

**ALLEN COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
DECEMBER 17, 2020  
8:30 AM**

The Allen County Council met on Thursday, December 17, 2020 at 8:30 am in the Discussion Room at Citizens Square. The purpose of the meeting was for additional appropriations, transfer of funds in excess of the current budget, grants, budget approval and any other business to come before Council.

Attending: Robert A. Armstrong, Joel M. Benz, Sheila Curry-Campbell, Kenneth C. Fries, Tom A. Harris, Kyle A. Kerley and Christopher Spurr.

Also Attending: Nick Jordan, Auditor.

The meeting was called to order by President Joel Benz with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silent prayer.

**Joel Benz:** Good morning everyone. First on the agenda is the approval of the November 19, 2020 meeting minutes. Are there any additions or corrections?

**Tom Harris:** Move to approve the minutes from November 19, 2020.

**Kyle Kerley:** Second.

**Joel Benz:** All in favor signify by saying aye, opposed, same sign. The motion passes 6-0-1 (Curry-Campbell absent). Next is the financial report from Auditor Nick Jordan.

**Nick Jordan:** Good morning, Council. In your packet you will see the financials through the end of November. In looking at the General Fund you will see that we are sitting extremely healthy and should probably end the year with a record cash balance. Miscellaneous Revenue is approximately ten percent above the 100 mark and well over where we would be year-to-date. Eight million of that is due to the Cares Act reimbursement and we will get approximately another \$3 million back. That will only increase adding to the actual cash balance at the bottom. As you look through the other Major Fund financials, pay attention to the side of actual disbursements you will see that almost every fund in there with the exception of the County Bond Fund is trending well below where we would be on a year-to-date scale of expenditures. There are multiple funds with multiple fund balances.

**Tom Harris:** Question. In terms of the rollover, is it too early to anticipate what you think rollover might be for this coming year?

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**Nick Jordan:** When you look at the General Fund, right hand side lower third, you will see the percentage of disbursements is about 80% of \$118 million budget and so it will be estimating well more than last year which was about \$5 million. I would assume at least that if not almost double that. Some of that is due to the fact that we have gotten \$12 million back on COVID the expenses will be net zero and also receiving an additional million and some on LIT Certified Shares.

**Tom Harris:** It looks like we are up \$4 million in Miscellaneous.

**Nick Jordan:** Actually, if you back out the \$8 million for Cares, we are down \$4 million which brings us right around the 90% mark through 90% of the year-to-date. Absent the Cares reimbursement, we should still end close to 100% for Miscellaneous Revenue. I will note some of the ones that will be short are the Sheriff since we moved Work Release the money is not going into the General Fund as well as the care of prisoners is lower than it was in prior years and/or estimated.

**Tom Harris:** I will move for approval of the financial report.

**Kenny Fries:** Second.

**Joel Benz:** We have a motion and a second. All in favor say aye, those opposed, like sign. The motion passes 6-0-1 (Curry-Campbell absent). Typically at this point we would open it up for public comment but we are going to delay that just a little bit here. The court system is going to make some adjustment here and is moving forward. They have a full schedule today and so we are going to have Judge Davis come forward and whomever else for the discussion of several items for Circuit Court. Congratulations on your new role.

**Judge Davis:** Thank you, Councilman Benz. There are a lot of distinguished guests here and veterans and the fact that I am going before them, I am a little humbled. I am here today, as you all know, Judge Felts is retiring and I have been elected as the new Circuit Court Judge. I will say on the record that I have big shoes to fill. With that being said, the landscape of Circuit Court is going to look a little different going forward with some of the things that Judge Felts had begun and I want to pick up and run with. First and foremost, I will just go down the agenda with the consideration of a salary ordinance establishing the pay for the Finance Coordinator. In talking with Mr. Zimmerman who is the current Chief Probation Officer, he and I working with Nick Jordan, I really appreciate Mr. Jordan's help moving forward. We are going to restructure the way that we take in money at the Allen County Adult Probation Department. Currently the Allen County Adult Probation

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Department takes in user fees, restitution and all of the fees that we put on our offenders that they have to pay in order to be on probation and make victims whole. However, we are going to move away from that and not take those monies in directly. We are going to utilize the Clerk's Office. I haven't talked to Chris Nancarrow yet but we are working on a plan with Nick Jordan and as soon as we have that plan ironed out, which I think as of yesterday we were having emails flying around to see how to do it. I think we have good collaboration in the County to make sure that we are not handling the money anymore and that other people are handling the money and that we are in good favor with the State Board of Accounts. What I would like to do is to eliminate the two individuals right now that are responsible for the money and would like to create a new PAT 4 position of a new Finance Coordinator. Because we are not going to be handling the money as we are now, Mr. Zimmerman and I feel that this would only be a one-person job. The two individuals that I am eliminating are happy to reapply for the position and I am open to that. I just don't think we need two people in this position considering that we are going to set up a new way of handing the money. That is the first thing I am asking for. Do you want me to go through all of them and then you can ask questions?

