

BARTHOLOMEW COUNTY COUNCIL

August 29, 2022

Budget Hearings – Day 6

Name:	Representing:	Title:	Present:
Matt Miller	At Large	Pro-Tem	Present
Bill Lentz	At Large		Not Present
Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence	At Large		Present
R. Scott Bonnell	District 1		Not Present
Greg Duke	District 2	President	Present
Mark E. Gorbett	District 3		Present
Jorge R. Morales	District 4		Present
Chris Monroe	- -	Attorney	Not - Present
Pia O'Connor	Auditor	Secretary	Present

The Bartholomew County Council met on August 29, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Governmental Office Building, 440 Third Street, Columbus, Indiana.

President Duke called the meeting to order.

1:00 – Deliberations

Picking up where they left off. (Bill Lentz joined the meeting)

- **EOC**
 - Email sent to everyone from Director Noblitt

- ***Soil & Water*** – Heather Shireman was present
 - \$15,000 is for MS4 – firm helping
 - J. Whiteside would be paid \$23,400
 - Total with all combined salary = \$43,000
 - No benefits
 - In office probably 37 hours
- ***EOC*** – Director Todd Noblitt via Zoom
 - Showed 2022 budget
 - New hire starts with \$39,800
 - 5 year employee
 - 2023 – new hire at \$45,000
 - Council proposed \$43,500 with \$1,000 additional each year for 5 years
 - Orange column shows starting at \$43,500 then 3.5% each year for 5 years
 - In that scenario, it decreased the starting proposed salary of \$45,000 and stuck it on the end
 - His concern is the yellow column – have only had 3 dispatchers with +5 years of service leave in since changes in pay structure
 - Still prefers the original request – covers the 3 years where the problem is
 - Johnson County starting will be \$47,000+ in 2023
 - Request pinpoints where the actual issues are
 - Blue & Orange columns are built in matrix

- Orange is at 3.5% at each level
- Had agreed to the 5 year condensing of the 8 year plan
- Had agreed to double the shift differential
- Set starting to \$43,500 – would receive only a 1.4% increase after 5 years
- Would not get the raises above the matrix
- Matrix is typically 20 year scheduled fee with a certain percentage that is added in year after year
- The only one that would receive a 3.5% increase would be the Orange column
- If \$50,000 was new hire salary – would bump up the salary by the raise percentage
- He presented flat fee to get where they need to be
- Presented what would help fix the issue of employees not staying
- 83% left for pay and/or weekday jobs
- The amount requested will not include any additional raises this year
- Provided what the Council had requested
- They would receive raises after this year – salaries would be what were proposed for this year and then %'s going 2024 and on
- Blue column – 12% increase
- Orange column – 7.7% increase
- Paying more to this department than will be paying to other departments

- GD - Starting at \$39,000 now – going to \$43,500
- BL – go with the proposal by MM at \$43,500
- MM – do the \$43,500 plus the way the raise structure – would only be a 1.4% raise at the end of 5 years
- BL – take the 1.4% out and set to 0% then give what other employees
- MM – 1 foot in 1 foot out of a Matrix
- MG – Use the blue column and used the \$43,500, the top end would get 4.4%, would that work
- GD - \$8,000 raise is ridiculous
- MG – City preparing for 6% - law enforcement will be 2% or 3% behind
- GD – council against his vote gave ½ year raises and now want 5% on top of that – told Salary Study was perfect and then found out issues during these hearings
- MG – what is his proposal
- GD – 3.5% increase
- MG – how do you keep employees that receive a 1.4% increase
- JM – not taking into account the overtime we are using to cover open positions – need to look further than the end of their nose
- BL – would it be better to do away with the Matrix and just give the county wide raises

- DN – tried to follow through with what the Council did in establishing the Matrix
- MM – sees what DN is saying – 5 year employee will only get 1.4% raise – Matrix/No Matrix makes it difficult – need to determine yes Matrix and live by it or no Matrix and use the raises as the County goes – do the 3.5% increase for the non-new hires
- DN – 5 year employee current plus 3.5% increase
- MM – yes – moving forward use a Matrix and live by it or don't – run with \$43,500
- DN – starting at \$43,500 and the 5 year employee at 3.5% and then review the amounts in between those amounts
- MM – this partial Matrix will continue to be an issue every year – have a Matrix with built in raises every year
- JM – we have a Matrix based on what it does – need to think ahead of what he is trying to accomplish – how can he compensate new hires – pay on the front end or on the back end – paying a lot of overtime and those people getting quickly burned out in a very stressful job
- GD – all good points that were brought up
- MG – trying to fit all employees into one category
- MM – no one opposes the concept – it is just the number to use

