

**ALLEN COUNTY COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 16, 2006  
8:30 AM**

The Allen County Council met on Thursday, February 16, 2006 at 8:30 am in the County Council/Commissioners Courtroom. The purpose of the meeting was for additional appropriations and transfer of funds in excess of the current budget. Also, grants and any other business to come before Council.

Attending: Paula S. Hughes, President; Paul G. Moss, Vice President; Michael W. Cunegin II, Darren E. Vogt, Calvert S. Miller, Roy Buskirk, and Paulette L. Kite.

Also Attending: Lisa Blosser, Auditor; Tera Klutz, Chief Deputy Auditor; Jackie Scheuman, Finance Manager and Susan Whetstone; Administrative Assistant and Commissioners Marla Irving and Nelson Peters.

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am by President, Paula Hughes with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**Cal Miller made a motion to approve the minutes of January 5, 2006 and January 19, 2006 as printed. Darren Vogt seconded it. Motion passed 7-0.**

**FINANCIAL REPORT:**

**Lisa Blosser, Auditor:** The amount you have left for appropriation in the County General fund is \$4,751,250. For your consideration today there are additional appropriations in the amount of \$4,086,931; this will leave you with a balance of \$663,319 for the remainder of the year.

**Mike Cunegin made a motion to accept the financial report as presented. Cal Miller seconded it. Motion passed 7-0.**

**REPORT FROM COUNCIL APPOINTMENT:**

**Jesse Rios, Council Appointment to the Child Care Facilities Board** presented a report stating that this is his second year on the board and he has enjoyed serving and learning about Youth Services Center, how the system operates, what the funding does and the services they provide. This year he will take it to the next level by getting more involved and as a board member carry the message out to the neighborhoods. He feels he can bring another fresh

perspective and some new ideas to the board. All of the people he serves with are excellent individuals and he appreciates being with them. He thanked Council for his appointment to the Child Care Facilities Board.

**Mike Cunegin:** Mr. Rios represents us well and has always been a breath of fresh air and he is very well thought of by the board.

**Item 1: Paula Hughes:** If you recall last month we talked about appropriating the back debt owed to the state and this request is just fulfilling the consensus we agreed on last month.

**Darren Vogt:** The concept was to go in and just get it off of the table so we wouldn't be looking at \$7 or 8,000,000 that wasn't really that much.

**Mike Cunegin made a motion to approve item 1 in the amount of \$3,992,596. Roy Buskirk seconded it. Motion passed 7-0**

**Item 2: Sheriff Jim Herman** requested an appropriation of \$27,000 to pay for part time Commissary help; this money has been receipted into the general fund from the Commissary fund.

**Cal Miller made a motion to approve item 2 in the amount of \$27,000. Darren Vogt seconded it. Motion passed 7-0.**

**Item 3: Sheriff Herman:** The next item is a request of \$5,290 to purchase a copy machine for the Nurses at the Jail. There is still a question of leasing versus buying copy machines and what was the appropriate thing to do in this case. We talked to Bruce Little and he felt that buying the copy machine is the way to go. This machine is 4 years old and on its last legs.

**Darren Vogt:** Councilman Moss and I met and had a conversation with a representative of Icon. If we are replacing a copier every 4 years that to me seems like it might be a situation where, in this case, leasing might be make more sense. The representative from Icon could do a complete analysis of our copy machine needs, basically a needs assessment. It takes 4-6 weeks to get that process completely done. There is an in depth version that they would charge a nominal fee for and then there is one they are willing to do that is free.

It would be my recommendation that we have someone who has the knowledge to go in and analyze our complete needs as a county wide system and see what is best. There may be some instances where purchasing makes more sense and some where it doesn't. We will need Mr. Little's assistance in

gathering information regarding the maintenance contract for the full analysis.

**Sheriff Herman:** This is a very important part of our operation; one of the things we are having problems with is that the machine just does not work properly. The medical records the nurses copy must be clean copies and they are not. I would like to get this done so that they are up and operational.

**Paul Moss:** Maybe as a bit of middle ground you would be willing to discuss this particular copier with the individual from Icon and maybe we could meet you needs by getting a copier in place that might fit into whatever program we end up going into whether it's a lease program for the entire county or just abandoning that idea. I think this can be done very quickly; she can come out and give you a quote in a heartbeat and I suspect it will be very comparable to the quote that you have.

**Sheriff Herman:** I need to have this problem solved and I will do anything to solve it. We understood that there would not be money in the budget for 400 series items in 2006 but there was money in 2005 and we should ask for the items then. At that time this copy machine was not giving us trouble but it is now and we need to address it.

