

MIAMI COUNTY COUNCIL  
25 NORTH BROADWAY  
PERU, INDIANA 46970  
August 18, 2020

Councilman Duckwall – Present  
Councilwoman Chittum – Present  
Councilman Donaldson – Present  
Councilman Wood – Present  
Councilman Wiles – Present  
Councilman Sailors – Present  
Councilman Nutt-Present

President Duckwall called the meeting to order.

Councilman Duckwall led the group in prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

President Duckwall reminded the Council of budget hearings August 25-27 beginning at 8:30 am.

### **MINUTES**

Councilman Wiles made a motion to approve July 21, 2020 minutes. Councilwoman Chittum 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion and it passed 7-0.

### **ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION/TRANSFERS**

President Duckwall reviewed the following additional appropriation requests:

#### **COUNTY GENERAL** \$ 25,000

##### **-WITNESS FEES FOR UPCOMING TRIALS**

Jeff Sinkovics Prosecutor came before the council to request an additional appropriation for \$25,000 from County General for upcoming trial witness fees. The additional appropriation would cover witness fees in the upcoming trials scheduled for January and March. Prosecutor Sinkovics explained an out of state witness, which is the Pathologist in a case, has relocated to West Virginia. Typically, witnesses are local and expenses are for travel are for a few days. However, having the Pathologist as a witness is \$300 per hour, so Prosecutor Sinkovics is working to keep the expenses to a minimum. Prosecutor Sinkovics went on to note payment must be tendered prior to the trial for the Judge in Virginia to issue a subpoena. Prosecutor Sinkovics noted that video conferencing is available, but the defense has the right, by law to have an in-person trial and he does not see the video conference as an option. The video depositions could cost \$5,000 - \$7,000. Prosecutor Sinkovics did not plan for these trials and unfortunately, there is not a way to avoid the expense. Councilwoman Chittum made a motion to approve the additional appropriation request for \$25,000 from County General to cover the witness fees for upcoming trials. Councilman Nutt 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion and it passed 7-0.

#### **COUNTY GENERAL** \$ 26,000

##### **-WAGES FOR MAINTENANCE CHANGED EFFECTIVE 1/1/2020**

Auditor Brown explained the Council approved the pay adjustment for the Jail Maintenance and creation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Jail Maintenance position in December 2019. The additional appropriation is to cover the cost of these salaries. Auditor Brown noted the part-time wages already appropriated in the jail budget were transferred to cover the salary of part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Jail Maintenance position, but the Council needed to do the additional appropriation to cover the rest. Councilwoman Chittum made a motion to approve the additional appropriation from County General for \$26,000 for the pay adjustment to the Jail Maintenance and 2<sup>nd</sup> Jail Maintenance positions from the approval in December 2019. Councilman Sailors 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion and it passed 7-0

**SOLID WASTE**

**SOLID WASTE MGMT FUND** \$ 9,000

**-WATER LINE REPLACEMENT**

Samantha St. John came before the Council to request an additional appropriation of \$9,000 for the water line replacement. Ms. St. John explained during the spring, she noticed the water pressure was decreasing. It was determined the water line between the well and building, which showed a broken water line. Ms. St. John was given the option of running a new line or digging up the area to find the break. It was determined it would be more cost effective to dig and find the break. The cost of the repair was \$9,000, which included the trenching and ability to have it expedited to re-open after the COVID-19 closure was lifted.

**SOLID WASTE MGMT FUND** \$ 4,684

**-REPLACE HVAC HEAT PUMP**

Ms. St. John explained the air conditioning was not working at the building. A few different companies came in to look at the unit and it was determined the best option was to replace the unit and heat pump.

**SOLID WASTE MGMT FUND** \$ 2,766

**-50% MATCHING FUNDS FOR IDEM GRANT**

Ms. St. John stated a grant was awarded for signage at the recycling bins, including photos of what can and cannot go into the bins, contact information, etc. The contractor is working to put the signs up and not charging for his time.

Councilwoman Chittum made a motion to approve the request for Solid Waste for water line replacement for \$9,000, replacement of HVAC heat pump for \$4,684 and matching funds for the IDEM grant of \$2,766 from the Solid Waste Management Fund. Councilman Sailors 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion and it passed 7-0.

