

Miami County Council Meeting

April 15, 2025

Meeting Information

- Date & Time: 4-15-2025 7:00 pm
- Location: 25 N Broadway Peru IN, 46970 GAR Room

Attendees:

President Chittum – Present
Councilman Fruth – Present
Councilman Scott – Present
Councilman Wiles – Present
Councilman Allen – Present
Councilman Sailors – Present
Councilman Nutt-Present
Auditor Annette Phillippo
Jim Tidd – MCEDA
Herb Hunt and Jodie Hutchins – EMA

Meeting Notes

1. County Infrastructure and Budget Appropriations

- **Opening and Approval of Minutes**
The meeting began with a prayer led by Councilman Saylor, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Motion by Councilman Fruth to approve the minutes from the previous meeting on March 18, 2025, Councilman Allan seconded, Motion approved 7-0
- **Appropriations**
 - A. Appropriations for Printers**
Discussion on the need for new printers due to malfunctioning units in the courthouse. The cost is \$24,660, and the printers will be leased. The appropriation will come from the General Fund. Motion to approve by Councilman Fruth, Seconded by Councilman Sailors., Motion passed 7-0
 - B. Engineer Consulting Fees**
Janice Hughes with the Highway Department gave updates on projects explaining the request for additional appropriations of \$200,000 in

engineering fees from Fund 4957, which is Miami County wheel and sur tax fund.

The fees are for mandatory bridge inspections and design fees for bridges 144 and 165, with 80% reimbursement expected.

- **Bridge and Road Projects**

Discussion on ongoing and future projects including bridge inspections starting May 1st, and road projects on Wabash Road and East Pawpaw Pike. A culvert on Wabash Road needs replacement due to a 10-ton weight limit.

- **Engineering Fees and Appropriations**

Discussion on the estimated engineering fees of \$186,630, with a contingency of \$200,000 for unexpected tasks. The appropriation is for CCMG, not from Cum Bridge or Highway Phase 2.

- **Wheel Tax and Funding**

The wheel tax fund is healthy with \$1,728,354, and an appropriation of \$975,000 for the year. Discussion on using wheel tax for CCMG and its comparison to MBH. MBH comes with more restrictions regarding where the money can be used.

- **CCMG Grant Application**

CCMG grant application history since 2016, with a 25% match requirement. The project is estimated at over \$2.2 million, with a maximum grant of \$1.5 million.

Motion to approve the \$200,000 for engineering consulting fee by Councilman Fruth, Seconded by Councilman Nutt, Motion passed 7-0

C. Additional appropriation for Sheriff salary increase of a total \$10,000. Motion by Councilman Fruth, Seconded by Councilman Saylor to approve the additional appropriations. Motion carried 7-0

D. Baker-Tilley Consulting Fees

Approval of \$30,000 additional appropriations for Baker-Tilley consulting fees to assist with a five-year plan for tax accounts and the courthouse plan.

Motion by Councilman Fruth, Seconded by Councilman Nutt. Motion carried 7-0

2. Items for Council Action

Sheriff's Contract Increase

Motion by Councilman Fruth, to Increase the Sheriff salary to \$105,000.00 with an additional \$1,059.50 for benefits for 2025 Seconded by Councilman Nutt.

Motion carried 7-0

Councilwoman Chittum stated the BOC recommendation for consideration, during budget hearing, to increase Sheriff Contract from \$105,000 to \$110,000 for 2026. No action is needed currently.

3. Annual TIF Management Report

- **TIF Management Report**

The Miami County Economic Development Authority serves as the redevelopment commission for both the city and the county. Jim Tidd with MCEDA gave the annual presentation of the TIF management covering revenues, expenses, and grants provided in 2024. See attached

4. Tax Abatement and Infrastructure Maintenance

- **Tax Payment and Abatement Exercise**

Jim Tidd presented a tax payment exercise involving Auditor Phillippo, Councilwoman Chittum, Councilman Nutt and Councilman Allen, illustrating how property taxes and abatements work. Sandy (business owner) pays \$58 annually, Brian (existing landowner) pay \$40, and John (new business) receives a 50% tax abatement for two years, reducing his payment from \$100 to \$50. The exercise demonstrated how tax abatements affect revenue and the potential impact if a business leaves.

The exercise concluded that the county does not lose revenue even if a business leaves after receiving an abatement.

A big thanks to Jim Tidd for the demonstration.

Discussion on tax abatements, including the duration and types of property eligible. Real and personal property can receive damages up to 10 years, with enhanced abatements up to 20 years. The importance of compliance and the role of the tax incentive committee were highlighted.

5. Emergency siren maintenance and funding

Herb Hunt and Jodie Hutchins with EMA handed out the quotes presented previously to the BOC.

- **Siren Maintenance and Funding**

The discussion focused on the challenges faced in maintaining emergency sirens, including the lack of updated policies and the need for new quotes from companies outside Indiana. The conversation also covered potential funding sources for maintenance, such as county general funds or rainy-day funds.

- **Storm Sirens Repair**

The county is working on repairing storm sirens, with a quote of \$113,000 accepted by the commissioners. The city has appropriated a portion, and the county's portion is \$69,000-\$70,000. The project includes software updates and ECC cards for cybersecurity.

Councilman Fruth encouraged that EMA reach out to Mr. Deniston to see if the server can be provided by our IT group.

- **Grant Programs for New Sirens**

The meeting discussed available grant programs for new sirens, including those from the FDA and FEMA. However, these grants do not cover maintenance costs.

- **Appropriation Process**

The process for appropriating funds was discussed, including the need for proper notice and the timeline for getting on the list for siren repairs.

A motion by Councilman Fruth, seconded by Councilman Nutt was made to advertise for the appropriation of \$70,000 for EMA for siren upgrades.

Jim Tidd was asked if there were any funds EMA could use out of TIF.

Discussion and appropriation will be followed up later since there was a long delay with ASA to get the equipment.

- **Storm Spotting Class**

Phil Phillippo, HAM operator member, announced that there is storm spotting class on April 26th at the Miami County Fairgrounds, presented by the National Weather Service. Mr. Phillippo encouraged anyone with interest to come check it out.

- **Open House at Civic Center**

Peter Sahaidachny invited everyone to attend the open house event at the Civic Center on April 26th, featuring tours, food, and music.

- **Federal Surplus Property Program**

Councilman Scott provided information that was shared about a federal program that allows counties to acquire surplus property from the federal government, such as trucks and filing cabinets.

Motion to Adjourn was made by Councilman Fruth, Seconded by Councilman Saylor. Motion passed 7-0

Attested

Auditor Annette Phillippo