

VIGO COUNTY COUNCIL
Sunshine Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 1, 2022 at 5:00 P.M.
City Court Room, City Hall, 17 Harding Avenue

Pledge of Allegiance

President Aaron Loudermilk called the meeting to order at 5:00.

Calling of the roll

R. Todd Thacker – present, Vicki Weger - present, Marie Theisz - present, Travis Norris – present, Brenda Wilson - present, David Thompson – present, and Aaron Loudermilk - present.

Public Comments

There were none.

Communications from elected officials, other officials or agencies of the County

David Thompson initiated a lengthy discussion regarding the Baker Tilly salary study in order to address the various rumors circulating. He said he had sent an email to Kara Wright and Kylissa Miller asking them to send an email to the department heads and give them a timeline of where we are with the study. He doesn't believe that an email was ever sent. He asked Council Administrator Kylissa Miller if anything had been completed or released. She said draft pay plans had been released and explained what that was and went into detail as to the changes that had taken place categorizing positions since the initial plan. There are no numbers with pay established because nothing has been approved so there are no numbers to release. The contract amount of the study was \$63,500 and approximately \$44,000 has been paid. She indicated there were 2 outstanding invoices but it had been decided to hold them for now. Lengthy discussion continued. Reasons given by Baker Tilly for the delay were discussed and Marie Theisz asked if there had been any lag time on our end getting them information. Ms. Miller said there had been some lag on this end and gave explanation about that. She doesn't feel it would have held up the whole project. Travis Norris said that he contacted Baker Tilly directly after the last meeting and they indicated they had wanted to have a meeting with all the department heads of the county. Mr. Norris was aware that had not taken place. He thought it would be a good idea and would set some of the rumors to rest. Discussion continued. Vicki Weger said that there were some members of the Council that had not been a part of all communication that had taken place. The communication they did receive recited something about the Open Door Law. She said the Open Door Law did not apply to this at all. All members of the Council should be receiving the same information and be fully informed. She requested that all members be included in any communications going forward. Among some of the comments made by Todd Thacker, he felt that this is something that should be tackled at the first of the year. Commissioner Chris Switzer said that in full transparency, he had been contacted directly by Baker Tilly but he told them they needed to deal directly with the Council since they

had initiated the project. Discussion continued. Creation of a sub-committee was suggested and discussed. Assessor Kevin Gardner made several comments and talked about the initial committee that had initially been formed in the selection of a firm to conduct the salary study. That committee seemingly has dissolved. It is his belief that blame cannot be placed solely on one side or the other.

Aaron Loudermilk then referred Council members to an email and a sheet of paper that had been given to them before the meeting concerning the jail and questions about the status of the inmates occupying the new jail. One of the sheets was a Certificate of Use and Occupancy for the new jail that certifies “no special conditions apply at this time” for the facility to not be occupied and that was issued on May 17. There has been a lot of questions about what is holding up occupancy of the jail. Commissioner Mike Morris said that the Engineer certified that it has been ready to occupy and has been occupied by the Sheriff’s Department for several months. He indicated that it is in their hands and the Commissioners have been cooperative in any of their requests. There was a lengthy discussion. Marie Theisz commented that this had not been on the agenda and it would have been nice to have a representative from the Sheriff’s Department here to be able to comment on these questions. Discussion continued. It was Commissioner Morris’ opinion and the opinion of the Engineering firm that the facility could have been in operation. It had been set to occupy by the 13th at a meeting about 5 weeks ago but that didn’t happen. Commissioner Chris Switzer said that there had been problems with materials/items being backordered and supply chain issues. Sheriff Plasse did not feel it was safe to move/house inmates until all issues were resolved and fully operational. He expanded on some of the issues that had been experienced and some of the ongoing issues. He said as far as he knew, the jail was habitable but there is some reluctance with some problems with the alarm system and everything working properly for safety of both the staff and inmates and to make sure that the County is not named in any further lawsuits. Discussion continued. There was also a brief discussion about the old jail.

First reading by summary reference of proposed ordinances and resolutions

- i. ROC 2022-38, Resolution 2022-13: Saturn Petcare, Inc. – 10-year personal property tax abatement
- ii. ROC 2022-38, Resolution 2022-14: Saturn Petcare, Inc. – 10-year real property tax abatement
- iii. ROC 2022-46, Additional Appropriation 2022-33: Juvenile Court – Contractual Services
- iv. ROC 2022-47, Adult Community Corrections – Pre-Trial Program and Dual Diagnosis Updates
- v. ROC 2022-48, Additional Appropriation 2022-34: Seized Assets – New Equipment
- vi. ROC 2022-49, Salary Ordinance 2022-20: Adult Protective Services – Delete Legal Secretary position
- vii. ROC 2022-49, Salary Ordinance 2022-21: Adult Protective Services – Add Investigator position
- viii. ROC 2022-50, Additional Appropriation 2022-35: LIT/Public Safety – Other Supplies

Reports from committees

There were none.

Resolutions and Ordinances other than appropriations.

- i. Resolutions 2022-13 AND 2022-14: Saturn Petcare, Inc. 10-year personal and real property tax abatement, ROC 2022-38

Attorney Richard Shagley, attorney for petitioner, said that this is for a 10-year personal and real property tax abatement. The personal property abatement is estimated at about \$42 million worth of work and the real property tax abatement is anticipated at about a \$10 million expense. Obviously, those numbers cannot be known until they are assessed after completion. They currently have 163 full time employees and an additional 36 temporary workers with an annual payroll of about \$13.7 million. If this abatement is granted, they will add about 50 additional employees with an average annual payroll of about \$4.8 million. There was a lengthy discussion. It was noted that they were ready to begin this project as soon as it was approved and are currently in negotiations with a local general contractor and plan to use local labor.

