

VIGO COUNTY COUNCIL
Sunshine Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 4, 2025 at 5:00 P.M.
Council Chambers, Vigo County Government Center

Pledge of Allegiance

President David Thompson called the meeting to order at 5:00.

Calling of the roll

Nancy Allsup – absent; Vicki Weger – present; Steve Ellis – present; Randy Gentry – present; Brenda Wilson – present; Brad Anderson – present; and David Thompson – present.

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

Vigo County Commissioner Mark Clinkenbeard approached the Council to give updates on the Vigo County Commissioners. Mark said that jail demolition had been progressing well. He said that once everything above ground had been demolished and work would begin on the basement of the building, progress would slow down a little bit. He reminded the Council this was a four step process. He said the first step was moving the tower communications out of the basement into a building next to the tower. He said the second step was the demolition, which was ongoing at the time of the meeting. He said step three would be the backfill and step four would be the road construction on the north side which will have access for emergency vehicles, additional handicap parking, service vehicle parking, and parking for the Sheriff's Office for when they transport inmates. He said they are looking to be near half a million dollars under budget on the project.

Mr. Clinkenbeard then gave an update on the community corrections expansion. He said they look to have numbers on the project by the end of February. He said the plan was to come before the Council to discuss costs in April for this expansion.

Ryan Keller with Thrive West Central then approached the Council with an update on the organization and the use of ARPA funds and the investment into Vigo County housing. Keller provided data to the Council showing 379 housing units had been awarded to Vigo County. He said that in previous years less than a quarter of this amount of housing was being built in the county before Thrive started their housing initiative. He said more homes would lead to expanding on their tax base and keep local talent. Keller then provided data on results from ARPA funding. He said when it was just ARPA funding, and just looking at the county and not the city or anything the city was doing with READI, 94 housing units were developed just on the county's funding alone. Mr. Keller briefly explained the data didn't reflect projects in the pipeline to avoid an inflated number of units, but the developers would continue to build now that the infrastructure was in place. Keller explained price ranges of homes awarded pointing out the market was gravitating toward homes in the \$200,000 to \$250,000 price range, which 48 of the units fall under. Mr. Keller then showed data of rent ranges and progress of the region, including other counties. Keller explained that there were more builders lined up for 2025, and the ARPA funds need to be spent by the end of 2026. He said READI round 1 would likely be expended by the end of 2025. He said when READI round 2 comes around they will have until the end of 2028. He explained that Thrive assistance helps developers offset risk when it comes to investing in local building

projects. He noted eventually smaller projects should start to be able to work without public investment as the years progress, but larger projects would likely need some sort of public investment due to the high cost of infrastructure. Mr. Keller then opened the floor for questions. Vicki Weger asked how the housing units are being advertised. Keller said the builders are marketing them themselves or through the realtor community. Keller discussed efforts by the organization to market the new units not only locally, but to a wider audience as well. Steve Ellis wanted to know more about Thrive West Central and if the organization uses public funds to build housing. Mr. Keller briefly explained and clarified Thrive West Central provides a smaller amount of funding to private developers to offset the risk of investment to encourage them to build housing projects locally. Steve Ellis then wanted clarification on Thrive assisted projects “competing” with the projects from the private sector. Mr. Keller clarified that all units were sold at market value and the buyer was not getting a subsidy, the developer/builder was getting a small one to offset the risk of investment. He said if Thrive was not helping to de-risk the investment the builders would not be building the homes. Steve Ellis then asked if the builders being assisted were local, and Mr. Keller confirmed the majority of builders were local. There were no further questions. Ryan Keller said he would be back before the Council next quarter.

County Attorney Michael Wright then presented the Council with an Ordinance request from the Treasurer’s Office. **Ordinance 2025-1: Ordinance of the County Council of Vigo County Indiana Authorizing and Approving the Investment of Public Funds by the Vigo County Treasurer.** He explained in 2022 the Vigo County Council adopted an investment policy that would expire at the conclusion of every year. He said this ordinance would give the current treasurer the ability to invest public funds for the calendar year 2025. President David Thompson then opened the floor to questions. There were none.

Mr. Wright then presented the encumbrances from 2024 to 2025 to the council and explained the encumbrances are monies that were committed in 2024 but maybe not payable. He said the departments can go back to their budget from last year to pay the money this year. He briefly explained that there were statutory requirements as to what has to exist for an encumbrance to be approved and the Auditor’s Office verifies those claims. Randy Gentry asked if these were bills that carry over from last year into this year. Mr. Wright confirmed this was correct.

