

**STARKE COUNTY COUNCIL
MINUTES
MONDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2023**

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Council at 4:30 PM in the Annex Building Meeting Room, Knox, Indiana, with Dave Pearman (via zoom), Anthony Black, Kay Gudeman, Howard Bailey, Todd Leinbach, Norman (Bruce) Bennett present, and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting was called to order by Council Vice President, Kay Gudeman at 4:30 PM for the Starke County Council Regular Session.

COURT SERVICES – OPIOID DISCUSSION/FUNDING REQUEST

Shawn Mattraw, Director of Starke County Circuit Court Services, came before the Board of Commissioners to request the use of restricted opioid money. He explained that they would like to utilize \$50,000 of restricted funds for CY24 to allow Court Services to continue with the evidence-based treatment services of Mr. Tim Gearhart, LCSW and associate. They provide counseling services to justice involved individuals with SUD/MH conditions, and are under community supervision, specifically community-corrections, and probation. After further discussion Councilman Leinbach made a motion to honor his request for the \$50,000 from restricted funds for Gearhart and Associates for Circuit Court Services. Councilman Black asked if this is something Director Mattraw expects to come to them every year for. Director Mattraw stated that is correct as long as they can entertain the services of Mr. Gearhart as it has a large impact on their program and services they can provide. Councilman Black seconded the motion.

Councilman Pearman ask if this contract is for \$50,000 for one day a week. Director Mattraw advised it is one full day per week for Mr. Gearhart and he also has an associate that will get paid six hours a week as well as facilitating jail assessments. Councilman Pearman expressed his concern in the cost of Mr. Gearhart and the price of his services. Director Mattraw advised that they have attempted before to get an LCSW prior to contracting with Mr. Gearhart and they could not find an LCSW that they could fund from their budget or afford to fund from their budget. Councilman Pearman asked if down the road they find a LCSW that would do 2 days a week for the same price, can they break the contract? Director Mattraw advised he does not think Tim Gearhart would be opposed to that and he will look into that and work with the County Attorney to create such a contract. Councilman Leinbach rescinded his original motion. Councilman Leinbach made a motion to take the \$50,000 out of the opioid funds for this request with the stipulation in the contract that we are not bound to a year term if the council or Director Mattraw finds a better deal with more hours and the same services. Attorney Schramm advised he is Tim Gearhart's neighbor so he has to disclose that he has done work for him before so he needs to disclose that in the contract. Councilman Black seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Auditor Oesterreich advised that Director Mattraw is also here tonight for the grant funding request. Auditor Oesterreich was directed by Community Corrections Field Auditor Andrea Feeny to take \$6355.90 from County General and deposit it into Fund 8500. The discrepancy occurred in FY20 and FY21. The balance remaining in the end at the end of the year for those two years should have been sent back to the DOC. However, due to employee shortage our DOC Audit did not occur until this year for those funds. The DOC never sent us an invoice to have those amounts refunded to the DOC so in turn we used those extra funds in 2022 and 2023. After further discussion continued regarding how the grant money was overspent. Councilman Black made a motion to move \$6,355.90 from County General to Fund 8500. Councilman Bennett asked if there are strict guidelines on what we can spend the money on. Auditor Oesterreich stated yes. Councilman Bennett advised he still does not understand then how the money was overspent. Auditor Oesterreich advised that the only money that is expended in that fund in the salary, social security, PERF, and Health Insurance Costs. She believes that the carry over money was spent on the increase in all of the benefit costs for that future year. Councilman Leinbach asked if the grant is going to be over expended for FY23 as well. Auditor Oesterreich and Director Mattraw will look into that request. Councilman Leinbach seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

CORONER TRANSFER REQUEST

Coroner Wilhelm came before the Starke County Council to request transfers within her budget. Councilman Bennett made a motion to approve the following transfer requests: an additional appropriation in 1000.10200.000.0007 in the amount of \$1,300, 1000.20100.000.0007 in the amount of \$200, and 1000.30600.000.0007 in the amount of \$400. A reduction in appropriation will be made in 1000.30202.000.0007 in the amount of \$600, 1000.30200.000.0007 in the amount of \$400, 1000.30402.000.0007 in the amount of \$400 and 1000.30801.000.0007 in the amount of \$500. Councilman Leinbach seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