**Joel Benz:** Yes, go right ahead.

**Judge Davis:** I think you all know that I am not asking for any new money from the taxpayers. I have worked with Mr. Zimmerman on this to make sure that the budget of Circuit Court will not change. This is all a restructuring working with these lovely ladies of HR and within the current budget. I am not asking for any new money this morning. The second new position that I would like to create is a Court Administrator. Currently, Mr. Zimmerman is in a two-fold position. He is the Court Administrator and Chief Probation Officer. As I move to the next issue about his salary and his job, we need to bifurcate out the Administrator of Circuit Court and the Chief Probation Officer. I will combine my explanation as I talk about Adult Probation. Judge Felts has begun this year with the prompting of the Indiana Supreme Court, a new evidence based problem solving court for addicted offenders, drunk drivers and those struggling with alcohol addiction. It is the first OVWI Problem Solving Court in Indiana and one of the few in the country. Our Supreme Court is pretty excited about that. Judge Felts has already gotten that up and running with Eric Zimmerman and Eric Zimmerman, as Chief Probation Officer, will be fully responsible for getting that certified in May. Under Judge Felts' leadership, it was preliminarily certified and created and it is the first problem solving court that will fully run through the Adult Probation Department. That laden the Chief Probation Officer with a lot of administration responsibilities. As you know there is a big push and I am a big advocate of this but those individuals caught in the criminal justice

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system that struggle with addiction, mental illness, are low level offenders that are not necessarily hurting the community we are really moving to a problem solving court model. As you know, Allen County has probably the most problem solving courts in the State. We have Drug Court in Superior Court and in Circuit Court there are three problem solving courts. We are the only court in the State that has that many problem solving courts to which the Allen County Chief Probation Officer is a part of each of those. Circuit Court has Veterans Court, Restoration Court which is the mental illness addiction court and now this brand new OVWI. This is going to fall squarely on Mr. Zimmerman to get it certified, under my leadership of course. There are so many added responsibilities of him being the Chief Probation Officer that is only makes sense, and he agrees to bifurcate out the duties of Administrator of Circuit Court which is the Judges' right arm and Allen County Adult Probation. Additionally, Mr. Zimmerman and I have talked and I am very active in the urban community with Fort Wayne United and some other initiatives with the Ten Point Coalition and I would like for Eric to also be a part of that to start mentoring some of our young urban boys that come through the Adult Probation Office. Get those mentors from Fort Wayne United and collaborate with those kinds of initiatives to ensure that we can get them to where they need to be. With all of these new programs and new initiatives that are going to fall squarely on the administration of Mr. Zimmerman, I really feel it is necessary to incentivize him which is why I am asking him to be bumped up a little bit. And that is not to mention the 35 years he has been with the County. He has so much institutional knowledge and I need him on my executive team. He is going to remain on the executive team of Circuit Court along with my Administrator and new Magistrate. Also Terri Berry, who has been there a long time, will become my new Director of Court Operations. I think I have a really strong team that I am asking all of you to approve. This team is essential and I believe for reducing recidivism, I think this is a team for strong leadership in Circuit Court moving forward and to accomplish everything that we need to accomplish. The other thing I am putting on Eric's plate is a win that the Attorney General gave Circuit Court money to start a new pilot for our addicted offenders outside of the OVWI Court. Hope Probation is run through the Probation Department and Hope is another way of trying to divert individuals so that we don't revoke their probation. We have a new pilot that Eric is just now starting to train some of his Probation Officers in conjunction with the money that we get from the A.G.'s Office to make this pilot work and hopefully move forward to have a better way to deal with keeping high accountability on our addicted offenders. The world looks a little different in the criminal justice system right now. Obviously the bad boys, murderers, rapists, molesters, if we are going to give them constitutional rights it will be through Superior Court and that is what prisons are for. The wave that our Supreme Court is looking to us to do is really to find the low level addicted offenders that have very high

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needs and give them the services that they need. Our veterans are mentally ill and now the OVWI Court as well as many of our urban young 18-years old to 24 years old that fall into the initiative of Fort Wayne United, we need to take our Probation Office and not that it hasn't been a good one but the world is changing. We have to have strong leadership at the top of those departments to make sure these people don't come back and recidivate. My humble opinion is that those in leadership that are my stakeholders, the Kim Churchwards of the world and the Eric Zimmermans of the world are getting very taxed right now. They are being asked to do things that have not been seen in the past. Ms. Churchward has been in front of you many times and we, as judges, are putting all onus on them. And I am doing that in Circuit Court to Eric Zimmerman. Putting all onus on them to make sure that we do what is right in the criminal justice system and it is just different of what it historically looked like ten years ago. I am open for questions if you have anything else. I don't know if HR has anything to say.

**Tracy Mitchener:** I think it was great that we did a great job of working together through everything. HR does support these positions. At Personnel Committee, these positions were approved.

**Joel Benz:** Council, are there any questions? Councilman Fries.

**Kenny Fries:** I assume Eric's job is not going to be posted. Will the other jobs be posted?

**Judge Davis:** The Court Administrator and Financial Coordinator will be posted.

**Kenny Fries:** The one thing I cautioned before with the Personnel Committee is that we pay for the position and not the person. The money that we are asking for the Chief Probation Officer is for the position and not for the person. How does this new salary of \$115,746 compare with salaries around the State?

**Judge Davis:** Thank you for asking that question. I did a comparison around the State and Allen County is one of the biggest Counties and he is pretty much underpaid. I looked to Hamilton County which is a smaller County and their Chief Probation Officer is at this rate. I know Hamilton County has a reputation for being a rich County but the reason that I chose Hamilton County is because they have some innovative things that they are doing there much like what I am asking Eric to do. The new pilot for the A.G.'s Office and this new problem solving court that we need to get certified, collaborating with Fort Wayne United initiatives and so I am really putting way more work on him than he has historically seen. Moving forward, I think it is the right

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thing to do. I think this is a fair salary and I think to be honest as a Circuit Court Judge, I think it is appropriate to incentivize him to ensure he is successful in all of these programs. I am committed to it and I know he is committed to it as well. Together, as a team, I want to make sure we are moving forward and that I have really strong leadership in place and being appropriately compensated for what I am asking him to do.

