

ALLEN COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

May 18, 2023

8:30 AM

The Allen County Council met on Thursday, May 18, 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: Tom A. Harris, Josh L. Hale, Kyle A. Kerley, Paul W. Lagemann, Ken Fries, and Don A. Wyss. Absent: Robert A. Armstrong

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

Tom Harris: Welcome to the Allen County council meeting for May 18th, 2023. As we generally do, we start with a Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of prayer if you'd like to join us.

Everybody: 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.

Tom: Thank you. As we start the meeting this morning, we generally looked to the approval of our minutes for April 20th, 2023, and May 9th, 2023, the executive session. Council, have you had a chance to review those minutes?

Paul: Motion to approve.

Don: Second.

Tom: Second. All in favor say aye.

Everyone: Aye.

Tom: Just passed 6-0-1(Armstrong). Next up is our financial report with Nick Jordan, our auditor. Nick, good morning.

Nick Jordan: Good morning, council. In your notebook, you see the financials for the first third of the year. I can take any questions you have. One thing I did want to point out, not that we're immune from Fed policy decisions. When you look at our driver of property tax being real estate, and you know the Fed has increased rates year to date through the first third of the year. This is dollars, not necessarily quantity, but building permits are down approximately 11%, surveyor revenue down 33%, auditor revenue, we charge a conveyance fee for each document that comes across the counter, down 16%, and then recording of documents down 33%.

The one shining positive is DPS is up 5%. If they're on the front end, that's the Department of Planning Services, you can anticipate that, hey, maybe the other ones will go back up. Keep in mind, these are down from '22, which we know are record year, so it was not realistic to think we always break record over record, but it is just to show that the raising of interest rates has obviously trickled down to our own activity.

Tom: Very good. I sent a note to you on the Rainy Day Fund. I don't know if you saw that. On the Rainy Day Fund, the highway loan repayment for \$340,000, we're at \$396,000. I just wanted to understand that number at 116%.

Nick: The \$340,000 is just our estimate. Depending on what the actual loan amount was divided by, I think it's a five-year repayment. It's probably actually a \$396,000.

Tom: Okay. Very good. I was wondering why we are paying more.

Nick: If not, the mayor paid something in advance, but that's all I can look and see. I feel like the \$340,000 was just our estimate on the initial request, and then when they actually spent the dollars for the trucks, that was for highway trucks. Then the buckets are the
[unintelligible 00:03:27]

Tom: It's nice that they paid us more than they needed to, just keep them coming.

Nick: Yes, it is. They're very good about repaying their loan.

Tom: [laughs] All right. Council, other questions on the financial report?

Paul: Nick, with regard to the permits and the changes that we see there, if you look back over the last couple of years, does that reflect the cyclical nature of the building cycle during the year?

Nick: It definitely can, and then you know weather plays a part in it, but you could say we've had a very, very good spring that wasn't harsh as far as weather goes, but timing, yes. Timing, the cyclical nature of it that can definitely play it. Don't take it away as, "Hey, we're going downhill." It's just the fact that year to date even though we may have more permits pulled or bigger projects pulled, it's just the revenue coming through is potentially down year to date. Then we can see how it trends for the rest of the year.

I am not worried a dime about it just because you're talking record years for '21, '22, '20, we broke year over year at some point. It's got to level of or slow down. The cyclical and the timing aspect could definitely play into it.

Tom: Council, other questions? Hearing none.

Ken Fries: Motion to approve the treasurer's report.

Paul: Second.

Tom: Second. All in favor, say aye.

Everyone: Aye. 6-0-1(Armstrong)

Tom: Thank you. All right. Next up is the total appropriations requested in the general fund minus \$35,070. Total appropriations requested in other funds is \$60,963. At this time, I'll open it up for public comment this morning. Anyone here for public comment? Hearing none, we'll move on. First up this morning is economic development. Rachel, good morning. You'd like to introduce yourself and your titles, please. That'd be great.

Rachel Black: Good morning. Rachel Black, Allen County Economic Development. Also with me today, I have Elissa McGauley, Director of Redevelopment, and Scott Harrold, Senior of Economic Development Specialist.

For council's consideration this morning, you have before you a resolution approving a statement of benefits for General Motors, LLC, located at 12200 Lafayette Center Road. Before we get into today's request, I wanted to go over just a little bit of history just because we have some newer people on the council.

This will be the 12th time that General Motors has requested property tax abatement. The first request came in 1984 for the establishment of their company in Allen County. The most recent approval took place in 2014. The remaining years of abatement for that 2014 approval are two, three, and four years on real property, and two, three, four, and five years on personal property.

The company is requesting a 10-year, 100% abatement on their new personal property investment as they have received this approval via maximum amount allowed by state law since 1984. Overall, general Motors has invested over \$1.8 billion in personal property and over \$525 million in real property. Since 2010, they have paid over \$48 million in taxes.

The request before you today, the company plans to invest \$468 million in new manufacturing equipment. According to the statement of benefits that you have in your packet today, the investment will begin in July of 2025 through February of 2029. GM plans to retain 3,300 jobs as a result of this new investment with salaries over \$209 million.

Last month, the commissioners approved a consent resolution that is required under Indiana Code as the truck plant is located within the General Motors allocation area or also TIF district that was established in 1996. There are no outstanding financial commitments for the General Motors allocation area. Today, we have Troy Kennedy, who is the Senior Tax Manager, as well as John Blanchard. He is the director of local government relations, to answer any questions. I did want to hand over to John for just a moment as he had a few comments that he would like to start with.

Tom: Good. Welcome.

John Blanchard: Good morning, President Harris, council. My name is John Blanchard, Director of Local Government Relations for General Motors. Rachel must have read my whole notes. She did such a great job reviewing that. With me today is Troy Kennedy from our tax staff and also Marvin Najor who's part of our tax staff as well. We just wanted to start off by just thanking you for the opportunity to present this and hear this very important tax abatement benefit for the company.

Just as background, it's hard to believe it was back 2014 or '15 when we announced \$1.2 billion of expansion and investment in our Fort Wayne assembly plant. At the time, we were talking about that, that may have been the largest single investment that we had made in a manufacturing facility. It just showed the importance of that product, the full-size pickup trucks. Now, today, we're in front of you. \$468 million is the equipment machinery, but the total investment is about \$622 million. Another significant commitment to this facility.

If we proceed with the project, the process would be, this is very important to factor this into our business case. The overall study that we do is one of many, but it's an important step in

the process once we make the decision to make an investment. If we do it here, probably start in 2025, is what we're looking, and completion in 2027. We really just want to thank you and we've enjoyed a great relationship with Allen County, with Fort Wayne, with the whole region. That's an important plant in our portfolio. We just appreciate you considering this investment tax abatement.

Tom: Thank you. We will open it up for questions. One of the questions that has come up and just looking at the form that you filled out, it does show a reduction of jobs. John, can you speak to that?

John: Sure. I think today, we have about 3,900 jobs. I think for the form, we've committed 3,300, very similar to what we did back in 2014, '15. We have no intention, no plan to reduce headcount, that's not part of the program. That's just a threshold that we like to give a little cushion there. We've been well beyond that 3,300, which is in the current agreement for the length of the abatement process.

I just want to emphasize, there's no plans to reduce that. That's just give us a little cushion in case the market demands or whatever else happens, so that we don't go below that 3,300 level.

Tom: The timeline on this is '25. You need to make the business case, if anything changes in this process, does this come back before us? Meaning that they've agreed to certain kinds of things on here if in a two-year period, if that should change based on that, do they come back before us or does that change the outcome of this document?

Rachel: I would only think there would be an amendment if it would be a decrease in investment. If it would be an increase in investment, then no.

Tom: I see. Okay. All right, council, open it up for questions. Paul.

Paul Lagemann: Yes. Can you speak to the nature of the expansion? I understand this is combustion, and maybe talk through the future of combustion as GM moves forward with the pickup truck brand.

John: Yes. That's a great question. Over the past two years, we've made major investments, as you've probably seen, in going all-electric, an EV future. We have three significant new battery plants, battery cell assembly plants that we've announced. That one is actually open up over at Lordstown, Ohio, one down in Spring Hill, Tennessee, under construction, and one up in Lansing, Michigan, under construction. We've also had three significant investments in manufacturing facilities.