**Darren Vogt:** I don't think that there is anyone here that doesn't want to address this problem; that is not the issue. One of the other things we talked about at the last council meeting was that maybe scanning would be a better and more efficient way for you to do these documents. That is the area that I would like to see explored

**Cal Miller:** Scanning is an amazing tool and it is fairly easy to use.

**Paul Moss** stated that this discussion basically reflects the need to have an assessment of the County's copier situation and the need to have somebody come in, objectively, and take a look at how we provide copier machines to the various departments and potentially leasing those machines. A lot of the issues that have been talked about, if we were utilizing one company and leasing the copiers', maintenance and replacement would not be an issue because they would be automatically refreshed on a specific schedule. This illustrates the need to do exactly what we are trying to do. To go full circle he asked that Sheriff Herman meet with this individual; I think she will meet the needs very quickly and don't think there will be a significant price increase but if there is Councilman Moss stated he would be willing to carry your case forward for that additional expense.

**Paul Moss:** I think it is important to know that we kind of jumped the gun in terms of this conversation simply because you have the request for this copier on the agenda today. Our intent was not to throw this out there; it was to talk to Mr. Little and the Commissioners because ultimately to enter into a contract, with whoever it may be, has to be a decision of the Commissioners. We did not intend to just throw this out there as a side project. I think it is an appropriate project to undertake if we can convince the principles involved.

**Mike Cunegin:** I understand what this body wants to do with moving toward the study with Mr. Little and the Commissioners. I think the Sheriff wants some guidance because if this idea doesn't pan out should he come back to us for a copier? I just want to get everybody on the same page.

**Sheriff Herman:** My only option if the project doesn't pan out is to come back to you and ask for the copier.

**Paula Hughes:** I am still of the opinion that since we increased your budget by \$500,000 last year and if this is a dire need you can find the money to buy this copy machine.

**Sheriff Herman:** I will do whatever needs to be done because we need this copier. I would like to know where to go next.

**Bruce Little:** The machine that Sheriff Herman is looking at has many options available such as scanning, faxing etc and is an entirely full functioning machine. What you are talking about isn't truly a lease of a machine it is purchasing copying service. Where you are paying not just for the equipment you are paying for every copy that you produce. The company will place that copier in your office at no charge and then charge you a per copying fee. A lot of times when the consultants come in and make a proposal to you, after studying your situation, a significant portion of the savings is going to be in reducing the number of copiers that you have placed.

I have certain skepticism as to how long range those types of savings can be maintained. Machines tend to place themselves where they are needed; if someone has to walk 150 feet instead of 25 feet to a copier eventually things have a way of trickling back in and I have seen it happen time and time again and most of the savings seem to dissipate. I don't care what kinds of rules and procedures you put in place.

If someone is getting consistently only 4 years out of a copier I would say that the machine is undersized for the application. I would like to take a look at how many copies are being produced by that machine. Is this is a situation where it is getting 24 hour use like at the Jail. The purchasing mechanism

doesn't make the machine right or wrong; that is just a manner of financing. He needs the right machine for his operation and 4 years on a machine tells me that is what we should be looking at not the method in purchasing but the machine itself.

**Paul Moss:** Do you have a wild guess as to what our costs are per copy?

**Bruce Little:** Off the top of my head I can give you a figure of 1.5 cents a copy.

**Paul Moss:** It is my personal experience that the situation we are talking about going to the cost is less than a penny a copy. All I am asking is that we have a hopefully objective analytical not antidotal approach and study treating it as a large business approach to this problem. You have hit on very important issues; we don't know how many copiers we need for the County at this point and I think having someone come in and look at it will do no harm.

We are talking about having Icon come in and simply do an analysis of the copiers in the county. Then they will provide us with a proposal and I assume we will put that out to bid at some point. The issue is that they need a copier immediately and I am suggesting that they get one through Icon assuming that it is similarly priced to the one they have asked for.

**Bruce Little:** We have a contract in place for your copiers and I don't see an over riding reason to breach the contract to go to another supplier.

**Patt Kite:** I agree with you Councilman Moss but if Icon comes in with a price that is out of the park he is still stuck for another period of time with a copier that doesn't work. We need a plan B.

**Bruce Little:** We have a contract to purchase copiers of this size from Adams Remco and it ties us to Adams Remco for the rest of this year. This is part of the program that the County has had for years and it is how we are able to negotiate as low a price as we have on copiers.