**Kenny Fries:** I will continue until I get stopped, I guess. For the viewing public, you initially said he was the Court Administrator and Chief Probation Officer. You are coming in as a new Judge and you want to set it up the way you want your department to work which we all understand and appreciate. But, he was doing two jobs and now he is going to be doing one and we are going to pay him more money. In your opinion, you are taking jobs away from him but are actually giving him more to do. Correct?

**Judge Davis:** It appears that way but my fear is Judge Felts has been a complete rock star to start up all of these problem solving courts. These problem solving courts have and they are growing. There are more offenders in these programs and now we have just put on his plate a new problem solving court. Like I said, Ms. Churchward is the head of the Veterans Court program and the Restoration Court program however Eric and his people are a part of that and on those teams. The Supreme Court is a stickler with continuing these to be certified pursuant to evidence based practices. Now, I am giving Eric the responsibility of his own problem solving court while he is still doing these two. Additionally, I am giving him a new pilot with money from the Attorney General's Office for the addicted offenders that are typically in the five-ten project that we run a lot of out Hope probationers through. He is dealing weekly with the Attorney General's Office with the Pilots through Sober Peer. That agency is coming in and training. Eric is in charge of all of that. Those are two new programs coupled with initiatives through Fort Wayne United which are things that he hasn't taken on before. In my view, I think it would be disastrous to tell him to be my Court Administrator and go make all of these new programs successful.

**Kenny Fries:** What you are saying is he is getting more responsibility and more money, in a nutshell.

**Judge Davis:** He is getting more responsibility and if I can be so bold, I am not going to micromanage but he has a high accountability bar with me moving forward with these programs.

**Kenny Fries:** You will remember at the Personnel Committee, I made the motion to approve this salary with the caveat that this certified court is to be certified in May. I would like you and Mr. Zimmerman to come to Council in

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June to let us know that it got certified because if it didn't and he is not doing his job, then perhaps we need to look at that salary.

**Judge Davis:** I look forward to seeing you in June with Mr. Zimmerman.

**Kenny Fries:** Thank you.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** Thank you so much for being here today. Can you tell us a little bit more about the Attorney General's pilot program? I heard you say that the two programs that are ran by the City or funded by the City, are there any other outside organizations that will be working with this pilot program?

**Judge Davis:** The pilot is a very interesting pilot. It is the first time it has been tried out in Indiana. Differently than individuals who are addicted to alcohol and are driving is the new problem solving court. This is a different pilot. This is for individuals with heroin addiction, methamphetamine addiction, cocaine addiction and many of these are run through the Hope Probation program. The new pilot is the Attorney General is giving us money so that when our offenders, believe it or not most of our addicted offenders have iPhones and that is the way they connect with their drug dealer. The new pilot, we are going to put an app on our addicted offender's phone and that app will be watched by the Probation Department. Administratively, there is a lot of work to be done. If the addicted offender goes into a problem area, for instance the corner of Coliseum and Goshen Road, that is a very highly addicted area with some of the hotels and the girls that dance over there. If one of our offenders that we are supervising on probation would go into an area like that the Probation Department will get an alert. The Probation Officer can call the offender and say I see you over there at the heroin hotel and I am worried. The addicted offender can go you're right and then they can get them with their sponsor. It is an app on their phone so we can ensure they are not going into high crime areas and are going to work when they are supposed to. They don't have an ankle bracelet on. Ms. Churchward has an ankle bracelet that they can monitor through GPS. Through probation, we don't have that. What we are finding is when someone is addicted and they leave probation and there is a trigger for them, they can go and maybe get drugs and violate probation. We want to catch them before they violate and get them the help they need. It is a very, very high tech way to supervise these probationers. The other question you were asking about the City initiatives like Fort Wayne United that is at the baby stages because the Coronavirus has really disrupted it. I head up the Justice Committee of Fort Wayne United and the Ten Point Coalition. Iric Headley and Joe Jordan and I in conjunction with Mr. Zimmerman and Ms. Churchward and we are taxing the Heads of the Criminal Justice Departments. I point to people like

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Kim Churchward and Eric Zimmerman because they really have a lot on their shoulders to ensure that our recidivism rates go down in addicted offenders and offenders that are losing their way without mentoring. Iric Headley, Joe Jordan and I are in the beginning stages of figuring out how we can utilize some of the Fort Wayne United mentors to come and work with Allen County Adult Probation. I know Judge Trevino and ACJC have already started with it for some of the younger offenders. We are going to collaborate to see if we can get some of these mentors to be honest. Ms. Curry-Campbell, we have talked so many times about how troubled we are with some of our urban young kids. I think Mr. Zimmerman and I agree that some of these troubled offenders that are on probation and dipping their toe in the criminal justice system, mostly felonies, could use some mentorship with individuals that look like them and maybe grew up like them. I think they have more credibility in mentoring some of these young kids that I believe can get out of whatever trouble they are in and move forward into leadership positions in Fort Wayne. That is my goal but with the pandemic, it has been horrible because we can't meet and do things like that. When this crazy pandemic is over Eric and I will sit down with Fort Wayne United folks and see how we can collaborate and mentoring some of the 18 to 24-year-olds that come through Allen County Adult Probation.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** I know a lot of people are talking about criminal justice reform and I think at this point the criminal justice system needs to reform itself. We are all watching and I commend what you are doing with the court system and congratulations once again on your next endeavor.

