

ALLEN COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
January 19, 2023
8:30 AM

The Allen County Council met on Thursday, January 19, 2023, at 8:30 am in the Chambers in Citizens Square. The purpose of the meeting was for additional appropriations, transfer of funds in excess of the current budget, grants, and any other business to come before Council.

Attending: Robert A. Armstrong, Tom A. Harris, Josh L. Hale, Paul W. Lagemann, Ken Fries, and Don A. Wyss. Absent: Kyle A. Kerley

Also Attending: Council Attorney Harper, Nick Jordan, Auditor and Jackie Scheuman, Finance and Budget Director.

Councilman Harris: Good morning. Happy New Year to everyone. Welcome to the Allen County Council meeting of Thursday, January 19th, 2023. As we start this morning, we'll start with the Pledge of Allegiance also followed by a moment of prayer. Before we do that, I ask that you keep Kyle Kerley in your prayers. He will not be here this morning with some family elderly issues going on in his family, and so if you can keep him in your prayers, it would be greatly appreciated. With that.

All: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with Liberty and justice for all.

[pause 00:01:11]

Councilman Harris: Amen. Again, happy New Year, council. Welcome to our two newest members this morning, Josh Hale, from the first district, and Don Wyss from the fourth. Great to have you here. Welcome and we look forward to working with you this year. With that, one of the first things we do is to look at the approval of the minutes. Council, have you had a moment to review minutes? If so, I'll take a motion for that.

Councilman Armstrong: Motion approved.

Councilman Harris: And second.

Councilman Armstrong: Second.

Councilman Harris: All right. We've had a motion and a second. All in favor of the minutes for December 15th and January 5th say aye.

All: Aye. Aye.

Councilman Harris: All opposed, and passes, 6-0-1(Kerley). Next up is our auditor with the financial report.

Nick Jordan: Good morning, council.

Councilman Harris: Good morning.

Nick: Put some information up on the screens today just to start the New Year.

Councilman Harris: We like that WiFi connection, Nick. That's good. [laughs]

Nick: I'll take a few more minutes than normal if you oblige. What I do want to talk through, I sent you these graphs, if they do come up.

[pause 00:02:32]

Nick: Hopefully.

[pause 00:02:51]

Nick: Not pulling it up.

Councilman Harris: This is usually when we have background music.

Nick: [laughs] I know.

Councilman Harris: We could sing Happy Birthday to Don Wyss. [unintelligible 00:03:16]. [laughs] Celebrating his birthday a few days ago, I think.

Don: Yes.

Nick: Well, not going to put it up there, I guess, but I did send them to you in advance. In the council notebook, you will see the beginning of the year financials. Not much to see there. On the left-hand side, you'll have our estimate column. That's what we estimate for the year. On the right-hand side, you'll have our actual. You'll have nothing because it's as of 1/1. The other information I sent to you prior was our year-end, 12/31/2022, for our major fund financials. Those that are included in the budget order and those that are supported by income tax. That's what I wanted to touch on today as you'll see as you look through those.

To start with the general fund, our main operating fund, our fund balance increased to \$57 million and it was \$55 million at 12/31/21. We went up close to 4%. If you look at the graph, you can see that's trended upwards since 2013 when we were coming out of the recession because county government lags in our revenues. Then you can look through those other fund financials. It's not a surprise of how they appear with rare exception. Many of them, the fund balance continues to go up. Self-health insurance, our [unintelligible 00:04:28] those were some of the ones that did go down.

The other item that I sent was the breakdown of that beginning fund balance of \$57 million. I highlighted what that's comprised of. The biggest piece of it is the amount that was unappropriated at 12/31/21. Those were dollars sitting and available for council to appropriate was approximately \$44 million. Miscellaneous revenue exceeded estimates by a shy of 10%, around 8% rollover. I thought I was going to be around \$4 million. Was closer to \$5 million. It shows \$7 million, but as we talked about before, we spent approximately \$2 million for the inflationary bonus.

How we handled that, that is why it reduces rollover because we left the coliseum appropriation in there. Then there's the remaining piece of POs or purchase orders that were carried over, approximately \$2.2 million. That's what makes up the \$57 million that's sitting available to appropriate for the beginning of 2023 in the general fund. Again, the general fund does not include the rainy day fund. The rainy day fund is a separate fund with another

almost \$16 million sitting in it. I can take any questions that you have. I apologize that the screens didn't work.

Councilman Harris: Nick, just one question. Miscellaneous revenue is not here because--

Nick: Today?

Councilman Harris: Yes.

Nick: Because the financials are as of the beginning of the year. We usually do the miscellaneous revenue as of the prior end month. In February, you'll see the beginning of the year, miscellaneous revenue for 1/31/23.

Councilman Harris: I always try to look at that and based on balances and such, our interest income is going to be a number that we can keep an eye on as well, correct?

Nick: Without a doubt, I mean it'll exceed expectations because, again, we don't know how long we're going to sit on \$57 million, so we take a conservative estimate. We don't know if the feds going to increase by a quarter or a half a percent and how many times they're going to do that, but I would say as of today, knowing that I haven't heard any massive expenditures coming, yes, interest revenue will exceed what we've estimated for 2023.

Councilman Harris: Do you recall what approximately that number was?

Nick: I believe it was \$2 million. Let me check here.

Councilman Harris: That becomes pretty significant just even in years past when we've had no interest income. All of a sudden now we're getting that interest coming back to us. At \$2 million, that's real money, so obviously, it's--

Nick: Oh, yes. It goes back almost a decade and you think as rates have dropped and now they're going back up. Thankfully, we haven't had to borrow so we didn't receive the interest revenue, but we didn't incur the debt. Had we had, we would have been able to take advantage of lower rates, but the county didn't have to at the time.

Councilman Harris: Is it fair to say that the \$57 million cash balance at the beginning of this year, maybe the highest ever?

