

**Owen County Council Regular Meeting
September 17, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.
Commissioners' Room 2nd Floor of the Owen County Courthouse
60 S. Main Street
Spencer, IN 47460**

Present: Irma Jean Franklin, Donnie Hall, Anton K. Neff, Nick Robertson, Patty Steward, Kristin Szczerbik and Mike Wood

Guests: Donna Hardy, Barb Winders, Harley Melton, Marvin L. Newland, William Snodgrass, Cristopher Lunsford, Allan Fountain, Dan McBride, Chester H. Richardson III, Tami Snodgrass, Sheila Reeves

MEETING WAS OPENED WITH THE PLEDGE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG

IN THE MATTER OF APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR AUGUST 13, 2007

Anton Neff moved to approve the minutes of August 13. Nick Robertson seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

IN THE MATTER OF APPROPRIATIONS OR TRANSFERS

Mr. Wood rearranged the agenda by having the Drug Free You and Me request go first.

a. Drug Free You and Me—Apple Butter Appropriation—Speaking Jill Brush

Ms. Brush requested \$1,500.00 of the Drug Free You and Me Fund 226 be appropriated for the Apple Butter Festival supplies and operation costs. Mr. Neff inquired as to how many surveys were completed but that information won't be available till the next meeting of the Drug Free You and Me Council. Ms. Brush also stated that the Representative from the Governor's Commission was present to work in the booth.

Mr. Neff moved to appropriate \$1,500 in Fund 226 to address the Drug Free You and Me Council's request. Mr. Robertson seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0. (Motion # 58)

b. Prosecutor—Additional Appropriation—Speaking Barb Winders

Ms. Winders explained that they had purchased a printer that had a rebate on it. They received the rebate of \$150.00 and would like to have it put back in the Office Supplies account. It was suggested that she put the information in writing and attend a Council meeting to explain the situation and ask the Council to appropriate the amount of the rebate back into the line item of the budget.

Ms. Lawson explained that it was advertised and will have to be sent to the State for their approval upon the approval of this Council.

Ms. Franklin moved to approve the additional appropriation of \$150.00 from Cash of the General Fund into Account 108-4213. Kristin Szczerbik seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0. (Motion # 59)

c. Health Dept—Re-Appropriation of Funds—Speaking Sheila Reeves

Ms. Reeves stated the Council members had received a letter requesting permission to take what was an additional appropriation in the Master Tobacco Fund for a County Tire Clean up day of \$5,000 and move it

to \$2,500 to the Cunot Community Center for assistance with their current pump and haul orders and \$2,500 to the Coal City project. In addition for the Coal City Project, the community as a whole is addressing what they want to do. They do not have a specific plan, at this time, if they are going to use the Sewer District. Dr. Schuld has asked that that request be tabled at this time. He thought they would have had a decision by now but they don't. The Health Department will come back with the Coal City request but if not, it will remain in the fund until re-appropriated by the Council.

Mr. Neff asked if there was any discussion by the Health Board on that because if the Council gives assistance to one group, would everybody else that has septic problems in the county want some money from the Health Department. Ms. Reeves stated it was discussed as far as this being a one time offer to them and Coal City Community. Ms. Reeves explained it is for pump and haul only. The Board has indicated the bills should be submitted to the Health Department for payment. Currently it is costing approximately \$250.00 for each pump and haul and that amount depends on the water usage at the Cunot Center. The pump and haul is averaging once about every ten days and so far there have been 3. Mr. Wood asked what would happen when the money runs out. Ms. Reeves explained that when the \$2500 is gone, if the Center does not have money to pay the cost, the Center will have to be closed. She continued that Cunot Center is exploring obtaining grants, etc.

Ms. Szczerbik stated they have cut back on the usage because if it was at full capacity, the pump and haul would have to be done weekly.

Kristin moved to re-appropriate \$2,500.00 of the money that was moved from the Master Tobacco Fund 253-4240 for the Countywide Tire Clean-up day to the Cunot Community Center for pump and haul assistance to be distributed as the help for..... (something was said that was inaudible) she continued--that's my motion.

Mr. Wood asked for a second. There was a pause.