**Sheriff Herman:** This copier runs 24 hours a day 365 days a year and that probably has an effect on its lifespan.

**Darren Vogt:** Bruce, have you looked at this machine to see if it is the correct size?

**Bruce Little:** I look at enough copiers during the year that I couldn't be sure if I have looked at this one or not.

**Bill Smallwood:** Usually Adams Remco recommend a certain machine according to the amount of copies we make.

**Darren Vogt:** The reason that's important is that as I understand the contract it is by size so if they only sell this size and if we need the next size up someone else can offer a larger one. That is why we need our independent third party analyzing how many copies we need to get the right copier.

**Cal Miller:** Despite the fact that we appear to be tied to a vendor for the year there is no reason why this shouldn't go forward to launch us into next year. If the cost of a copy is a penny five and we can be serviced well at the cost of a penny by a vendor who is going to place the right machines in the right place that is a no brainier. I think it is worth undertaking so we are not continually deciding whether something needs to be replaced or not we can lean on the vendor and let them take care of the situation.

**Bruce Little:** When it comes to putting together specifications for an RFP I would be loath to rely on any vendor who plans to put in a price on that. If this is the approach that the Commissioners and Council decide they want to take; as far as acquiring copying service rather than leasing or purchasing a machine; I would strongly suggest that we join in with Fort Wayne Community Schools and their approach which is very similar to what you are doing. However, they had the insight to not rely on the vendors to put their bids together for them they hired an outside consultant absolutely independent who does not sell copiers. This man was the top copier guy at Buyers Laboratory who started his own business; he charges an upfront fee for his services. He put the proposal together for them, put it out, helped them review it and he also provides service throughout the life of the contract and overseeing it to make sure the vendors is living up to the promises made. I would strongly recommend against just pulling in a vendor or two and say what do you think about that. If you want to take that approach do it right and go with someone who is truly independent. Fort Wayne Community Schools contract is coming up and I will check them.

**Paula Hughes:** Commissioner Peters, would you be willing to consider something like that countywide?

**Nelson Peters:** I think we need to do what ever is cost effective, but based on what I have heard I would be a little bit concerned about reaching out and going with one vendor.

**Paul Moss:** We have not reached out to on vendor; we had a conversation. We met with an individual yesterday and our intent was to then speak with the Commissioners and you and hope to get you to buy into looking into a variety

of vendors. It just so happens that this vendor is the largest one out there. I am familiar with them from my work and the state utilizes this vendor so there is some familiarity there but this is the first time I had ever met this individual. I agree that we need to be objective but I disagree that we need to spend money on a consultant to come in and tell us how to do this. I think that should be your position and you should be objective in this as well as in terms of managing that process. I don't see a problem of having these businesses come in because all they are doing is an analysis and then bidding on it. If we have a comprehensive approach to this there will be a savings in terms of the cost and in terms of being more efficient and of having a more formal approach to copier replacement and things of that nature.

**Mike Cunegin:** There has been some good conversation but what are we going to do for the Sheriff now.

**Cal Miller:** My sentiment is shared with Councilman Cunegin. It sounds like we have a frame work shaping up for analysis that could hit the ground running in 2007. We are contractually obligated to a particular company this year but we have time and a frame work, great ideas to move it forward. **With that I would like to make a motion to appropriate the dollars today for Sheriff Herman's needs of \$5,290. Mike Cunegin seconded it**

**Darren Vogt:** Sheriff please get with Mr. Little to make sure that you are getting the right size of a copier for your needs.

**Paul Moss:** Is there a commitment on the part of the Commissioners to undertaking that approach in terms of the analysis?

**Nelson Peters:** Absolutely but it will probably necessitate an additional appropriation.

**Roy Buskirk:** Before we vote it is my understanding that the new machine has the scanning ability and I think we need to put that into practice because there seems to be a savings.

**Paula Hughes:** All those in favor please signify by saying aye and those opposed the same. Motion passed 6-0-1 with Paula Hughes voting nay.

**Item 4: Tim Miller, Circuit Court Administrator** requested an additional appropriation in the amount of \$6,840 for digital recording equipment.

**Paul Moss made a motion to approve item 4 in the amount of \$6,840 for digital recording equipment for Circuit Court. Patt Kite seconded it. Motion passed 7-0.**

**Items 5-9: Judge Charles Pratt, Allen Superior Court and Jerry Noble, Superior Court Executive** requested an appropriation in the total amount of \$55,205 for an employee, FICA, PERF, Group Health and Group Life Insurance. The appropriation will be fully reimbursed by the Division of Children's Services. The funds appropriated will pay the salary and benefits for the CHINS Mental Health Services Coordinator position.