- JM – he reviewed the department and brought what he would think would work
- GD – when that idea doesn't work, where are we
- **EMA**
 - Email from Shannan Cooke
 - JM – confusion in the Salary Study - error that was made
 - GD – read email – adjust EMA salary to same as County Administrator
 - Reached out due to the Commissioners not having requested her increase
 - PO – showed EMA budget with flat 3.5% increase
 - Consensus – 4 no's
- **3.5% raise**
 - MG – City going to 5% or 6% raise, any consideration to increase to help offset inflation for our employees
 - PO – gave out 2 pieces of paper; 1 is synopsis is what has been done currently; 2nd is proposed 2022/2023 increases for Counties & Cities throughout Indiana – was put together by Auditor's Association – will answer questions if there are any
 - JM – in favor of minimum of 5% based on information that the City will be doing 6%, City plan is 6% for civilians and 7.9% for public safety employees, will lose if we don't maintain

- MG – other counties doing 5% - 8% employees – if we can't keep up with the other counties or even the City of Columbus – we are losing people with training that we have spent money on
- BL – probably spent \$1,200,000 with Salary Study
- PO – annualized was \$580,000 and included PERF and other costs
- MG – saving \$2,900,000 and can't give 5%
- MM – not saving as we will have to do the \$1,500,000 for the Court House now or later
- Consensus
 - Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence – 3.5% - people don't want to work; with the benefits we give – should not hire the positions of people that have left – with exception of 911 & the Jail – so that we are not paying benefits - PO – we don't pay benefits for people that are not employed – ESP – didn't hear what the departments have accomplished or plan to accomplish – No 5 year plans presented – plan to improve their office

BREAK

- ESP continued – also we need to pay off the jail bond
- GD – once we get rid of one bond, another will mysteriously appear
- ESP – Commissioners stated no long range for new buildings

• ***EOC***

- DN – starting of \$43,500, then new hire, year 1, year 2, year 3 & year 4, then \$49,915 for 5 year employee using a 3.5% increase up to year 3 – ballpark puts it at about \$1,500 between tiers
- JM – is that doable
- DN – seems fair for Senior Dispatcher – no matter what they move starting salary too, it will be a couple years to see the actual impact – will do everything to make it work
- MG – irrelevant as to the end percentage – it will fit into his plan
- JM – study and exit interviews – will this address some of the issues
- DN – yes, it is not the only thing but the highest consistence they have found – salaries and hours were the main issues and they have to be there – took \$43,500 and then 3.5% for the other years – gets them the same as every other employee – moved plan to a 4 year plan – 3 years and less is where they are losing employees
- JM – would help with issue in addition to doubling the shift differential and moving from 8 year to 4 year plan
- Consensus was in favor for the plan, not the %
- Other unfinished aspects of this budget before adjournment
 - MG – why adjournment we have not voted on the budget
 - BL – Environmental wanted storage space – Commissioners do have space at the YSC facility

- Consensus was 3.5% - 4 in favor of, 2 opposed
- **Recorder Tami Hines** – clarification on offices not providing information about accomplishments and future – only given 15 minutes and fire off questions – express what you want and allow them time to do that – this process was not conducive to do that this year – ESP – did have an office or 2 that gave it to them – before her time – TH – not before her time, communicate with the department heads what they expect – not mind readers
- JM – majority in favor of 3.5% - most ridiculous thing when there is money available, inflation and losing people – will have to revisit this – only looking at the tip of their nose – people call 911, Sheriff or come in to do business at any office
- MM – will answer the phone quicker for 2%
- MG – will keep the person in the position to answer the phone

END OF DELIBERATIONS

- Matt Kelley With Comcast – had information to share with the County Council regarding broadband coverage within Bartholomew County – Bartholomew County is recipient of Next Level Grant Funding – provided a map with amounts for Comcast – expanding in South/Central area – Bethany area – 1,000 or less will still be unserved after their Grant Project – now working with the State on Contracts – they will then have 24 months once the Contracts are signed but have been able to do this in 18 months in most areas – was approved for the Grant, just not received the Contracts at this point – MM – did he meet with Commissioner London, does

it take into account this project? Will it duplicate what he is working on? MK – not certain – were working with them but they decided they would be going with Meridiam – the State will not double fund addresses – other vendors won grants on other addresses within the County – MM – not a lot of communication between the Commissioners, Comcast & Meridiam – need to set up a meeting – JM – understood that Commissioner London had contacted several organizations to expand broadband – no one other than Meridiam were interested – now that the Contract has been awarded to Meridiam the other vendors are now bad mouthing the project and want a piece of the pie – he doesn't understand why all of a sudden this has changed – GD - \$3,580,000 local match by Comcast with the State money – no county money is involved – BL – theoretically serve all residents – GD – show up at the next public meeting with any documentation – not asking for a tax abatement

Matt Miller made a motion to Adjourn the 2023 Budget Hearings. Bill Lentz seconded the motion which passed unanimously.