

Vermillion County Council

Meeting Minutes

March 9, 2020

6:30 p.m.

Commissioners Courtroom, 2nd Floor, Courthouse

- I. **Call to Order.** The Council convened in a regular meeting on March 9, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. in the Commissioners Courtroom.
- II. **Pledge Allegiance to the Flag.**
- III. **Roll Call.** Members present were Vice President Robert Spence, Neil Costello, John Michael Major, Ronald Lee Dunavan, Auditor Amy Tolbert, First Deputy Auditor Stephanie Simpson, and Council Attorney Donald Bonomo.
- IV. **Approve of Minutes.** A motion was made by Major and seconded by Costello to approve the minutes from the February 10, 2020 meeting. All in favor, motion carried.
A motion was made by Dunavan and seconded by Costello to approve the minutes from the special joint meeting on February 18, 2020. All in favor, motion carried.
- V. **Treasurer's Report.** No comments.
- VI. **Comp Time Report.** No comments.
- VII. **Transfer of Funds.**
Reporting Only. Probation transferring \$3,000.00 from Adult Incentive to Probation Officer's Equipment.
- VIII. **Additional Appropriations.**
The Council considered additional appropriation requests as published. Vice-President Robert Spence reviewed the appropriations from the written requests submitted by Auditor Amy Tolbert. Thus, the following ordinance was adopted:
WHEREAS: it has been determined it is now necessary to appropriate more money than was appropriated in the annual budget for 2019, BE IT ORDAINED, by the County Council of Vermillion County Indiana, for the expenses of said county government, the following additional sums of money are hereby appropriated and ordered set out of the funds herein specified, subject to the law governing the same:

FUND/DEPT	AMOUNT REQUESTED	AMOUNT APPROVED
General Fund	\$228,251.00	-0-

This is to cover the increase in cost for personnel and equipment to man an additional paramedic level ambulance in the County on a 24-7/365 basis. As per combined meeting held on February 18, 2020 this appropriation is being sent in to ensure proper time to advertise prior to the March Council meeting, the actual amount of this request will be less as per instructions at the February 18th meeting.

Eric Shaughnessy from Illiana EMS stated that the third ambulance would be stationed in Clinton, and that this reduced the amount requested to \$203,879.56. Emergency Management Director Mark O'Heir stated that he had attended a meeting at Union Hospital Clinton recently that was focused on improving quality of life in the county. He said at that meeting it was stated that the county is number one in the state for deaths from heart attacks, and number two from strokes. He said those situations are very time sensitive when they happen. You don't have a half an hour to get a crew to Clinton and drive wherever. He said having a third crew is very important. He said the people in the county deserve better. Mayor Jack Gilfooy said I think you all are in agreement this is needed. He said at the last meeting, you said the funding was there. You're the only ones who can make a

difference. He said the people of the county need this, they want it, and they deserve it.

Commissioner Tim Wilson acknowledged that the Commissioners, in hindsight, may have made a mistake by not approaching the Council in advance. But he said that the people he has talked to like having paramedic service. Commissioner Tim Yocum said he had talked to neighboring counties, and that to staff an additional ambulance requires six employees. He pointed out that the money being requested would barely cover the salaries for six people, not to mention the other costs associated with operating an additional ambulance. He said from a financial standpoint, the value is there. He said he appreciates what they've done in the community and he's very happy with their service. He said the future of the county is in your hands.

Spence said he feels very strongly we should do this, but it's up to the Council. He said he supports what the Commissioners, the Emergency Management Director, Mayor Gilfoy, and the ambulance director have to say.

Costello asked if they could move on to other business while they wait for Bush to arrive, in case there was anything he wanted to add to the discussion. Tolbert reached Bush by phone and he said he was in Terre Haute and would not be able to make it to the meeting. Spence suggested tabling the request, and Shaughnessy told them that he had already lost three full-time people because of the instability, the Council's actions, the ping-ponging back and forth. If you table it, tomorrow we will reduce to what the contract says. He said he's held off as long as he can in good faith. He said this affects his employees' lives, and people's lives that live here and pay taxes here.

After considerable discussion Costello made a motion to approve the additional appropriation request for the Ambulance, seconded by Spence. There was a roll call vote with Costello and Spence voting yes, Dunavan and Major voting no. Motion is not approved.

Costello then asked if Major and Dunavan were willing to explain the reason for their "no" votes. Dunavan said he believes that it needed to be handled at budget the hearings. He said he believes that there shouldn't be any more additional for 2020. O'Heir said so people's lives can wait until 2021? He said you approve additional at every meeting. Gilfoy said that the Council recently approved a transfer of over \$750,000 to the Rainy Day Fund, but you can't find money to give the citizens what they need. He said, "you all should be ashamed of yourselves."