Nick: Oh, yes. That's whether you like pictures or not, but if you look at the graph for sure, at least dating back to 2009, yes, it's the highest. You'll see 2021 and 2022, I'll float around that \$56 million, \$57 million. \$58 million if you factor in the local income tax public safety fund.

Councilman Harris: Council, more questions? Questions, comments, anything?

Councilman Fries: Motion to approve?

Speaker 5: Second.

Councilman Harris: A motion and a second. All in favor of the auditor's report, financial report, say aye.

All: Aye.

Councilman Harris: All opposed. Passes, 6-0-1(Kerley).

Nick: Thank you.

Councilman Harris: Thank you very much, Nick. Total appropriations requested in the general fund is \$43,920. Council, the request from the commissioners has been to withdraw from today's agenda. The request of the \$63 million to be used in ARPA funds as we received notice yesterday that there's additional meetings coming up with the commissioners. It's going to allow further information for council to consider in the coming months. At this point, that will be pulled from today's agenda. At this point, we'll move to public comment. Come forward if you'd like to speak publicly. Introduce yourself. We are limiting comments to about two minutes this morning.

Sean Collentine: Good morning gentlemen of County Council. My name is Sean Collentine at 46807. I'm in the city. First of all, I'd like to welcome our two new members, Mr. Hale and Mr. Wyss, a nice addition. Mr. Wyss, I would like to quote you and some of the information that you've had in your campaign. This is why I feel great about your addition. When I asked about the jail, you said whether the project should be a full construction or significant renovation, it's still going to cost a lot of money.

We need to look at those factors and how we arrive at that decision, and not only arrive at that decision, but how are we going to pay for it. Budgeting and making every dollar count and investing wisely has been a long-time responsibility of mine and my family. I am seriously encouraged. Now, the jail issue. I would caution all of you that the information you are receiving generally about the jail comes mostly from those who seek to build a new jail and the commissioners. There's been little or no public discussion of other alternatives to solving the jail overcrowding issue. That's the problem.

The federal Judge Leichty has ordered a solution to the problem of overcrowding. He asks for answers to how the overcrowding would be addressed in the short, the midterm, and the long range. The commissioner's answer was build a new jail at whatever cost, and that's our solution. They didn't cover short term. The jail's going to take at least three or four years to build. What are we going to do in the meantime, the sheriff is still forced to deal with his overcrowding issue, and the commissioners have offered no solution to that problem, so who does that fall on then? County Council needs to be the one that's pushing the area and pushing the issue to the front.

Let's try this. Set a budget cap on the jail expenditure by county council. If they come in over budget, you can hold them to it. If they come to the budget, that's what you've asked for. You've asked, and you demanded that they do that. How much are we as a community willing to spend on a jail if we as a community are willing to spend \$25 million per year and that's what we're talking about with the \$300 million, \$350 million that we've heard. That works out to about \$25 million a year.

Councilman Harris: About 30 seconds in, Sean. About 30 seconds to go.

Sean: I'm sorry?

Councilman Harris: About 30 seconds to wrap up.

Sean: I'm sorry. My hearing--

Councilman Harris: 30 seconds about your time's almost up.

Sean: 30 seconds?

Councilman Harris: Yes. Keep going. [chuckles]

Sean: All right. The Alternative to Incarceration work group proposes a public hearing in front of this council on how to best meet the judge's orders. We have seen the commissioner's proposal on its \$300 million cost. Why not permit a full public presentation of other ways to meet the goal within a set budget? How can you, in good conscience, not allow the alternative views to be heard?

You must demand through a council resolution that there be an open presentation on the matter before you, the Allen County Council approves any further expenditures on this proposed new jail. That is your job as our financial public watchdog. Do your job.

Councilman Harris: Thank you.

Sean: Thank you.

Councilman Harris: Other public comment?

Dr. Earl Brolin: Can I speak now?

Councilman Harris: Yes.

Dr. Brolin: I'm Earl Brolin, Dr. Brolin. I'm not a person involved with the present directly, but I noticed an article that was in the paper on December 4th written by Timothy Murphy, pastor at Plymouth Congregational Church, and I thought it was an excellent article and he explains that there is no requirement to build a new jail. That the business about saying that they build a new jail is simply not true.

It says the Allen County Board of Commissioners has insisted the judge is requiring the county to build a new jail, and they have overcrowding and understaffing and so on, but the jail should be near the county courthouse where the processes take place. It shouldn't be out in the periphery, but the whole thing is ridiculous to me,

Councilman Harris: Sir, you might pull that microphone just a little bit closer. We're being told that--

Dr. Brolin: I'm a little hard in hearing.

Councilman Harris: That's okay. There you go. Thank you very much.

Dr. Brolin: The jail has a flood of problems, but those are inherent in the jail. No way. It's run. There's no reason that a bigger jail would be anything other than bigger problems. The study that was done was built by a company that builds jails and there are multiple companies that provide guidance, of which I've talked to a couple, and apparently no one from here has ever seek or tried to get outside opinions from people who manage jails.

No one talks about the difficulty of bringing people from a long distance. It was only last year in the paper there was a lady in the southeast part of town who apparently they wanted to

develop that area, and she wanted to have a real estate office, and they gave her several acres of ground and I don't know if that is still available, but there's plenty of places to build it closer to town.

There's a much better solution. That's for sure. One method I mentioned when I had an article in the paper is that they have, like when Martha Stewart was sentenced, I think six months, they went, sent her to a prison camp mainly for nonviolent people, but there's no reason here that you have to have one jail. It could be two jails. Banks have multiple branches, fire stations have multiple branches. Why do you have to have a single jail? No one has answered that from your group as far as I know or the jail.

Councilman Harris: You have about 30 seconds left.

Brolin: Okay. Well, I hope my time is worth something.

Councilman Harris: Yes.