The stated goal has been all-electric future. Realistically, these products are important. This would continue to be the next generation of the full-size pickup trucks, the ICE, internal combustion engines. These are going to be important and critical to the entire portfolio of the company. We still sell a lot of pickup trucks, a lot of full-size SUVs. While the goal is to get all-electric and we have a stated timeframe for that, the market's going to control that. There has to be a market demand for the electric vehicles, for electric vehicles in total, and plus electric pickup trucks.

Then candidly, there needs to be the infrastructure in place. We're spending a lot of time with the locals, the state federal government to try to make sure that you have infrastructure in

place to be able to charge electric. This is a big step for us to really show the commitment to ICE engine, ICE vehicles that we're even considering a \$622 million investment here in this plant.

Tom: Thank you. Just with that, I recognize that you may not be able to tell us the details, but the \$622, what will that be doing inside the plant in terms of investments?

John: Most of that is equipment. It's materials, equipment, it's fully renovating, there's some minor facility renovation, but most of it is to bring the equipment necessary to build the next generation truck. Most of this is within the four walls. Troy, is there--?

Troy: Rearrangement as well, all those types of things that will be required to modify the process for the new product.

Tom: Okay. Council.

Ken: John, I appreciate you being here. My big sticking point with this is Southwest Fire District and the funding that they have gotten cut over the years because of these tax abatements. I have said from the beginning, I wanted GM to come in front of us today and hopefully tell us, this is our plan, we have to help Southwest Fire District. Only to find out that it's been at the last minute that you guys have made contact with Southwest Fire District to help them make sure they can stay continuing function as a fire department.

We heard through the Great Vine that GM had made donations to Roanoke Fire Department, but I've found that that's not true. In fact, Roanoke came to GM 15 years ago and asked for help getting a grass reg, and GM told them no.

That's the problem I have with it. I'm sure GM does a lot of good in the community. I can tell you the UAW workers do a lot of good in the community. They help a lot of nonprofits, and I appreciate that immensely. I'm having a hard time saying I would approve this today because of the lack of, it would appear concern for Southwest Fire District.

The one program that I would like to see GM try to work on, and I don't know, I'm sure legal's going to say they can't do it, is you guys have hundreds of pickup trucks that are parked in lots that are going to be smashed and dismantled, I guess, because of the wiring problems in them. I would like to be able to see GM do something with local government where they could donate these to local government, sign paper, have them sign waivers saying that they don't want any warranties on, they don't hold GM accountable, if they ever get rid of the truck, it goes back to GM.

You could save small municipalities hundreds of thousands of dollars by doing that and cost GM nothing, but it doesn't look like that's been worked on. Where are we with the Southwest Fire District?

John: Great question. I can tell you I was naive of the relationship there. I have responsibilities for local government relations around the country, so I go to all our different locations. I deal with mayors, city councils, county councils, and so on. This was new to me, and so I spent a lot of time, my first call was to the plant executive director over there at Fort Wayne. Found out he's retiring, so he's retiring.

I talked to the assistant plant director, Jerry Wheel, and she as an individual, she's got a great partnership with her UAW counterpart, and he takes the lead in dealing with the Southwest

Fire Department, but she's spent an awful lot of time. We are trying to make sure that we not just maintain that relationship. There's some indication that there is still a lot of work going on between the plant and the fire department through the district.

We're looking to put in a new access gate that's been in process to provide direct access there. One thing they did agree to commit to is strengthening that relationship. I thought it was going to establish a relationship, but it seems like there is one. The connection point has been UAW lead and the fire department, the fire chief, and so we're going to get the plant folks involved.

Troy and I, we're both a part of a call with the assistant plant director, as well as the new comptroller over at the facility. She did talk to the chief yesterday at about a 45-minute conversation. They have actually a meeting on this on the calendar for next week to go through how they can strengthen that relationship, which I'm encouraged by that. I think that plan is important to the community and the fire district.

Fire support is important to the plant, so they need to establish that working relationship. We used to do tabletop exercises, pre-COVID, before Covid changed everything where we'd have folks out at the plant or they'd do it offsite. We need to get back into that routine. I'm encouraged that they're looking to strengthen that relationship. It's going to be the plant assistant director, her security force lead who's new to the job there at the plant last year and a half, along with the chief and then some of his leaders to meet and continue to grow that relationship.

Ken: You're encouraged by it, and I'm discouraged by it because this has been a conversation with the council for over a year. Now all of a sudden, the day before the council meeting where you guys come for tax abatement, somebody calls the fire chief. That's discouraging. It would appear to me as though GM didn't really care, but now all of a sudden, it's like, "Oh, we better care."

John: Well, I think there has been a relationship. Whether it could be better or not, it seemed like there just from an outsider looking in, it probably could have been better. They believe that, at least at the plant level, they believe they have a relationship with the fire department that they do a lot of things. They're working with them. I've encouraged them to increase that.

As far as the timing related to this process, I just became aware of that, and I was able to get the assistant plant director, the new comptroller involved and set up a meeting for next week. I think we should hold them accountable and we should make sure that that continues to grow. I'm sure the chief will report out to this body. I think now having the new folks on board from General Motors, they're aware that there's an appearance that the relationship is not strong, so they need to do something about that.

Kyle Kerley: I'm glad that you brought up, hold them accountable. Little history lesson, Southwest Fire District actually exists because of General Motors. When you guys announced the plant in 1984, huge plant at the time, out in the middle of nowhere, still out in the middle of nowhere based on where the population core is, but that plant needed fire protection, so in 1986, the commissioners created Southwest Fire District.

A main purpose of that was fire protection for the General Motors plant and the future surrounding growth. There's been a symbiotic relationship between Southwest Fire District

and GM since day one. If there's not a fire district out there, the plant doesn't have coverage. If there's not a plant, there's probably not a Southwest Fire District until much later in history.

I'm encouraged that you said hold them accountable because what we hear from the Fire side is the relationship is strained. When they came before us over a year ago, we encouraged them to reach out to General Motors, and they did at the time. Basically, what we heard from them is all their attempts to reach out to General Motors went through the plant. The plant sent them up to corporate. Corporate, said, "Sorry, there's nothing we can do."

Obviously, I understand GM's a huge corporation. There's multi-channels of way things flow, so maybe it just didn't get on the right desk. That's concerning to me because when the Fire District's not able to provide services, it's not just the houses and other things that surround the General Motors plant, it's actually your employees that could be at risk because the Fire District doesn't have the funding and the supplies that it needs to respond to calls, to report.

We have a partnership in Allen County where you're covered by Southwest Fire District TRAA, which is the countywide EMS provider. Over the last year, Southwest Fire District has responded 172 times to the plant. TRAA, which primarily covers the city of Fort Wayne but has ALS coverage over the entire county, responded an additional 60-plus times. That's 230 calls to the plant. That shows that the Southwest Fire District is already stretched then that they're having to get help from an outside agency. That's concerning to me.

When you say hold them accountable, me personally, I don't want to vote against 4,000 jobs. I also don't want to vote against public safety. I would like to see the results of what comes from that meeting in seven days, but I don't know what that does to General Motors' timeframe to where can we come back in 14 days and reconsider this after we hear of the results from the meeting, or does that put undue stress on GM's plans?

Ken: It'd actually be 30 days.

Robert A. Armstrong: We can call a special meeting.

John: A couple of comments. One, the relationship needs to be at the local level. I'm not aware of phone calls that went to the local folks and then got bumped up to corporate. Corporate really wouldn't have any say in-- This is a local fire district that supports the plant in a plant. They need to work together. Corporate's not going to come in and do anything about that.

If the ask is for dollars, this meeting that they're going to have last week is to develop and establish operating procedures and how they can maybe streamline- I just jotted down these numbers, 172 and 60-plus. -how they could streamline those where it makes sense. The protection of the individuals, the employees, the facilities-- Facilities is secondary. The employees are number one. They need to make sure that they have that in place.

There's no additional funding source in place that's going to come out of this meeting next week other than the taxes that we pay, the \$48 million that we've paid in taxes. They need to look through that. As far as timing, this timing is critical for us to have a decision today one way or the other because we're looking to make decisions on where we're going to invest in the next-generation trucks.