Ms. Szczerbik commented for them to remember this was the Health Board's idea and she thinks the Health Department may have had this idea for quite a while, she didn't think it just came out of the blue or people were urging or pushing them that they had to go a certain way, but that they had thought this might have been an appropriate use for quite a while and she stated she would like to see a second knowing potentially that another area of the county might benefit from this later.

Mr. Wood once again asked for a second. **Mr. Robertson stated it is a good service they provide and he would second the motion.**

Mr. Robertson's question and hesitation was if this is just a band aid fix, would they be opening up a can of worms. Ms. Steward and Mr. Neff were also concerned about this. Ms. Steward stated she thinks their focus should be on helping an entity help themselves.

Mr. Wood commented the difference between Cunot and Coal City is that the money for Coal City is to help them obtain grant money. Ms. Reeves commented that the money granted Coal City would most likely be used toward a feasibility study because they have to apply for that.

Ms. Szczerbik stated that the money is helping them (Cunot) while they are in their grant process. In the meantime they are kind of stuck. She re-iterated this was a Health Board decision. Mr. Neff had another issue concerning where is the line drawn for offering assistance for other groups. He asked what if a company comes to them asking for assistance because that company may also have sewer issues. Once again, he asked, "where will the line be drawn"?

Mr. Wood offered his personal opinion that the money is coming from the Health Department at the request of the Health Board. He struggles with the concept of one segment of a Senior Citizen's Complex but if another Senior Citizen organization came to the Health Board would they take that into consideration down the road as well? Mr. Neff asked "and if there's no money there"? Ms. Reeves commented she can not speak for the Board but this is money they already have and there has been an additional \$17,000 received that has to be appropriated by the Council for 2007-2008 period. She continued that in the past there have been letters received and the Health Board takes them into consideration, but, again, there isn't enough money to help everybody.

Mr. Wood mentioned it is a part of the community that desperately needs help and therefore-----

Mr. Neff stated that no one is against Senior Citizens, no one is against the Health Board—he wanted that made perfectly clear, but they have to be careful with requests because as good as it sounds and as worthy of an issue that it is, the Health Department is in trouble, as it is, as far as funds, there are other groups in need badly and although he has trouble justifying this, he is not against assistance in that area.

Ms. Szczerbik stated this is not a frivolous request and she would hate to have the Health Board think the Council lacks confidence in their decision making process.

Mr. Neff stated that when a recommendation comes before the Council either a yes or no can be decided and he does not believe there is anything bad about either choice. He commented their (Council's) job is to provide oversight and further discussion of it so he thinks it's fair either way whether a yes or no based on whatever the Health Board recommends.

Mr. Wood called for the vote. The motion passed 5-2. Mr. Neff and Mr. Hall voted no. (Motion # 60)

The Coal City issue was tabled.

Ms. Reeves continued that at the Budget hearings the Council asked her to return to the Board of Health and ask about Volunteers in Medicine (VIM). At the recent Health Board meeting it was decided that rather than a \$5,000.00 contribution from the Master Tobacco Fund, \$1,700 or 10% would be more appropriate and it will come out of the 2008 allotment that was received in July or August. The total amount received was \$17,408.99. The Council has to appropriate the funds.

Mr. Neff moved to appropriate \$1,700.00 from Master Tobacco Fund 253 to Volunteers In Medicine (VIM). Ms. Franklin seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0. (Motion # 61)

d. EMA—Additional Appropriations for Uniforms—Speaking Jack White

Mr. Wood reviewed for the members that at Budget Hearings Mr. White had requested an allotment in the 2008 budget for uniforms and apparel. At that time they discussed using another Fund source to supplement this request.

Mr. Robertson moved to approve an additional appropriation purchasing uniform and apparel for the EMA Director in the amount of \$250.00 from River Boat Fund 267-4307. The motion was seconded by Anton Neff.

Ms. Szczerbik had a quick question about why are they not putting the appropriation into a certain line item and Ms. Lawson explained money in one fund can not be put into another fund.

Motion passed 7-0. (Motion # 62)

Mr. White also has a training issue he wanted to discuss. Once again, Mr. Wood reviewed information from Budget Hearings. It was explained that as EMA Director, a portion of his salary is to be evaluated to be reimbursed back to the county and one of the things he gets points for is if he goes to the Annual Conference. In his current budget he has no conference fee or allowance. Jack reported that the cost of the conference only is \$335.00. He stated the additional cost would be picked up by LEPC funds.