Dr. Brolin: I think that the appropriation for this is out of order and I think you should talk to people like Timothy Murphy, even though I've not met him personally. I did talk to him on the phone, and he wrote here, as I just mentioned, that it's not true that you have to build a new jail. No one has proven that you have to build one. If you want a bigger jail, you can have a second jail and that if they would get people in and out, they wouldn't need one anyway, so all you're doing is creating a bigger jail with bigger problems.

Councilman Harris: Thank you very much.

Dr. Brolin: I'd be glad to present more information when you have time. I'm available seven days a week, and I'd be glad to talk to any of you privately, if you like or anybody else. I do not understand why this has gone on this long, frankly.

Councilman Harris: Thank you very much.

Dr. Brolin: Or continues to go on.

Councilman Harris: Thank you.

Dr. Brolin: Thank you.

Councilman Harris: Thanks. Any other public comment this morning?

Dr. Brolin: I have a whole bunch of information on it here if you're interested.

Councilman Harris: Okay. All right. Thank you. Thanks.

Eddie Raval: Good morning, Eddie Raval. I'm sorry, Tom.

Councilman Harris: Good morning.

Eddie: Yes, good morning. Happy New Year, Tom. Congratulations. Hopefully, lead the county council as president. This is my first time back of the New Year. Just wanted try to piggyback what some of the two people were saying this morning. We have a debacle here, this jail is a big problem. See, Ken Fries, council, would appreciate this point where maybe

we can expand on this jail and build up onto the top, that's what I've heard what we potentially could do.

A short-term, you're going to build this jail, like he said, it's going to take two, three years. What is your short-term fix on this, and the solution in some of this that we need to stop taking in prisoners from these other counties, Wells County, Bluffton, Steuben, some of these counties we're bringing in their prisoners, and that's why we got overstaffing problem with that.

Maybe we can eliminate that and somebody can eliminate their phone call. I'd appreciate it. Thank you. Not only that, we have a couple agendas. I know last time we spoke in back in December, I believe, it was about the Three Rivers Open Air Music Festival. You guys said, "This is not your question to ask about the TinCaps Stadium," where I think the peoples paid for that by taxes. I think it's the People Stadium. Let's try to put maybe a referendum, maybe this Three Rivers Open Air Music Festival, it's going to be good for Fort Wayne.

We're talking \$10, \$20, \$30 million generated for the city, which we really need. That's huge. Hotels, restaurants, you name it, will be sold out for the whole week. I've been working on that, so we're not going away. I heard there's going to be a job opening up on the fourth floor, so hopefully we get enough votes, maybe I'll be able to get that job potentially, so thank you. I'm working hard on that. A lot of sleepless nights, A lot of stressful. Hopefully, I'll see Council Ken Fries tonight over at Northwest Neighborhood Association.

Councilman Harris: Time to wrap up, [crosstalk] 30 seconds.

Eddie: One last thing. We need to have maybe an ordinance exceeds overseas the city council, the city ordinance about pop-up vendors.

Councilman Harris: Eddie, that might be something for the city council [crosstalk].

Eddie: I know, but it's a county issue as well. We could have popup markets on the street corners, but it's not really legal, so it's-

Councilman Harris: Thank you.

Eddie: -not for about the food trucks. It's about the people. You're creating jobs. You're going to create more business for the small business owner.

Councilman Harris: All right. Very good. Thank you very much.

Eddie: All right. Well, I'll see you next month, you guys only get to meet once a month, man, so we change the [crosstalk],

Councilman Harris: Feel free to reach out to the council members anytime during the month, but thank you for being here. Thank you.

Eddie: Hey, I'll see you at the Y, man. I'll just reach out to you over at the Y, man. Come on now.

Councilman Harris: All right. Any other public comment? Hearing none. We'll move on with the agenda this morning and first up is our department of -- or the surveyor's department, surveyor's office I should say, and if you'd like to introduce yourself and your title, please.

Mike Fruchey: Sure. Morning Council, Mike Fruchey, Allen County Surveyor. I have a few things on the agenda today, but first of all, I'd like it if you'll be gracious enough to give a moment to remember one of our employees that died last night.

Councilman Harris: Oh my.

Mike: We had our project manager, Dan Smith, and had a long fight with cancer and lost that last night. If we could just take a moment to remember him and his family today, I'd appreciate that.

Councilman Harris: So sorry. Yes, I'm good. Thank you.

Mike: All right. What I have for you today is the appropriation for replacing a vehicle. As you may recall, and I apologize to Josh and Don our newest members, I had sent this email out to council in October, I think October 21st. I'd had some discussions with council members about replacing a very old vehicle in our fleet that had almost 200,000 miles that was deemed unsafe and we had a garage recommendation on that. I came to council at the time. We worked on trying to get a light vehicle and we're able to secure that.

Then I'm coming to you now for the appropriation for replacing a 2009 field inspection truck for us. I'm hoping, I know that the returning councilman certainly got that information in October. I asked for comments back. I didn't get any comments back from the councilman, so I'm hoping, and I think I also talked at a, maybe a November, December council meeting about this, about needing to replace this vehicle so we had another functional vehicle.

I think I attached the garage score on this one, which was quite high and above. I think the score was 37 and a half, and anything over 25 is Category 4, needs immediate replacement. That's what I'm asking. Today, that price includes the bed cover to keep our instruments and tools in good working order. That cost was \$43,920 for that vehicle. That's what I'm asking for today in my first item.

Councilman Harris: Councilman Fries.

Councilman Fries: Mr. Fruchey, could you reference the vehicle replacements score sheet? Could you go over that for our new council members and also the public so they understand, the public understands as well that why we have to buy these new vehicles?

Mike: Yes. We work with the garage people with the county and they have a scoring sheet where they rate vehicles excellent, good, qualifies for replacement or needs immediate replacement. They score based on the year of the vehicle. In this case, the vehicle was 13 years-old. The mileage, this vehicle had a high score of 19 and a half at almost 200,000 miles. General overall condition at three points and it's got some rusting. Again, we've had some maintenance issues. Maintenance is the fourth category.