Again, me, I'm encouraged that there's a meeting next week. It seems like we have the right folks at the local level that are going to be part of that. The accountability needs to be with the local people. The new comptroller who's on board, he's a local guy. He lives in the area. The plant assistant manager, she lives in the area and has lived in the area. She was born and raised. She told me she went to school here in the area. There needs to be responsibility at the local level with the plant leadership.

We've conveyed that. We'll continue to convey that as a takeaway from this meeting that they need to make sure that they're working hand in hand with the Fire and EMS and police on top of that. Police, Fire, all of our first responders, they need to make sure that it doesn't get to this point where we're waiting this long, and then now it becomes a crisis. This should be front and center for them locally. Absolutely.

Tom: You had a chance to speak to the chief, I think, yesterday. Any thoughts on how that conversation went with the chief and such?

Don Wyss: Sure. Good morning. Welcome to being here. I appreciate you being here this morning. I live out close to the GM facility and represent that area. I wanted to know firsthand the chief's reaction to the conversations here in the last couple of days. He has been positive. It's been a positive response.

His concern is just-- Along the lines of Kyle, and he spoke on public safety, his concern, and this is what makes him a firefighter and this is why he's chief, is that he is looking at his equipment aging and being concerned if a big event-- corporation or the corporate office is not involved, but in a major event, they would be, and we would want to have a fast and quick and successful reaction to an event. That concerns the chief today. He's looking at aging equipment.

Also, this meeting that's happening next week, it does help from the standpoint that he's excited about looking at operating procedures. He brought up an example. He said, "We got a call. We didn't know what building. Two firefighters showed up--" Councilman Hale was there with me when we were having that conversation. He was saying, "It's pretty intimidating for two firefighters to pull into that facility and say, 'Where do we need to go help?' Because they're there to help, but we need to know where to go. That communication, like you say, at the local level, very important.

There was progress made. He does still have some concerns in regards to funding because he continues to see the aging fleet and being able to respond the way a firefighter would want to respond, is really where his mind goes in regards to big picture, long term, but overall positive.

Paul: The way this is dealt with generally, and I'm sure you're familiar with this across the country, there are a few different options. PILT, a Payment in Lieu of Taxes is certainly an option. The other option is controlling the number of runs. It's either the input or the response to those runs.

One of the concerns as I've spoken to members of the Southwest Fire Department and other fire departments that would respond if they're unavailable, were that some of the requests, some of the calls didn't necessarily merit a 911. Probably some of those calls could have been dealt with in the infirmary, presuming you have one of those at this plant. I assume you do.

John: [unintelligible 00:28:05] people.

Paul: Making sure that you internally regulate those numbers of calls helps because when they show up and they don't transport, they can't bill insurance. Ultimately, when the ambulance shows up, which most of these calls are ambulatory, the ambulance shows up. If they transport, there's an insurance component individually that they can bill. Generally, they're able to do that, and your employees got insurance so it's usually not a problem.

When they show up, they fix somebody up and leave. They have the cost of the run. They have the time on the run. They've actually taken that ambulance out of circulation for other emergencies. If it's something that really didn't merit an ambulance, that can be problematic. Really understanding the protocols that drive a 911 call and regulating those is critical in this case.

If it's not a Payment in Lieu of Taxes, the opportunity to reduce the number of calls and therefore reduce the number of non-transport situations is important. Now, if somebody's really hurt and you know they need to get to the hospital, get them to the hospital. On the other side, understanding that those protocols need to make sense is critical. These conversations on what makes an ambulance run a viable run or not, really need to be a part of those discussions.

Tom: They'll obviously have a chance to talk through that, but the idea of just setting a goal to reduce 172 down to something, whatever you can get that trend going that direction, it seems to me is from a safety standpoint, what can you do internally versus making those calls all the time too? That would be of concern. Rachel, did you have any other information to hand out or pass out or anything else from a standpoint of this topic?

Rachel: I'm going to go ahead and let Scott come up and talk for a little bit. He was the one that put together all the data for you. Then I have some sheets depending on the--

Scott Harrold: Just the first one for now. I understand that Southwest Fire is having financial problems. I think every local government agency is these days. A lot of that has to do with tax caps. When I get a deduction because my property taxes were over 1%, there's no one making up that money in the local budgets. The fire department loses money, schools lose money, county loses money. There's no mechanism to make up that lost revenue. When you budget, you're always getting less money than you budget.

There's a lot more going on here than just the number of runs and that sort of thing. One thing I'd like to point out is the 172 number that you saw or that you've heard. That represents 7.6% of the incidents at Southwest Fire in 2022.

Tom: This is the document you have or we have in front of us now? At the bottom, it's 7.6%.

Scott: Right. Now, every year, GM has paid over \$300,000 in taxes to Southwest Fire. That's a fair amount of money. In 2022, the corresponding number to that 7.6% was they paid 18.3% of Southwest Fire's budget. They're paying 18% of the budget and only receiving 7% of the services. I think in my mind, GM is already paying plenty of money. Not only--

Another thing I like to point out is tax abatements don't really take away money from budgets. When you're doing the finances, the way it works is you take the levy and divide it by the net excess value to get your tax rate. That tax rate already takes out the tax abatement.

Now, the only place where this will affect Southwest Fire is the Capital Improvement Fund, which certainly sounds like they need some more equipment. Since that's a fixed-rate fund, there are some losses there, but that's the smaller portion of their budget.

Tom: That's the chief's biggest concern.

Scott: Yes, I understand that. If you're concerned that GM is not paying enough taxes to Southwood's Fire, I would disagree.

Tom: Also, as a percent of the overall amount, this amount will change, the percent will change based on the other taxing units in that area too.

Scott: Right. The numbers have been going down over the years. At one time, GM paid almost 28% back in 2011 of the budget. There's been a lot of growth in the area. Yes, there are a lot of other people contributing to Southwest Fire now.

Tom: Those numbers are dropping because other people are getting some of those taxes.

Scott: Right. There's a lot of growth in the area.

Tom: Council, any thoughts, questions on that document?

Paul: No, these numbers are helpful. I'm sorry, did I miss your introduction?

Scott: I'm sorry. I'm Scott Harrold. I've worked for the County Economic Development for 27 years now. I've worked with Troy since '95 on a lot of these projects, and they've always done a good job at the plant, I think. They've always stayed above the minimum employment. I think since the last abatement was in 2014, at that point, they all said they would retain 3,300. The lowest number they got to was 37 something, which is-- Like Troy said, that's just a number they felt comfortable with. A lot of people are a little optimistic. They like to be careful, I think.

Paul: Thank you.

Ken: We have a lot of numbers here. You said that the tax abatement will hurt their capital improvement fund.

Scott: It won't hurt it. It won't decrease. It just won't increase.

Ken: It won't increase as much as it could. What's that number?

Scott: Right. I'm sorry, I didn't calculate that.

Ken: Because we have all these other numbers for everything else. You'd think that'd be a pretty important number.

Scott: Well, of their budget for this year, about \$2.4 million goes to general fire operations. \$1.3 million was the budget for cumulative fire. Oddly, though, the levy for special fire was only \$1.6 million. The levy for special cumulative fire, the capital fund was only \$324,000. That's how it's been for quite a few years that their budget number is quite a bit higher than their levy. I don't know if that's the tax cap impact or something else. Really, this year their cumulative fire is \$324,000 of the budget.

Paul: Cap rolls. It's a cumulative fund that doesn't need to be spent down annually. All of their budgetary-- when they submit the budget, just like us, it has to be approved by DLGF.

Ken: If we approve the tax abatement, they won't get as much money in their capital improvement fund.

Scott: Well, that's assuming that GM decides to invest here. Our plan is competing with other GM facilities for money. It's not just competing with other manufacturers. General Motors could certainly put its investment in one of the other truck plants if they aren't satisfied with the support they get from the community here.

Tom: One of the discussions that we've had, and I think Josh and Don and I had met with the fire chief and such there, is that maybe further discussion about the abatement process beyond this situation, but maybe further discussion about what do we do with abatements? Do we modify, change, enhance these systems going forward? We discussed the idea that that's not something we'd change right now.

From a strategy standpoint for the county, we get that pivotal walk between incentivizing companies to come here and retain here versus doing an abatement process that may not be needed in some cases. That might warrant a further discussion, I think, down the road here.

