

DECEMBER 9, 2024

REGULAR SESSION

PULASKI COUNTY COUNCIL

The Pulaski County Council met in regular session on Monday December 9, 2024 7:00PM at the Pulaski County Highway Garage training room. Councilmembers present were Kenneth Boswell, Michael Tiede, Jeffrey Richwine, Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez, Tim Overmyer, Jerome Locke and Bradley Bonnell with County Auditor Laura Wheeler and County Attorney Kevin Tankersley.

Also present were Judge Mary Welker, Brent Gillum, Stan Bennett, Dave Olds, Brandi Larkin, Chris Brucker, Joe Moyer, Bill Smith, Teresa Bryant, Ed Cotner, Michael Sehstedt, Josh Stamper, Darrell Gudeman, Ben Smith, Jennifer Knebel, Connie Ehrlich, Jamie Murray, Natasha Daugherty, Katherine Spurgeon, Don Darda, Lynn Darda, Judge Crystal Kocher, Ross Davis, Randy Davis, Megan Galbreath, Keith Davis, Niki Clemons, and Nathan Origer.

IN RE: NATASHA DAUGHERTY, EMS

Pulaski County EMS is the recipient of a \$5,000. NIPSCO Grant that will allow for EMR certification classes with 20 books, instruction materials, T-shirts. There is no match required by the County.

Natasha went over the issues she is having with staffing as they are 3 EMTs short right now and considers the current staff to be underpaid and overworked compared to neighboring counties. EMTs in Pulaski County make \$13.08 per hour, the lowest in the region, and Advanced EMTs makes \$14.87. Paramedics earn \$19.03 per hour, significantly less than the \$20-25. offered by nearby Counties. Even the EMS Director earns substantially less than other department heads. According to the IDHS District Manager, only 1,400 of Indiana's 4,100 licensed paramedics are actively practicing with just 350 new paramedics added annually. Training new EMTs takes at least 6 months while paramedic programs require over a year. EMS operating budget is around \$1.2 million but have returned \$660,000. to the general fund from billing revenue. Privatizing EMS would cost more and nothing returned to the General Fund. If staffing shortages continue, Natasha fears she will have to shut down one ambulance. She proposes increasing EMT wages from \$13.08 to \$15.60, Advanced from \$14.87 to \$16.90, Paramedics from \$19.03 to \$20.80 and Director from \$23.79 to \$26.00. Jeffrey Richwine said that Pulaski County can never pay enough to compete with neighboring counties. He questioned if deputies can be trained as EMT first responders. Kenneth Boswell says Council needs time to study the information and as there were no motions made, they tabled the matter.

IN RE: NATHAN ORIGER, CDC

Nathan requested Commissioners reappoint Katelyn Bierrum, Brian Ledley and Isaiah Tidwell for a one-year term to the Redevelopment Commission. Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez made a motion to reappoint the three, Jeffrey Richwine seconded and motion carried unanimously. Nathan then asked Council to reappoint Vernon Gillum to a two-year term on the Tourism Advisory Council. Michael Tiede made a motion to reappoint Vernon, Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez seconded and motion carried unanimously.

IN RE: JUDGE CRYSTAL KOCHER, SUPERIOR COURT

Superior Court currently has a grant to pay for Community Navigator, which will run out of money July 1, 2025. Council agreed to fund position as full-time with benefits if Judge Kocher is unable to receive another grant as of July 1, 2025. Judge Kocher wanted a clarification on when the benefits start and Bradley Bonnell stated he understood it would be when she came on County payroll as full-time.

IN RE: OTHER BUSINESS

Michael Tiede made a motion to approve all transfers and additional as presented, Jerome Locke seconded and motion carried unanimously.