Mr. Robertson moved to approve an additional appropriation of \$335.00 out of River Boat 267-4307 and put in new line item 4308 for a Conference for the EMA Director. Ms. Szczerbik seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0. (Motion # 63)

e. Clerk—Funding for Marriage License scanning—Speaking Clerk Harley Melton

Mr. Melton reminded the Council he had asked for an appropriation to scan marriage records and he is now before the Council to request \$2,500 out of the Document Fee Fund. The Historical Society stated they would copy the documents for \$.10 per page and requested a copy of the CD which Mr. Melton thought they should have that anyway.

Mr. Robertson moved to transfer \$2,500 from 057-to 057-4301, imaging of documents. Ms. Szczerbik seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0. (Motion # 64)

f. Declaration of Funds no longer used for purpose intended (303 Commissioner Court cash balance to General)—Speaking Auditor Lawson

Ms. Lawson reminded the Council that during Budget Hearings the County received the approval from the State to put the Commissioner Court in the General Fund. The State Board of Accounts informed Ms. Lawson that since Fund 303 would not be used for the purpose intended, the Council needs to pass a Declaration that the money in 303 revert to the General Fund but must continue to be used for Child Support purposes.

Ms. Franklin moved to declare funds in the cash balance of Fund 303, Commissioner Court, to be transferred to the General Fund because the purpose for which the Fund was intended no longer exists. The Commissioner Court has been placed in the General Fund. The money transferred must still be used for Child Support purposes. Mr. Robertson seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0. (Motion # 65)

IN THE MATTER OF EMS—LINE ITEMS IN THE NEGATIVE, RUN VOLUME, & MONROE HOSPITAL INCOME—Speaking Cris Lunsford

Mr. Lunsford wanted to discuss and obtain guidance concerning line items in the red. He explained clinical supplies Fund 216-4240 is currently in the red by \$214.06, and needs to have supplies for the remainder of the year. He has money to move around but his concern is included the other three line items in the red. 216-4241—garage and motor is in the red by \$3,655.82. He began the year with \$5,000 in the line item but in January the transmission in one of the trucks had to be replaced for a cost of \$3,500 and in February injectors, at the cost of \$1,500, had to be put in one of the trucks.

He has two vehicles with over 200,000 miles. Twice this week they were down to one ambulance. The 2004 ambulance has been fairly reliable so far but he has to take it somewhere for repair.

The next line item in the red is 4243 by \$710—repair of equipment—he was using this line item to help pay for the other repairs.

Mr. Neff mentioned the Lease Purchase line item as being used later in the year and Mr. Lunsford also wanted to discuss this line item. \$15,000 was appropriated for 07 and was taken out of the 08 budget because they said they would look at buying an ambulance out of another fund. He suggested redistributing the \$15,000 among the line items in the red. Mr. Neff stated the Council will now have to address some kind of rotation for both Sheriff and EMS and probably have to do it out of EDIT or somewhere else.

Mr. Hall moved to transfer \$8,000 from 4370.00 to 4241.00. Patty Steward seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0. (Motion # 66)

Mr. Lunsford also presented a graph on run numbers as well as a handout concerning the state of the EMS fleet. Mr. Neff asked about a 4 year rotation and Mr. Lunsford believed perhaps a five year rotation might be ok. They really need 4 ambulances for the entire county.

He presented a Life Star Rescue Inc. proposal for a Standard remount of a Modular ambulance totaling \$75,800 and the second proposal was for a total of \$77,750.

Mr. Lunsford explained there a Billing Seminar in Pennsylvania September 27, 28 and he would like to attend and take Mike Mallo. He would like money appropriated for them to go to this seminar. Mr. Neff asked how this would integrate with the way billing is now done. Mr. Lunsford explained that what they now do is code the run sheets and send it to Medical Accounts Services and they enter into a computer and complete a standard form used by Medicare and Medicaid. EMS recently had issues with nursing homes and some other issues. He explained why he wants two people to go is because on the first day there are two sessions at the same time and Mike's job is documentation of all the runs and the way it ties into Medicare and Medicaid and if audited it will be decided whether or not EMS should be paid based on documentation. The other class is the one Cris would attend basically concerning coding. The money he is requesting is out of the 4300 series and therefore he can use \$900 out of training.