Paul: Just to comment on that, the form that you all completed is the state form which is different. It's a different rubric. It's a different process, somewhat. The rubric that we are working on with DPS is one that would include a pilot for many of our other abatement folks, the folks who request an abatement. That process has not been completed yet, but it is something that we're certainly having discussions on. This is somewhat different in that not only in scale but also in the paperwork that you filled out.

Tom: Council, other comments, questions?

Josh Hale: Yes. For me, I would encourage that Rachel and the group would-- I think we need to reach out to council. I understand before I was on council, this was a discussion. I feel like GM is the highlight of this discussion right now, but I think it's the overall impact to public safety. I think we're putting a lot of time and effort right now in General Motors, but prior to me being on council, this was a discussion. I brought this up at the last--

I really would like to see if there's a way that we can have a workshop or something to discuss. Maybe that's something that we can do for council, at least for me as a council person, that's an expectation I would have as we look long term into other others of these processes.

Scott: The staff is always willing to meet with you and discuss whatever your priorities are. I wish we had more discussions prior to today on this Southwest Fire thing with you, but that is what it is.

Josh: Well, because we're using percentages and I think that's unfair. When we're talking about public safety, responding to a very large facility, we're sending two people into that, or we are putting public safety people in a not good place. We met with the fire chief, and again, to me, this isn't about General Motors. That's what's for me as a council person is frustrating.

When we met with the fire chief, one of the things that he was talking about was he's buying used firetrucks. That to me is unacceptable that we are sending firefighters to run into,

whether it's burning homes, burning factories, people that are unconscious, those types of things, and we are allowing them to have to purchase used pieces of equipment to make lifesaving measures. That's where I would like for your group to find a way that we can come up with a resolution.

I'm not so concerned about the immediate thing in front of us with General Motors. It's this process. I know before I was on council, I brought it up at the last one and I know that Councilman Freeze has, so that's my direction to your group.

Tom: Thank you. This meeting that's taking place next week, we've not been invited to that, but I would presume that it would be okay for someone from council, and Don, you've been speaking to the chief. Would you be able to attend that meeting or be part of that meeting?

Don: Sure.

Tom: Then you could report back to us on council in terms of how that went and some of the needs, concerns have been raised and addressed in that meeting. That would be helpful.

Paul: I would strongly encourage the inclusion of Councilman Hale as a fire chief. He has the background and knowledge to really be able to speak to equipment issues that none of the rest of us probably are.

Tom: If you're interested as well.

Josh: Certainly.

Tom: Now again, we've not been invited to that meeting, but I think he'd warrant or he'd accept your attendance, so that's good. Council, other thoughts, questions at this time? Hearing none. We have a motion to approve.

Paul: Motion to approve.

Tom: Is there a second?

Don: Second.

Tom: We have a motion and a second. Council, any other discussion about this consideration resolution for abatement for General Motors?

Kyle: Vote call.

Tom: A roll call, vote. Very good. Any other questions? No. We'll start, Kyle.

Kyle: As I said earlier, it's tough to vote against 3,300 jobs. It's tough to vote against public safety, so for this, on this vote, I have to say that I'm going to put some trust in GM as a good corporate partner in the community, that if the local plant does not hold up to their end of the bargain, that John, you're going to come back down and get involved and help guide things in the right direction.

Tom: Or a designee.

Kyle: Or a designee. Your job is to make sure local governments are taken care of. I know you want to hold the plant accountable, but some of that comes back to you, so I will vote yes to approve with an expectation that you're going to keep your eye on this through the process.

John: I have to have full transparency. I am retiring after 40 years at General Motors, but I can assure you, my replacement, and I've already had conversations with our state government affairs people, this is a priority for us now.

Kyle: I will vote yes.

Ken: No.

Don: John, congratulations on your retirement.

John: Thank you.

Don: Has a replacement been named, and will that be, I assume, shared with our Rachel?

John: It will, absolutely.

Don: I vote yes.

Tom: I will vote yes as well. I think that communication needs to be ongoing. When we spoke to the chief, he said, one of the biggest things that-- and this is my words, not his, but the biggest things that freaked me out is when I'm driving down with three volunteers, three people onto that facility and I look in my rear view mirror, and all I can see is building. It just keeps going on and on and I've got three firefighters with me. He said, our job is to protect and help those individuals.

What comes back to me, and I think it's been said a few times this morning is, we're trying to help those employees. The fire chief and that group wants to maintain safety for those employees in all ways, so whatever we can do to enhance that, that's what I think we need to do. That's a yes for me. Paul.

Paul: Well, first of all, I don't want to reiterate some of the things I've already said, but I look forward to the outcome of the meeting and I'm sure it will be productive. I hope that we find a way to reduce the non-required calls. I think that'll make a big difference for the fire department. I think this is another opportunity for us as council to really take a look at the needs of the regional fire departments.

When I say regional, I mean those fire departments that surround Fort Wayne in our county. They have done a fantastic job of consolidating, finding ways through duct tape and chewing gum sometimes to piece parts together and make a functional fire department provide that public safety mission that they have to. I hope that as we move forward, we all and council see the merit in more participation by our county in supporting our fire departments through our own county funds.

It was said earlier that the tax caps have impacted many local units of government. I think we've been very fortunate and we have been frugal certainly, but the amount of cash that we have in the bank is something that we should be very proud of right now. We are not like a number of other local units of government who are struggling, we're certainly not. We should

share some of that large \$ with public safety, which is our primary mission in local government. With that, my vote is yes.

Tom: Thank you. Josh.

Josh: As I said, I think I'd be remiss if I didn't say that I would echo some of Councilman Curley's comments that we have a lot of people at the plant and we're very appreciative of the investment in the community, but I hope that I don't sit up here as a councilman again and we have this type of a conversation without some an adjustment to how the scoring goes because I believe, as you said, public safety is extremely important and we understand how much this has impacted. Again, I think we have to find a solution for this so we're not doing this again. I vote yes.

Tom: It does pass 5-1(Fries)-1(Armstrong). Congratulations on that.

John: Thank you very much for your support.

Tom: Please pass our congratulations to the plant and the employees for their continued success as well.

John: I will reach back out to them on my way back and have that conversation. It's next week. I would encourage it's not-- I would think it's the chief to invite the council members, but I would encourage it. I think it's a great idea.

Tom: Good.

John: Thank you.

Don: Thank you for coming down.

John: Thank you.

Tom: All right, council. Next this morning on our agenda is Superior Court. If you'd like to come forward and introduce yourself and your title, please. Forward.

John McGauley: Apologies for the delay. I went the wrong way. Come to the wrong corner here. Good morning, everyone. I'm John McGauley. I'm the Court of Executive for Allen Superior Court, here this morning to get your permission for just really, a couple of bookkeeping measures. I'll take them one at a time if you'd like. The first is appropriation of a grant that we've received from the Indiana Supreme Court to help us pay for the expenses of a new problem-solving court that was launched here just a few months ago in our family relations division, that's our new domestic violence court.

Doesn't add any new employees. This just helps us to pick up the cost of what is our eighth problem-solving court in Allen County. Again, going at the causes essentially of what makes people come back to court someday. This is helping us out with [unintelligible 00:49:16] cases, there are about 500 of them a year. The ones that come in with roots in domestic violence within the family or caregivers.

This is what that court's objective is to try to get at some of the issues that make these cases wind up in our court in the first place and prevent them from coming back someday. What

this is essentially just picking up the cost of that with help from the Indiana Supreme Court.

Tom: John, the overall balance for that account, I think we had that in a document, I believe, right? What is the overall account balance for this particular-- or is that the \$10,000?

John: That's the 10,000. We're appropriating everything that we've received for the year.

Tom: All right. Very good. Thank you, Council.

Paul: First of all, John, I want to say thank you for your efforts in making sure that we find this money outside of Allen County. You specifically have done yeoman's work in seeking and finding grant funding of monies that would go otherwise to Indianapolis, or Gary, or some other large community that's not us, and has saved our taxpayers dollars by doing so. Thank you for your efforts in your grant work and grant funding seeking, and I appreciate that.

John: I would be remiss in taking credit for this one. This really is the work of Judge Morgan and her staff. We do put a lot of time into getting other people to pay for things.