It's really graded on the year of the vehicle. The mileage, the general overall condition and the maintenance cost. Those scores add up to that 37 and a half. Then based on that, you fall into either excellent, good, qualifies for replacement or needs immediate replacement. We wouldn't just come to replace vehicles. Our perspective would be it would be unsafe for our workers to use. Then we would get the garage to confirm that through their independent scoring of that.

Councilman Fries: Their scoring, the garage's scoring, says anything over 25 points needs immediate replacement, and yours is 37 and a half points.

Mike: Yes. It had been on the CIP to replace for the last three years. The previous surveyor had never come and done that again and had that follow through. I guess that I'm trying to fix things and make things the way they should be. This is one of those things that fell through the cracks and never-- and then our staff didn't use the vehicle because they didn't feel safe using it. It's time.

Councilman Harris: Councilman Lagemann?

Councilman Lagemann: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mike, I know that that you have-- in taking over this office, there are a number of items that were probably not addressed in a timely manner or in a manner that they should have been. My sense is this is the first in a few. We look forward to your regular visits as we deal with some of these issues. Thanks for stepping up, taking care of this. You've spoke with me last year about this vehicle, and I know this is something that has been a concern for the office and for the department. Then let me also say my deepest condolences to your office and to the family. Thanks.

Councilman Harris: Other questions, comments, anything? Council?

Councilman Armstrong: I'll make a motion to approve the appropriation from the general fund for one new vehicle for \$43,920.

Councilman Hale: Second.

Councilman Harris: I had a motion and a second. Any further discussion? Hearing none. All in favor, say aye.

All: Aye.

Councilman Harris: All oppose. That passes, 6-0-1(Kerley).

Mike: All right. Thank you, council.

Councilman Harris: A couple of other items.

Mike: I do. As I've gotten into our surveyor funds and worked with the auditor staff, which has been great to look at how we could reduce the number of funds, consolidate them in a wise way. We had funds sitting out there with no particular intent that hadn't been touched in 10, 20 years or more. There was no rhyme or reason, again, things that were neglected, and so I've tried to get that corralled.

Two of the things that needed to come in front of you, these were separate funds, both items two and three that were established that really didn't need to be separate funds. This first one, the Stormwater Watershed Study Fund, we are consolidating that with some other extraneous funds to have a study fund in under drain, under the drain maintenance umbrella.

Councilman Harris: Without going too deep into the trenches or water or whatever at that point, hope the public understand a little bit about what that fund's for.

Mike: Really to do flood studies to allow us the resources if we feel it appropriate. Sometimes we had to do flood studies on Copper Creek, then that area, because we were really concerned about the impact and the flood protection grades. As I've relayed before, I feel like our most important mission is our development project review for flood control, right? To make sure people don't flood in all the new subdivisions that are being built. Again, lower and lower ground is being developed. We have to, as engineers, be more and more creative on trying to protect with the appropriate flood protection grades and appropriate storm water management systems, getting that water away to keep people and their property safe.

Councilman Harris: These funds provide the study of what's appropriate [crosstalk].

Mike: Yes. If in our opinion, we need a consultant to do a professional flood study, which is very intensive, we would have the resources to do that. In addition, I'd like to bring up something, I brought something with me that many of you may not know about. This is a document, it's called The Red Book. When I say that sometimes, people have no idea what I'm talking about. This is the master plan for stormwater drainage for Allen County.

It was published in 1972. It was done by Fort Wayne, New Haven, and Allen County. It's still used today. It correctly delineates all the watersheds in the county and flow rates and many different useful pieces of information are in here. We use it. I know City Utility still uses it. This projected development our county through 2020. It's been a 50-year document and it was very, very well done by the people who did it at the time. Now obviously in 50 years, engineering practices have changed.

Modern hydraulic engineering is different. We do detention now. We designed for a 10-year storm now. We control release rates now. There's so many other nuances that are different than how engineers thought 50 years ago. Okay. My hope as one of my side projects is to have a new study done that will take our community for the next 40 or 50 years and have a stormwater master plan that when land develops, we utilize, so that we do our due diligence and our best job in protecting our citizenry from the hazards of flooding.

That is a great document that is still used today and I'd love for an updated version of that to deal with watershed specific release rates in one instance. That's just an example-

Councilman Harris: Good. Thank you.

Mike: -Councilman Harris. We allow a blanket release rate for the whole county, 0.18 CFS per acre releasing out of detention basins. Not every stream can take that. Some streams can take more, some streams can take less, but you need to do the study to know how to regulate that in each watershed so it gets very specific, but allows us to do a much better job in review.

Councilman Harris: Councilman Armstrong.

Councilman Armstrong: In that study with the county New Haven and City Utilities, are they on board? Have you talked to them about updating that book?

Mike: Yes, I would say approximately four months ago not too long after I swore in as surveyor, City Utilities, we have regular meetings with them. Okay. Again, we're all working for the citizens of the county and so we want to work together. One of the things that they

brought up is that they use this document currently and they brought up about if we would have an interest in partnering to do a new document, and so I know that we've had a couple discussions with City Utilities about doing that, so I certainly think that there's an opportunity there. I hope we keep this ball moving and it's not just an opportunity we talk about, but that we follow through. That it'll live long after all of us are here, in our positions, but it'll be a great thing.

Councilman Harris: Councilman Lagemann.

Councilman Armstrong: Thanks.

Councilman Lagemann: To follow up on Councilman Armstrong's question, we certainly have an issue in Sunnymede, in Councilman Hill's neck of the Woods, making sure that we don't have more Sunnymedes in the future, and making sure that we properly addressed those issues in the past that weren't proper, that weren't addressed in the best possible way. I really applaud you for moving this direction and making sure that we're on the front end of this, not on the back end of fixing flooding in people's backyards, which is the worst.