- ii. Pre-Trial Program and Dual Diagnosis Updates; ROC 2022-47: Adult Community Corrections

Bill Watson and Judge Sarah Mullican gave an update on the pre-trial program and the success they are experiencing. They have been able to reduce the rate of a jail stay from 4-5 days to 1 1/2- 2 days. The re-offense rate is very low. The State has changed the manner of tracking. They are required to track everything now because the program has been certified by the State. They hope to continue to move forward with the program. Judge Mullican said that one of their grants had been cut this year (they were cut state-wide) and they will probably be coming to the Council to ask for another position next year. They looked into federal grant money but those grants are also being cut. There was lengthy discussion.

The Dual Diagnosis Services was then reviewed. It, too, is doing very well and the statistics are very positive and encouraging. As of the day of the meeting, there are 150 people in the residential program with at least 50 of them in the dual diagnosis program. It is a great need that is being filled and is very successful. He gave a short synopsis of how the program works. He also brought 2 individuals, namely Shawn Roberts and Larry Mankin, who are members of the program who talked about their personal success with the program and how it gave them back their lives. Mr. Watson said that return is not always in dollars when you invest in these types of programs. The investment is in helping some of these people regain their lives and become productive members of society again. Additional discussion continued. Mr. Watson also added that at the end of the year, they would be bringing on a forensic nurse practitioner to help in-house daily and a CNA which will greatly help their caseload. Chief Deputy Prosecutor Rob Roberts, who was also present, commented that this program also benefitted their office because by being successful, it cut down on their caseload of returning, repeat offenders. The impact of this program is far-reaching for the whole system.

Ordinances relating to appropriations.

iii. Additional Appropriation 2022-33; ROC 2022-46: Juvenile Court – Contractual Services

Hon. Dan Kelly and Hon. Sarah Mullican presented this request. This money requested will supplement their grant and allow them to pay for a mediator. They explained how mediation helped resolve many of the cases in their Courts without the need for a formal hearing and helped move their caseload quicker. This particular mediator has proven very effective. He was given cases involving 35 kids for the month of September at a cost of \$4,500 in which he obtained either complete settlement of the cases or partial settlements involving at least 28 of those 35 kids. That is a real impact on those kids lives and gets things moving more quickly. When a case settles in mediation, those are cases that aren't going to be appealed. This also greatly reduces the caseload for the Court.

iv. Additional Appropriation 2022-34: ROC 2022-48: Seized Assets – New Equipment

Rob Roberts, Chief Deputy Prosecutor, noted that the specific new equipment they were wanting to purchase was set out in their request and talked about the need for what was going to be purchased. Seized Assets does have the funds available to purchase this equipment. These are not direct tax dollars, they are seizures that are accomplished through investigations that are done with the Drug Task Force. In Vigo County, the Prosecutor's Office chooses to run these funds through the supervisory group of both the County Council and the Auditor's Office to make sure that those expenses are closely monitored for transparency.

v. Salary Ordinance 2022-20: ROC 2022-49, Adult Protective Services – Delete Legal Secretary position

Rob Roberts explained how Adult Protective Services operates. Each year, a contract is signed with the State of Indiana to provide services for Vigo and surrounding counties for investigations of adult situations. Their funding from the State covers most of the expenses. They currently have a director, 2 investigators and 1 receptionist for all cases. If the director has to handle cases, he cannot perform his duties as director effectively. They feel it is a better use of their resources to transfer the receptionist spot into an investigator spot and free up the director from investigator duties. There is only about a \$400 difference between the salary of a legal secretary and an investigator, although benefits will push that figure up slightly higher. They hope to see a grant increase by the middle of next year that will cover the additional difference.

vi. Salary Ordinance 2022-21: ROC 2022-49, Adult Protective Services – Add Investigator position

This request is in conjunction with the prior request and was discussed concurrently.

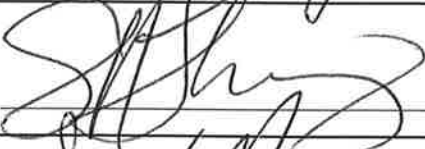
vii. Additional Appropriation 2022-35: ROC 2022-50, LIT/Public Safety – Other Supplies

Chief Deputy Auditor Cheryl Loudermilk explained that this was a technical correction to the 2022 budget. This appropriation had been approved by the budget committee but was inadvertently not carried over to the adopted side of the 2022 Budget. This request will allow the Auditor' Office to clear up any issues before the end of the year. Since it was not officially adopted as part of the 2022 budget, this will need to be adopted as an additional appropriation. Measures have been put in place to hopefully ensure that this does not happen again.

Vicki Weger made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 p.m. David Thompson seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote of 7-0, the motion was unanimously approved.

MINUTES OF THE VIGO COUNTY COUNCIL
SUNSHINE MEETING
NOVEMBER 1, 2022

Presented to the Vigo County Council, read in full and adopted as written this 6th day of December, 2022.

Aye ☒	Absent ☐		R. Todd Thacker	
Nay ☐	Abstain ☐			
Aye ☒	Absent ☐		Vicki Weger	
Nay ☐	Abstain ☐			
Aye ☒	Absent ☐		Marie Theisz	
Nay ☐	Abstain ☐			
Aye ☒	Absent ☐		Travis Norris	
Nay ☐	Abstain ☐			
Aye ☒	Absent ☐		Brenda Wilson	
Nay ☐	Abstain ☐			
Aye ☒	Absent ☐		David Thompson	
Nay ☐	Abstain ☐			
Aye ☒	Absent ☐		Aaron Loudermilk, President	
Nay ☐	Abstain ☐			

Attest:

James W. Bramble
Vigo Auditor