Paul: Well, please thank Judge Morgan for me personally [crosstalk] and thank her on behalf of the taxpayers of Allen County. Grant funding matters to us. Thank you.

John: Definitely will.

Tom: Council any other questions on this one. Hearing none. Do you have a motion.

Paul: Motion for the appropriation of or for the transfer. Is that what we're doing?

Tom: No, it's appropriation of-- [crosstalk]

Paul: The appropriation, as stated in our documents.

Kyle: Second.

Tom: Motion and a second, councilman any other questions? Hearing none. All in favor say aye?

Unanimously: Aye.

Tom: Opposed. It does pass 6-0-1(Armstrong). John, you've got a second one as well.

John: I do. We have a request for transfers within our eviction diversion initiative fund. This is about \$164,000 or a subset of that that we received almost a year ago from the National Center for State Courts to establish a program within the Allen Superior Court Civil Division to help us resolve, prevent and reduce the number of evictions that take place in our county. That number in 2022 was about 3,300 cases a year. We do have an employee who is funded by the National Center for State Courts, who's trying to get involved in those cases early to try to see if there are ways to work things out, come to mutually beneficial settlements between property owners and tenants to reduce the number of evictions that we experience in our county.

Essentially, what we're doing here is moving money from where we initially thought we'd need it to where we actually need it. The amount of money that is required here to do just simple tasks, printing, for example, there are a lot of folks that come into this court who are self-represented litigants. They're doing everything they need to do by paper, but because of the circumstances that are involved, and don't have access to reliable computers, for example. We're doing a lot of this for them. We're just simply asking to move this money into where we need it right now, which is essentially supplies. We're approaching the end of year one of a two-year grant from the National Center to support this. There will be additional dollars flowing into this coming in July.

Tom: Council, questions?

Ken: Motion to approve Transfer and Eviction Diversion Fund from Communication and Travel \$5,000. Utility services, Parking \$420. Furniture and fixtures, \$5,628, a total of 11,048 to general supplies \$11,048. [crosstalk]

Tom: Motion to second. Any other discussion? Hearing none. All in favor say aye?

Unanimously: Aye.

Tom: Opposed? It does pass 6-0-1(Armstrong). John, thank you very much.

John: We thank you very much.

Tom: Thank you. Council next up is a County Council item, and I think our auditor is going to help us with this one.

Auditor: Yes, Council. The first item you have on there is an appropriation reduction. Last month you granted the building department an appropriation in their budget to purchase a vehicle. Like we've done before, we take this out of the capital, you have budgeted in your budget so it doesn't become rollover at the end of the year.

Tom: Pulling out. The second one?

Auditor: The second one is in the LIT, the Local Income Tax Public Safety Fund. If you recall from last year, you had granted 1.4 million to the Allen County Fire Chiefs Association. The collection of fire departments throughout the county outside in the rural areas to buy radios and pagers, the price, and I sent you the letter separately. I put it in the notebook depending on when you downloaded the notebook. The ask today is for an increase is because of the increase in the firewall package. It was originally \$600, and it's apparently 2,000 and some dollars now. In order for the Fire Chiefs Association to use the Spillman system, they have to have this firewall.

Tom: We probably want to take these one at a time.

Auditor: Yes, there are two different funds.

Tom: I wanted to just discuss this one. Any other questions on this one while we're here? Questions, and let's-- All right, in that case, let's back up and look at the first one for the \$35,070. Is there a motion?

Paul: Motion for the appropriation reduction within the general fund of \$35,070?

Kyle: Second.

Tom: Second. All in favor say aye?

Unanimously: Aye.

Tom: Opposed? Does pass 6-0-1(Armstrong). On this one, Council, any other questions?

Paul: Just, I am pleased that they brought this to us, and that this is just another opportunity for the county to show, number one, our thanks for the work that the fire departments in the county do. This is yet another place where they have met this important rubric of benefiting all the departments equally, and identifying an area of county-wide need that is critical for public safety. Thank you.

Kyle: Nick, they spent all 1.4. This isn't on top of that. [crosstalk]

Auditor: We still have a chunk of it sitting there just waiting for, I can't remember if it's Motorola, or there's a piece that's still outstanding before we pay the final invoices on the other two pieces. There is not enough. The 1.4 is fully encumbered on the other two aspects of it. One other thing we will have, depending on what the form of it becomes, whether it's an agreement or a contract, because we bought the equipment, and it's going out to the districts or territory, whatever they exist as now, you can't necessarily do that. We need to create a contract between the county and these districts territories in order for them to have that equipment. I don't know if it'll come before you. It depends on what that agreement or contract looks like. Just as an FYI, in case we do.

Tom: In essence, that's going through the commissioners at this point for contraction?

Auditor: We should have done it last year. It didn't get done, and so that's why we do need to get it in place because you can't necessarily take our equipment or things, our dollars and give them to another tax unit.

Tom: All right. Very good. Council, other questions? Any?

Ken: Councilman Hale, maybe I'll answer this, but I see there are people from the Fire Chiefs Association here. Do we have a timeline yet of implementation? We know when it's going to be operational. We were told June as of right now but Chris Forbing has been a point person. If maybe he'd want to step forward, or maybe he doesn't, but he could anyhow.

Josh: I think it's important. A lot of what Chris has been doing is very important for the communications. It's very important for the integration of the fire districts. If he can just take 30s and share, I think [crosstalk]

Tom: Maybe introduce yourself and your title.

Chris: Chris Forbing, I'm in the Southwest Fire District for the last 30 years, and I'm the project manager over all the new communications for the county.

Tom: Thank you.

Chris: Motorola is waiting on one more major part for the Mac alert system. They said June. They're hoping it'll be shipped here by the end of June. All the Mac alert system should be in

all the fire departments. As far as the Spillman, it just got approved yesterday from the CCP board to go live with the ambulance part of it. All the ambulances in the county will now have the Spillman and the silent communications will be implemented. I think there's a chief's meeting Monday. We're going to bring it up to them. Hopefully by next week the Spillman's will be live in the ambulances.

Then we're hoping within two to three weeks, we'll be able to put them in the fire trucks. We wanted to go have a soft launch with the ambulances, make sure dispatch understood everything. Then once that's done, they'll go on the fire trucks. Probably by the end of July, we're hoping everything will be completed.

Ken: Good. Thank you.

Paul: Chairman. Chris, first of all, thanks for all you do. I know you've worked on this for now, what about a year and a half? Thanks so much for all of that. I love to see the overused euphemism of cooperative government actually work. Thanks for all you do, and bringing everybody together.

Chris: Thanks.

Tom: All right, Council, any other questions? Hearing none.

Ken: Appropriation within the public safety fund 120 for \$50,963 contractual.

Paul: Second.

Tom: Second. Any other questions? Hearing none. All in favor say aye?

Unanimously: Aye.

Tom: Oppose? It does pass 6-0-1(Armstrong).

Speaker 2: Thank you.

Tom: Thank you. Thanks. All right, Council. Next up on the agenda, we've got a couple of discussion items. Let's see. First up is our public health funding board of health, and some legislation had passed through the General Assembly. We have with us this morning an update on that. If you'd like to introduce yourself and your titles, please.

Speaker 2: Of course.

Tom: You can sit anywhere you want to. Absolutely.

[laughter]

[crosstalk]

Mindy: Thanks [unintelligible 01:00:07]

Speaker 2: Watch your step.

Tom: Yes, that's good. Makes it on TV or otherwise. [laughs] Thank you, Miss. Mindy, if you'd like to maybe introduce yourself, and such. You have the floor. How's that?

Mindy Waldron: I'm Mindy Waldron. I'm the administrator of the Allen County Health Department.

Tom Gutwein: I'm Tom Gutwein, the Health Commissioner for Allen County.

Tom: Welcome. Congratulations.

Mindy: A year in and we have some big projects. Well, thank you for the time to present to you today. We'll keep it brief as I committed. The document that I've given you is what I'll speak from and hits the highlights of what has occurred over this last year and a half. Our primary reason to be here today, we need no money, and we need no votes. We are just looking to answer any questions you might have, or frame what we hope the future is, just so you're aware, and because it will affect the budgets we will submit this year. I won't go over all of the reasoning. I think everybody's pretty well aware of why things transpired over this last year and a half, and where it pretty much landed.