Mr. Lunsford reported that 5 months ago EMS he started tracking the transfers to Monroe Hospital and to date \$34,000 has been generated.

IN THE MATTER OF SIGNATURE OF PRESIDENT ON DECLARATION OF COUNTY TAX RATES

Anton Neff moved to hold the CAGIT rate at 1% for the upcoming taxing year and zero for COIT and .3 of a percent for CEDIT tax. Nick Robertson seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0. (Motion # 67)

There was a 5 minute recess.

IN THE MATTER OF THE 2008 BUDGET APPROVAL FOR SUBMISSION TO THE STATE

When the tape begins after the break, Mr. Lorenz is discussing that longevity is imbedded in their actual pay and creates a disparity between highway and courthouse workers that seems a bit tangibly unfair. When you say someone has been here for a longer period of time and you're granting them the particular longevity pay, it seems that it would stay with that salary at that point in time—it would become imbedded in it and not lost because you get an incremental year. The point is, one would continue with it. Ms. Steward stated that there was confusion at the budget hearings when a department head was asked how they came up with the projected salary, answers were both yes and no concerning whether longevity was included or not. Mr. Lorenz responded that the answer to that is to have the Commissioners pass, legislatively, a personnel policy that defines when, how and to whom longevity is awarded. The Council's responsibility then becomes whether the Budget can afford the increases—not what the increases, if any, will be concerning longevity.

Mr. Wood commented that if a personnel spreadsheet is done for next year as has been suggested by Mr. Lorenz it would be helpful and then next year they could discuss Personnel at the beginning of the process instead of at the end of the budget hearings. Mr. Lorenz then stated that Personnel salaries amount to 90% of what the Budget encompasses.

Ms. Steward wanted to make sure that if an employee changes in the middle of the year and the line item still has a balance of the tenured employee, the salary ordinance does not allow for the department head to use the balance of that salary and if the employee comes back 30 days or more after leaving, the employee receives the base pay. It was also suggested that the names behind a position be eliminated but leave the numbers and code.

Ms. Lawson asked if the Council would be in favor of a similar retreat as they had last year. Mr. Lorenz stated the financial sponsorship is still available and they really need to review what has taken place and that there will be new information presented. He would like to bring in the web site people for demonstration purposes and Ms. Lawson would like to invite Cook and Boston Scientific representatives since they are the County's largest employers. Ms. Franklin commented that the communication was just terrific.

Ms. Szczerbik asked if the Council needed to assist the Auditor in any way. Ms. Lawson replied she would prefer to move forward with a more decisive method than to leave it go another year. Ms. Szczerbik also asked if there would be an opportunity for them to explain to all department heads at one time---Mr. Neff commented that was a good point---Communication to everybody--. Ms. Lawson suggested that perhaps a letter from the Auditor and Council can be put together to explain it.

Mr. Wood stated Communication is important and a letter should be composed explaining to the department heads what they are doing. Ms. Lawson informed them it would take a little bit of time---she has to get the budget submitted to the State. Perhaps by the October or November meeting she will have the Salary ordinances together.

Mr. Wood then commented that everybody should have a letter from the Circuit Court in front of them. He wanted to review a couple of things---regarding 136-4232---the \$7,500 was an error and Angie made the adjustment. The second is 136-4389 which was taken care of by Lori because this was a match grant that had to be left in the general fund. The next item is the 136-4119 the reduction of the \$40,000 to zero which has been worked out between the Auditor and Judge Nardi to use the Public Defender fee for this amount.

Prosecutor Allan Fountain commented that this past budget hearing process was a nightmare from the Office Holder's perspective. He has been involved in the budget process in Owen County for the last 36 years. He stated that as an office holder one does not know what to put down. He could care less about how much taxes, insurance, FICA costs. He thinks someone else could figure that. He sees it is attributable to the office but really that is a bill the employer pays and should be in the Commissioners' Budget. When he figures his budget he wants to make sure his people get "x" number of dollars. Ms. Lawson explained that a few years ago a decision was made to have the "employer" costs show in the department budget instead of being in the Commissioners' budget which at one time it was.