**Judge Davis:** Thank you, Councilwoman.

**Joel Benz:** Councilman Harris.

**Tom Harris:** In regards to the consideration of the Court Administrator, what percent of that function made up of Eric's job? In other words, if that component is something new or different, those functions fell within Eric's current and existing function and what percent of that was his job?

**Judge Davis:** I think initially, if you asked Mr. Zimmerman right now he would probably say 50% or maybe 60% of his job which is why having all of the new initiatives and programs on his shoulders now, he just can't devote that time. My intent is Terri Berry, who is an essential part of my executive team I would like to move her into Director of Court Operations. I think moving Eric out of that position and seeing what Terri Berry does and she has a lot on her plate and I would like to take some of those things off Ms. Berry's plate and put them on the Court Administrator's plate. Just doing my due diligence, I think it would run the court the way that I want it to run.

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Judge Felts has been so successful but in looking forward into what I want to do in Circuit Court I just think that is the best way to do it to have a really strong administrative team.

**Tom Harris:** The other question is that you are eliminating two positions for the PAT position. What were the levels of the two positions eliminated?

**Tracy Mitchener:** PAT 3.

**Tom Harris:** So you eliminated two PAT 3's?

**Tracy Mitchener:** To create a PAT 4.

**Tom Harris:** Thank you and a final comment, I generally feel supportive of someone new in their position and we try to allow you an opportunity to do the restructuring. I can be supportive of the first two but am concerned on the third one from the standpoint that might be something that you could look at during the next budget. I am concerned that 50% of his functions were taken away but yet we are going to give him a larger increase. I think it is something that you could look at down the road.

**Judge Davis:** I appreciate that comment but I will say that if you really understand the criminal justice system, and I am not saying that you don't, and what I am asking him to do and the things I want to do in the Allen County Adult Probation Office Judge Felts has started so many things that now have to grow and be certified and the new pilot coming from the A.G.'s Office that there are so many more things I am putting on Eric's shoulders that he hasn't historically had to do through Adult Probation and which I think is the right thing to do. It requires more meetings and more time for administrative work. It requires him being present and working with his Probation Officers to make sure these programs are successful. I am going to say this one more time and I feel like a broken record but I think in the criminal justice system we are really trying hard to divert low level addicted offenders and those mentally ill offenders that aren't necessarily hurting the community. We have to have evidence based systems and practices in place to do so. That requires a really strong leader at the top. These programs are really difficult and difficult to get certified. The Supreme Court is watching us and Allen County has been a leader in those programs. I need a leader in Adult Probation to make sure that he has the time and energy and support from me to make this happen. I appreciate what this appears to be but I would invite you anytime to come and watch a problem solving court. Judge Gull has run a very good Drug Court for a long time and I am looking to her for mentorship. I just think we need to ensure that we don't lose the Eric Zimmermans of the world or Kim Churchwards of the world but I want to be

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a big advocate for them because we as Judges get all of the credit and they are doing all of the hard work.

**Tom Harris:** I totally respect that and it might be the opportunity for me to at least look down the road.

**Joel Benz:** Councilman Spurr.

**Chris Spurr:** In this first position, there is 37.5 hours per week and non-exempt. Do you see that moving beyond 37.5 hours per week?

**Judge Davis:** That is a great question. Mr. Zimmerman and I have been talking about this position and I am hopeful that redoing and how we take in the money is going to be more efficient and is going to take a lot of the workload off the Adult Probation Department as far as accountability with the money. I don't think this will become a bigger job. If anything, I think down the road and we get all of our systems in place to ensure we are in good standing with our current Auditor and money, I see it maybe transferring into a different position. I will just have to wait and see. You can ask me about that in June.

**Chris Spurr:** My other question was is that you may mention that it is covered now. My question is will it be covered in the future?

**Judge Davis:** Will what be covered in the future?

**Chris Spurr:** When we consolidate those two positions into what we have in front of us today, will you be coming back in front of us asking for more money in the future with regard to these three positions?

**Judge Davis:** That is not my intent.

**Chris Spurr:** Okay and if you had to assign a probability to that what would you assign?

**Judge Davis:** As a Judge, I don't normally make deals.

**Chris Spurr:** I am not making a deal. I am asking what the probability is.

**Judge Davis:** This is honest that I do not anticipate it. I am very consciences of the taxpayer money and so I don't see this changing at all. I will say that the only time I would come back would be if and when Mr. Zimmerman would decide to leave which I hope is not sooner than later but when he decides to

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retire, I would probably do some restructuring again. That is the only foreseeable probability. I don't see me asking for any more money.

**Chris Spurr:** Thank you.

**Joel Benz:** I don't want to belabor the point but I want to say I am fully supportive of your restructuring and I think what you are doing is outstanding. I love the energy and I think it is going to be good for the citizens of Fort Wayne. I am going to side with Tom on the Chief Probation Officer in that our best comparisons are similar positions in other Counties. Our second best would be the private sector. I feel that a private sector job would probably not equate to \$115,000. I may be wrong but I just don't see it. Once you get about \$100,000 for someone who is not a Department Head, ultimately we are responsible to the taxpayers and I think that most of my neighbors would say that's a lot of money to pay somebody. That is where I am at and I agree with Tom that maybe somewhere down the road I would certainly be open to revisiting it.