I wanted to talk just about the outcomes, and what it looks like from here. The document that you have is considered, I see it as a two pager, but the state calls it a one pager, but it is the summary of the items that we are to do from here on out. In short, what has occurred is two years of funding have been secured for public health throughout the state, dispersed by a per capita basis. Then there are additional monies that come to certain counties that have two other issues that make them more problematic in terms of the services they need to provide. We are one of those counties, so we would receive an additional amount per capita.

What you see there at the top is the amounts that are the ranges for the first two years. It has been discussed, and there's never any guarantees, obviously, but it does appear that this would be sustainable funding that every biannual budget would be voted upon, and a similar amount for a longer period of time would likely be very similar. To put it in perspective, as you can see, those ranges there that the new money, that would come to our county, being in that range of 4.4 million the first year to 5.9 the first year, and then the second year doubling is what you see there.

What they decided was to give us time to grow instead of all the money up front, which would have been a dispersed 150 million across the state by population. It is 75 the first year and 150 every year thereafter. You see those ranges, and that's really just based on the fact that some counties may opt out this first year, and so we could see further funding. There is a county match, and the match is, they refer to it as a 20% match, but it's actually 25% of the new funding. When you add those totals together, it's 20% of that new budget. To put it in perspective, as you see that legacy funding where it says opt out, in blue there below the opt in.

If counties opt out, they continue to get their legacy funding, which has been very small. That has been a total of 6 million that was dispersed over the state, and remembering we're going to go to 75 million and 150. We had received around that \$200,000 each year. That's 3% of our budget, 3%. This new money is very high in terms of what we have received before. You can see the difference between that. It's a large increase, and it can allow for significant good. Below that are the requirements that come with opting into the funding, which are the core services.

The core services, a good portion of them we already do, but there are key performance measures that will drive those, so we will have to improve on each of those. You see that they

have set a 40% and a 60% either minimum and maximum based on which section you're looking at. The 60%, we do some of those services already, but the eight of them that we do will need to improve on, and the six that we don't currently do are extremely large buckets. the maternal child health, the trauma and injury prevention, all of those things.

Tom: You might point this, so say that slowly, which ones?

Paul: Tell us the eight that you do and the six that you don't.

Tom: Or maybe the six that you don't, anyway.

Mindy: Yes. Okay. I did highlight those. There are two sections that you see there, the 60% and the 40%. Starting with the 60%, we currently do communicable disease prevention and control, testing and counseling for all of the STIs, vital statistics, fatality review, we have all three of those teams here locally already, TB control and case management, emergency preparedness, childhood-lead screening and case management, and child and adult immunizations. What we do not do and need to add is, and each of these buckets or realms have subcategories under them. Student health, referrals to clinical care, chronic disease prevention and reduction, trauma and injury prevention and education, tobacco prevention and cessation, maternal and child health.

Those are very, very large buckets that are more in the chronic realm where we have been in the preventive communicable disease realm. They add significant duties. The blessing that we have here in Allen County is we have a lot of entities that are already engaging in these activities. Our intent is more to support them in continuing their good work or figuring out what the gaps are in some of those areas and seeing how we can help, not doing them all. We have the option, as the bill said, to provide them or ensure they're provided. By ensuring they're provided means we might be able to support some of these folks financially or work with them, come alongside them versus anything else.

It is not our intent to do all of these things, some things we may, as we do GAP analysis alongside these partners, we can determine what makes the most sense. Of the second bucket there where you see the 40%, we do all of those for the most part. Again, there are key performance measures that we'll have to do. On the other side, you'll see a few more facets that I wanted to just briefly cover. The opt in, the commissioners are the entity across the state that must decide to opt in for each county. We have been working with them over a year, keeping them on track, just as we have, hopefully with you in terms of the information that might come from this.

Once that happens, a fund is required to be set up. Nick and I have already had that conversation about how that would occur. What you would see from us is two main budgets. Obviously, we submit all of our grant budgets and some of those things, but we'll have two lesser funds that we submit because the legacy funding, which was from tobacco money and local health maintenance money, we're getting that \$200,000. Now we'll get 4 to 6 million in the first year, that \$200,000 goes away. Those funds will also go away. We create the new fund and all the funds go in there. Very similar line items, very similar work. You'll see two main budgets from us that we submit our health fund like normal.

It probably wouldn't change because you saw the funding match for this upcoming year is a three-year average of the past. Yes, an average of the past three years. That's about 3.3 million that's required by the statute. Then the match goes down as the years progress. We

would submit two budgets for your approval just for appropriation of the funds, doing very same work just in different realms. You probably also saw there was a change to the board representation. We are run by a board. It is currently a seven-person board. It would go to a nine-person board, and the makeup would be slightly different.

There is the ability to have a County Council representative, someone you appoint that meets the criteria of being a board member for an executive board of health. There are about nine or so options to choose from what skill sets or jobs that a person would have to appoint. That will happen over time, because it isn't that the board stops, and everyone goes away, and they reappoint. It's as they roll off, there will likely be the mechanism put in place for putting each of the new members in, probably in 2024. That's just something to think about. You'll have a board appointment to our board. We will, I just want to be transparent, need to grow a little.

These are significant services that we have to be sure we can provide. Opting in means we get this larger budget, we begin to be able to do good. I know Dr. Gutwein will speak about why he thinks this is really, really helpful for public health overall. We will need to grow both in space and in staff. This will take a while to do. We're already engaging in discussions for both of those things, and I'll be before personnel committee at the next meeting with a few key positions to start. We do hope not to just create positions that we don't know that we need yet.

We're going to stairstep into this, and we'll contract out some of the project management and data analysis parts where then that can roll off when it's no longer needed and it can be brought in in-house, but have professionals do that versus trying to create a job description that likely we won't be able to fill, and have it in-house, and then you have to determine how do you discontinue that position if you misgauged what you need. We are only starting with a very small subset of positions that will need to carry this out. Our next steps, and I'm skipping over some of it because you can read it, and we're happy to answer questions on it, but our next steps are meeting with all of our elected officials just so they're aware of either what their role is or what's happening.

We have already reached out to a good number of our partners to gather their thoughts on what might be good for us to do, how can we help them, what are their goals in these next few years, what gaps do they have, what services do they provide, because we do not know everything about what is done in the public health realm. Then we have to establish the plan and the budget. The plan we are drafting now, we've been working for over six months to brainstorm on how could we fill the gaps that we know exists, and how can we work in the areas that we've not yet?

We are developing a draft plan that will be shareable publicly that will accompany the budget. The budget will be very similar to what you've seen before, but we're happy to answer any questions on that when it comes. A gain, this is two-year funding for sure, and then beyond we're told it should continue. Those are the main points for me. Dr. Gutwein was just going to throw in a few comments, and then we're happy to answer any questions you might have.

Dr. Gutwein: Yes, just a couple of comments. One, as health commissioner for Allen County, I think this is a tremendous opportunity for our county to really move ahead a little bit into where we're at with healthcare. It's not really healthcare that's delivered in hospitals and urgent care centers, but it's preventative healthcare. The state of Indiana, Dr. Kane states that for every dollar you spend on preventative healthcare, you can save \$14 in the economic

and healthcare benefit in reducing cost, reducing the long-term effects from diabetes, hypertension.

This money will allow us to partner, as Mindy said, with a lot of our community organizations so that we can enhance our services that we provide for mental health, for the chronic diseases that are going on, and then also making sure that those people get referred appropriately to see these people a little bit sooner. The other things that I think are really important that are on everybody's radar, or should be, are the social inequities, or the inequity in health, and then health education, because a lot of people don't know, they don't grow up with any good understanding of dietary changes, or the importance of diet, or the importance of exercise, or the importance of work-life balance, things like that. People don't have that opportunity. There's a lot of people in our community.

We feel like we can partner with some people, but also, Mindy mentioned, we're going to need to hire a few people on our staff, that we'll need there to be a liaison to work towards these projects. We have a huge booklet right now that we're putting together on what our projects are going to be, where the gaps are, as she mentioned, because we know there's some gaps. Maybe it's an age gap. Maybe it's a regional gap. Maybe there's a certain zip code in our city that we need to focus on, but everything, even from maternal-fetal health, we have a lot of people in this community working on maternal-fetal health, but do we know that we're covering everyone?