Ms. Franklin offered the opinion that the confusion came from last year when the raises came out of the River Boat Fund. Mr. Fountain then asked why they weren't told what each person got that year so they would know how to figure salary for this year.

Ms. Lawson explained that last year she provided each department head 2 copies of the Salary Ordinance for that department. The second copy stated the complete salary for the employee and that copy should have been used when preparing the budget for salaries instead of the budget sheets.

The discussion continued using a specific employee as an example but some employees are paid from more than one fund so what is on the “budget” sheet may not be the total salary appropriated for an employee.

Mr. Fountain requested the Council allow him to increase Dan McBride’s salary based on the dangers of being a road deputy and all of the responsibilities of a detective plus the Prosecutor’s office. Mr. Wood requested Mr. Fountain to restate exactly what he is asking for Mr. McBride. Mr. Fountain stated he wants to pay a total of \$36,500 and he is willing to take the money from Pre-Trial Diversion Fund. Mr. Neff commented that there are employees in the courthouse who bring different expertise or education skills to their jobs and if the Council begins considering that for one employee, it would have to be considered for all employees.

For comparison purposes, Sheriff Richardson was asked the salary of a 7 year deputy. He replied that he does not have a deputy with 7 years but it was brought up that an eleven year deputy’s salary is \$35,143.00. Mr. Neff stated that if they go for Mr. Fountain’s proposal, then they have to do the same for the Sheriff, the dispatchers, jailers, etc.

Mr. Robertson asked the Sheriff if they did what the Prosecutor proposed, how that would affect the Sheriff’s Department. To that question Sheriff Richardson replied that the Prosecutor has his own incentive money and the Sheriff does not have any of that money to give raises to his deputies. The Sheriff explained he was there to discuss his department and not any of the others.

Mr. Wood stated that last year the pay scale for the dispatchers was increased. Mr. Wood continued that there needs to be research and development done for all the employees and all the departments in this particular situation.

Ms. Szczerbik asked Ms. Lawson if, until they figure a number, can the budget be submitted like this and then later take the extra amount, whatever they figure it to be, from Pre-Trial Diversion and put it in to the salary. Ms. Lawson stated it would have to be done before the first of the year. She continued they have October, November, and December to decide to take it from user fees but it can not be taken from the General Fund. Mr. Fountain wanted the members to know that if this employee left, he would not be paying a new person the same salary. Mr. Neff asked if this was something that had not been reviewed before and now it is a major issue. It became a major issue with Mr. Fountain when he found out how far out of line it is with the Sheriff’s Department.

Ms. Szczerbik was about to make a motion and Mr. Neff said he would support something but if this raise was given, he wanted to review the entire law enforcement salary structure. He was not in favor of adjusting one law enforcement salary without looking at other law enforcement salaries.

Ms. Szczerbik moved that they supplement the salary for that position in an amount that is comparative to what a seven year deputy makes in our County Sheriff’s office out of Pre Trial Diversion an amount that—she would like to put cap because of according to those figures it should be no more than \$5,365.

Mr. Fountain stated he didn’t know how much that is—Sheriff Richardson stated it would be \$27,500—Mr. Fountain stated he already makes that and Mr. Neff asked why they are debating this. Ms. Szczerbik wanted to know where the \$6,514 came from—and that was because the original request was based on 12 years.

Mr. Fountain was asking for \$36,500 which was his understanding of what a 12 year deputy makes because his employee has the experience of more than a twelve year deputy and the training. The employee was a former Sheriff’s Deputy who left county employment after 5 years and then returned after one year.

Mr. Wood stated there is a motion on the floor—Ms. Szczerbik withdrew the motion. Mr. Neff stated unless they restructure the whole thing (law enforcement) he is not in favor of it. He did not think it was wise to go with adjusting one position.

It was determined that at the Retreat they will create a Task Force Team to work together with each department to come up with a plan.

There was a three minute break.