**ITEMS FOR COUNCIL ACTION**

The Council reviewed the maximum levy and tax cap amounts as follows:

**2021 Max Levy**

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Max Levy Type</b>	<b>Max Levy</b>
Allen	Fire	\$8,350.00
Allen	Civil	\$15,396.00
Butler	Fire	\$9,224.00
Butler	Civil	\$9,640.00
Clay	Fire	\$18,714.00
Clay	Civil	\$10,222.00
Deer Creek	Fire	\$15,997.00
Deer Creek	Civil	\$17,270.00
Erie	Fire	\$9,332.00
Erie	Civil	\$12,817.00
Harrison	Fire	\$8,959.00
Harrison	Civil	\$8,590.00
Jackson	Fire	\$23,120.00
Jackson	Civil	\$21,413.00
Jefferson	Fire	\$31,869.00

Jefferson	Civil	\$28,279.00
Perry	Fire	\$13,224.00
Perry	Civil	\$23,378.00
		\$174,946.0
Peru Twp	Civil	0
Pipe Creek	Fire	\$34,615.00
Pipe Creek	Civil	\$31,082.00
Richland	Fire	\$31,675.00
Richland	Civil	\$12,450.00
Union	Fire	\$17,450.00
Union	Civil	\$11,066.00
Washington	Fire	\$34,775.00
Washington	Civil	\$46,082.00
		\$3,409,045
Peru Civil City	Fire	.00
		\$4,345,121
Peru Civil City	Civil	.00
Town of Amboy	Civil	\$49,508.00
Town of Bunker Hill		\$268,884.0
	Civil	0
Town of Converse		\$398,789.0
	Civil	0
Town of Denver	Civil	\$26,540.00
Town of Macy	Civil	\$21,053.00
Maconaquah School	School	\$3,127,827
	Operating	.00
	School	\$1,732,990
North Miami	Operating	.00
	School	\$2,132,699
Peru School	Operating	.00
		\$109,516.0
Converse Library	Civil	0
Peru Public Library		\$500,654.0
	Civil	0