Because why is our infant mortality rate still so high for certain people, certain populations? We need to look at those, dig into those, and then this will give us that opportunity that we've never had before. I joined this organization recently, but it's been running bare bones from my opinion, and trying to keep things moving, and do what we have to do. I think we have an opportunity to really impact the future of this county.

Mindy: Sorry. If I can just sum up, we need to put things in perspective. We have been as a state as low as 49th in terms of public health funding coming into Indiana. Allen County's third largest county, and second largest city, and we have been down in that 80th percent for funding, and 50th percent for staffing. We should be in that top 10%. We have been more disparate even as a large county. The state has been so low. We're currently 45th. We are hoping that our outcomes, all the outcomes that you ever see, obesity, whatever it is, we're low because there's no proactive money. We are very reactive.

This allows, this money is not to create enforcement, which is one of the things that is always asked, this is not about regulation or more rules. This is, how can we come alongside the hospitals, the clinics, all the nonprofits that are doing work because we didn't, because we had no funding to look at tobacco cessation. Now there's entities for that. Things like that. That's what this money's for. It is for proactive education, and to hopefully raise those outcomes over time. We're glad to answer any questions.

Tom: Mindy, first of all, want to say congratulations, and thank you because you've served on the state board or state group that helped to formulate this.

Mindy: Yes.

Tom: Very good. Thank you for your service and for representing Allen County that way. A question for you is the matching amount, is that based on a percentage, or is it some kind of a sliding teel or what?

[crosstalk]

Mindy: It's an odd thing. Okay? Let me try to explain it my best. There's a minimum that per capita we are to get, and that's how the numbers came to be. That's \$26 per capita. They used the 2020 census. It puts us around 385,000 is what was used at this time. It will obviously increase if the funds increase. That's the base. There are two other measures that were used to calculate what a county would get. We are going to get an extra \$5 per capita because of our social vulnerability index levels, and our life expense expectancy levels, they're lower. We will get an additional fund amount.

The match is calculated only on the \$26 amount so that it was even around the state despite giving extra funding to assist. The numbers don't seem to equate unless you know the equation. I had to do that math myself. It does seem odd. The match though for the first year is purely based on an average of the past three years, because we can't have monies being taken away and only replacing, or else we'll never move forward. They've given us one year to try and build, and after that then those matches do tend to drop a little bit, but that's the formula if it helps. It's based on the 26th.

Tom: You see that match coming from the Board of Health's fund.

Mindy: Yes.

Tom: That wouldn't come as a new request to the county?

Mindy: It would not.

Tom: That would be something out of the Board of Health's current-- [crosstalk]

Mindy: The current levy that we have will cover the match likely, and for the most part perpetuity, [laughs] as long as that stays that same. No new funds are needed from Council or from anywhere else, we're going to be very lucky that most of our budget will now be covered. We will not have to take as many grants, we will not have to seek as many fees perhaps.

Paul: Will that include new employees?

Mindy: Will what? The coverage?

Paul: The funding, yes.

Mindy: Yes. It's high on covering employees, contractual work, and grants. That's what they want.

Tom: Is it faced more on behavior, in other words, the things that you do, or is it, and/or also focused on outcomes and results?

Mindy: A bit of both. There's a heavy emphasis on the analytics and tracking your status now, that's what the KPIs are designed to do. Those will be released soon. They're very generic for the first year because there are a number of health departments that don't do many of these services. We've got to get them to a certain level too. We're lucky we can begin to focus on the things that we haven't been able to, and we don't have to get to the things the

statutes say now, but there's a heavy emphasis on the analytics part so that we can look at outcomes and say, "Are we predicting correctly the things we should be focusing on?"

We'll know, I think it's going to take a bit before we see huge income or outcome increases. It's going to take a bit, because we've got to build the infrastructure to be able to deliver these services and the knowledge base of things. Chronic health has not been within our bailiwick, so that is going to be a huge learning curve for us. Again, we're blessed with the organizations that we can come alongside versus recreating that wheel.

Dr. Gutwein: Just to add to that, I think that the KPIs are very important. As Mindy mentioned the states put out three KPIs for each one of these categories. Then we have to develop our own KPIs underneath that. We will be measuring, and that's the thing that we really struggle with today, is getting good measurements and good data, and trying to correlate our data. One of the first projects we're going to do is to try to get help to get our data together so we can figure out where we're at, and then know where we want to go. I would hope that when we come back here, and whether it's one year or two years, that we can say, "This is what we accomplished with this money." I think everybody really wants to know what are we doing with the money. This is what we're going to show that we have done with the money.

Tom: Council, questions, comments, or anything?

Paul: First of all, we get this, both Kyle and I hear the report on the number of permits that are dealt with on a regular basis. That core function that you all provide, do you want to just touch on the number of permits that you guys are dealing with on an annual basis? Number one, a little bit about the nature of those permits, and then how the existing workload might be affected by this change.

Mindy: Sure. Permitting, the divisions that handle permitting within our department represent about a third of our staff and a third of our duties. Those are the regulatory sections, the food inspections, the motels, the tattoo and body piercing, swimming pools, septic systems, and then issuing vital records and those sorts of things. Our permits are annual and they're slightly on the construction end, but they're more annual routine visit versus building department and others which are to do something, and then it's done. Ours are inspectional to ensure safety.

While that is sometimes not liked, when you look back at the statistics from earlier even this century, the number of foodborne outbreaks has been reduced to fairly nil, especially in these areas. It goes unnoticed because you're not remembering what happened earlier in the century. Either serves a purpose to continue with that, but our permits are well lower in terms of numbers as any other department.

Several thousand that we'll issue per year for food. Several hundred for both motels and for tattoo and body piercing, swimming pools relatively in the 200 to 300 range. I don't see this money affecting the numbers of permits because we're required to issue them now, and required to do those inspections now that nothing changes on those rules. What will change is our ability to respond quicker for plan reviews. The ability to get out for a restaurant and other openings the day or day after of a request. No weeks waiting. Plan reviews. We can get to what our standard has been, but what we have done is the work has grown 10 times in the last 30 years. The staff has grown none.

We have grown two positions, one for plan review and one inspectional, but the workload is enormous. The overtime is pretty big. Now we can reduce that and be proactive and get out there quicker. When they ask us to come do education for their new staff, we'll be able to do it. We'll be able to hold educational programs. It's more on the proactive side where this money would be used in the permitting divisions if that helps answer the question.

Paul: It does. One editorial comment, one of the things that you and I have talked about and worked on, and I just want to say thank you for your efforts here, all too long waterfront dining has essentially been banned and required a-

Mindy: -Variance.

Paul: -variance throughout the state of Indiana. I just want to bring to everyone's attention that Mindy has been the key player in fixing this problem. This was an issue that concerned the hall's deck. It's concerned all of our development along the rivers. I want to personally thank you for your efforts, and acknowledge those here today.

Mindy: Thank you. That state rule should pass next year.

Tom: Council, any other questions? Commissioner Mindy, thank you very much for being here today. Thanks for the update. We'll watch for more information, looks like that September timeframe. It's coming to us both **[unintelligible 01:21:06]**.

Mindy: You'll get the budget in the normal budget cycle because we have to get your approval before we can submit it to that September 1 deadline to the state. They have to also approve it. It's more making sure we don't go over the 60/40 match. They will not question what your decision is on appropriation. It's a checkmark to ensure we meet the bill. That's it. You'll see a regular budget in the July timeframe when you request our others.

Tom: All right, thank you very much.

Mindy: Thank you.

Tom: Council, next up on the agenda is an update from the commissioners on the county jail project. Good morning, if you'd like to introduce yourself and your titles, please.

Therese: Good morning. Therese Brown Allen County Commissioner. I think Rich will be coming up.

Tom: We do that for the minutes. I think **[unintelligible 01:21:56]**

Therese: Don't you just like the echo of the little speakers up there?

Tom: Rich.

Rich: Rich Beck county commissioner.