Donna McElroy had sent an email or letter to the members concerning Community Corrections and the budget which has the fiscal year from July 1 through June 30. Community Corrections has an Advisory Board. The State has already approved the Fund 219 budget but there is also the 220 Project Income Fund. In June the Advisory Board approved salary raises and that comes from 219 or 220. The Advisory Board also met earlier this evening and wanted Donna to bring before the Council that there are 4 employees, one of which is a Probation officer, Donna, with a mandated salary. Mr. Neff asked the amount of the raise. Ms. McElroy averaged the surrounding counties wages and came up for Bob's (\$2,000) and Adrienne's (\$1,300) salaries. For Kathy it was a standard amount of \$1,000. Ms. McElroy explained that an employee left and has not been replaced so the money is in the salary fund. She also informed the Council that because they are part of the Commissioner Court they are anticipating receiving approximately \$8,500 in reimbursement that they have never had before.

Mr. Neff, once again, stated this is similar in principle looking at enhancement of compensation based on other counties as with the Sheriff and the Prosecutor. He continued that Community Corrections has the Advisory Board and the Sheriff's Merit Board come to the Council to say how much they should be paid.

Mr. Wood commented it would be very difficult for the Council, this evening, to approve these increases in pay for these individuals and not do it for Mr. McBride, or the road officers or anyone else. This should become a priority to get in place. A budget has to be submitted to the State. If it gets to the point where it is on an individual basis by department, that's what it has to be. Ms. McElroy asked if they could do that now. Ms. Szczerbik stated they could if they want to and she suggested that what they are looking at when talking about the discrepancies in pay, the problem is enormous. However, she continued that if you see a golden opportunity where there is a way to help some others out that is not affecting the general fund because of where it comes from. She stated that the only reason why she withdrew her previous motion concerning the Prosecutor was based on the numbers. She continued if those numbers turn out to be accurate she will come back and suggest they do it differently. So, based on that, she feels the same way about this department—"it's there, let's use it, let's fix it and then start with a plan for the deputies".

Ms. Szczerbik moved to make the salaries for these positions that are outlined in this paragraph on the proposal of the Owen County Community Corrections Advisory Board Minutes for the funds to be coming out of Fund 220 Project Income exclusive of the \$300 increase the County gave. There were various conversations going on. Mr. Wood then restated Kristin's motion that said that the salaries for the individual employees from the Probation Department increase be approved as the Advisory Board suggested in the paragraph from the fund 220 Project Income and exclude the \$300 increase and Ms. Szczerbik replied that is correct. Mr. Wood called for a second to the motion two times. Motion failed for lack of a second.

Ms. Franklin added that the Assessor's office goes out and assesses, the Auditor's office calculates, and the Treasurer's office collects the tax money which pays the bills. She asked Kristin if because they do what they do and don't have access to extra money, are those people going to be paid less. Ms. Szczerbik said "no, that is where our job comes in to address that in a different way—we have the opportunity —Ms. Franklin believes it need to be addressed all at one time and it needs to be fair. Mr. Neff interjected a brief history lesson that 5 years ago there were major messes on their hands that took a lot of work to refix

because for years the Highway department would get a raise because they had all their money but the county didn't and they had to cut and then because elected officials were not included they came back later after the first of the year and gave a raise, elected officials got left out. He continued they have to know where they came from and respect that before moving forward and getting into the same trouble. He does not want to repeat history but they need to be very, very careful. He stated the entire system has to be reviewed. They can't just pick and choose as they go because it will just cause more trouble down the line.

Ms. Szczerbik stated she understood the all or none philosophy. But in reality sometimes you have to take it in steps and if there is an opportunity to take one step forward she does not understand why they have to turn that down. She continued that if they start making a stand that this is a priority and start where they can maybe a message will be sent to other people and especially to themselves to remind themselves that they need to find something somewhere to help other area out.

Ms. Lawson explained that other county employees are going to say "they threw us under the bus". They are going to say the Council didn't care about their positions or what they have to come up with—you can't pick and choose. She continued that 5 years ago the Council said no more—as Anton alluded to. The County Highway used to be able to give whatever per cent increase they wanted to because they had the money and they thought that was fair. How does that make other employees feel?

Mr. Wood commented to Donna that he hoped that a committee will be formed to look at all the departments at the same time.