**Tom Harris:** If no other questions, I will move for consideration of a salary ordinance establishing the pay for Finance Coordinator, PAT 4/2, \$51,724, 37.5 hours per week, non-exempt. Effective January 1, 2021. Also, consideration of a salary ordinance establishing the pay of Court Administrator, SPEC OCC, \$82,000, 37.5 hours per week, exempt. Effective January 1, 2021. I would like to ask for a rollcall vote, please.

Kenny Fries: Second.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** Aye.

**Tom Harris:** Aye.

**Kyle Kerley:** Aye.

**Joel Benz:** Aye.

**Chris Spurr:** Aye.

**Kenny Fries:** Aye.

**Bob Armstrong:** Aye.

**Joel Benz:** The motion passes 7-0.

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**Kenny Fries:** I will make a motion for consideration of a salary ordinance reclassifying the Chief Probation Officer/Director of Court Services, SPEC OCC, \$108,547, 40 hours per week, exempt to Chief Probation Officer/Executive Committee Member, SPEC OCC, \$115,746 and 37.5 hours per week, exempt. Effective January 1, 2021. This is with the caveat that if you come back in June and that court has not been certified by the State we will take a look at that salary.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** Second.

**Tom Harris:** I would like to ask for a rollcall vote.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** Aye.

**Tom Harris:** No.

**Kyle Kerley:** Aye.

**Joel Benz:** Nay

**Chris Spurr:** Aye.

**Kenny Fries:** Aye.

**Bob Armstrong:** Aye.

**Joel Benz:** The motion passes 5-2 (Harris and Benz).

**Judge Davis:** Thank you, Council.

**Joel Benz:** Thank you for indulging us and the Judge so she can keep things rolling downtown. We will go back to the agenda and the Veterans Memorial Wall presentation.

**Eric Johnson:** I am Eric Johnson, Second Vice Commander, for the Veterans National Shrine Museum. Vietnam Veteran 1968-1969. This is my cohort, Pat Frasier, First Vice Commander and a past Vietnam Veteran also.

**Pat Frasier:** 1965-1966. This isn't just about the Vietnam Wall. This whole facility is about all veterans and we are involved in the Veteran's Court. We have a Vet Center that we are proposing and are opening our doors to Veteran's Court. We can be mentors. We have on our staff and on our Board Certified Social Workers that are willing to work with veterans. We have programs that we can bring young kids out and we have a picnic area. They

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can see the sacrifices made for their country and to understand our history. That is extremely important. If you don't study your history, you are bound to repeat it. We don't need any more war. Most of all we have (inaudible) who is the head of the dog program for veterans with PTSD. We open our doors to that. To this community and this facility is going to be open to Allen County and the surrounding area. It is not just Vietnam Veterans. We are all the way back to the Revolutionary War and all the way up to today's latest war. We are losing 20 people every day. It has to stop. This facility can be a beautiful area to come to and settle down and take it easy. I have suffered PTSD for over 50 years. What I saw, no human being should ever want to see. The smells, the sounds and the cries, you need to be here and you need to be relaxed. I will pass it onto my brother in arms, Eric Johnson. He is a Broad Star recipient for valor in combat and I a Presidential Unit Citation not only from the United States but also the Premier Key in Vietnam. Our outfit did an outstanding job and we are good soldiers.

**Eric Johnson:** Thank you, Pat. Thank you for having us out here today. I have a short PowerPoint presentation that I would like to present to you. We have been working on this project since January of last year. For Pat and I it is a labor of love. We have three other Board members who are Vietnam Veterans who are all in on this project. We have another Board Member here, Bud Mendenhall who is a Korean War Veteran. Bud is behind us all the way. It is all about veterans like Pat said. It is not just about Vietnam. By next May we hope to be looking at Fort Wayne's newest tourist attraction and especially for Allen County. It is a replica of the original Vietnam Wall that stands in Washington, D.C. The wall is already here. We purchased the wall and it was delivered in May. It has been in storage since then. I will tell you more about our progress later in the presentation. Pat and I carried the first panel off the truck when it arrived. It is an honor to be involved with this and it is really a tribute to a lot of great people that lost their lives. The Healing Wall, as it is called, is an 80% replica. It is eight feet tall at the highest point. It is 360 feet long. It is huge. It is made of high strength anodized aluminum. We are pouring a concrete backer right now that this wall will go up against. There are more than 58,320 names of fallen heroes on that wall. Fifteen hundred and thirty-four are from Indiana. Seventy-nine are from Allen County. Our marketing area is very interesting. This wall is protected by an agreement that they cannot erect another Vietnam Wall within a 250 mile radius of Fort Wayne. This takes in six States. Forty-four million people that work in the six States surrounding Fort Wayne. That is 365 Counties. There are the major cities of Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, Indianapolis and all of Indiana. It is quite the coverage area and that is who we are going to market to in order to bring tourism to Fort Wayne. Economic impact for Allen County is why we are here. We think we will see 100,000 people visiting this wall the first year. I have no doubts about that and that is a conservative estimate.

