

**Owen County Council Budget Hearings Continued**  
**September 29, 2008 at 8 a.m.**  
**Commissioners' Room 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of the Owen County Courthouse**  
**60 S. Main Street**  
**Spencer, IN 47460**

*Disclaimer: From 8 a.m. till 4:30 p.m. while the Council was in session, the minutes were be typed in real time. After 4:30 we depended upon the tapes for the remainder of reporting. However, it was later determined that the tapes did not record discussions because the battery in the microphone was dead. There were no motions throughout the proceedings, with members agreeing by consensus of the majority. The SPENCER EVENING WORLD article was used to conclude these minutes.*

Mr. Wood reconvened the Budget Hearing meeting from August 21. The first item of business was the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Mr. Wood commented as to how he thought today's meeting should progress. He thought the best way would be to go category by category and then go back through as necessary. Discussion began.

The first group considered was the officials appointed by the Commissioners. These offices include Building Inspector, Courthouse Custodian, Emergency Management Director, Emergency Medical Service Director, Highway Supervisor, Recycling Center Director, and Veteran Service Officer.

The discussion turned almost immediately to the longevity issue.

Discussion began concerning the Building Inspector's salary: Base pay, longevity on anniversary date, and based on 1300 hours were

Courthouse Custodian--if there is a maintenance supervisor position created as Commissioners requested, the first question becomes are they going to leave the position in the current budget to hire a Maintenance Supervisor. This issue will be reviewed later after discussion of whether or not to leave the new position in the current budget. The requested amount for the new position if \$37,500.

Ms. Szczerbik asked the question if the members had not already decided to not decrease anyone's salary so the only thing they need to discuss is what will be added because of longevity, new positions, etc. There was no response to the question.

Tape changed to side 2

Longevity and base pay continued to be discussed.

When the spreadsheet, being displayed on the screen, is completed with the numbers approved by the Council, that spreadsheet will be attached to these minutes. Please refer to the spreadsheet

for final numbers.

According to the chart on their computers and screen, BASE pay was decided for new employees in various categories.

Mr. Wood stated there would be a 5 minute break. After 2 hours of discussion and the break the meeting reconvened with a fresh start.

### **IN THE MATTER OF COST OF LIVING RAISE DISCUSSION**

Mr. Wood stated today's COLA has affected everything and he believes it should be at least 3%. Ms. Steward stated that she is seeing 4-5% in her industry and Mr. Neff stated that he believes this needs to be done on the backside. By consensus they will begin with 2% COLA plugged into the spreadsheet.

Discussion continued with plugging in 2% in each of the appointed officials.

Concerning a comment by Mr. Robertson about comp time, Ms. Lawson explained that the Commissioners have established that appointed officials do not receive comp time.

COLA was applied to EMS Employees and Highway Employees.

Mandated Employees (Judge, Prosecutor, Sheriff, Probation Director, Probation Officers already receive raises through the State and COLA was not added to their salaries.

Sheriff is similar to EMS--there were several "specialty" structures within this department such as dispatchers and dispatcher supervisor.

### **IN THE MATTER OF EMS**

Discussion concerning new squad members for EMS to have an operation at Patricksburg began. Ms. Lawson reminded the members that there will be a \$75,000 Circuit Breaker next year. Mr. Lunsford was asked if the new employees were really needed and his response was that employee overtime would be reduced. He stated his current problem is he can't keep people employed for the current pay. Ms. Franklin commented the 4 new positions would cost over \$60,000. Mr. Wood asked Cris to research the \$35,000 overtime to see if that could be saved and used toward new full time employees. The members decided to keep it the way it is for now--no new employees.

Mr. Wood asked Mr. Lunsford if he had any comments. At first, with hesitation, he said no. Once again he was asked for comments and so he asked them why they had asked him to prepare information pertaining to the operation if they weren't serious about having the service. The consensus at this time by the members was not to add the additional services. The Council was appreciative of the information he provided and hopefully can be considered in another year. Mr. Wood asked Mr. Lunsford his preference of putting 4 part time employees into full time or adding a new squad at Patricksburg and his response was the part time to full time. New sub-

station may be reconsidered next year.

Lunch break 12:10 to 1:10

Reconvened at 1:10 p.m.

Mr. Neff brought up the position of matron in the Sheriff's department with some explanation that it has been somewhat re-classified because of the fact she is not a "law enforcement" person and the position of matron has changed over the years.

### **IN THE MATTER OF THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Ms. Szczerbik stated she would like the salary to revert to a \$13,000 amount instead of remaining at \$9,000. Ms. Szczerbik related that she believes the "position" should be looked at rather than the person. Mr. Neff stated he believed that the \$13,000 was fair.

Tape 3 begins--Conversation about salary of Health officer continued to be discussed.