Real quick question though. I know that we have really two issues that we're dealing with from a state regulatory standpoint. Sorry about that. Number one, we have the baffle layer through DNR. That may come into question in this legislative session, but we still have to deal with it in the short term, and then we certainly have the requirements from the Army Corps of Engineers. How do the state and federal requirements and regulations play in with what it is you're working toward?

Mike: Well, that's a good question. The baffle layer that, for those that don't know, that's the best available flood layer, and that's published by the DNR. That became Indiana in the DNR legislation that passed effective July 1, it mandated that flood administrators, and every county has flood administrator, in our county it's been or so the DPS executive director shall use the baffle layer in all permitting for floodplain permitting.

They didn't give any flexibility. That's the DNR'S perspective. They have their studies that they like. We have always gone by the FEMA FIS study or Flood Insurance Rate Study. That's always been our gold standard. I'm hoping that this will get resolved with the DNR and if they believe that FIS study is incorrect, that they will do the process of a letter of map amendment or revision to FEMA.

FEMA will always be our gold standard for floodplain mapping. I'm not necessarily sure how the baffle thing will eventually play out in this document. Now, I did attend a talk not too long ago by the Indiana State Floodplain Administrators where senior hydrologists from the Army Corps talked about PAS, Planning Assistance Studies, that the Army Corps would do this type of study for us. It would be a 50-50 cost split.

It's whether we want to go that direction, and I oppose that, Bob, to city utilities. Do we want to do that? Do we want to have an outside consultant? Let's figure out what we want to do and keep this going down the road, because I think it'll be a great thing for our community, but we'd certainly be thinking about those other regulatory institutions and how that would impact what we're trying to get accomplished.

Councilman Lagemann: You might consider that a leading question in that I know that we are in a difficult situation with the Army Corps, particularly with Junk Ditch and some other

areas where we've had flood trouble, and because variances were given over the years which the Army Corps didn't approve and didn't want us to give, we have a moratorium on a lot of new building along some of these waterways which could be very damaging from an economic development standpoint long-term. The opportunity to work with the Army Corps, and in fact, the opportunity to get the Army Corps to pay for part of this, both I think are positive directions if you can go that way.

Councilman Harris: Paul, thank you. I've also had meetings with the mayor of Woodburn on some of those issues, and we've spoken about that. The second item that you have listed as well, do you want to touch base and then we've got another question or comments?

Councilman Armstrong: We have a question.

Councilman Harris: Josh. Oh, go ahead. Yes, Josh.

Councilman Hale: Quick. I just want to echo those comments. I also want to thank you. I know you were there when there was the public open house and how a potential development by the commissioners, how that could affect the Sunnymede community. Thank you for being there. I do want to echo those comments because that is a very much of a big thing for the District 1 area, and I too have had some conversations with the mayor of Woodburn based on a flood issue that happened out there. I know you've been well involved in both of those, so thank you for that.

Mike: Yes. You're welcome. Okay. Councilman Harris, you'd ask about the next appropriation. I don't know if you want to do these together.

Councilman Harris: Go ahead and just talk through the second one as well.

Mike: Okay. It's actually the Mossman drain. There's an m missing there, but we actually have a drain maintenance account for the Mossman drain. For some reason that I do not know, a separate fund was created for the Mossman. We are simply closing down that separate fund and transferring its money to the Mossman drain fund. It's simply consolidating that. I'm not sure why a separate fund was ever created, but again, it helps the auditor having less funds. It makes sense to me. I'm a logical guy. I'm just trying to clean up as much as I see it. I try to clean it up. Again, that's just almost a cleanup item.

I will say there were a number on that second appropriation for the watershed study fund. By the time I went around and found a number of these funds and consolidated them, that Stormwater Study Fund got to be about close to \$150,000 in that fund from various funds that really didn't have a purpose. Actually, when the Stormwater Study Fund was created, I looked at the creation documents in maybe 2000. It was given seed money, and then it was to be get drainage board fees to continue money coming into that. Not \$1 drainage board fees ever went into it. As it was passed, it was never executed that way. Again, I'm just trying to clean up these things.

Councilman Harris: We appreciate the information and education in that field. That's probably the most I've heard from the surveyor's office sometimes. Thank you very much for that. We can take these individually, council, any other questions? Hearing none, or--

Councilman Lagemann: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make a motion for the appropriation within Stormwater Study Fund of \$67,688.

Councilman Hale: Second.

Councilman Harris: A motion and second. Any other discussion? Hearing none. All in favor, say aye.

All: Aye.

Councilman Harris: All oppose. That passes, 6-0-1(Kerley).

Councilman Lagemann: Mr. Chairman, I would also like to make a motion for the appropriation within the Mossman Drain Fund of \$20,984.

Councilman Hale: Second.

Councilman Harris: And a second. Any other discussion? Hearing none. All in favor, say aye.

All: Aye.

Councilman Harris: All opposed? That also passes 6-0-1(Kerley). Mike, thank you very much. Thank you.

Mike: Thank you, sir.

Councilman Harris: Keep up the good work and we'll continue, and help us understand moving forward if there's updates or anything for us. We greatly appreciate that.

Mike: Yes. We're getting going on the section corner program. We initiate six contracts in December. In the six townships, we started in Cedar Creek, Eel River, Perry, Jefferson, Boy Lake, surveying firms will be searching for those storm corners. You should see some work on--

Councilman Harris: We reckon.

Councilman Lagemann: Mike, what's the state requirement for how many of those corners need to be surveyed per year?

Mike: 5% a year. Given our theoretical number that we have in the county of 2,400, we should do 120 a year. My goal with having six firms work on it is that we would double that this year. My goal--

Councilman Lagemann: How far behind are we on this?

Mike: We have not met our 5% in 20 years. Some years we've done close to zero.

Councilman Lagemann: Thank you.