Mr. Wright’s next item was an update on litigation surrounding a mandate that the Vigo County Judges issued in 2024 that relates to court staff classifications and salaries. He said that mediation with judges will be Thursday February 6th at division 3 court on the 3rd floor of the courthouse at 9:30AM. Mr. Wright said he anticipated the mediation taking several hours. Randy Gentry asked which judge would be presiding, but Mr. Wright clarified this litigation was not at that stage. He said this was a mediation and a mediator Stephen David had been appointed and he was a retired Indiana State Supreme Court Justice. Mr. Wright further clarified this was not a hearing where evidence would be presented, this was a mediation where both sides are entering with the hopes to reach a settlement agreement.

David Thompson noted that Vigo County Parks Superintendent Adam Grossman said repairs for a damaged skid steer would cost about \$30,000. Mr. Grossman told David the repairs would be paid for out of the Parks Department budget, but due to this being an unexpected cost, Mr.

Grossman might come before the Council with an Additional Appropriation request later in the year.

Reports from Committees

There were none.

Resolutions and Ordinances other than Appropriations – First Reading

There were none.

Ordinances Related to Appropriations – First Reading

a. Amended Salary Ordinance 2025-01: Council Administrator

David Thompson explained this request was for a position the Council had, but the funding was taken away. The position still exists, but there is no funding. He said the ordinance was to correct the Salary Ordinance made in 2024 for 2025 for the appointment David Thompson made for Devin Gackle to this administrative position. He said she would be at the Baker Tilly pay grade of an 11 with a salary of \$53,172, FICA of \$4,068, PERF of \$7,551, and Single Insurance at \$12,926.

b. Additional Appropriation 2025-01: Council Administrator

David Thompson said this request for an additional appropriation would fund the position outlined above.

c. Additional Appropriation 2025-02: Council Members' Insurance

This request is for group insurance for newly elected Vigo County Council Members. David Thompson explained \$78,914 was the difference between what was budgeted and the amount needed for 2025 due to new members on the Council. He said this request would fund insurance for the new council members.

d. Amended Salary Ordinance 2025-02: Vigo County Assessor (Eliminate a Position)

Vigo County Assessor Kevin Gardner and Harrison Township Assessor Christina Patterson said when Baker Tilly did their study, he had disagreed with the pay grades set during that time for the Assessor's Office. He noted he went before the Council during the 2024 budget cycle to voice his disagreement as well. Mr. Gardner said he has worked with the Harrison Township Assessor's Office to remove one position out of his office. He said this position would have cost the County \$78,880.35. He said by doing this, it allows the grade to be increased by one for everyone in the two offices. Mr. Gardener said this ordinance and the following salary ordinances lay out what those new pay grades would be for everyone in the two offices using the money from the eliminated position. Mr. Gardner said by eliminating the Deputy Assessor/Field Agent position from the Harrison Township Assessor's Office and using the money in this way would save the County \$10,905.99. He said the two offices are working together to complete the duties the position would be normally responsible for. Mr. Gardner said there would be not be a loss in the service tax payers receive and no additional cost to the county. He says their office is one of the only offices in the county where the staff has to be a level 2 certified assessor, and his and Christina Patterson's positions have to be a level 3 certified assessor to their job. He says this needs to be

reflected in the pay grades for the position. Randy Gentry asked if the Vigo County Assessor's Office took on part of the work from Harrison Township. Mr. Gardner said previously Harrison Township Assessors had an employee that did the permits for the entire county. He said the two offices shared an employee. He said now that employee has taken on more duties. Mr. Gentry asked about the position requested to be eliminated. Mr. Gardner said the position was sitting open right now in the Harrison Township Assessor's Office. He explained there has been a difficult time filling the open position due to the Level II Assessor requirement.

e. Amended Salary Ordinance 2025-03: Assessor's Office Pay Increase

This Ordinance outlines the Pay Grade Increase for:

Four Deputy Assessor from Grade 7 (\$22.71/hr) to Grade 8 (\$24.19)

One Chief Deputy position from Grade 12 (\$56,628/yr) to Grade 13 (\$60,309/yr)

County Assessor from \$70,726/yr to \$77,445/yr.

Explained above.