The number of CHINS cases are increasing, a trend that is not likely to alter. Many cases involve parents and children who have multiple mental health diagnoses and who have multiple matters pending before several courts. Coordination of services and specialized assistance to these families will expedite permanency for the children and will reduce long term costs.

**Mike Cunegin made a motion to approve items 5-9 for a total of \$55,205. Paul Moss seconded it. Motion passed 7-0.**

**Mike Cunegin made a motion to approve a salary ordinance for an annual salary of \$51,038. Darren Vogt seconded it. Motion passed 7-0.**

**Items 10-15: Chris Dunn, Executive Director of Youth Services Center** requested an additional appropriation in the YSC Placement Fund in the amount of \$25,898. This will pay for Food, Operating Supplies and Recreation items for Yoder House and Kryder House.

**Darren Vogt made a motion to approve items 10-15 in the total amount of \$25,898. Mike Cunegin seconded it. Motion passed 7-0.**

**Item 16: Lisa Blosser, Auditor** requested \$45,000 appropriated in the County User Fee Fund for Law Enforcement continuing education fees. The State Board of Accounts is now requiring that we appropriate this fund.

**Darren Vogt made a motion to approve item 16 in the amount of \$45,000. Patt Kite seconded it. Motion passed 7-0.**

#### **SALARY ORDINANCE:**

**Ed Steenman, County IT Director** requested a salary ordinance for the new Project Manager which is classified as a Special Occupation with an annual salary of \$58,300.

**Roy Buskirk made a motion to approve the salary ordinance for the Project Manager. Paul Moss seconded it. Motion passed 7-0.**

**GRANTS:**

**Mike McAlexander, Chief Deputy Prosecutor** requested permission to apply for renewal of the Domestic Violence Coordinator Investigator grant position. The current grant period expires on June 30, 2006. The period for this renewal is July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007.

**Mike Cunegin made a motion to approve this grant renewal. Roy Buskirk seconded it. Motion passed 7-0.**

**Mike McAlexander** requested permission to apply for the renewal of the Child Advocacy Center (CAC) grant with the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI). The current grant period expires on June 30, 2006. the grant period is July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007.

**Mike Cunegin made a motion to approve this grant renewal. Roy Buskirk seconded it. Motion passed 7-0.**

**Lin Wilson, Grant Administrator** speaking on behalf of the Center for Nonviolence requested permission to apply for a grant from Families in Crisis: Women's Empowerment through Advocacy Support and Education. The total amount requested is \$27,000 and is a pass through sponsored by Allen Superior Court.

**Mike Cunegin made a motion to approve this request. Roy Buskirk seconded it. Motion passed 7-0.**

**Paula Hughes:** We have a couple other grant issues this morning; one of them is that Council needs to approve the application for electronic deposit of funds regarding the Riverhaven Grant.

**Cal Miller made a motion to approve the application for electronic deposit of funds for the Riverhaven Grant. Darren Vogt seconded it. Motion passed 7-0.**

**DISCUSSION: Allen County Grant Procedure & Policy Manual**

**Lin Wilson:** The Allen County Grant Procedure Manual has been updated; it took affect in 2002.

The policy is a different issue; we don't have a policy that ensures that every grant is presented for Council consideration. It puts us at a disadvantage because when we get electronic transfers sometimes the money sits in the Treasurers office because they don't know where to put it. This way; if the grant had come before Council and taken to the Auditor's office we will be

able to have a heads up and be aware that a certain amount of money is coming in. We will then be able to have a file on the money and be able to track it. The policy will establish that you need to come to Council also the Commissioners will be involved because funds need to be set up usually by ordinance.

A procedure is how you do it and a policy is why you do it.

**Cal Miller made a motion to accept the revisions in the Procedure Manual. Darren Vogt seconded it. Motion passed 7-0.**

**Lin Wilson** will present the policy manual to the Commissioners for their consideration.

### **The Board of Commissioners: Discussion of the Sheriff's Building**

**Marla Irving, Commissioner, Nelson Peters, Commissioner and Sheriff Jim Herman** requested Council assistance on where the search for a building should go. The Commissioners gave Council a spread sheet regarding Sheriff location options. They believe the cost of new construction for a building would be \$100 a square foot for the office and \$50 a square foot for garage space. This would include things other than the actual structure for a cost of approximately \$2.6 million.

They researched the cost of moving the Sheriff downtown in either the Building Department/Highway Building or the City/County Building basement. This would mean that we would have to find places for the people that work in the Building Department/Highway Building and the City/County Building. This would cost approximately \$1.7 million.