TRANSFER OF APPROPRIATIONS
12/09/2024

1000-0068	County General/Commissioners		
From:	12200 PERF	\$12,000.00	
	31801 Professional Services	12,000.00	
	35100 Electric, Water, Gas	12,565.00	
	39701 Four County Mental Health	3,500.00	
To:	32100 Postage		3,000.00
	37100 Postage Meter Rental		1,815.00
	37900 Examination of Records		14,050.00
	38201 Inmates in Institutions		4,700.00
	39100 Dues & Subscriptions		2,500.00
	34100 Official Bonds		2,000.00
	43400 Matching Grant		12,000.00
9123-0531	Community Xs Grant/Maintenance & Repair		
From:	75803 Bridge #249	64,400.00	
To:	23400 Hot Mix		64,400.00
1000-0011	County General/Extension		
From:	11800 Office Administrator	30.00	
To:	39100 Dues & Subscriptions		30.00
From:	11500 Part-time	703.50	
To:	37300 Rents & Leases		703.50
1000-0232	County General/Circuit Court		
From:	13100 Witness Fees	3,650.00	
To:	32100 Postage		3,650.00
8950-0068	American Rescue Plan/Commissioners		
From:	11101 Jailer	20,000.00	
	12100 Social Security/Medicare	33,500.00	
	12200 PERF	50,000.00	
	49900 Miscellaneous Equipment	197,463.80	
To:	10302 Sergeant		6,000.00
	10402 Deputy Sheriffs		42,000.00
	10902 Dispatchers		46,000.00
	11505 Part-time Jailer		4,500.00
	17000 Overtime		5,000.00
	44201 Ambulance		197,463.80
1000-0002	County General/Auditor		
From:	10200 1 st Deputy	200.00	
To:	10100 Elected Official		200.00
1170-0301	LIT Public Safety/EMS		
From:	32601 EMS Education	1,000.00	
To:	20700 EMS Training Materials		1,000.00
From:	44600 Computers & Printers	1,000.00	
	31801 Professional Services	6,500.00	
To:	36300 Service & Maintenance Contract		1,500.00
	24601 Patient Care Supplies		1,000.00
	44700 Patient Care Equipment		5,000.00
1000-0506	County General/Recycle & Transfer		
From:	10309 Laborer	8,000.00	
To:	31701 Hauling of Trash		8,000.00
1000-0005	County General/Sheriff		
From:	22600 Inmate Meals	6,710.00	
To:	10601 Matron/Clerical		2,200.00
	11200 Head Cook		1,900.00
	13101 Merit Board		2,610.00
1000-0235	County General/Probation		
From:	11500 Part-time	500.00	
To:	10106 Chief Probation Officer		500.00
2100-0235	Supp. Adult Probation Services		
From:	11512 Part-time Office Admin	12,294.00	
To:	45200 Furniture & Fixtures		12,294.00
1159-0610	Health/Health Department		
From:	12300 Group Insurance	5,030.00	
To:	10408 Registrar		5,030.00
1222-0005	Statewide 9-1-1/Sheriff		
From:	36300 Service & Maintenance	90.00	
To:	12300 Group Insurance		90.00
1235-0005	LIT-PSAP/Sheriff		
From:	11504 Part-time Dispatcher	7,000.00	
To:	12100 Social Security/Medicare		7,000.00
1000-0361	County General/EMA		
From:	31100 Training	96.70	
To:	17000 Overtime		96.70
From:	44301 Equipment	227.23	
To:	10108 EMA Director		227.23
1176-0533	Motor Vehicle Highway/Gen & Undistributed Exp		
From:	22100 Gas, Oil and Lube	20,000.00	
To:	11104 Mechanic Wages		5,000.00
	12300 Group Insurance		10,000.00
1000-0062	County General/Election Board		
From:	11401 Asst Election Board (Election night)	425.00	
To:	31100 Training		425.00
From:	10901 Absentee Voter Board	375.00	
To:	11002 Precinct Board Members		375.00
1000-0001	County General/Clerk		
From:	11501 Part-time Clerical	3,000.00	
To:	10212 First Deputy		3,000.00
1000-0004	County General/Recorder		
From:	10200 1 st Deputy	100.00	
To:	10100 Elected Official		100.00

1000-0011 County General/Extension		
From: 11500 Part Time	1,000.00	
To: 32200 Travel		1,000.00

ADDITONAL APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE

1112-0069 LIT – Economic Development/Network Admin (consultant)	30,000.00
1000-0063 County General/Surveyor (Board Members)	1,803.51
9189-0201 Community Foundation Grant /Superior Court (Contracted)	12,000.00
1000-0062 County General/Election Board	
Board Members	2,510.00
Misc. Service & Charges	425.00
Training	1,000.00
Travel	1,000.00

TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	48,738.51
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Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez made a motion to approve and sign the November 12, 2024 regular session minutes, Tim Overmyer seconded and motion carried unanimously.

