regarding the body cam invoice for the first one. I expect I will get that invoice some time between now and your next Council meeting. I am curious as to how you would like the first-year invoice, we can do that over a five-year plan. We have about \$110,000.00 out in grant requests on a \$298,000.00 project. So, when they invoice that first year, do you want me to do that at a minimum invoice so we can carry the other because I think the funds that we have to use if the grants don't come in, those funds are still going to be there next year.

Gary asked is this Cares Act funds?

Laura said ARPA.

Art said whatever funds you decided to take it out of, I know you told me there were some funds you were wanting to look at to do that. I think those funds will be there next year and I guess my point being I would like to see what comes in with some of the grants before we commit the full \$298,000.00. I actually think we will get this in two bills. I think we'll have the body cam package will come first and then we won't see the mobile camera invoice until January or February of next year because its going to be that long before they are able to install those. I am looking for some guidance as to how you want that invoice submitted and to what dollar amount.

Gary said where are the Commissioner's at on this? If it's out of ARPA funding, it got to come through the Commissioner's and then us.

Art said I didn't speak to the Commissioner's specifically, I didn't realize they were as much of a controlling factor of ARPA as they are. But my question to you guys, with \$110,000.00 there, I think we should have the first invoice a little bit low because I can have me invoice them again 30 days after we receive the first one, for additional amounts, that's not an issue.

Gary said it needs paid for before the ARPA funds expire.

Art said sure.

Gary said that's four years isn't it?

Laura said we have to commit it by 2024 and then it has to be paid out by 2026.

Art said there is \$110,000 out there in grants, one of them I've applied for, the other one I am still waiting on. But between the two I think there would be about \$110,000.00 if we get that full amount and the initial bill is right around \$182,000.00 for the body cam package.

Missy asked is there any interest payments if you pay over the five years?

Art said no, it's all broke out the same, so I can get the initial bill as low as I believe either \$35 or \$37 thousand for the first year. Which would leave some funds left that if we get the grant then we could pay that, then the rest of it we could figure out as we go.

Gary said I would pay as minimum as possible until the grants are done. Then I would like to just go pay it off.

Art said I will have him submit the first one in that direction. I would also share with you I lost another jail staff, they resigned over the weekend. The other thing I would like to plant the seed with the Council and I will do the same thing with the Commissioner's having found out that the ARPA is mainly controlled by them. The Winchester Mayor is going to present to his Council the same thing that I'm going to present at this point in time is out of the ARPA funding, there is a permissible expense they call it essential employees. I have read a few things and I tried to find the one article that was sent to me regarding this and I could not find it this week because we've all been inundated with emails regarding these types of funds. There is and different places call it different things, I've heard it referred to premium pay, hazard pay, stipend pay, overtime pay, I've heard many things referred to on this. I've heard of places that are doing it for their emergency services employees to where they're giving them a stipend out of ARP for working through Covid. I've read where the max amount is up to \$2500.00 per employee, I've also read where someone did \$3,000.00. I've got my mind stuck someplace that's up to \$2500.00 and we can research it some more, I'm going to look some more. I know I received a text that had some information in it today. The City of Madison Indiana had approved it for all city employees. They deemed all employees as essential employees and they're giving them a stipend from Covid. I do know for one-month last year, emergency services were put into the time and half category for working that month. I think this is separate and can be on top of that because we've been dealing with Covid for almost two years now. So, to have some type of premium pay for that other time, I believe is a permissible expense. I did talk to Meeks briefly yesterday, he had the find on the situation with me with regards to emergency services personnel. I find it interesting that some of the other entities are actually doing this with all of their employees. Most of them are anywhere from \$1000.00 to \$2500.00 per employee. I would also share that this is not the lost revenue portion of the ARP funding, this is actually one of the four allowable expenses of ARP. I don't look for the Council to act on it today because I came to you blind. It is just some information I have been looking at over the past couple of weeks and I just go some confirmation emails over the weekend. I do want to present it to the Commissioner's at their next meeting. I am going to make them aware that it is coming, but I want the Council aware also. I think this would be something nice that could be given to the employees out of that funding.

Gary asked do you mean just emergency service employees?

Art said for my point. I would look at emergency services employees for me. From the Council stand point I'm not so sure I wouldn't do research to see whether it fits everybody. I know the City of Madison gave it to all employees. I think they gave it in varying amounts. I think the emergency services stipend was a little higher than the others. I'm not sure how the Mayor is planning on presenting his, but I know he is going to ask the Council the same thing because him and I have had this discussion a few times and we both believe it's an allowable expense.

Meeks said if the Council wants to do that, we need to get that confirmed from Barnes & Thornburg.

Laura said I did ask them regarding our raises I think. I don't remember their response but I will forward that to you guys again.

Art said did you ask in the form of raises or premium pay one-time stipend?

Laura said raises. Because Council ask that at budget time.

Art said could we check with them on the one-time stipend.

Laura said yes.

Art said they told you no on the raises, correct?

Laura said I don't remember the response. I forwarded that to the Council and they didn't do it so I would say yes.

Gary said this goes to the Commissioner's first.

Art said okay, but I want you guys thinking about it too, since I received the information over the weekend and I didn't realize, I thought the Council controlled that fund. I am going to be put on your next agenda because I would like to discuss the hourly differences in rates between emergency services and non-emergency services and I think there is a discrepancy there. For those that work 24/7, holidays and weekends. I would also share with you in regards to pay and raises and the comment was made about losing employees or cutting employees if something didn't change. I would probably share with you that if we don't do something, you won't have to cut employees, were not going to be able to fill those positions anyway. I have an open jail position now and there is three at EMS, dispatch has had one for months. If we don't do something the quality of people were going to have is going to decrease also.

Gary said I want to reiterate on Dave's statement too, to say either we do it or prepare to cut, is not a fair statement. It is more of a passionate statement that we are up against the wall. But Dave is correct, there are other manners to do it.

Art said sure, as an office head if we don't do something we are going to continue to hemorrhage employees and historically we have compared ourselves to counties of similar size. That's not who were losing them to.

Dave said here is the response back that you sent out to us Laura. It cannot be given to all employees, they have to be considered essential to be given this to them. We cannot pay out a second time and we did give premium pay to essential workers in the beginning of the pandemic. That's what you sent out to all of us. I think it would be a good question to ask Barnes & Thornburg.

Art said out of curiosity. The one time to me is, that's the ARP funds, not one time overall. Because the other portion came out of the general fund.

Laura said it came out of the CARES.

Art said but it would be two separate funds.

Laura said I will ask the question.

Art said what came out of CARES?

Laura said when you guys got the time and half. CARES paid that.

Gary said it was not paid it was comp time.

Citizen Comments (3-minute limit)

None

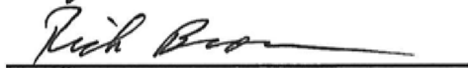
Adjournment

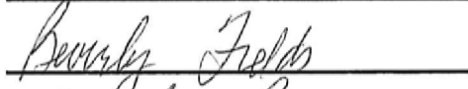
Rick made a motion to adjourn. Max seconded. All aye votes. Motion carried.

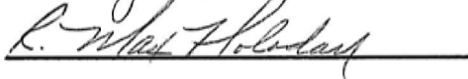
Reviewed and accepted this 8 day of February, 2021.

RANDOLPH COUNTY COUNCIL









ATTESTED: 
Laura J Martin, Auditor