Mr. Marvin Newland, Veterans' Affairs Officer, began his remarks by thanking the Council for the salary they gave him for next year and he really, really, really appreciated it. Second he wanted them to know the reason he was so grateful for that amount is because it still keeps him below the poverty level and he is still qualified for food stamps. That being said—he informed the members he was not satisfied with the amount but he will gladly take it because something is better than nothing. He was glad to be here to hear that when they talked about history it can't be used this way but it can be used that way. He thought the best thing that happened was when the attorney was talking about having a base salary set and work from that for everybody. He believes because his salary was lowered, his responsibilities have been lowered 1/3 to 2/3s and he doesn't believe he will be able to accomplish all the things he wanted to do for the Veterans of this County. He asked if there were any questions about his job, qualifications and responsibilities. Ms. Franklin asked if he had anything good to say about them and he said no. He continued that the Veterans would be served whether the County thinks they are being served right now or not. Based on what he was given as a salary, he felt they did not believe he was serving the Veterans properly for the last 2 years for nothing.

The tape was turned and Sheila Reeves was speaking concerning the Health Department. She stated the Health Officer believes the nurse's position is a new position and will be advertised with the salary negotiable, but he still wants a full time nurse and she was to relate that information to the Council.

Mr. Neff did not want to put Ms. Reeves on the spot but he asked how many hours the Health Officer is here. Is he required to be present so many hours? He had heard that the Health Officer has not been at some of the Health Board meetings and he was not present tonight. Mr. Neff wanted to know what they are getting for the money.

The Health Officer is working on a job description for the Nurse/Coordinator and at this time the salary totals \$34,580 which is estimated at \$19.00 per hour.

Ms. Franklin asked if what they voted on at the Budget Hearings is no longer correct. Ms. Reeves replied that what she wanted them to be aware of was that the Emergency Coordinator will no longer be funded at the State level via grant money. Mr. Neff commented they weren't getting that money anyway because the Commissioners turned down applying for the Grant last year. Ms. Reeves explained that the Health Officer

is adamant about having a full time nurse even at the possibility that she or John may have to go if the budget comes back that it has to be cut. There were no changes made at this time.

Mr. Lunsford began by asking consideration for line item 4351 which was moved to the Building Department and stated he doesn't really want another department paying his bills. His concern was if the Building Department ran out of money, he would be back before the Council in a year or two asking for money for Utilities. Mr. Neff said—that may happen to several departments.

Mr. Wood asked what the budget is at right now. Ms. Lawson stated that there is a difference sixty six thousand dollars above where they should be. So there is an option to turn in to the State and see what comes back from the State. The insurance has not been touched and if the State says to cut more they might want to take a large amount from insurance and then use another fund to pay for insurance.

The County is using various funds to make a budget work, but eventually personnel will have to be cut.

Mr. Wood brought up a proposal that the Council and Commissioners pass a joint ordinance stating that a person convicted of a misdemeanor or felony in the Owen County Circuit Court be charged \$30.00. The fee would be paid directly to the court and go into a fund that would help support courthouse security. This proposed ordinance has not yet been discussed at a Commissioners' meeting.

Sheriff talked about courthouse security with Dan and Allan. He would like for Dan to be in charge of Courthouse Security instead of the Sheriff.

Mr. Robertson moved to present the budget as is to the State. Ms. Franklin seconded the motion so there could be discussion.

Mr. Neff thought they were going to go through to make sure some things were taken care of and Mr. Wood asked such as? Mr. Neff had notes and commented the salary stuff can be taken off the list.

Ms. Szczerbik had a suggestion concerning the raises. Her suggestion was, after she had thought about it a little more was that she keeps hearing fair and consistent and in order to be fair and consistent with raises it seems that the Council needs to change that so that the full time/part time distinction covers across the board and not just this person or that person. There are part time employees getting a percent because they felt that over compensation when they had a lower salary and the part time elected officials. She was going to suggest that change. She tried to make calls to some of the individuals and the comment she received "do what you gotta do"

Mr. Neff had someone pose the same question to him. He reviewed that over time and what type of raise structure they approved has included a flat percentage, a one time bonus, added longevity and add all that into the mix he believes they have been consistent and addressed the needs over time. The \$300 if you divide percentages is not very much of a raise for those making the higher salaries. However, at the same time by giving everybody the same amount, everybody moves up \$300.00.

Ms. Szczerbik believed the Council should have the 1.5 percent raise as opposed to the \$300 so it would be more fair and consistent.

Mr. Neff also interjected that last year they made a correction to elected officials salaries because percentages had been given over time and things got out of whack again. He continued that if they give some officials \$300 and others want \$50 the gap will again be created.