Last month Council adopted Matrix, with part-time changes. Ten revisions were proposed to correct errors.

1. LTC-A (Highway, Surveyor) and LTC-B (Maintenance, Aviation and Solid Waste) matrices were adjusted to reflect the inclusion of part-time positions and to streamline the matrices to be like all of the other (from A-10 with 2.5% gaps between each one. This change does not affect anyone's wages but gives the matrices the same structure as all other non-Sheriff, Non-EMS matrices.
2. Maintenance Matrix shows two part-time custodians overpaid. They will be paid \$16.73 rather than the \$18.07 shown. Up one tier too high.
3. Recycling/Transfer Station matrix has the part-time, non-CDL laborers one tier too low. Will be paid \$18.07.
4. Reclassified the Soil & Water part-time educator/assistant and should be paid \$19.13, not \$18.36.
5. Veterans Service Officer should be paid \$24.48 as a department head, not \$19.13 as a part-time employee.
6. Health's part-time nurse is under-paid and should be paid \$27.51 and not \$19.13.
7. In Sheriff Matrix, head cook and part-time cooks should be paid \$16.73, not \$16.75. Full-time cook should be paid \$19.41 instead of \$18.81.
8. In Sheriff Matrix, part-time administrator should be paid \$19.89, not \$19.13.
9. The entire first deputy matrix in the Courthouse Offices is wrong in the legend but all of the individual employees' rates are correct except one. First Deputy Treasurer corrected to \$22.19.
10. Prosecutor's Office interns were to be paid \$19.89, which seems too high for part-time, seasonal employees who are supposed to be getting an educational benefit from the experience. Nathan reclassified position and wage will be \$18.36.

The Navigator position will be added in July 2025 if made full-time. Jeffrey Richwine made a motion to approve the MATRIX revisions, Jerome Locke seconded and motion carried 4-3. Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez, Jerome Locke, Jeffrey Richwine were in favor and Bradley Bonnell, Tim Overmyer, Michael Tiede were opposed. President Boswell broke the tie by voting in favor as Council President.

Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez made a motion to approve and sign the "2025 County Matrix Ordinances for Salaries and Wages", Jerome Locke seconded and motion carried 4-3. Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez, Jerome Locke, Jeffrey Richwine were in favor, Bradley Bonnell opposed, and Tim Overmyer, Michael Tiede abstained. President Boswell broke the tie by voting in favor as Council President.

At this time, solar money is in County General as there is no designated funds for solar. There are 3 solar projects that will be making payments to the County. Auditor Wheeler stated she does not see the necessity of multiple funds. Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez made a motion to have one fund with 3 line items, Jerome Locke seconded and motion passed 4-2. Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez, Jerome Locke, Jeffrey Richwine, Michael Tiede were in favor, Bradley Bonnell opposed and Tim Overmyer abstained.

A resolution "Agreement for Payment of Third-Party Compliance Monitoring Services" was tabled as Commissioners are waiting on signed agreements from solar companies. Commissioners are hiring VS Engineering to monitor the collection fees from solar companies.

For Public Comment, Joe Moyer thinks the County needs to support EMS. Brandi Larkin thanked Auditor for making an open discussion on Matrix. Jenny Knebel like Michael Tiede's idea that the solar monies should go to the townships most affected. An individual has heard rumors that farmers in Starke County are not being paid by the solar companies. Another individual wanted to know "why the rush"? County gave abatements and his taxes went up. Jenny Knebel stated that the new commissioners should have been a part of the discussion on the resolutions. Don Darda complained about councilmembers not using their microphones.

With no other business to discuss nor public comments, President Boswell adjourned the meeting at 8:52PM.

Approved and signed this 13th day of January 2025 by the PULASKI COUNTY COUNCIL.

NO LONGER IN OFFICE
KENNETH BOSWELL

SHEILA HAZEMI-JIMENEZ

TIM OVERMYER

Matt T. Tiede
MICHAEL TIEDE

Bradley Bonnell
BRADLEY BONNELL

Jeffrey Richwine
JEFFREY RICHWINE

Jerome Locke
JEROME LOCKE

ATTEST:

Teresa Bryant
TERESA BRYANT, AUDITOR, PULASKI COUNTY, IN