Mike: We have to catch up. I foresee this as eventually an internal process, like say Hamilton County does with an internal staff of three people just doing your 120 a year, but we are so far behind, we don't have that luxury.

Councilman Harris: We recognize that it's a marathon and not a sprint. We wish you well in that regard. Thank you very much. Thank you.

Mike: Thank you.

Councilman Harris: All right. Council, next on the agenda is the prosecutor's office. Speaking on behalf of the prosecutor is our auditor.

Auditor: Yes, I told the prosecutor's office that I would take this form. It's just a transfer. You'll see from their 300 series contractual to 400 series in the High Tech Crime Unit Fund. They need to purchase some licensing for software. It's being split with the city. This will allow them to have enough in the 400 series to purchase the software.

Councilman Lagemann: Just for the record, Mr. Chairman. The prosecutor's office did reach out to me as a liaison and had a conversation. This is pretty simple and should be perfunctory, but it's very needed as well.

Councilman Harris: With that

Councilman Lagemann: I'd like to make a motion for the transfer from within the High Tech Crime Unit fund of 25,000 from contractual to office, computer and equipment.

Councilman Hale: Second.

Councilman Harris: A motion and second. Any other discussion? Hearing none. When that, all in favor, say aye.

All: Aye.

Councilman Harris: All opposed? That also passes, 6-0-1(Kerley). Thank you. All right, council, next up is-- let's see our discussion items. I think human resources is here today to talk to us a little bit about the comp study. If you'd like to introduce yourself and your titles, please.

Nancy Steigmeyer: Good morning, Nancy Steigmeyer, Human Resource Director. Nick's putting up a little PowerPoint for us. As you will recall, for those of you that were on council in 2022, we had-- our consultants were here in November providing an update where we're at with the study. We are closing in on the first phase of our study. I wanted to give some updates today, and we'll be bringing to council next month a proposal that has been identified by our consulting company. This is just to reiterate what they provided in November. We looked at market data, specific jobs throughout the state of Indiana, and many other states in counties that were similar in size to us. This is what we have found.

Councilman Lagemann: Could you explain that real quick, Nancy?

Nancy: Yes. This brings up our job classifications. We have office, professional and trade, POLE, which is our law enforcement, and labor and trade. You can see here where the min and the max, where we are at in relation to public identities. For example with the office support our minimum we're at about a 95%, and then our maximum is at 82%-

Councilman Harris: What's the min and max, maybe?

Nancy: This is based on 2022 salary data and how we measure up to other public entities like us in the market.

Councilman Lagemann: We're low, at least in OSS for sure.

Nancy: Yes, You can see in the labor and trade, we're at over 100% on that compared to 2022 data, and our law enforcement in police areas.

Councilman Lagemann: Thank you.

Nancy: Market study recap. We have three phases of the study. Phase one is the approval of reclassification of Allen County positions as proposed by Clemans Nelson, and then an amendment to the salary ordinance for 2023. Phase two is the implementation of Allen County Pay philosophies, and I'll explain that a little bit more in detail here. Phase three is analysis of special occupations in elected officials which would be for the 2024 budget season.

Phase one recommendations. We have revised our current scoring system to change and update the Oliver scoring, which is a rubric that we use for compensation data. That provides a look at the job descriptions, and how those measure up on a point value system in those classifications. Clemans Nelson is also reclassifying all full-time positions throughout Allen County. This is a major reclass for our entire organization. They are addressing any wage disparities, any challenges across departments to make sure they all measure up with like jobs.

We will be taking a vote and adoption of a 2023 amended salary ordinance in February which will be brought forward to you. The revised progression of steps, this will help us to be more competitive in the market for attraction in hiring new talent. Our current steps you'll see there, steps one through five or seven across the board. The proposed is to bring people on and elevate them quicker with salary increases in the steps system. Any questions about that slide? This is phase one.

Councilman Harris: Paul, and Kyle, and I, serve on this subcommittee that's been going on for a little while. One of the challenges that we've heard from department heads and elected officials is we need to get competitive particularly on recruitment of new people coming to the county. This proposed that bottom graph there chart basically suggest the ability to increase the speed of which someone can move through those steps.

Meaning that they can get a increase faster which when we looked at turnover that turnover rate was happening in the earlier part of someone's tenure within the first few years. This speeds up the process of getting an increase. That remains and allows the county to become more competitive, and to be able to retain those people as they come to the county at that point. Is that fair?

Nancy: Absolutely, absolutely. It gives us a competitive edge when we're looking at bringing people on that might have some skills or experience levels that we are interested in retaining.

Councilman Harris: Very good.

Nancy: Phase two. Yes, go ahead.

Don: Nancy, thanks for your presentation this morning. My question focuses on the wage disparity across the departments. Has that shed any light on any disparities? Some of my initial conversations with other folks in the county highlight maybe some disparity there. I

just wondered if any have been found yet and just curious as to how that will be addressed and presented in the future during this process.

Nancy: That has been a comprehensive review across the board and the need for changing the scoring system. Our system that we had was antiquated. We needed to update it to match current skillsets, what we're looking for to bring to our county as well as language that fits within that. The review and reclassification of all jobs looked across the board, so jobs making sure that if they were in different departments and doing similar work that that was evaluated appropriately based on education, experience, and skillsets are required for that job. We feel strongly that utilizing all of those resources in addition to the market data has helped us to review all of those and eliminate some of that.

Councilman Harris: Paul.

Councilman Lagemann: To Tom's point and also answer Don's question. This was a key component of why we did the study in the first place. When we appropriated the funds to do this there was a concern with folks in different departments who do the same job being paid differently. One of the really excellent outcomes as we've seen the progress on this study has been to eliminate those disparities. That's a key point and I think the major improvement that we'll see with the proposal we'll see next month.

