

**VIGO COUNTY COUNCIL
MINUTES
Tuesday, August 16, 2010 AT 6:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, VIGO COUNTY ANNEX**

Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order and Sheriff Greg Ewing led the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Mark Bird asked everyone to remain standing and asked for a moment of silence for Earl Slavens, a Vigo County employee who passed away.

Calling of the Roll

Present: Brad Anderson, Ed Ping, Kathy Miller, Tim Curley, Mark Bird, Bill Thomas.

Absent/Excused: Bill Bryan.

Councilman Bryan was attending a funeral for his aunt.

Corrections to the journal of the preceding meeting, if needed

None were presented.

President Mark Bird asked Councilwoman Kathy Miller to discuss the proposed salary ordinance for the 2012 budget. Ms. Miller explained that in the past few weeks, the Personnel committee (Tim Curley, Chair, Ed Ping and Brad Anderson) met and discussed raises as well as the education multiplier. Both items passed through the committee with a 3-0 vote recommended to the Annual Budget Committee. The Annual Budget Committee (Kathy Miller, Chair, Bill Thomas and Brad Anderson) met and discussed the proposal as well, where both items were also passed. However, since these votes occurred, there have been questions and concerns from community members, staff members, employees, and other Council members. There has been discussion leading to further investigation into the numbers of what is currently on the table. Ms. Miller expressed appreciation for the attendance and for the feedback received so far.

Suggestions have been made as far as the percentages of three and six above the base pay; a Phase II, which would provide tuition reimbursement and certification recognition of continuing education credits; as well as what has already been proposed in Phase I. The details of Phase I were reported in the Tribune Star newspaper. With all of the feedback received by all Council members, Councilwoman Miller would like the issue to be sent to a Study Committee made up of representatives of every stakeholder in this process which would include employees, the Taxpayer's Association, the County, and the Commissioners. All parties involved should have some representation on the Study Committee as far as what direction to go to from here. Ms. Miller asked that President Mark Bird set a committee in order to proceed further. She suggested collecting contact information from anyone willing to serve on the committee to give feedback and work together to determine what is best in moving forward for all parties involved.

President Mark Bird asked that anyone interested in serving on the committee should contact Ryan Oilar, Council Administrator. The Council has made no decision on a

Salary Ordinance. He feels this committee will give the Council other possible ideas. Mr. Bird does favor the idea of a tuition reimbursement. If an educational pay increase was introduced in the future, he feels there are employees who, with the financial support of the County, would seek higher education. He explained that neither he nor the other Council members are saying that an educated person is smarter than those currently performing their jobs; current employees are a great group of workers. However, at some point we must recognize that educated people coming out of college may be willing to stay around if they know they would receive a slightly higher salary.

The committee must meet in the next couple of weeks. No decisions will be made tonight; the decision will be made at the September meeting when the budget is finalized.

Public Comment

Norman Loudermilk, Assistant Chief of the Terre Haute Fire Department, whose primary responsibilities are that of the Director of the Emergency Responder Training Academy. Mr. Loudermilk discussed property in which the County previously owned and deeded to the City of Terre Haute. The fire department uses the land for training. During the process of installing water lines, human graves were unknowingly unearthed. Mr. Loudermilk submitted a three-phase process provided by Dr. Shawn Phillips who is an Archeologist from Indiana State University, to exhume the remaining graves and relocate them to a cemetery for a proper and respectful burial. Councilwoman Kathy Miller would like to see the County and City work together in resolving the issue and possibly sharing the cost. President Mark Bird explained that he will assign the issue to a committee and it will be addressed at the September Council meeting.

Bridget Kelsheimer, Criminal Court Reporter, Division 6 and Mike Ellis, Public Defender and practicing Attorney in Terre Haute are both interested in being a part of the Study Committee.

Susan Allen, Chief Court Reporter, Division 5, asked how many people will be on the committee and how they will be chosen. Ms. Allen also asked if the step and grade system will be open for discussion during the committee meeting. Councilwoman Kathy Miller stated a number has not been set as to the number of people to be chosen for the committee. In formulating the committee, each group of stakeholders should have a voice on the committee. Regarding the current salary schedule, everyone knows it isn't perfect in its current state and any input would be welcomed.

Mark Dailey, Deputy Treasurer would like a legal opinion as to whether or not the education multiplier is legal under the Equal Pay Act. Mr. Bob Effner, Council Attorney, stated that without having an opportunity to thoroughly research the issue, his initial impression in regards to the Equal Pay Act, is that it only relates to gender discrimination. However, there are other acts that pertain to discrimination that relate to a protected class, such as those with disabilities. President Mark Bird asked Mr. Effner to research the issue further and report back to the Council with the information. Councilman Ed Ping doesn't understand the purpose of the study group. President Mark Bird explained the purpose is for input and to discuss ideas that others may have.

Mr. Ping made a motion to scrap the salary proposal. President Mark Bird stated that there would be no motions made. Councilman Tim Curley seconded the motion. President Bird stated that there will be no vote since one Councilman is absent that should have the opportunity to vote.

An employee of the Highway department stated that if there is money for raises to be given to County employees, it should be one level across the board for everyone.

Nancy Allsup, Vigo County Recorder feels the step and grade schedule should be corrected before other items are included in the salary schedule. She currently has an employee that is at a grade 17 and has been here 28 years. Since there is a cap at step 20, she should be increased to the step cap level. Councilwoman asked the Auditor's office for verification on the step cap. It was determined there is currently no cap in place; those over step 20 receive a 1.5% increase to their pay when raises are given.

Councilman Tim Curley stated that his stance is, "What is fair for one is fair for all and that is the way it should be."

Kylissa Miller, Chief Deputy Auditor responded to the Highway employee comment regarding equal pay across the board. She pointed out that not all County employees receive the class pay of an additional \$0.71 per hour that Highway workers receive. Even though not all Highway employees receive it, it is a benefit available if all requirements are met.

John Moore, Highway Union representative confirmed that both a Class "A" and a Class "B" position were negotiated.

Ann O'Brien, Vigo County employee asked for clarification on a rumor that employees in the Sheriff's department would be exempt from the education multiplier proposal. Councilwoman Kathy Miller explained that the salary proposal that was passed by the Personnel committee by a 3-0 vote to the Budget Committee which was also passed with a 3-0 vote to the full Council, did not exempt the Sheriff's department. Ms. O'Brien suggested that perhaps the education multiplier be for new employees only.

Communications from other officials or agencies

There were none.

Reports from standing committees

Annual Budget Committee

First reading of the 2012 Annual Budget

Timothy Seprodi, Vigo County Auditor cited the first reading of the 2012 Annual Budget.

Reports from select committees

There were none.

Ordinances relating to appropriations

There were none.

Honorary resolutions.

There were none.

Resolutions relating to fiscal policies of the Council

There were none.

First reading by summary reference of proposed ordinances and resolutions

President Mark Bird assigned Requests of Council to committee for further review.

Appointments

There were none.

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn, **Action:** Adjourn, **Moved by** Tim Curley, **Seconded by** Kathy Miller.

Vote: Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote (**summary:** Yes = 6).

Yes: Bill Thomas, Brad Anderson, Ed Ping, Kathy Miller, Mark Bird, Tim Curley.