**2021 Estimated Property Tax Cap Impact Report**

**Miami County**

**0000 | MIAMI COUNTY Estimated Impact**

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits \$565,990

**Total Estimated Credits \$565,990**

**0001 | ALLEN TOWNSHIP Estimated Impact**

\$30

\$20

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits

Township Fire Credits

**Total Estimated Credits \$50**

**0002 | BUTLER TOWNSHIP Estimated Impact**

\$20

\$20

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits

Township Fire Credits

**Total Estimated Credits \$40**

**0003 | CLAY TOWNSHIP Estimated Impact**

\$10

\$20

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits

Township Fire Credits

**Total Estimated Credits \$30**

**0004 | DEER CREEK TOWNSHIP Estimated Impact**

\$40

\$40

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits

Township Fire Credits

**Total Estimated Credits \$80**

**0005 | ERIE TOWNSHIP Estimated Impact**

\$80

\$120

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits

Township Fire Credits

**Total Estimated Credits \$200**

**0006 | HARRISON TOWNSHIP Estimated Impact**

\$20

\$20

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits

Township Fire Credits

**Total Estimated Credits \$40**

**0007 | JACKSON TOWNSHIP Estimated Impact**

\$560

\$480

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits

Township Fire Credits

**Total Estimated Credits \$1,040**

**0008 | JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP Estimated Impact**

\$130

\$150

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits

Township Fire Credits

**Total Estimated Credits \$280**

**0009 | PERRY TOWNSHIP Estimated Impact**

\$50

\$30

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits

Township Fire Credits

**Total Estimated Credits \$80**

**0010 | PERU TOWNSHIP Estimated Impact**

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits \$42,170

**Total Estimated Credits \$42,170**

**0011 | PIPE CREEK TOWNSHIP Estimated Impact**

\$310

\$90

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits

Township Fire Credits

**Total Estimated Credits \$400**

**0012 | RICHLAND TOWNSHIP Estimated Impact**

\$40

\$90

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits

Township Fire Credits

**Total Estimated Credits \$130**

**0013 | UNION TOWNSHIP Estimated Impact**

\$20

\$30

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits

Township Fire Credits

**Total Estimated Credits \$50**

**0014 | WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP Estimated Impact**

\$2,880

\$160

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits

Township Fire Credits

**Total Estimated Credits \$3,040**

**0310 | PERU CIVIL CITY Estimated Impact**

\$1,376,780

\$847,840

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits

Fire Territory Credits

**Total Estimated Credits \$2,224,620**

**0782 | AMBOY CIVIL TOWN Estimated Impact**

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits \$210

**Total Estimated Credits \$210**

**0783 | BUNKER HILL CIVIL TOWN Estimated Impact**

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits \$25,700

**Total Estimated Credits \$25,700**

**0784 | CONVERSE CIVIL TOWN Estimated Impact**

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits \$60,150

**Total Estimated Credits \$60,150**

**0785 | DENVER CIVIL TOWN Estimated Impact**

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits \$80

**Total Estimated Credits \$80**

**0786 | MACY CIVIL TOWN Estimated Impact**

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits \$60

**Total Estimated Credits \$60**

**5615 | MACONAQUAH SCHOOL CORPORATION Estimated Impact**

School Operations Credits \$27,260

**Total Estimated Credits \$27,260**

**5620 | NORTH MIAMI CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL CORP Estimated Impact**

School Operations Credits \$4,810

**Total Estimated Credits \$4,810**

**5625 | OAK HILL UNITED SCHOOL CORPORATION Estimated Impact**

School Operations Credits \$55,690

**Total Estimated Credits \$55,690**

**5635 | PERU COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION Estimated Impact**

School Operations Credits \$1,415,130

**Total Estimated Credits \$1,415,130**

**0152 | CONVERSE PUBLIC LIBRARY Estimated Impact**

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits \$5,510

**Total Estimated Credits \$5,510**

**0153 | PERU PUBLIC LIBRARY Estimated Impact**

Civil Max Levy Fund Credits \$154,060

**Total Estimated Credits \$154,060**

**1060 | MIAMI COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DIST Estimated Impact**

**Total Estimated Credits \$0**

Councilman Sailors made a motion to approve the 2021 Max Levy and 2021 Tax Caps as presented. Councilwoman Chittum 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion and it passed 7-0.

**HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Dr Redmon came before the Council to request an increase in the part-time nurse hourly rate from \$16.50 to \$18.50 per hour. Dr. Redmon noted the Health budget could support the increase. In addition the work related to COVID-19 has increased and the extra help is needed. Dr. Redmon explained it is difficult to find good help and the current rate is well below what an average hourly rate would be for nurses in the area. Councilwoman Chittum made a motion to increase the part-time hourly rate for the health nurse from \$16.50 to \$18.50 effective immediately. Councilman Wiles 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion and it passed 7-0.

Dr. Redmon noted that she has applied for a grant for a community based testing site. The grant would provide a testing place while working together with Dukes Hospital. The grant would cover salaries of the employees. Equipment has already been purchased and ready once the funding comes in.

Dr. Redmon provided an update on the status of the COVID-19 virus within the county. There have been 288 cases and 2 deaths to date. There is a 4% positivity rate of those tested, which Dr Redmon feels Miami County has been very lucky to have such a low rate. Most of the people tested at the Optum site are for those who have high-risk exposure. We can expect to see a steady increase in numbers, especially with school starting back up, but the goal is to try to hold the surge.

**2<sup>ND</sup> SECURITY OFFICER**

Sheriff Hunter came before the Council to request a 2<sup>nd</sup> Security Officer for the Courthouse/Annex. Sheriff Hunter has discussed the issue for a while. Auditor Brown and Sheriff Hunter have worked together to find funding to cover the cost of the position. Sheriff Hunter explained the issue of security is not going away and this option would take care of the situation. Auditor Brown explained that several years ago, an agreement was made with the City of Peru to contribute \$60,000 to the operations of 9-1-1. The county also contributes \$60,000 from the Commissioner's budget. Auditor Brown went on to note that in 2016, the county amended the agreement and now, the City of Peru pays half of the total expenses incurred, which would cover the budget for Local Source Funding. The \$60,000 that covered the cost of the 9-1-1 operations instead, could be used to cover the cost of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Security position. There is \$30,000 remaining in the budget for the remainder of 2020 and would allow the county to hire the 2<sup>nd</sup> person at any time. Commissioner Hunt explained with only 1 officer, it makes it difficult for Sheriff Hunter to cover the position. Sheriff Hunter must take an officer off the road, which is a waste of resources. Currently, if only 1 officer is available, it leaves 1 of the buildings without anyone to immediately respond. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Security Officer will float between the 2 buildings. Councilman Sailors made a motion to create the 2<sup>nd</sup> Security Officer, effective September 1, 2020 with a salary of \$40,000. Councilwoman Chittum 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion and it passed 7-0.