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Military families and friends and relatives will visit from the six States surrounding this wall. There are 12,300 guys are on this wall from within the 250 mile radius. You don't think their families are going to be there? They will show up in droves. It will make Fort Wayne a destination for travelers across the Midwest and further. Military reunions will be held at the memorial grounds. Motorcycle rides, picnics and bands will gather at this site to remember veterans.

**Pat Frasier:** Real quick, just to give you an example, a gentleman by the name of (inaudible) who was a para rescue received the Medal of Honor and his bench was sent to us by the Motion Picture Industry that created the movie Last Full Measure. This individual saved nine lives when he was dropped down by helicopter. We had the ceremony out there and a fellow by the name of Mr. Hall was in that battle. We ended up with 400 bikers within a two-day notice. This gives you an idea of what kind of assembly we will gather there.

**Eric Johnson:** Economic impact in dollars. We have counselled with Dan O'Connell and his staff at Visit Fort Wayne and these numbers are not a dream. These numbers are real. If you projected 100,000 people the first year, the average spent for a local attendee in Fort Wayne is \$23.44. For an out-of-town attendee, they spend \$47.57. Overnight attendees spend \$125.10. This translates into \$4,325,800 in new tourism dollars that would be brought in the very first year. I think 100,000 is probably conservative. They say that 50% visitors would be local, 40% would be from out-of-town and 10% would be overnight stays. I think because people are coming to see the wall that our overnight stays will probably be higher because they will be coming from a longer distance. Elizabethtown, Kentucky has a wall similar to ours and they had 150,000 the first year. They get 7,000 people on a military holiday come to see their wall. It is interesting because their population is only 59,000 people. We have over 280,000 people. We know that we are giving you some pretty conservative numbers. Drawing crowds will also help with some other venues in Fort Wayne. A family of City attractions is what I call them. The Tin Caps, the Komets the Children's Zoo and the parks, public library, restaurants and hotels, Promenade Park and you can go down the list. In Elizabethtown, they had a reunion last year in June and they had 750 rooms reserved in January for a June event. I think our hospitality industry would love to hear that. Events like these would bring thousands of new visitors to the Veterans Memorial Shrine and Museum.

**Pat Frasier:** Real quick, I have already talked to the 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne and they are looking to bring us into 2022. I have talked to the 7<sup>th</sup> Air Force reunion which is usually huge and they are talking about coming in 2023. We are

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lining these people up ahead of time. We are not messing around. We want this County to be the best ever. That is the way we work.

**Eric Johnson:** Raising money to build the wall has been challenging with COVID but we have been out there and we are not stopping. Our projected budget for this entire three-year plan is \$6 million. Currently we have raised \$350,000 in donations and in-kind services from companies helping us get started. Soliciting, we have been to all of the Legions and they have really stepped up. Automotive groups, Vietnam Veterans of Indiana, VFW's, DAV's, UAW Local 2209, spouses of Vietnam Veterans, local veterans, friends and families and concerned citizens. Visitors that come in every day to the Shrine leave money in the donation box. Le Tour de Fort donations and the Coronas and the second annual golf outing goes right to the wall. Our annual magazine publication, we have done two of those in the last two years. Submitting grants through foundations, we are in the process for a \$250,000 grant with the State of Indiana. Collection canisters in local retailers and convenience stores and the three dollar can's average take is over \$100. Every little bit counts. We have had promotions with Texas Roadhouse and Mission Barbeque who are very big into veterans and veterans' causes. We have traveled with a mini version of the wall on a trailer to expose people to the wall and what is going on. We went to South Bend and met with the VVA (Vietnam Veterans of America) and we will continue to promote our cause. We got digital billboards donated by Burkhart and Upfront Media. We have had two specials on PBS Channel 39 to educate the public. We had a two-month promotional run on WANE-TV at no charge to us. WOWO, we have already seen Pat Miller once and he wants to see us again. We had a new website developed by the Vietnam Veteran that sits on our Board, Bruce Lehman. Bruce put his head together with a new site and if you have time go to [honoringforever.org](http://honoringforever.org). It is a tremendous site. You can donate to the wall. You can buy a legacy brick for a relative that was a veteran. You can learn all about what we are doing and veterans' causes. I mentioned the three-year vision for the memorial and we would love to be able to do this all at once. I'm sure our construction people would find it a lot easier too if we could tear everything up at one time and get it all finished at once. This illustration over here is a rendering of our finished product that we just had finished last week. It gives you some idea of the expanse of how this project is going to be put together. The new parking lot, the Vietnam Wall, room for more macro artifacts, tanks, helicopters, picnic areas and expand on the Chapel. Dave McComb has come to us from McComb Funeral Homes and would like to set up a columbarium. If you are not familiar with that it is if you are cremated and your remains need to be put in a storage facility such as a vase or urn, they can put up to 152 cremains from fallen soldiers. We think with the wall going up, most of us Vietnam Veterans are in our early 70's and we are not going to be here forever. We think there is a great opportunity to sell space in

