

PULASKI COUNTY COUNCIL

The Pulaski County Council met in special session Monday October 1, 2024 9:00AM at the Pulaski County Highway Garage training room. Councilmembers present were Kenneth Boswell, Michael Tiede, Jeffrey Richwine, Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez, Jerome Locke, Bradley Bonnell, Tim Overmyer and County Auditor Laura Wheeler.

Also present were Judge Mary Welker, Judge Crystal Kocher, Jen Shafer, Brandon Williams, Katie Surma, Allyssa Quick, Gary Kruger, Kelly Gaumer, Anita Messer, Kelly Gaumer, Holly Van Der Aa, Joe Moyer, Jennifer Knebel, Phillip Woolery, and Chris Schramm.

President Boswell opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

HR Director of Cass County sent email describing the different functions of the HR department (new hires, insurance, discipline, FMLA, resignations, WC claims, payroll, and quarterly meetings with department heads). Information also obtained from White and Brown County. If the cost of living adjustment is reduced from 5% to 3%, it would save the county \$90,845.00, which could fund an HR Department. Jeffrey Richwine was not in favor of establishing an HR Department now due to being over budget. ARPA money will be running out so Council will have to come up with funds for the Sheriff Department raises in 2026. After further discussion, Bradley Bonnell made a motion not to fund an HR Department for 2025. Tim Overmyer seconded the motion to not fund HR in 2025 and motion passed with 4 in favor (Jeffrey Richwine, Michael Tiede, Tim Overmyer, Brad Bonnell) and 3 opposed (Jerome Locke, Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez, Kenneth Boswell).

Superior Court requested the Navigator be a full-time position with benefits as of 7/1/2024 (the end of current grant). CDC asked for a Project Coordinator position. Surveyor asked for an assistant but did not include in her budget. Clerk asked that her part-time election clerk be full-time. EMA wants part-time salary increased and new vehicle. Stipends for Auditor and Clerk. Probation wants part-time administrator made full time.

The Navigator position is funded through a grant until 6/30/2025 and unknown if another grant will be available. Judge Crystal Kocher will continue looking for grants but in case she is not successful, she requested Navigator position be changed to a full-time employee position with benefits as of 7/1/2025. Judge Kocher contacted Representative Rudy Yakim's office regarding the possibility of a grant but it would be 100% match and applications were due in April. Annual salary of Navigator is \$40,658.00 as a contracted position. Clerk JoLynn Behny said she could cover pay difference in salary and benefits from PT to FT from her Perpetuation Fund.

Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez spoke in favor of the Project Coordinator position for CDC as Nathan is taking on more and more responsibilities for the County. His full-time employee is clerical and Nathan said he does not need full-time clerical but needs someone to be in charge of projects.

Michael Tiede motioned to approve Superior Court's Navigator position as full-time position with benefits as of 7/1/2025 and to approve making part-time election clerk full-time with salary and benefits paid out of Clerk's perpetuation fund. Bradley Bonnell seconded and motion carried 4 to 2. Michael Tiede, Bradley Bonnell, Tim Overmyer and Jeffrey Richwine were in favor and Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez and Jerome Locke opposed.

Assistant Surveyor was denied, stipend for Auditor approved for 2025 but not Clerk as no election in 2025. Probation request for part-time office administrator to go to full-time was also denied.

CDC's \$70,000.00 marketing budget discussed. The newly created Tourism Council would be involved in marketing. Marketing funds used to advertise on TV, print and digital ads, DNR Fishing & Hunting Guide and Indianapolis Colts guide. Tim Overmyer made a motion to reduce CDC's budget for marketing in 2025 by 50%, Bradley Bonnell seconded. Kenneth Boswell gave the following amounts for CDC's marketing budget for prior years: 2018-\$49,696., 2019-\$67,000., 2020-\$59,990., 2021-\$87,978., 2022-\$50,000., 2023-\$55,023. After more discussion, Tim revised his motion to reduce marketing budget for 2025 to \$40,000., Brad Bonnell seconded and motion carried 4 to 2. Jeffrey Richwine, Michael Tiede, Bradley Bonnell, Tim Overmyer in favor and Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez, Jerome Locke opposed.

Michael Tiede made a motion to reduce Community Foundation's request to zero and Tim Overmyer seconded. The request will support the Community Grant Fund to support local organizations, such as purchasing Lucas devices for local fire departments. Eli Lily has a 2-1 match grant, which will turn the \$15,000.00 into \$45,000.00. Lily endowments build the fund to help contribute to communities County wide. Michael Tiede then withdrew his motion.

Maintenance Director requested a \$2.00/hour raise for himself and Soil & Water wants to increase the education coordinator's salary by \$2,000. Bradley Bonnell made a motion to deny Maintenance and Soil & Water wage increases, Michael Tiede seconded and motion carried unanimously.

EMA's increases were addressed at a prior meeting. Part-time was reduced from \$12,500.00 to \$8,000.00 and repairs from \$62,000.00 to \$6,000.00 as new vehicle denied.

Assessor Holly Van Der Aa included \$50,000.00 in her budget for software and Clerk JoLynn Behny requested \$56,000.00 for 40 new voting machines. The current machines are 20 years old and used every 2 years. Bradley Bonnell made a motion not to fund new voting machines in 2025, Tim Overmyer seconded and motion passed 5-1 with Jerome Locke opposed.

Aerial mapping software for the assessor discussed. While WTH provides new photos every 3 years, Pictometry will provide every 2 years with more detail. Pictometry includes a "change finder" which WTH does not. Cost for the software is \$50,000.00 annually. Pictometry will be helpful in determining solar vs farm ground. Bradley Bonnell feels this would be something that should be paid out of solar money rather than taxpayers. Brad then made a motion not to fund aerial mapping. Following more discussion, Michael Tiede seconded and motion passed 5-1 with Jerome Locke opposed.

