

**BARTHOLOMEW COUNTY COUNCIL**

**June 13, 2023**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Representing:</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Present:</b>
Matt Miller	At Large		Present
Bill Lentz	At Large		Present
Evelyn Strietelmeier-Pence	At Large		Present
Greg Patterson	District 1		Present
Leah Beyer	District 2		Present
Mark E. Gorbett	District 3	Vice President	Present
Jorge R. Morales	District 4	President	Present
Chris Monroe	- -	Attorney	Present
Pia O'Connor	Auditor	Secretary	Present

The Bartholomew County Council met on Tuesday, June 13, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Governmental Office Building, 440 Third Street, Columbus, Indiana.

President Jorge R Morales called the meeting to order. Pastor Aaron Lentz of Athens Church gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The first item on the agenda was the Approval of the Minutes from the meeting on May 9, 2023. **Mark Gorbett made a motion to Approve the Minutes from May 9, 2023 as presented. Greg Patterson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

The next item was a Request for Additional Appropriation from the County General/Coroner's Office Fund (1000-07) for the Coroner's Office for \$109,953.00 presented by Coroner Clayton Nolting. These funds will be used for the purchase and up-fitting of a Sprinter-style cargo van for use by the Coroner's Office.

*Current vehicle is privately owned by Coroner Nolting, leased to the county for \$5/year with the provision that his insurance gas and a \$5,000 stipend per year. The vehicle he uses is an old Suburban, high miles, having mechanical issues and poor gas*

mileage. The need to replace this by a county-owned vehicle has been discussed for some time.

- *Estimated Price of Replacement Van* \$ 50,000
    - 3 quotes ranged between \$46,000 and \$52,000 in a tri-county area
    - Previously quoted vans sold very quickly
    - Newer vans continue to increase in price
    - Time between initial quote and purchase does not allow for long approval phase
    - Considering Ford, Dodge, or Sprinter Style van
  - *Up-fitting / Customization* \$ 67,269
    - This quote is for the base-model customization
    - Provides a more efficient, organized, rolling crime scene response vehicle for the Coroner's Office
    - Secured, necessary crime scene investigative tools such as respirators, body bags, camera equipment, detox, etc.
    - Most importantly, this would include an automated gurney to lift victim's bodies safely into vehicle for transport
- |  |           |                |
|--|-----------|----------------|
| <i>Previously Advertised total</i>       | \$        | 109,953        |
| <b><i>New Proposed Need in total</i></b> | <b>\$</b> | <b>117,269</b> |

There was some further discussion about the need for a fully equipped transport van vs. a basic van with room for totes and a gurney, previous vehicles have offered. **Leah Beyer made the motion to Approve the purchase of a van, should one become available, since this would fall under the previously awarded appropriation amount (not to exceed \$55,000), leaving further discussion and additional advertising and appropriation to be addressed in July's meeting. Greg Patterson seconded this motion, which passed unanimously.** The updated projected costs will have been advertised and can be successively voted on at that time and perhaps Coroner Nolting can seek some additional bids for alternative customized upfitting solutions.

Reporter Mark Webber asked for clarification about what kind of models of vans are being sought at this time. Coroner Nolting stated that it would be a 2023 new model; among several choices are: a Ford cargo van, Dodge Pro Master and Mercedes-Benz Sprinter being first choice.

The next item was a Request for Additional Appropriation from the County General/Circuit Court Fund (1000-36) in the amount of \$40,000 presented by Tammy Johannesen, Circuit Court Office Manager.

- *These funds are used to pay for Criminal or Juvenile Appeals*
- *The number of appeals has been higher this year than in previous years.*
- *A murder trial requires a special public defender and must be paid from this account*
- *To date, approximately \$21,650 on pauper services and trial expensed, as well as \$7,000 from offenders' fund account*
- *We currently have approximately \$19,000 in outstanding attorney invoices and \$10,000 in transcript invoices, totaling an estimated \$29,000 outstanding invoices*
- *We have only approximately \$2900 in our 390 Fund and \$1100 in supplemental*

**Bill Lentz made a motion to Approve the appropriation for \$40,000 as requested. Mark Gorbett seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

The next item was a Request for Additional Appropriation from the County General/Sheriff Fund (1000-05) in the amount of \$5,156.50 presented by Sheriff Chris Lane.

- *The Sheriff's pay is based on the Prosecutor's pay. It was raised by the State effective July 1, 2023. This allocation is necessary to raise Sheriff's pay to the established statute in place.*

**Mark Gorbett made a motion to Approve the appropriation for \$5,156.50 as requested. Matt Miller seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Under miscellaneous business, President Morales confirmed that Phyllis Apple has resigned from the Alcohol and Beverage Commission. Mark Gorbett made a motion to appoint candidate David Welmer to this vacancy on the Alcohol and Beverage Commission. Matt Miller seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

President Morales mentioned he had recently received some information regarding a resolution for Project 46. Since the information had only come in today, **Mark Gorbett motioned to table it until the next meeting so they had some time to look it over. Matt Miller seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.** President Morales asked the Auditor's office to be sure this issue would be included in next month's agenda.