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those niches that will be in a memorial right next to the Chapel. Phase One would be the Vietnam Wall with ADA sidewalks, lighting, security, landscaping, new parking lot with bus access, new signage and a second entrance. Phase Two would be Monument Plaza with new monuments for World War I, World War II, Korea, Iraq and Gold Star Families. There will be a walk through the history of war. As you can see on our diagram, there are 70 different conflicts that the U.S. has been involved in and they would be set on limestone pedestals with the summary of the conflict as you walk by. We would like a Welcome Center with ADA restrooms. That is very important. We have a lot of veterans that are disabled and have walkers or are in wheelchairs. We need golf carts to move these people around. All of the walkways will be ADA compliant. We hope to have a gift shop with a kiosk. We have software where you can look up any name of any soldier and find his name on the wall, what panel he is on and how far down he is on the list. We have a lot of veterans that go up and trace a name. There will be people leaving flowers, gifts and things all along the wall. This is what is happening in Washington, D. C. and will probably happen here. The expansion of the Shrine and Museum, we have a Curator Robert Thomas and he is doing a wonderful job of collecting data, finding out the value of the collectables are when they come in. We catalog everything, we video tape it and inventory it. If someone wants to loan us a war item, we will put it on display and give it back to them. If they want to donate it and walk away that is fine too. Pat mentioned the Veterans' Counselling Center and we think it is very important that Tim Shield, who was with PTSD at the VA, wants to do counselling with the veterans. Some guys won't even come to the wall. Pat and I can talk about it but it has been 50 years and time heals a lot. There are guys that have a really rough time when they come to the wall and think about their buddies. We are going to provide counselling to those people when they come out and they are taken care of. We need more pavilion space and additional storage for golf carts to assist the handicapped and upgrading our lawn and maintenance equipment at the site. We want to make Fort Wayne, Indiana and the Veterans National Shrine and Museum an exceptional national military attraction that our City can be proud of. Our partners for the wall project are Hagerman Construction and Crosby Excavating and we have started building the wall. They have laid the footers, yards and yards of rebar, 360 feet of ditch and tow-foot footers that are already poured and in place. We will do whatever it takes to get this project done. Our partners are also Veridian Architecture. Terry Thornsby who is a veteran has helped us. GME did the soil testing. Foresight has completed the survey. Engineering Resources is finishing the final specs. We have union labor ready to help and volunteers ready to help. We have restaurants donating food for workers. Now all we need is your help to finish this memorial. Naming rights, endowments, sponsorships of special sections of the memorial park and family tributes, such as if you want to sponsor a granite bench. Naming

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rights to the museum or the pavilion, we need Fort Wayne community leaders, politicians, corporations and businesses to help us on this project. The wall structure is already up. It is already poured. The color has been mixed to a darker gray. Together we can bring new visitors to Allen County and new revenue to City businesses. Also a sense of caring for those that sacrificed their lives for our freedom. Pat and I went to South Side High School at about the same time. He had twelve guys join when he joined and seven came back. Five did not and their names are on that wall. When we were down in Indianapolis pitching Vietnam Veterans of Indiana and there was a painting on the wall. I thought so much of it that I put it in our presentation. It is called "To Live the Wall". To live the wall and see the faces, to hear the voices, to feel the presence of the dead, to live the wall and share a hug, to shed a tear and love those that are no longer here. To live the wall, to touch a name, to say goodbye, to say well done and thank you, to say welcome home my brother, my friend. To live the wall, to lend a shoulder, to lend a hand and to live the wall is to understand. This is a lasting tribute to these fallen heroes. Thank you for your time. We invite all of you, whenever you want to come out for a personal tour of the new museum and there have been a lot of improvements made out there. I think two years ago in January, we owed \$2,000 in back taxes. That has all been paid. The museum has been redone with ne flooring, new ceiling and new display cases. They have completed renovations on other parts of the museum and outside landscaping. When you want to come out and see us, we would love to take you through and show you the progress. If you drive by 2122 O'Day Road today, you will be amazed at what you see on the concrete and construction taking place. We hope to dedicate this facility in May of 2021 on Memorial Weekend. We have a lot of big things planned and hopefully with help from the Allen County Council we can get there. We will continue to raise money and pitch this cause to make sure everything gets done the right way.

**Pat Frasier:** One of the things I would like to add and I am sure it is going to come up in your thoughts and questions, is how we are going to maintain this and not come back to County Council all the time. With Dave McComb and Dignity Memorial putting together this column barium it is going to generate enough money for perpetuity to keep the place going. That is anywhere from \$400,000 to \$600,000 every two years. We don't want to be a burden on this County or the taxpayers. As Vietnam Veterans, we have always had to do it on our own. We came home on our own. We got our jobs and had to stand in line because there were so many of us. We have been through a lot but we are tough people. We don't mess around. We are going to have some good partners out there.

**Chris Spurr:** I want to thank you both for being here today. My father was a Combat Medic in Vietnam. I am a Life Member of the VFW and the American

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Legion and I have been deployed overseas. You have my full support 150%. Thank you both for everything you are doing for the project.

**Eric Johnson:** We have had great response from the VFW and the Legions. Tremendous response and they are behind us all the way.

**Chris Spurr:** That is good to hear.

**Kenny Fries:** I have a couple of things I want to say. Can you let the public know that is watching this as to how to make a donation?

**Pat Frasier:** By going to honoringforever.org. There is a donate button there that you can use. You can come out and put it in the donation box at the Shrine. You can send to 2122 O'Day Road P.O. Box 26.