Randy Gentry voiced concern over questioning pay grades established by Baker Tilly after the cost to the county for the study. He said he has concerns over setting a precedent of county government department heads attempting to renegotiate pay grades. Mr. Gardner said this plan would make the offices more efficient with less staff, so there should be some compensation. There was a short discussion. Steve Ellis noted the open position being vacant may be a sign the position isn't being compensated appropriately. Randy Gentry asked how long the position had been sitting open. Mr. Gardner said since December 2024.

f. Amended Salary Ordinance 2025-04: Assessor's Office Pay Increase

This Ordinance outlines the pay grade increase for:

Three Deputy Assessor/Field Agents from Grade 7 (\$22.71/hr) to Grade 8 (\$24.19)

One Chief Deputy from Grade 11 (\$53,172/yr) to Grade 12 (\$56,628/yr)

Harrison County Assessor from \$66,409/yr to \$70,706/yr.

Explained above.

g. Amended Salary Ordinance 2025-05: Assessor's Office Pay Increase

This Ordinance outlines the pay grade increase for:

Two Deputy Assessors from Grade 7 (\$22.71) to Grade 8 (\$24.19)

Three Deputy Assessor/Field Agents from Grade 7 (\$22.71) to Grade 8 (\$24.19)

A Sales Disclosure Deputy from Grade 7 (\$22.71) to Grade 8 (\$24.19)

A Deputy Assessor/County from Grade 7 (\$22.71) to Grade 8 (\$24.19)

Explained above.

h. Resolution of Re-Allocation of Existing Appropriation 2025-01: Assessor's Office Pay Increase

This Re-Allocation would move \$21,146.78 from Salaries, \$1,617.73 from FICA, and \$3,002.84 from PERF, totaling \$25,767.35 from the Harrison Assessor account to Assessor account as part of the plan outlined above.

i. Additional Appropriation 2025-03: Reassessment Fund – Assessor's Office Pay Increase

Kevin Gardner said between the Harrison Township Assessor's office and the Vigo County Assessor's Office, some are paid from the County General Fund, and some are paid from the Reassessment Fund. He said this would be less money coming out of County General, but this has to be offset some by the Reassessment Fund. He said this is why there is an additional appropriation from the Reassessment fund. Mr. Gardner noted that all together this would still save the Vigo County \$10,905.99. David Thompson noted there was a history of the offices working together. Mr. Gardner said anything that goes through the Harrison Township Assessor's Office goes through The Vigo County Assessor's Office. He briefly explained how the offices work together.

j. Additional Appropriation 2025-04: Cameras at Courthouse

Mark Clinkenbeard and Director of Building Security Tom Little approached the podium and explained this additional appropriation request for \$38,151 out of the LIT/Special Purpose Fund was for the installation of security cameras at the Vigo County Courthouse. Mr. Clinkenbeard said the funding would cover seven cameras, the labor and services needed to install the cameras. He noted the installation would require some underground boring. Mr. Clinkenbeard explained there were no cameras outside the courthouse at the time of the meeting. He said request for security footage were frequent due to incidents, and there currently is no way to get footage outside the building. Steve Ellis wanted to make sure any security camera services purchased were technologically sufficient. There was a brief discussion. David Thompson asked if there was a monthly fee attached to the camera purchase. Tom Little said there would not be. There was a brief discussion about quality of the potential new courthouse exterior cameras compared to the interior cameras.

k. Additional Appropriation 2025-05: Health Department – New Equipment: Life Vac Units, IFAK kits, CERT kits.

Health Department Administrator Joni Wise explained when working with the Auditor's Office and a Bookkeeper hired last January, smaller leftover funds from grants were found. Joni said account 1168 "Local Health Maintenance" is what used to be Health First Indiana and that funding source died in July 2023. She says the state would like this money spent down. She says with the accumulation of all these smaller funds, she reached out to the EMA Director to find out how the agency could use these smaller funds. Randy Gentry asked about the smaller funds and using the smaller amounts of money in the accounts. Joni provided another brief explanation. This Additional Appropriation request is for \$3,053.47 from the Health Imm Covid 19/8209 account would go toward purchasing of:

Life Vac units to prevent choking to be placed in all Vigo County Schools and private schools, fire apparatus in city and township fire departments, law enforcement units that respond to calls, churches, all senior living facilities and skilled nursing homes. This purchase would be \$41,601.45. Randy Gentry asked for an explanation of the of the Life Vac units. Joni gave a brief explanation.