SHERIFF TRANSFERS AND ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS

Sheriff Rosa and Matron Wilhelm came before the Starke County Council to request transfers within the Sheriff's Budget as well as some additional appropriations. Discussion was held regarding their trash services at the Sheriff's Department. Councilman Black made a motion to approve the transfer request as follows: an additional appropriation will be made in 1000.30404.000.0005 in the amount of \$1000, 1000.31202.000.0005 in the amount of \$3000, 1000.30605.000.0027 in the amount of \$4500, and 1000.31102.000.00027 in the amount of \$6500. A reduction in appropriation will be made in 1000.10601.000.0005 in the amount of \$15,000. Councilman Bennett seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Councilman Bennett made a motion to approve the Transfer Request as follows: an additional appropriation in 4919.20202.000.0000 in the amount of \$6,000. A reduction in appropriation in 4919.10502.000.0000 in the amount of \$6,000. Councilman Bailey seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Councilman Leinbach made a motion to approve the transfer request as follows: an additional appropriation in 1114.40275.000.0027 in the amount of \$500 and a reduction in appropriation in 1114.10300.000.0027 in the amount of \$500. Councilman Black seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Matron Wilhelm provided the Council with the additional appropriation they are requesting for Fund 1114. Sheriff Rosa also explained why a few of the budget lines were over expended. After further discussion Councilman Bennett made a motion to approve the following additional appropriations: 1114.10504.000.0027 in the amount of \$200,000, 1114.11400.000.0027 in the amount of \$45,000, 1114.20600.000.0027 in the amount of \$45,000, 1114.21100.000.0027 in the amount of \$25,000, 1114.30405.000.0027 in the amount of \$45,000, 1114.30804.000.0027 in the amount of \$15,000, 1114.11602.000.0027 in the amount of \$25,000, 1114.30600.000.0027 in the amount of \$45,000, and 1114.10805.000.0027 in the amount of \$14,000. Councilman Leinbach seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Matron Wilhelm also brought up the current situation regarding running out of autopsy money. The autopsies have gone up to \$3,000 per autopsy. After further discussion Councilman Bailey made a motion to pay the autopsies for the remainder of the year from ARPA. Councilman Black seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

PROSECUTOR TRANSFER REQUEST

Councilman Bailey made a motion to approve the following transfer request: an additional appropriation in 1000.20100.000.0032 in the amount of \$1,500. A reduction in appropriation in 1000.10407.000.0032 in the amount of \$1,500. Councilman Bennett seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

PARK DEPARTMENT TRANSFER/FUNDING REQUEST

Tracy Williams, Starke County Park Superintendent, and Park Board Members Tom Busch and Richard Ballard came before the Starke County Council for a transfer request and also a funding request. She advised she is still new in this position and is still learning about the budgeting process. She also advised they are not going to make it into next year when they start collecting revenue again with the cash balance they now have. She is requesting that the payment for the sewer lift station be paid from a different fund. Tom Busch is also requesting that the Starke County Council pay for the money they had to put towards the consultant for the grant work that have been completed so far. She explained that those two large expenses are the major reasons as to why they are in trouble. She also advised that their revenue was down this year because they had trouble with the pier permitting and was not able to collect for pier rentals. Councilman Pearman suggested approving the transfer requests that have presented to them tonight and then looking at their fund again in November regarding the possibility of paying the sewer lift station and the consultant for the grant fees.

