

**ADDENDUM
ALLEN COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 16, 2006**

Paula Hughes: We have not formally re-appointed Judy Macon to the PTABOA Board.

Cal Miller made a motion to re-appoint Judy Macon to the PTABOA Board. Paul Moss seconded it. Motion passed 7-0.

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Paula Hughes: I would like for each council member to report on the department that they are liaison for and also the conservations for potential for efficiency.

1. **Paula Hughes: Auditor-**If there were combined departments the areas of overlap for the Auditor's office would be: Payroll Division where there are 2 employees and the Finance Division with the City Controller which would involve a total of 7 employees. The bulk of the employees in the auditor's office relates to the taxing system and would be done regardless of any merger. The Auditor has continually been overhauling her department looking for efficiencies and has had an additional amount of mandated work placed into that department over the last 3 years and at this time she feels that she could not be more efficient.

iMAP: there is a need to be more efficient and have initiated discussions in a very preliminary way with the city of Fort Wayne they have approached us about using the information that we have invested and are aware and acknowledge that their GIS does not come close to reaching the benchmarks that we have with our information and they desire to use the information that we have and are keeping up to date. This was originally to be self supporting but it has become clear that it will never happen. The launched their web portal this year and have picked up subscribers but no where near the volume we had expected. Many department use this system and I have no doubt that it will remain a viable project for Allen County.

The Alliance: This is already a combined department and I really didn't spend a lot of time at looking at other ways to accomplish things there.

2. **Cal Miller-Allen County Building Department:** I asked Dave Fuller who his counterpart in the City was and said I haven't had one since 1974 and they have been very successful.

Clerk of Courts: I did not meet with her but will shortly.

Election Board and Voter Registration: I didn't believe, at first glance, warranted the time because I didn't see any overlap that they have with the City.

Purchasing: I talked with Bruce Little and asked him if there was a merger of City and County government would it make sense to have one Purchasing Department and he said yes. With respect to the current set up with two governments operating it would be difficult to consolidate those two departments because the County and City are two very different customers and as we know in talking to Bruce they operate very lean anyway. It didn't sound like it would be impossible as it would be disruptive and a lot of details would have to be ironed out. I think that if it ever came to consolidation that Bruce would be up to the challenge.

Recorder: This is one that I thought may have some merit because of all the recording they do there. I talked to John McGauley because he has studied it and he continues to do so in preparation for the Primary Election. He assured me that there is very little overlap because whether you are in the city or county they go to the Records office and pay a fee and didn't see any companion department in the city that serves the same function. But he did say that if it is there he will find it.

3. Darren Vogt-Assessors: They do the job for everyone within the City and the County so that is pretty much off the table.

Sheriff: That is a very, very large target. The conversation centered around our favorite discussion which may be even more painful than the copy machine conversation. I don't even think I need to say what that is out loud but that would be three numbers put together. The direction I gave the Sheriff to put the ball back into the City's court was to design what he thinks is the most efficient way to run that department, in writing and hand it to the City and say this is what we are willing to do for 911 services and is the actual way it will get done and start that conversation from there. Then allow them to create their own plan saying what they are willing to do. There have been rumors that have never been put down in writing and that are the critical part of this conversation. If it makes sense and I can support it we can move forward. This conversation also included the B of I which is also a critical part of the operation. The Sheriff has several issues on the table and the earlier discussion we had regarding the building is probably more pressing so it will be a challenge to keep that in his forefront. I am trying to do that as well as getting that building issue over and done with from the initial stages so he can concentrate on other things.

4. Mike Cunegin-City/County Maintenance Department: There is no possibility there since they are the only show in town.

Coroner: There is nothing there that could be combined.

Coliseum: This is a separate entity unto its self and they work together with the City and the County.

Prosecuting Attorney: There are some components of the Prosecutors office that they said they would be willing to overtake in the area of Neighborhood Code.

Public Defender: There is nothing that could be combined there.

Safety & Environmental Affairs: This also involves Solid Waste and the City and County already combine some elements to a degree.

Youth Services Center: Nothing to combine.

Community Corrections: Nothing to combine.

5. Patt Kite: I must apologize to my fellow council members that I have not had the opportunity to talk to all of my departments. I finished a career and had been out of there for three months and have had to play catch up.

County Extension: I haven't talked to them.

Treasurer: I don't see any overlap or anyway we can merge them with any one.

Byron Health Center: I don't see anyway to merge them with another department.

Park & Recreation: I talked to Mr. Zartman some time ago about merging with the City Parks but he felt in order to save money that way he would have to bring his employees salaries up and cut services. What he did tell me about was a Metro Park District concept that is being done in Ohio and Michigan; particularly in the Detroit area and would be a legislative issue. He feels that this would be good avenue to pursue and he has someone that he could have work on that project. They would have some better funding and more taxing authority that way.

6. Paul Moss: I would just ay right off the bat that I think this is a process rather than an end result. With that in mind in going through my list of

departments I have had some conversations with the individuals managing those departments.

Commissioners: Obviously they are a critical component in these types of discussions and I think, from an efficiency standpoint, there are a lot of department who report to the Commissioners who are continually looking for efficiencies.

Human Resources: I have not had an opportunity to talk to Brian Dumford extensively about this but I think intuitively and we all understand that if there is some sort of a combined government that is a natural area where a single entity serving the new governmental body.

Circuit & Superior Courts: Obviously there is not a whole lot of opportunity with these departments. I am going to assume that there continues to be discussion at the legislature about some sort of a separate tax levy and that factors into the overall discussion of any type of consolidated government; as a side discussion I should say.

Department of Planning Services: This certainly seems to come up frequently in discussions with here is an area that could potentially be combined. I find it interesting that we have separate Plan Commissions for the City and the County and so I think that is an area for continued discussion and there has been progress in that regard. In terms of actual department to department combination for these departments I talked to Ms. Bowman and she certainly does not appear to live in fear of that process or discussion. She in fact has some very good points in the positives and there are certainly some negatives.

On thing that I find interesting and I think is true across the board when you look at E-911, Communications, the Planning Department or really any area or department that could potentially be combined it seems to me that there is an assumption that it will just be absorbed into a City structure. The way to get to the basics and the core of facts is to look at the budgets of those departments. I think people need to realize that as a general rule the City payroll particularly if they are union jobs is substantially higher. Simply combining, that is a key question to be addressed. It appears there is not a whole lot of enthusiasm for pay cuts. Unless you are willing to do that, you are creating efficiencies, you are creating inefficiencies.

7. Roy Buskirk: The Highway Department does not have as many things that are similar. Salt and sand, the mixture is different. City's goes into storm systems.

The Surveyor's is not an overlap. The city does not have Surveyor. We are working together on the Clean Water Act.

NIRRC and UTAB are countywide or regional.

The Soil and Water District is funded greatly through grants and there is not duplication between the City and County.

Paula Hughes: Thank you for undertaking the exercise. There is not as much overlap as was thought.

We have been talking to the Commissioners about the long term needs, Capital needs, rolling five year basis as to what the needs would be. We have put together small teams and will go out to talk to every department in the County about what their needs. There are better efficiencies to be had.

I will co-author with Commissioner Irving a letter to the department heads.

Paul Moss: This has been a good discussion and demonstrates that there is not a huge overlap of departments within the City and County. Focus needs to be on the efficiencies. We need to address some of the issues with maybe some outside analysis. We need to agree to cooperate fully with an outside entity and convince the City Council to do the same. Simple cooperation and a true commitment to provide information from both parties is needed.