Resupplying and replacing IFAK kits for first responders. IFAK (individual first aid kit) is a more specialized basic survival kit. If space and weight or more limiting factors, a first responder would carry something closer to an IFAK. Vigo County EMA would be responsible for kit distribution. This purchase would be \$5,700.

Providing a replacing CERT kits for members of the VC CERT team. CERT kits are specifically designed to supply members of the Vigo County CERT team with their response tasks. This purchase would cost \$12,400.

l. Additional Appropriation 2025-06: Health Department – New Equipment (pt.2)

This Additional Appropriation request is for \$1,468.68 from the 93.268 Health Immunization 2/8119 account and would also go toward the three items outlined above.

m. Additional Appropriation 2025-07: Health Department – New Equipment (pt.3)

This Additional Appropriation request is for \$2,158.55 from the 93.268 Health Immunization 1/8109 account and would also go toward the three items outlined above.

n. Additional Appropriation 2025-08: Health Department – New Equipment (pt.4)

This Additional Appropriation request is for \$2,918.57 from the Health CARES Act CV-2/8911 account and would also go toward the three items outlined above.

o. Additional Appropriation 2025-09: Health Department – New Equipment (pt.5)

This Additional Appropriation request is for \$1000.00 from the 93.354 2021 Annual Survey/8915 account and would also go toward the three items outlined above.

p. Additional Appropriation 2025-10: Health Department – New Equipment (pt.6)

This Additional Appropriation request is for \$36,129.73 from the Health Maintenance/1168 account and would also go toward the three items outlined above.

q. Additional Appropriation 2025-11: Health Department – New Equipment (pt.7)

This Additional Appropriation request is for \$12,972.46 from the Health Donation Fund/4103 account and would also go toward the three items outlined above.

**r. Additional Appropriation 2025-12: Health Department – CPR training
Mannequins, Free CPR Training**

This Additional Appropriation request is for \$1,600 from Health Non-Reverting/4957 and would go toward replacing CPR training mannequins at EMA and free CPR training to small groups.

s. Additional Appropriation 2025-13: Health Department – Intrepid Phoenix Fitness Program and Application, Purdue Extension GrowTH Club, Deming Park Summer Yoga, Fall Prevention Program

Larry Smith from Intrepid Phoenix took the podium and explained non-profit corporation Intrepid Phoenix to the Council and the services they provide. He explained the application to assist those in recovery that could be utilized by judges, law enforcement, and patients. Randy Gentry asked how this application would be used and asked for an example. Mr. Smith said a patient in treatment court could be assigned the recovery planning app by a probation officer. The patient could then register what meetings they are going to and what recovery groups they are a part of and the probation officer can use the app with the patient as a case management tool. Mr. Smith said this gives visibility to how patients are doing in between meetings. Steve Ellis asked about a monthly fee. Larry Smith there would be no costs to the patient or the court budgets, the Health Department would be handling it. Larry said the ask right now would be to pay for the licensing for the application for a year. Steve Ellis asked for clarification on what the appropriation request was for in this moment. Larry said part of this request was to fund the Intrepid Phoenix Fitness Program that they've been doing in Vigo County over the last three years for \$27,060, the second part is to fund the Intrepid Phoenix Application for \$31,045.

Joni Wise said the second ask on this request was for Purdue Extension. Purdue Extension Office Community Wellness Coordinator Chloe Hurst took the podium and explained the proposed GrowTH Club 2025 which would be \$2,960 as part of this request. She then explained the Deming Park Summer Yoga Program which would be \$2,040 of this request. Randy Gentry asked for clarification on the amount of funding needed for this particular program. Joni Wise provided the dollar amounts for each of these programs.

Health and Human Sciences Educator Gail Wright then explained a proposed fall prevention program called Matter of Balance. This part of the request would be \$2,219. Randy Gentry asked for clarification on the dollar amount for this part of the request. Gail then provided it. The total amount for this Additional Appropriation request is \$65,324.00.

Joni Wise noted with Health First Indiana all of the contracted entities have to sign a contract and utilize the funds by the end of the year or they revert back to the Health Department. She said each one of them are asked to track data because the Health Department needs to show the success of their programs or what needs to be done differently. She said the data is used to show the state what works and what does not. Joni said this helps keep organizations accountable with Health Department money.