Mr. Robertson recommended nothing be done until perhaps January and consensus was to remain at \$9,000 and be reviewed upon recommendation of the Health Board--perhaps at the February meeting.

### **IN THE MATTER OF SPECIALITY POSITIONS**

The specialty positions discussed included the Health Officer, Food Inspector, Judge's supplement, Sanitarian, Deputy Prosecutor IV-D, PA Investigator, GIS Coordinator, Deputy Coroners (5 but 2 are currently vacant), Community Corrections Officer and Community Corrections Director.

Mr. Fountain was present to answer questions--concerning the pay for his PA IV-D salary. He is actually paid from 3 different funds.

Mr. Fountain also discussed with the members, the position of Prosecuting Investigator. He is asking the salary be moved up to \$50,000. In the letter sent to members by the Prosecutor he stated he will fund \$15,000 from one of his continuing funds.

Tape 3 turned to side B approximately 2:35 p.m.

Sheriff Richardson was speaking at end of Side one and at very beginning of side 2 comparing sheriff's deputies' responsibilities with those of the Prosecuting Investigator.

The conversation continued with Mr. Fountain.

Mr. Neff explained a reclassification of a Sheriff's deputy/investigator with the responsibilities of the PA Investigator. Mr. Fountain stated that apples are not being compared with apples. Mr. Fountain stated that 50% of what the positions of PA Investigator and Sheriff's

Deputy/Investigator often do is the same because they work together.

There was considerable discussion concerning base pay for the Prosecutor's Investigator. When the consensus for an amount was requested Kristin stated \$35,000, Nick stated \$32,000, Patty was for \$30,000, Donnie, \$30,000, Anton, \$30,000, and Irma Jean \$30,000. The \$35,000 was removed and the question was between \$32 and \$30. Four members--Patty, Donnie, Anton, and Irma Jean remained with \$30,000 and Kristin and Mike were for \$32,000 as a base pay.

The decision, 4-3, set the base pay for the PA Investigator at \$30,000.

Sheriff Richardson continued to discuss base pay with the members and the consensus was to leave it at where it is currently.

Tape 4 begins with discussion continuing Sheriff's remarks.

The next specialty consideration was for the GIS Coordinator. Mr. Neff explained that the entire position should be by itself and with a salary, although the position remains as an Auditor's employee. The request at budget time was for a \$3,000 increase. The consensus for the GIS Coordinator was to plug in \$27,000.

By consensus, the deputy coroners should be \$1,800 for the chief deputy coroner and \$1,600 for each of the other 4 deputy coroners.

For Community Corrections Officer the base pay will be \$25,868.

For Community Corrections Director the county base pay was set and comes out of Fund 219.

After 4:30 p.m.

The following is, as stated in the disclaimer, being reported from what was stated in the SPENCER EVENING WORLD because of problems with the recording equipment.

The Council allowed a 2 per cent increase for cost of living for all employees as recommended by the Wage and Salary Committee consisting of Anton Neff, Patty Steward, Angie Lawson, and Judge Frank Nardi.

Mr. Neff was quoted in the article that "I can't believe we just spent 15 hours on it, to be honest. But we did, and we accomplished a huge amount. We ended up adopting the entire proposal."

He continued by stating, "It's pretty far-reaching because there is not really one position that gets any pay from the county that wasn't affected by what we did." It was basically a complete overhaul of the county's wage and compensation structure," he continued.

He stated that a wide variety of opinions were sought from employees and others in order to come up with something that will work.

The Wage and Salary Committee proposed the categorization of employees and the types of jobs they perform. The categories included self-explanatory, elected, EMS, Highway and Sheriff. Additional categories included those appointed by Commissioners, and mandated positions such as judge, prosecutor and sheriff and probation where the determined by law.

Specialty positions are unique and difficult to define in other categories, and the support positions include clerical work, book-keeping, record-keeping, and customer service.

Mr. Neff was quoted by the SEW saying, “as far as the structure itself, there are a lot of components to it. It’s not something that can be easily described.” “Basically, we were able to categorize all of the employees and appropriately compensate them for a number of different factors. From a base-pay amount to longevity, education, training, those type of factors that, in some cases, have never received compensation. It’s a fairer system, because it is easier to identify which positions qualify for which factors and ultimately, what dollar amount we end up paying that particular position.

The increase of a 2 per cent cost of living increase across the board to all county employees was the beginning of the process. The council determined a base pay for future employees in each category. Longevity and criteria for specific jobs were then considered for employees’ pay for 2009.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 p.m.

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Donnie Hall

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Irma Jean Franklin

\_\_\_\_\_  
Anton Neff

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nick Robertson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patty Steward

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kristin Szczerbik

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Angie Lawson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Wood