**Sheriff Herman** stated that he was not in favor of a downtown location for this part of the Department.

They also researched the cost of buying and renovating an existing building would cost approximately \$2.6 million.

After a lengthy discussion the Council reached a consensus that a new building on the Lima Road property seemed like the best option. Nothing formal was decided.

The Commissioners have pledged \$1.8 million, the Sheriff \$300,000 and then County Council would have to come up with \$500,000 or more.

**Cal Miller** asked Sheriff Herman to seek plans that would accommodate current needs and also to present a 'dream scenario' that would take into consideration future needs.

**Sheriff Herman** stated that he would do that because he would like to get his employees out of the current headquarters before next winter.

**Paula Hughes:** We have been talking about efficiency in County Government for quite some time I would like to have your reports on the departments that they are liaison to.

Each Council member reported on their departments; reporting which departments they had talked to and what they felt could be combined. It was stated that there is not as much overlap between city and county functions as people might think, but that Council will pursue efficiencies. A joint meeting between City and County Council has been scheduled for April 10.

**Paula Hughes:** The next step is that we have been talking to the Commissioners about continuing the Strategic Planning effort that began last fall with an evaluation of the long term capital needs and operational needs of the county departments. We can start to develop a system in this county that will project at least a rolling 5 years basis what the big expenditures will be and start to get our arms around what our future will look like.

We would like to talk to every department in the county; the Auditor's office has volunteered to help us manage this process as a pre cursor to our budget process. It is important that a Council person and a Commissioner go and talk to the departments about what their needs are in the individual departments.

If we can get consensus from this council I will co-author, with Marla Irving, President of the Commissioners, a letter to department heads. The Auditor has already put together a form, essentially, that would address what the capital needs and planning needs are. Is this an appropriate next step?

**Paul Moss:** I think it is very appropriate and this has been a good discussion and it illustrates the fact that there is not a lot of overlap between city and county government. There is a huge misconception out there in terms of the amount of overlap between city and county government and quite frankly I had that perception to a certain extent as well.

I think what is really needed is some outside forensic accounting analysis. Council and the Commissioners in trying to put some of this to bed agree to cooperate fully in terms of giving information from the County perspective to

an outside entity, an accounting firm or something of that nature. We then try to convince the City Council and City Administrative to do the same.

Pending legislation affecting local consolidation was discussed. A discussion was held regarding whether a countywide vote should be held on a proposed merger, or whether separate votes should be held for incorporated and unincorporated areas. Of the seven Council members 5 support one vote and Mike Cunegin and Roy Buskirk support two votes.

Discussion was also held regarding the investigation into the county legal fees by uncovering at least one area for improvement. They asked why the county spends more than \$800,000 a year on attorneys and they learned that some department heads don't see the bills for the work that attorneys do for them. County Council is determined to find ways to save money and feel that looking into these fees is a very good place to start.

**Darren Vogt** said that he wants to investigate whether hiring some attorneys and a paralegal to work full time for the county would cut overall legal expenses.

**Cal Miller** stated that there is much to consider because unless we can find attorneys with the knowledge needed we may be putting our legal problems in the hands of people that are not, perhaps, as equipped as we would like them to be to deal with our problems. He feels that Council as well as the Commissioners needs to explore this situation.

**Marla Irving:** I think there a couple of things that need to be added to the list. You have to look at the numbers that makes a big difference; when you look at the attorney that strictly represent the Judges and Prosecutors; that is \$100,000 right there. You have another \$17,667.02 that is with another attorney. When we look at law firms we have 9 that we use; and there are over 50 attorneys in those firms that are available to us.

**Paul Moss:** You don't need to use an attorney for every little thing.

**Darren Vogt** stated that he would like to meet with Commissioner Irving to further discuss attorney costs and bring that information back before the council.

**Marla Irving:** One thing that I have asked over and over again and have never been able to figure out is why the county paid another attorney to defend them in a mandate on the juvenile center and that is exactly what we were doing. I asked several times who paid this person as he came to all of the construction meetings and other meetings that were held. I think that if

you are going to look at it we need to figure out why we were spending money on county attorneys to defend themselves against other county attorneys in mandated situations. I kept asking what tax dollars are paying for this and continues to pay for it.

**Cal Miller** thanked Susan Whetstone for the job she has done over the past 25 years and wished her well in retirement.

**Darren Vogt made a motion to waive the second reading on any matter approved today for which it may be deemed necessary for the County Council meeting of February 16, 2006. Patt Kite seconded it. Motion passed 6-0-1 with Mike Cunegin absent.**

The next meeting will be held on March 16, 2006 at 8:30 am.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:20 pm.