Michael Tiede made a motion for 2.8% Cost of Living Adjustment, which is the Federal standard. Bradley Bonnell seconded and motion carried unanimously.

The 2025 Budget Final Adoption will be October 14, 2024 at Council meeting. The Matrix must be adopted before year end.

With no other business to discuss, meeting adjourned at 11:00AM.

Approved and signed this 12th day of November 2024 by the Pulaski County Council.

KENNETH BOSWELL

MICHAEL TIEDE

JEFFREY RICHWINE

SHEILA HAZEMI-JIMENEZ

BRADLEY BONNELL

TIM OVERMYER

JEROME LOCKE

ATTEST:
LAURA WHEELER, AUDITOR, PULASKI COUNTY, IN

IN RE: CIRCUIT COURT

Mary Welker expressed her frustration with high humidity and water leaks in Justice Center roof. The humidity has been 60% ever since courtroom constructed and maintenance/contract have now decided that a dehumidifier should be added to HVAC. Light switch on skylight has gone out 3 times and it will be 30 days before replaced. Tuesday there was a tile down in jury room and water has gotten into the dry wall in the file room. There is a humidity issue in the entire Justice Center but not as bad elsewhere. Maintenance is a Commissioners issue.

IN RE: OTHER BUSINESS

Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez made a motion to approve all of the following transfers and advertised additional, Jerome Locke seconded, and motion carried unanimously.

TRANSFERS:

-0009 PROSECUTOR			
From:	31100 Training	\$1,500.00	
To :	39300 Acquisition of Evidence		\$1,500.00
1173-0531 HIGHWAY			
From:	23300 Bituminous	20,000.00	
To:	23400 Hot Mix		20,000.00

ADVERTISED ADDITIONALS:

1112-0700 LIT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/CDC (LOANS)	100,000.00
8138-0232 PUBLIC DEFENDER GRANT	1,218.54
8139-0232 PUBLIC DEFENDER GRANT	3,096.42
2504-0232 JURY FEES/CIRCUIT COURT	(10,000.00)
2504-0201 JURY FEES/SUPERIOR COURT	10,000.00

Jeffrey Richwine made a motion to approve and sign minutes from August 12, 2024 regular meeting, August 12-13, 2024 budget hearing and August 26, 2024 special session, Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez seconded and motion carried unanimously.

IN RE: BUDGET-HEARING DISCUSSIONS

EMA requested 65,000 for a new truck. Transmission in current vehicle is acting up plus vehicle is starting to rust out and needs repaired. Discussion followed as several councilmembers think new transmission would only be around \$6,000. Council decided to reduce equipment to 6,000 for vehicle repair and put part-time to \$8,000.

County Attorney Kevin Tankersley spoke about Human Resources (HR) Department. HR would help in interpreting employee handbook, disciplinary actions, training, guidance on health insurance, including retirees, gathering information for the boards. Employees and department heads need somewhere to go and much easier going to one person. The Sheriff and Tankersley recently spent 2 hours on an unemployment claim.

If cost of living adjustment dropped from 5% to 3%, it would save County \$90,000. There is also a 5 year-grant through representative Rudy Yakim's office that could replace the current Navigator grant, which expires in June 2025.

County General is approximately \$1,100,000 over estimated revenue and is suggested to disapprove all additional employees/pay raises/funds for CDC, Surveyor, Clerk, Maintenance, Soil & Water, EMA, Community Foundation, and Probation with stipends paid as recommended by State and part-time wages increased by \$1.00.

Jeffrey Richwine made a motion to reduce EMA part-time to \$8,000 and equipment to \$6,000, Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez seconded and motion carried unanimously.

Jerome Locke made a motion to approve \$2500 stipends for Auditor and Clerk, but Clerk stipend if only on general election years. For 2025, only Auditor eligible for stipend. Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez made a motion to pay Auditor \$2500 stipend, Bradley Bonnell seconded and motion carried unanimously.

Michael Tiede made a motion for no new employees and Bradley Bonnell seconded. After further discussion Michael T. Tiede rescinded his motion. Sheila Jimenez-Hazemi than made a motion for no new employees, Michael Tiede seconded and motion was than rescinded by Sheila.

A special meeting to discuss budget set for October 1, 2024 at 9:00am in the Pulaski County Highway Training Room.

Public comment: Hiring a project manager discussed as well as outsourcing HR. Bradley Bonnell already checked into this and said it would be more expensive. Jenny Shank-Maxwell in Auditor's Office and Fred Rogers in Sheriff's Department have been doing most of the HR duties and would like to continue doing so. Another County was interested in teaming up on an HR project but it would be next year. Several people spoke up for the Navigator position.

With no other business to discuss, meeting adjourned at 9:03PM.

Approved and signed this 14th day of October 2025 by the Pulaski County Council.

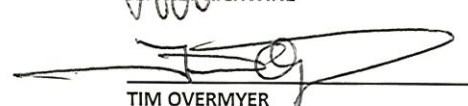

KENNETH BOSWELL

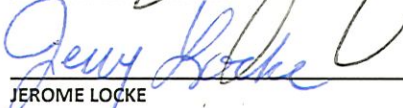

MICHAEL TIEDE

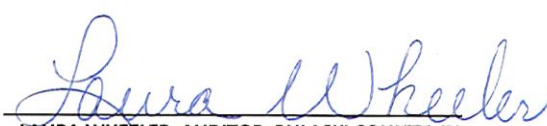

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