Major said he agreed with Dunavan. He said he thinks they should take it up at budget time. He said the Commissioners should bid it out, we have to be prudent with taxpayer money. Bidding it out is the best way.

Wilson told the Council that the Commissioners have already extended the contract three years, and it has been signed, so it won't be bid out.

That's always subject to appropriation Dunavan said.

Yocum said come budget time, if we put this in, are you going to support it? He said there's no use in putting something in if you all have your minds already made up. Dunavan said he believed that at budget time, there would be multiple options presented for where the third crew would be stationed, with costs for each. Shaughnessy said that depends on what the commissioners want to do, it's up to them where it goes. I'll honor the contract starting tomorrow.

Dunavan said so we'll have response times similar to the first year? Shaughnessy said yes, and Dunavan stated that those times were still under the national average, so he said it's not like they were horrible.

FUND/DEPT	AMOUNT REQUESTED	AMOUNT APPROVED
1000	\$24,834.00	\$15,228.00

Fire system upgrade. Upgrade was approved at the end of last year but the work has not been started and the appropriation needs to be appropriated in 2020 since it was not spent in 2019. The approved bid was lower than the amount requested so the amount needed for the work to be done is \$15,228.00. A motion was made by Major and seconded by Dunavan to approve \$15,228.00 for fire system upgrade. All in favor, motion carried.

FUND/DEPT	AMOUNT REQUESTED	AMOUNT APPROVED
SIM Grant Fund	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00

Judge Jill Wesch explained that this is grant funds that have been received and need to be set up into line items.

A motion was made by Major and seconded by Costello to approve the additional for the SIM Grant Fund. All in favor, motion carried.

IX. Open Issues.

A. Jail Renovation.

a. **Funding.** Tabled until all members could be present.

B. Economic Development Board Member. Economic Development Director Dylan

Riggen said he had been working with Tolbert on the Economic Development Council membership, and he said it seemed that while some members were supposed to be 1-year or 2-year terms, that has not been followed the last 20 years or so. Riggen said at some point, the county should probably rewrite the ordinance to sort it out.

Riggen said that in the meantime, he would like to see Basil Ave reappointed.

The Council also received applications from Curtis Howard and Joe Ellis.

Major made a motion to reappoint Basil Ave to the Economic Development Board. A separate motion was made by Dunavan to appoint Joe Ellis.

Costello seconded the motion for Basil Ave. All in favor, motion carried.

Motion to appoint Joe Ellis dies for lack of a second.

C. Parke-Vermillion Humane Society Update / Parke County. Major said that he had talked with Mark Southwick from the Parke Vermillion Humane Society, and he said he believes Parke County is going to vote to increase their funding.

Dunavan confirmed that Parke County intends to increase their funding to \$30,000, and then match Vermillion County at \$35,000 during this year's budget hearings. Major said, then we need to increase ours again at our budget hearings, and get Parke County to give some more.

X. New Business

A. Investment Reports – Florinda Pruitt. No comments. Treasurer Florinda Pruitt was not present.

B. Sheriff's Commissary Fund. Spence said everything looked proper with the Sheriff's Commissary Fund. There was some discussion on postponing this until the next meeting.

A motion was made by Major and seconded by Dunavan to table until the next meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

C. Public Comment. Commissioner Tim Yocum said he is working with the local schools on the idea of arranging to have a Government Day at each school, which would include a Commissioners meeting, a Council meeting, and having all elected officials present to talk to the students. He asked the Council their thoughts on this idea. Major asked if meetings could be held anywhere other than the county seat, and Dunavan said he didn't know why they couldn't, as long as proper notice was given. Bonomo said he would verify that and let Yocum know.

D. Adjourn.

Having no further business to come before the Council, the motion was made to adjourn by Major, seconded by Dunavan. All in favor, motion carried.

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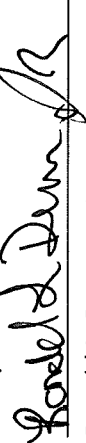
John Michael Major



Ashley James

William Brent Bush

Randy Dreher



Ronald L. Dunavan Jr.

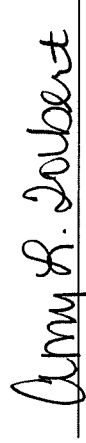


Neif Costello



Robert Spence

ATTEST:



Amy Tolbert, Auditor