There were multiple conversations going on concerning what is part time and how much should be paid. Ms. Szczerbik wanted to discuss part time elected officials and Mr. Neff commented that it is difficult in defining part time elected officials.

Ms. Snodgrass commented that when you look percentage wise at \$300 for her as Treasurer, the raise amounts to .008 and for her employees it is .009. When you compare that to the \$300 raise for the Council it is almost 12 %. And that is a huge difference. It is hard for the employees to see the Council get such a high percentage. Ms. Snodgrass stated that there are some part time employees and she doesn't know how many that when they receive the 1.5% will have a bigger raise than the \$300—perhaps county highway.

Ms. Lawson explained that county highway employees will get the \$300 because they are salaried. She continued that the only part time employees not on the regular part time salary schedule will receive the 1.5% increase.

Mr. Wood commented that at the budget hearings he voted against the flat amount of \$300. He stated then and he repeats his belief now that personally he doesn't care. However, he considers a person who may replace him at some point and he thinks the raise is fair from that perspective.

Mr. Wood asked if there was any other discussion about the motion on the floor. Mr. Neff made the comment that again the Auditor is doing her adjustments and all that stuff.

Mr. Wood stated that if anything is going to be changed it has to be changed before they accept the current motion.

Ms. Szczerbik stated she can not make another motion while there is a motion on the floor. Mr. Neff said an amendment could be done.

Mr. Neff stated the only two things he had which are minor included the Board of Review and Reassessment and Machine Mechanics in the Election Budget. That is still a required position that needs to be funded for the 08 election, but may not be technically “mechanics” as they have been referred to in the past. The position has been zeroed out but it will need funding. Ms. Lawson explained she is not adjusting that levy because they have to raise money. Mr. Neff agreed, he just didn't want to lose sight of those areas.

Mr. Wood asked if there was any further discussion, hearing none he called for the vote by having members raise a hand—there were 6 in favor and 1 opposed. Motion carried 6-1. Ms. Szczerbik voted against the motion. (Motion # 68)

Ms. Szczerbik wanted to amend the motion—Mr. Neff explained she needed to make the amendment before the vote was taken. She said she misunderstood because she asked Mr. Wood a question and Mr. Neff answered. She did not offer an amendment at the appropriate time. Mr. Wood then explained that she should have made the amendment before the vote was taken. Now, if she wants to make another motion, she can, but it is too late to amend the original motion.

Ms. Szczerbik moved for the record “that we amend the previous motion, ordinance, whatever it is now that we agreed on for the salary raises so that part time elected and appointed officials and/or those making less than \$19,000 also fall under the 1.5 % salary increase as opposed to the \$300 fixed amount.” Mr. Wood asked for a second. The motion died for lack of a second.

Mr. Wood asked for anything else and Ms. Lawson took the opportunity to inform the members that there is a refund issue approved this year by the State Legislature where counties are responsible for writing a refund check. It was determined that there are 6100 checks that will have to be written. The financial software company sent a purchase agreement stating the cost would be \$12,200. Each check will cost \$2.00 plus the

\$300 charge that will be added to generate the checks and the postage will be about \$2,500 and that is not even Manatron's bill. The refund will cost the county a tidy sum. She informed the Council she would work 24/7 because she doesn't plan to pay the company to generate the refund checks.

IN THE MATTER OF A POSSIBLE MEETING CHANGE FOR OCTOBER 8TH MEETING (COLUMBUS DAY)

Nick Robertson moved to change the regularly scheduled meeting from October 8th to October 15th because of Columbus Day. Patty Steward seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0. (Motion # 69)

IN THE MATTER OF COUNCIL COMMENTS

Ms. Szczerbik wanted LOIT put on the next agenda as she was informed by DLGF that the county must provide a decision before 2008 budgets can be processed.

Mr. Neff commented he would still like to see the first step of the LOIT approved just to see what the effect would be but didn't want to get into an hour's discussion of it at this late hour tonight.

IN THE MATTER OF ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Robertson moved to adjourn. Mr. Neff seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Donnie Hall

Irma Jean Franklin

Anton Neff

Nick Robertson

Patty Steward

Kristin Szczerbik

Attest: _____
Angie Lawson

Michael Wood