### **PURDUE EXTENSION**

Commissioner Musselman explained to the Council an ongoing issue with Purdue Extension office with 2 county employees. Commissioner Musselman stated that there have been several complaints filed by the county employees against Kim Frazier, Extension Agent. The complaints speak of her behavior towards the employees and forwarded to Purdue, Ms. Frazier and Ms. Julie Gray, Ms. Frazier's boss. Commissioner Musselman went on to state that Auditor Brown has contacted Purdue many times regarding the complaints filed by the county employees against Ms. Frazier to no avail. A few weeks ago, the Commissioners received a letter from Ms. Frazier and Ms. Gray stating that effective August 13, 2020; they would no longer assign duties to our employees. The letter also noted the behaviors and performance of our staff have not improved and have further declined. Commissioner Musselman stated within the notice from Ms. Frazier and Ms. Gray, there was reference to a letter from Purdue's General Counsel dated February 26, 2020, but the county did not receive the letter from Ms. Frazier and Ms. Gray until August, citing a delay from COVID-19. Attorney Downs stated the letter from Purdue dated February 26, 2020 was in response to a complaint filed with Ms. Frazier regarding her behavior towards our employees. The letter explained that any issues regarding our employees needed forwarded to the Commissioners to address, but the Commissioners have never received anything from Ms. Frazier or Ms. Gray. Attorney Downs further explained the situation is a hybrid of sorts because the Commissioners maintain jurisdiction over the county employees, but Purdue employs the Extension Agent, who then assigns duties. Commissioner Musselman noted this is not the 1<sup>st</sup> time county employees have complained about Ms. Frazier, but they will not speak up and the county cannot force them to do so. Auditor Brown stated that she met with Ms. Gray and Ms. Sharon Williams, head of HR of Purdue a few years ago and reviewed the complaints filed by the county employees against Ms. Frazier. During the meeting, both Ms. Gray and Ms. Williams assured the county they would address the situation. Auditor Brown followed-up a few weeks later, not to find out if Ms. Frazier had been disciplined, but to see if the matter had been addressed. The response Auditor Brown received from Ms. Williams was, "We hope things in the office will improve soon." Since that time, Auditor Brown has sent emails about ongoing complaints about Ms. Frazier's behavior toward the county employees and has not received any kind of response. Auditor Brown noted that Purdue requires yearly employee reviews. Miami County does not perform yearly employee reviews and Ms. Frazier was notified the reviews do not hold weight with the county. Auditor Brown feels as though Ms. Frazier and Ms. Gray have provided false information to Purdue based on poorly composed and inaccurate employee reviews. This prompted Purdue to make the comments about the county employees within their letter, but have not once spoken to the county regarding the county employees' behavior. Auditor Brown provided a copy of the statute that requires the county to appropriate funds for the Extension program, but does not state how much funding is required. Auditor Brown feels moving forward, the Council should provide flat funding to Purdue and they can figure out how to hire

help based on the funding provided. In addition, for the current budget year, Auditor Brown recommended the council transfer the remaining salaries of the current county employees to the Commissioners budget for the remainder of the year. Auditor Brown noted the employees have been assigned to the Health Department to provide help while the county tries to work on the issue with Purdue. Councilwoman Chittum made a motion to transfer the remaining wages for the Extension employees to the Commissioners budget for the remainder of 2020. Councilman Sailors 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion and it passed 7-0.

**REQUEST FOR AUDIENCE**

None

**COUNCIL DISCUSSION & COMMITTEE UPDATE**

None

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

Councilman Wood made a motion to adjourn. Councilwoman Chittum 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion and it passed 7-0.

Respectfully submitted

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**Mary Brown**

Miami County Auditor