Public Comment

Chief of Clinical Outreach at the Hamilton Center Emily Owens took the podium and gave a brief review of their 2024 annual report. They have served 4,216 patients in the 2024 State Fiscal Year. She said nearly 3,000 of those patients were adults and over 1,000 of those patients were youth. Most of their services are provided to Medicaid population while also providing to Medicare, private insurance, and self-pay population. She said the Hamilton Center has reestablished a partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation, and reestablished a partnership with Union Hospital to provide peer recovery to assist with transitioning consumers into services. The Center has built a new partnership with Eastside Christian Academy to begin receiving referrals from them for their

students. The Center provided addiction treatment to over 1,600 patients. The most common addiction substances taken by adult patients were stimulants followed by cannabis, and then alcohol. Hamilton Center provided mental health treatment to over 1,700 adults and 1,300 youth. The most common primary mental health diagnoses of adult patients was generalized anxiety disorder, followed by major depressive disorder. Emily noted Hamilton Center employed 361 Vigo County residents and provided over \$2 million in charity care. She then opened the floor to questions.

David Thompson asked how the Hamilton Center board members were appointed. Emily said they take applications from the person themselves if they are interested or others that want to recommend, and then the board members themselves look over that information and approve or do not approve the appointments at board meetings. David then asked if the board members determined the director of the Hamilton Center. Emily said the board members did have oversight over who the president and CEO and asked to clarify if that is what David was asking. David clarified he was talking about Hamilton Center's CEO Melvin Burks. He then asked if Hamilton Center gets a financial contribution from all 11 counties they serve. Emily said they do not. She said they do not receive contribution from Marion, Hendricks, Putnam, or Knox counties. David asked for how much Vigo County contributes. Emily said Vigo County provided a little over \$737,000 according to the last report she had. David said in the 2025 budget Vigo County provides \$760,492. He then asked if Emily knew how much the CEO of Hamilton Center makes. She did not. David said that the Hamilton Center CEO makes over \$905,000 in 2022. David said his initial issue stemmed from the Council appointing a member to the Hamilton Center Board and the appointment needed a resume to be voted on by the board, which in turn decides who the director is. He said he didn't think it made sense for an elected official to be required to have a resume to be on the Hamilton board. David pointed out H.B. 1454 on page 162 says that the counties that Hamilton Center serves, not just Vigo County - but the other counties that have a council as well, are allowed to have an appointment on that board. There was a brief discussion about Hamilton Board appointments. Emily said she would have to get information and return to the Council. David said the contribution from the County to the Hamilton Center increases each year and asked if it was related to population. Emily confirmed the donation was related to population size. David then asked how many people the Hamilton Center turns away each year, and Emily answered the Center does not turn away anyone in need of care. There was a brief discussion about holistic vs. prescription treatment.

Vicki Weger asked how many patients the Hamilton Center can handle in house. Emily said they have 16 beds. There was brief discussion about diverting mental health patients from Emergency Rooms and Jails. Vicki asked if the beds were full most of the time. Emily said that most of the time the Center's beds were full. She explained discharge and care procedures.

Hamilton Services in coordination with the jail were briefly explained.

Adjournment

Randy Gentry made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Steve Ellis seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote of 6-0, the motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 6:42p.m.

MINUTES OF THE VIGO COUNTY COUNCIL SUNSHINE
MEETING
FEBRUARY 4, 2025

Presented to the Vigo County Council, read in full and adopted as written this 11th day of March, 2025.

Aye	☒	Absent	☐	Nancy	<u>Nancy Allsup</u>
Nay	☐	Abstain	☐	Allsup	
Aye	☒	Absent	☐	Vicki	<u>Vicki Weger</u>
Nay	☐	Abstain	☐	Weger	
Aye	☒	Absent	☐	Steve	<u>Steve Ellis</u>
Nay	☐	Abstain	☐	Ellis	
Aye	☒	Absent	☐	Randy	<u>Randy Gentry</u>
Nay	☐	Abstain	☐	Gentry	
Aye	☒	Absent	☐	Brenda	<u>Brenda Wilson</u>
Nay	☐	Abstain	☐	Wilson	
Aye	☐	Absent	☒	Brad	<u>Brad Anderson</u>
Nay	☐	Abstain	☐	Anderson	
Aye	☒	Absent	☐	David	<u>David Thompson</u>
Nay	☐	Abstain	☐	Thompson	

Attest:

Larry T. Hutchings, II
Larry T. Hutchings, II
Auditor