Therese: Oh, good morning. County Council. Therese Brown on behalf of the Board of Commissioners. I appreciate the opportunity to provide an update on the Allen County Jail and its project. On March 31st, 2022, Federal Judge Damon Leichty concluded the federal lawsuit brought by the ACLU on behalf of the inmates at the Allen County Jail. He issued an order for Allen County to file a plan with the court that specified its long-term solution to

resolve the problems leading to the constitutional deficiencies that were found to be present in the Allen County Jail.

Judge Leichty ordered that this plan permanently resolve the issues of, and I quote from his order, "Prisoner overcrowding, lack of sufficient staff, lack of appropriate prisoner supervision, presence of prisoner on prisoner violence, and any other matters that defendants believe must be addressed to resolve permanently the jail's constitutional deficiencies." Indiana code firmly gives the responsibility to establish a county jail to the Board of Commissioners. In turn, the county sheriff is given the charge of overseeing the daily operations of the jail facility, and is responsible for the care of pretrial detainees and post-conviction inmates completing their sentence.

As we have publicly stated since our first federal court filing last May, the Board of Commissioners believe that the construction of a new jail facility is the best long-term solution to address the constitutional deficiencies outlined by the judge in his order. In June of last year, after soliciting requests for proposal, the Board of Commissioners signed an agreement with Elevatus Architecture to be our lead architect on this project. However, we would be remiss not to mention the other local architectural and engineering firms that are a part of Elevatus team on this project, including Engineering Resources, SCO Engineering, Design Collaborative, MSKTD and DLC.

This team of architects and engineers has worked closely with the sheriff's department in developing the schematic design of the new Allen County jail facility, which was completed in late January of this year. The team is now in the design development phase which should conclude this summer. It will be filed by construction documents phase which will lead to bids being issued for the project. For the first time in its history, Allen County is utilizing a CMC or construction management as contractor model for this project. The CMC model was permitted by the Indiana General Assembly for publicly funded projects in 2017.

It has been used successfully all over the state of Indiana for construction of schools, jails, municipal government buildings, and here locally, the recently expanded terminal at the Fort Wayne International Airport. After a public request for qualifications process, the Board of Commissioners selected Weigand Construction as the CMC for the jail project on March 24th of this year. Last year, Weigand used the CMC model on 88% of its public and private projects. We've already seen the fruits of this model by having Weigand be a part of the team design meetings, and offering their insight and expertise as contractors who have built 17 Indiana jails, including 9 with Elevatus as the project architect.

The other major update is location. We came to you at the December meeting for permission to purchase 140 acres of land at the 2911 Meyer Road area. After environmental due diligence, I'm pleased to inform you that we closed on the property April 14th of 2023. The team is in place, the location is secured, the plans are coming together, but are still being refined. The logical question I'm sure you have today is, so what now? Now comes probably the most difficult part of all, determining how best to pay for this project.

Last August, we invited our financial consultants Baker Tilly to make a presentation before Council explaining how to fund a large public construction project like a new jail, including the impact taxpayers if property tax or income tax are used to fund the project. We believed then and still believe now that income tax is the best of the two options. Since 2018, Indiana has permitted County Councils to adopt a special purpose income tax for the construction and operation of a county correctional facility. Baker Tilly's most recent analysis indicates

adopting the maximum rate of 0.2 this year would allow us to issue \$286 million of bonds in late 2023.

Our current construction estimates for the jails slightly exceed this number, but we continue to work with the Sheriff's Department, the design team, and our construction manager to refine the scope of the project, and look for areas of savings. We know the sheriff has received input from many sources including from members of County Council, and those have been passed on to the design team. Adopting the correctional facility income tax rate follows the normal process for all other taxes. The first step is a public hearing. The second step would be a vote from County Council.

At this point, the Board of Commissioners request that County Council hold a public hearing at its June meeting on the adoption of the maximum point to local income tax rate for the purposes of construction and operations of a correctional facility. Holding a public hearing does not Commit Council to vote affirmatively, nor does it Commit Council to utilize the maximum 0.2% rate permanently. However, it is the first step in the process and subsequent steps are time-sensitive. To be able to put this project bid this winter and issue bonds, steps like these need to be undertaken even as we work to refine the scope, and hopefully reduce the cost of this project.

We are not requesting a decision today. I just ask that you take this as an update under advisement. I know this is a lot of information, and we thank you for your time today.

Tom: Thank you for that great summary of what the overall project. Council, any initial thoughts. Otherwise, we'll have an opportunity to begin to lay out either a timeline or next steps where we're at, and timelines with both our June and July meetings coming up. Any initial thoughts, comments, Paul?

Paul: The request today is to set the date for the public hearing. Is that correct?

Therese: Today is a setup date, but also was to ask that you consider, that's amongst you to decide when to have your public hearing.

Paul: With that, I will say that, especially over the last two weeks, I and I know Councilman Kerley have had a series of conversations with Sheriff. We've included both commissioners Beck and Brown in a meeting yesterday with the purpose of identifying value engineering opportunities for this facility. We've identified some major opportunities to cut the cost, and bring it closer to within the realm of what other counties on a per unit basis have paid for their jails. I appreciate your participation yesterday and the opportunity to really work through that.

I, for one, as we make this decision to move forward, would like to see us move forward as soon as we can so that we meet the requirements of the judge, number one. Number two, I also want to recognize that Councilman Hale and Councilman Wyss both joined me in a tour of the jail. It's been about 10 years since I've been there. It reiterated my concern for the safety of our confinement officers, and certainly for the safety of the inmates that that facility has long since passed its lifetime. I do believe that a new facility is certainly the best course of action to meet the federal court requirements.

I do think that as we begin this process, number one, we have to continue this requirement to reduce the cost from the initial sort of \$350 million-ish. We're hoping to get that down nearly

\$100 million, and focus on a jail facility that is a jail facility and meets the requirements of the court. I hope we can get there. I will continue to commit myself to working toward that goal of not only protecting our confinement officers and our county employees, protecting the inmates as required by the courts, and required by the lawsuit, and then also making sure that we're protecting the taxpayers as we value-engineer a project that won't change the quality but maybe the quantity of what we're trying to design. So thanks for being here.

Tom: All right, thank you. I'll be working with both Council members and the auditor in terms of establishing and coordinating the next step as far as a public hearing and such. Watch for that. Thank you very much. Thanks.

Therese: Thank you.

Tom: All right, Council, recent or upcoming meetings? One we have coming before us is the personnel committee. I've learned from Councilman Freeze that he is requesting to resign. I guess you didn't request, you actually resigned.

Councilman Fries: I resigned, yes-

Tom: [laughs] -from the personnel committee. I am looking for another volunteer. So be it that any of you are interested, let me know. Otherwise, we'll be diligent to make sure we have somebody else in that seat by next Thursday, I believe is the date. All right with that? Other upcoming meetings, Council, anything else or liaison reports? Any liaison reports? Any upcoming meetings?

Paul: Just a quick note on DPS. I know that Nick mentioned earlier that we see a downtick in permits. I can assure you this is a seasonal downtick in working with both the building commissioner and in my role as our liaison to the Plan Commission. We are not seeing a significant downturn, but we're preparing for another major building year. With that, I've been working pretty closely with Ben Russell and the team on the budget process, which will be coming up.

They're doing a great job of preparing well in advance, which is exciting to me, and working toward that situation where we eliminate some of the special funds, number one, and number two. Also, identify a budget that's not going to create rollover at the tail end. Identifying and working toward an accurate budget, not one that ties up county funds for some unimaginable emergency, is what we really hope to see from all of our departments. I got to commend DPS on really making an effort to be accurate in their budget process.

Tom: Very good. We did receive, I think just yesterday or the day before an outline of the budgetary process. For newer members, **[inaudible 01:34:54]** that and recognize that those days are ahead of us for some work to be done. With that, any further motions at this point?

Paul: I will make a motion for the approval to waive the second reading. Waive the second reading on any matter approved today for which it might be deemed necessary for the County Council meeting of May 18, 2023.

Tom: Thank you. First and second. All in favor say aye.

Unanimously: Aye.

Tom: That's pass. Our next County Council regular meeting will be held at 8:30 Thursday, June 15, 2023, in the chambers of Room of Citizen Square. We have a motion to adjourn.

Paul: Will move.

Tom: Second?

Paul: Second.

Tom: We are adjourned. Thank you very much.