The next item was a discussion regarding Courthouse security concerns. President Morales began by thanking the Judges who were present for attending the meeting in person. Citing previous discussions, Mark Gorbett reaffirmed the position that in order to be able to hire and retain high quality Corrections Officers we needed to increase base salaries. This could greatly assist the cause of filling vacant positions. He further stated that he asked Sheriff Chris Lane and the Auditor's office to prepare specific numbers to see what is available within the current budget as well as what it may take, additionally, to raise the entry-level, base pay to \$50,000 for a full staff of Corrections Officers at the Jail as well as the Courthouse.

At this time, Sheriff Chris Lane stepped in to present the proposed staffing and salary changes. He addressed potential changes for the Jail Staff first, as follows:

- *Approximate increase would be \$138,969.20 if beginning on July 1, 2023*
- *This includes FICA, PERF and insurance for jail staff*
- *Due to ongoing vacant positions, there should be sufficient funds in the budget to cover an initial increase to raise the base salary for Corrections Officers to \$50,000, beginning July 1, 2023*
- *Old Section of Jail closed to help condense population and eliminate overtime of staff*

Concerning the new Courthouse Security Division changes, there will be six (6) total people will assigned to this including three established positions, three new positions including one supervisor (probably a Lieutenant). These officers will be assigned to the Courthouse through Jail with oversight by the Courthouse.

Addressing the Courthouse Security Division staffing and salary changes, Sheriff Lane, presented the details as follows:

- *Approximate increase would be \$177,691.67 if beginning on July 1, 2023*
- *Full year would be \$355,383.34*
- *\$96,500 salary matrix for July 1, 2023 does not include FICA, PERF, ins.*
- *This is not in the jail budget*
- *Coverage for sick days and vacations will be determined by supervisors as fully as possible*

President Morales asked that the three present judges are in agreement with the details of this proposal as currently presented. They all nodded in agreement and then verbally affirmed their consent to agreement, as well.

Acknowledging that there is more work to do and discussion to cover in the July meeting, Mark Gorbett asked to poll council members to see if they are in favor of raising the entry-level positions to \$50,000 and can give direction to prepare for the July meeting. President Morales then called for a poll with the following result:

- *Greg Patterson - yes*
- *Matt Miller - yes*
- *Jorge Morales - yes*
- *Leah Beyer - yes*
- *Mark Gorbett - yes*

- *Bill Lentz - yes*
- *Evelyn Strietelmeier-Pence - yes*

Evelyn Strietelmeier-Pence asked Sheriff Lane if they had seen any benefit to closing the old section of the jail. He said it was too early to see any benefit at this time.

President Morales asked to change next month's council meeting from Tuesday, July 11 to Monday July 10. There was no objection from the council members.

Greg Patterson shared that he had attended Parks and Rec Board Meeting and had several significant points of interest to share:

- A large BMX race is coming to town; they project it will bring \$1.5M spending to the area.
- Dunn stadium is getting new lighting.
- They want to focus on making playgrounds safer and ADA compatible. They will begin in Petersville because it is one of the most used playgrounds and a lower income area.

Leah Beyer shared that Nurses are finally fully staffed! Also, the Bartholomew County Redevelopment Commission met. A Resolution is in the Council packet, as well as info regarding the TIFF for your review.

President Morales shared a letter from Bartholomew Health Department in packet to read.

Mark Gorbett shared he had spoken to Sherry Jewett regarding funding from the State for the Dove House. Matching funds, 5-year commitment, 125k less because of grant money they received. Dana Bolt is doing Six Sigma re: ambulance service for 2025 to assure it will be functioning correctly in the county.

Bill Lentz had nothing to share.

Evelyn Strietelmeier-Pence suggested we send office holders guidelines for 5-year plans, as this helps to see who has what in mind.

Dalene reminded Matt, Jorge, and Evelyn that they are on the Job Classification Review Committee and have a meeting on June 22, 2023 at 1:00. There are three or four presentations. Matt Miller said he will be unable to attend.

There will be no work session in July.

President Morales noted that even with everything, the Council could be approving; we are still well within good financial standing.

The next County Council meeting will be held on Monday, July 10, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the Council, **Greg Patterson made a motion to adjourn. Leah Beyer seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

**BARTHOLOMEW COUNTY COUNCIL**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jorge R. Morales, President

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mark E. Gorbett, Pro-Tem

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Matt Miller, Member

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Evelyn Strietelmeier Pence, Member

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Leah Beyer, Member

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Bill Lentz, Member

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Greg Patterson, Member

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Pia O'Connor, Auditor  
Bartholomew County