Nancy: Absolutely. Great question. Phase two will be the next phase, which will be identifying and developing our pay philosophies as a county. What that means is how we look at our pay. Alignment with hiring practices, attracting and hiring skilled employees, accelerating the steps to elevate based on experience levels. We are looking at how we go back to that step progression. How we equate years of experience that somebody may come in and bring with them, and how we can accelerate them through the step process. We're still finalizing those details.

How we retain our internal talent as well. Reward and developing those people. We want to make sure that we are making pay changes that are fiscally responsible. We want to maintain fair and equitable employment practices within the county in the marketplace just to make sure that we are competitive. That will be updating our scoring and our rubric-updated language within all of our current job descriptions to align with the rubric appropriately.

Phase three, we'll be working with Clemans Nelson on this. Updating finalized full-time job descriptions, reviewing and scoring of all elected officials for 2024 compensation recommendations to the salary ordinance, and analysis of the recommendation of remaining special occupation's roles. Throughout this study, I think we had like 70 of special occupations that were in our compensation structure. Now we have about eight really positions that are remaining in the special occupations level besides chief deputies. That's encouraging. That means we're moving people into the classification. We're classifying people appropriately, and aligning those jobs appropriately.

Councilman Harris: I was just going to mention for the new council members. One of the challenges that we've had in the past is a critique that too many people were outside of the grid process and actually were classified as a special occupation. Meaning they didn't fit on the path structure and the systematic approach for job evaluation. Part of this study has allowed those special occupations to move now onto a grid, into a structured system. Which gives the chance both to be competitive and making sure that those jobs are paid appropriately in comparison to other jobs in the county.

Nancy: Which makes the phase two so critical to the process developing those pay philosophies so that we don't go back to developing a lot of special occupations that we can elevate somebody through the progression of steps if we need to attract and retain top talent.

Councilman Harris: Paul is your turn.

Councilman Lagemann: Two things. In the December meeting, we talked a little bit about one in particular reclassification. I want to say that I spoke with both the recorder and the previous recorder regarding that. I am confident and feel completely comfortable that we will address their concerns in the upcoming proposal that will come to us next month. I'm not going to propose that reclass. In fact, we really have placed ourselves in a moratorium for the next six months on reclassifications after the December meeting which I think is appropriate, particularly as we go through this transition.

I wanted to get that out there. Also just to bring to everyone's attention that we cannot alter the wage rate of an elected official and have that happen within the same year by state statute. That's why they hold off on the elected, and with many of those elected, the pay rate associated with their chief deputy is tied to the pay rate of the elected official. Also to the certifications that both of them may or may not be required to have at the state by state statute.

Councilman Harris: That's part of this next analysis or next step phase that's happening.

Nancy: Yes. For phase one, we are looking at February 16th for the proposed dollar figure that will be amending the salary ordinance with council. Phase two will begin immediately. Following phase three would be for the 2024 budget season, is what we're looking at. Things will be moving progressively as we move on.

Councilman Lagemann: Mr. Chairman.

Councilman Harris: Go on.

Councilman Lagemann: Just one point that I'd like to bring up. Nancy, this is your first year as our-- how long have you been in the job?

Nancy: Nine months.

Councilman Lagemann: Nine months. The first year and you've done an excellent job of communicating with council, first of all. Second of all, I want to also applaud Erica and her work. She's been great to work with in this process, and great to work with on the wage study. You guys have really done a yeoman's job on making sure that we cover all our bases and have competitive wages and equal pay for equal work across the board in the county. Well done and thank you.

Nancy: Thank you.

Councilman Harris: Thank you. Any other comments at this time? Otherwise-- oh, I'm sorry.

Ken: Mr. President, I've got one. Timeline, I guess you say phase two is going to be after phase one, but what are we still looking at as far as months? Are we looking March, April for implementation?

Nancy: Phase one, once the amended salary ordinance would be approved, it's my understanding from the auditor's office that we can make that happen in the next payroll cycle. It can happen pretty immediately. Phase two we're continuing to work on that, so it's just rolling out the next phase of that. We're looking at February 16th-- Nick. The next payroll would be-- it's up to the council to determine when that adoption goes into place.

Councilman Harris: To answer that question on phase two, the intent would be to have something prepared so it can be discussed during the budget season in order to make sure that we're aligned with the budget adoption for 24 at that point.

Ken: If we vote on this February 16th, phase one, that's going to be considered the implementation date.

Councilman Harris: In that first phase, yes.

Ken: We have set it out six months after that before there can be any hearings for reassessment for different jobs.

Councilman Harris: Reclassification for the positions that are in this study. There will still be that need for jobs to come. There'll be few but those exceptions could happen during a six-month period.

Nancy: For new positions primarily.

Ken: Otherwise we're looking at August or so before that kicks in.

Nancy: Yes.

Councilman Harris: Wait, for which. Phase one, if we would adopt that in February, that could be as early as March, or even sooner the phase two, we'd have to have that-- oh, I see What you're saying.

Ken: It's around six months.

Councilman Harris: Oh, I see. The reclassification. The intent will be further work that will provide us information during the budget season for those elected officials to consider.

Ken: For the department heads they need to know that if we consider February 16th the date of implementation, then reclassification stuff they could start looking at that back in August coming from the personnel committee.

Nancy: Yes.

Councilman Harris: That's fair.

Ken: Good.

Councilman Harris: Paul.

Councilman Lagemann: Councilman Fries to your point, the important part of this process too is that number one we gave it 5.5, which is exactly what we should have done. Number two, as we implement this we're probably going to see other additional wage increases in the

short term. As the reclassification occurs if somebody's redlined meaning that until they catch up they can't get wage increases over and above what they've already received, with the exception of the annual COLA increase. I guess where I'm going is there's definitely going to be a lot of increases across the board. Maybe held at their current rate-- oh, I'm sorry, at the current rate with 5.5, but that is the worst-case scenario. Based on what we've seen that's not very many people.

Councilman Harris: That'll be something that we'll understand in the February meeting a little bit further from that point, but Nancy, thank you very much.