After further discussion Councilman Leinbach made a motion to approve the following transfer request: 4927.12500.000.0000 in the amount of \$1,900, 4927.10804.000.0000 in the amount of \$2,150, and 4927.10218.000.0000 in the amount of \$16,222. A reduction in appropriation in 4927.40102.000.0000 in the amount of \$1,900, 4927.40102.000.0000 in the amount of \$2,150, 4927.20100.000.0000 in the amount of \$1,200, 4927.21100.000.0000 in the amount of \$3,500, 4927.30600.000.0000 in the amount of \$2,000, 4927.21400.000.0000 in the amount of \$740, 4927.30100.000.0000 in the amount of \$530, 492.30200.000.0000 in the amount of \$414, and 4927.40102.000.0000 in the amount of \$7,838. Councilman Black seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Councilman Leinbach made a motion to table the request regarding the payment of the lift station until further investigation is done. Councilman Black seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

HIGHWAY TRANSFER REQUEST

Dan Dipert, Starke County Highway Superintendent, came before the Board of Commissioners to request a transfer. Councilman Bennett asked what this will do the Bituminous account. Councilman Leinbach asked Superintendent Dipert if he will be holding bills for the Bituminous account that will not be paid until next year. Superintendent Dipert advised he believes he will have to pay around \$100,000 of bills from the 2024 budget that should have been paid for 2023. Councilman Leinbach asked why the over-expenditures occurred, we should not be paying for this year bills from next years money. Superintendent Dipert stated that normally he has money eft in the truck driver line to use in other areas but this is the first year he has been fully staffed. He said being fully staffed meant that he needed an additional five trucks for those additional drivers. He stated he had to fix these five trucks to be able to have trucks for those drivers. He stated that the age of their fleet is depleting as well. After further discussion Councilman Leinbach would like to make a motion that the Highway Department is not allowed to spend anything over the \$25,000 so this does not happen again. Further discussion was had regarding preventive measures regarding not going over the allotted budget amounts. Councilman Leinbach expressed his concern about not paying current bills we owe. Councilman Leinbach made a motion that the County Highway cannot spend an excess of \$10,000 without coming to the council first. Councilman Bennett seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Councilman Black made a motion for a reduction in 1176.21600.000.0531 in the amount of \$198,069.76 with an addition to appropriation in 1176.31203.000.0533 in the amount of \$55,469.67, 1176.31305.000.0533 in the amount of \$108,275.42, and 1176.31406.000.0533 in the amount of \$34,324.67. Also, for a reduction in appropriation in 1176.21600.000.0531 in the amount of \$17,197.77 with an addition in appropriation in 1176.20100.000.0530 in the amount of \$2,116.83, 1176.31901.000.0530 in the amount of \$170.20, 1176.32007.000.0530 in the amount of \$253.60, 1176.10218.000.0531 in the amount of \$14,121.43, and 1176.11400.000.0531 in the amount of \$535.71. Also, to make a reduction in appropriation in 1176.21600.000.0531 in the amount of \$13,245.76 with an addition in appropriation in 1176.21001.000.0531 in the amount of \$71.32, 1173.21800.000.0531 in the amount of \$11,142.90, 1176.21900.000.0531 in the amount of \$370.26, and 1176.11400.000.0531 in the amount of \$1,661.28. Councilman Pearman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with 5 ayes and 1 nay.

BOARD REPORTS

Councilman Bennett advised that he has seen improvement at the SCILL center. They are trying to move forward with an adult diesel school and he does see them making some strides. Councilman Bailey advised that the Planning Commission has been going smoothly, they are moving forward with making more people clean up their properties. Councilman Gudeman advised she went to the manufacturer's day at the high school for Economic Development. The turnout for the kids were great but the turn out for the manufacturers were down.

OTHER DISCUSSION

Auditor Oesterreich advised she is looking for approval to pay out accrued vacation time to an employee in which their grant just ended so the position has ended. However, the grant will not cover accrued vacation time. After further discussion Councilman Bailey made a motion to pay \$1400.95 from 1000.50100.000.0036. Councilman Black seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

With no other business or public comment to come before the Starke County Council, Councilman Bennett made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:37 PM. Councilman Leinbach seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

OCTOBER 16, 2023
STARKE COUNTY COUNCIL

Dave Pearman, President

Kay Gudeman, Vice-President

Todd Leinbach

Norman (Bruce) Bennett

Howard Bailey

Anthony Black

Cassandra Hine

Rachel Oesterreich, Starke County Auditor