Nancy: Thank you.

Councilman Harris: Thanks for your update and we look forward to seeing you next month then.

Nancy: All right.

Councilman Harris: Thank you.

Nancy: Thank you for your time.

Councilman Harris: Council, also before us is the council board appointments. We had two that we want to look at today and one's for the PTABOA board. I hear any nominations for that position to fill that Position.

Ken: I would like to nominate Michael Clough, who's a Level II Certified Assessor, served on that board since 2014 and has sent a letter saying he'd like to serve again.

Councilman Harris: We've had a nomination for Michael Clough. Is there a second?

Councilman Armstrong: Second.

Councilman Harris: Any discussion?

Councilman Lagemann: We do have another nomination. In Councilman Kyle's absence, I would like to make. Is it appropriate to do it at this time?

Councilman Harris: You are nominating Kyle?

Councilman Lagemann: No, that Kyle has asked me to make it. It's Adam Neumeyer.

Councilman Harris: I see. Adam Neumeyer.

Councilman Lagemann: I believe that Councilman Kyle shared his resume and qualifications.

Councilman Harris: I see. At this point-- is there a second for Adam Neumeyer? Hearing none. We have one nomination at this point, and so that is Michael Clough. All in favor of Michael Clough, say aye.

Council: Aye.

Councilman Harris: All opposed?

Councilman Lagemann: Aye.

Councilman Harris: That passes 5-1(Lagemann)-1(Kerley). Second, up for the council board appointments this morning is redevelopment. Do we have a nomination for the redevelopment?

Councilman Lagemann: Mr. Chairman, I would like to nominate Andrew DeGood for the position of redevelopment. Andrew's joined us in the audience as well.

Councilman Harris: Okay, thank you. Is there a second?

Ken: I'll second.

Councilman Harris: Is there any other nominations? Oh, I'm sorry.

Ken: I'll second it.

Councilman Harris: We do have a motion and a second. Any other nominations at this time?

Councilman Armstrong: I'd like to nominate Darren Vogt.

Councilman Harris: Is there a second for Darren Vogt?

Don: I'd Second Darren.

Councilman Harris: Second. Okay. With that, let's take a vote of those two. All in favor of Andrew DeGood say, aye.

Council: Aye.

Councilman Harris: I count two at that point, 2(Paul, Ken)-4(Don, Bob, Josh, Tom)-1(Kyle). All in favor of Darren Vogt say, aye.

Council: Aye.

Councilman Harris: Josh, how did you vote?

Josh: Darren, aye.

Councilman Harris: That's one, two, three, four. That's four in favor of Darren Vogt, 4(Tom, Bob, Don, Josh)-2(Ken, Paul)-1(Kyle). Two in favor of Andrew DeGood. Andrew, we want to say thank you for your interest and there may be other opportunities to provide service to the county. There always is, so thank you for your interest. At this point, Darren Vogt was selected for that position. Council, next up we have the-- let's see board of zoning appeals. I have not received anything at this time.

Councilman Lagemann: In fact, I shared this with council last year. We held off on it because the existing member of the board of zoning appeals had not submitted his resignation, but had not attended meetings for quite some time because of illness actually. We did have the-- here I'm trying to pull it up.

Councilman Harris: What I'd like to do, Paul, is I'd like to--

Councilman Lagemann: I pull this one off.

Councilman Harris: Yes. Let's make sure we get that out to the new members and let's find out if there is anybody else, but that way it won't plan to address that in the February meeting at this point. Thank you and we'll look forward to that name and information. Council, any-- let's see. This is an opportunity for discussion of any other topics as well as a liaison. I'm pleased that a number of departments and elected officials have reached out and we encourage them to continue to do that. To reach out to their liaison assigned council people and council members. Are there any updates from liaison assignments at this time, council?

Ken: Mr. President it's not so much about that as it is. There's a meeting at the coliseum on the 26th of this month at 4:00 PM in the Red Room. It's their annual meeting of trustees. I'm not going to be able to be there. I'll be out of town, so I just want to make sure the rest of the council members knew that it was going to be the 26th of January, four o'clock in the red room at the coliseum.

Councilman Harris: Great. Thank you. Other liaison assignments? Anything else? Hearing none-

Josh: Hearings if I could.

Councilman Harris: Please.

Josh: I'd just like to express my-- as I did at our last meeting and I know there's some commissioners that are in. With the development of the fire districts that happened in Allen County I just want to strongly stress that that I think that should be in a liaison appointment as well and something that should be strongly considered.

Councilman Lagemann: I would agree with that.

Josh: That's going to have an impact for next year voting for-

Councilman Harris: Budgets and such?

Josh: Yes.

Councilman Harris: Possibly financial.

Councilman Lagemann: In fact, since we did appropriate the-- almost \$5 million was it for the communications systems that were completely broken down because of whatever reason. The commissioner sat on that for seven months. We should have someone to make absolutely sure that those appropriations are adequately and quickly dealt with when we make them-- when it comes to public safety in particular.

Councilman Harris: We will have that discussion to see what we can do for that February meeting for consideration event. Thank you very much. All right. Council, any other comments? If not, Paul, would you like to make a motion?

Councilman Lagemann: Yes. I would like to make a motion for the approval to waive the second reading on any matter approved today for which it may be deemed necessary for the county council meeting of January 19th, 2023.

Councilman Harris: He had a motion. Is there a second?

Don: Second.

Councilman Harris: Yes, a second. All in favor say, aye.

Council: Aye.

Councilman Harris: All right. Very good. That does pass. The next county council regular meeting will be held on 8:30, Thursday, February 16th, 2023 in the chamber room of the Citizens Square. Is there a motion for adjournment?

Councilman Armstrong: I'll make a motion we adjourn.

Councilman Harris: A second?

Don: Second.

Councilman Harris: All in favor say, aye.

Council: Aye.

Councilman Harris: We are adjourned. Thank you very much.