**Eric Johnson:** Our P.O. Box 26 is Arcola, Indiana 46704. I have to tell you that you don't really know how connected people are to the wall just like you were talking. You don't know their background or their story. We had a lady send us a check for \$10,000 from Florida out of her IRA. We didn't know the lady from Adam. Her husband had just passed away and he was a Vietnam Veteran. He didn't die during the war or after the war but lived a good life. She felt committed to give us \$10,000 in honor of her husband. We had another couple come in a month ago. They came one week and walked around and looked at everything. They came back the next week and brought a check for \$10,000 and found out her brother was on the wall. She said I have to do this and this has to happen. We got a check the other day for \$5,000 from Don Wood. Don used to run 80/20. He and Darlene Richardson were going to give us a grant for \$10,000. They sent us five grand last year and just two days ago they sent the other five grand. Don was a military guy. He has passed and they still sent the check. Dave McComb is a great example. When he was out the very first time, he wanted to know what we were doing and how could he help. We took him to a sample of the wall and he said his cousin was on this wall. He was four or five years old when he was killed back in 1968. That is my story. Mark Hagerman, he came out to look at the project and he had a friend named Henry Persons. His dad was a bigwig at Lincoln Life and he went to IU. When he got out of IU, Henry said he was going to join the military. He was going to Officers Candidate School. He became a First Lieutenant and was killed three months later in Vietnam. Mark shook his head and said talk about commitment and courage and people stepping up. He said that is why he wanted to be involved in this project. You just never know where someone is coming from on their story.

**Pat Frasier:** Tom Berry's brother is on the wall. This is what you find all over. This is what you witness every day. It just takes your breath away. At the

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same time, I will never, ever give up on this. If I have to scratch with my bare hands and pull that dirt that is what I will do. That is how important this is. We have soldiers that have come back from our recent wars that we have to help them. We have to help our community and young kids that are facing fights every day with all of the drugs and crap going on in this world. We need to stand up and have a place for them to go so that we can be the kind of people to lead these people coming up. It means the world to me.

**Kenny Fries:** I see in the Live the Wall is to lend a hand. I am going to challenge everyone on Council, City Council and all of the other Elected Officials. I am going to write a check for \$500. And if by the end of the year you can raise a half million, I will double it to \$1,000. Every other Elected Official, dig into your pockets. It is time to give some of our salaries back to the veterans.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** Mr. Chair, can I speak please? Thank you once again for your service. My uncle is on the wall out of Pine Bluff, Arkansas. Manuel Carroll. I serve as the Secretary at American Legion Post 148. I am proud to serve with the Women's Auxiliary. What you are doing, I back you 100%. I accept your challenge and you will receive a check from me for \$500. Thank you.

**Pat Frasier:** I was with Archie Lunsey when we did the memorial at Memorial Park and helped him get that going. He and I were very close.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** Yes, he is no longer with us but he has a great history here and thank you for mentioning his name.

**Pat Frasier:** I left some magazines up there. Max Shambaugh was one of the stories in there. The average pilot in World War II flew 25 missions and he stayed and flew 38. We have a man out of Garrett, Indiana that we have applied for the Medal of Honor. His name is Eddie Placencia and he was in the battle of Doc Teo. He had 143 brothers that died in those three days and are on the wall. He saved 23 of them.

**Joel Benz:** Those are some amazing stories and thank you, gentlemen. I will move onto public comment. There are several individuals from the restaurant industry that have some comments to make. Please come forward and introduce yourself.

**Jimmy Schindler:** My name is Jimmy Schindler and I am President and Owner of Bandito's Mexican Restaurants in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Also, I have Guadalupe's Mexican Grill. I have with me today Patrick Tamm and he is with the Indiana Restaurant and Lodging Association in Indianapolis. He

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drove up this morning. We have Christina Rey with El Azteca, my favorite competitor. I am going to go over a press release that we did yesterday through the Indiana Restaurant and Lodging Association. I would be happy to provide that to anyone that would request it. We have 17 restauranteurs who have signed onto this. I would be happy to read their names and the restaurants, if you would like, at the end. Patrick will give a little data on the current status of the local restaurant industry and there are a couple of other restauranteurs that wanted to talk. We told them they had to be under three minutes. I will move onto the press release, again, thank you for letting us give you an update. First and foremost, we are partners with the Board of Health. We view them as an asset and they have done a great job of providing us with restrictions and guidance on how we should operate our restaurants safely. We want safe restaurants. We want people to be safe, our customers and our employees. We encourage mask wearing. We encourage social distancing. We have self-imposed restrictions with the six-foot social distancing across the City. We do extra sanitizing and have ample sanitizing for customers. I can't stress enough that we feel our restaurants are safe and are following all of the guidelines provided by the CDC and also by the Allen County Board of Health. They are a great resource and we respect them. We also have the Hoosier Hospitality Promise which came through the Indiana Restaurant and Lodging Association. Governor Holcomb has backed that and so we take this very, very seriously. Unfortunately many big box retailers, groceries and smaller retailers are not facing the same restrictions that we face. We have been reduced in seating capacity at the State level and at the local level. We have not been provided, even though we have requested it at the State level and local municipalities for contact tracing data that ties increased cases to restaurants. We have not been provided with that unfortunately. It is our opinion that the restrictions seem a bit arbitrary on us and we are being a bit scapegoated and unfair. It is frustrating because it is really affecting our local restauranteurs and our business. I will give you a few statistics here. In Indiana, nearly 20% of all restaurants have already shut down. That is kind of shocking if you are not in tune with the industry. That is a big number. About 33% of operators say they are worried about being open in the next six months. It is an extremely serious situation. Every time a Council or community Elected Official walks up to a podium, I know I am scared to death and in talking to these other restauranteurs they are as well, we see 10% to 50% in sales drop every single time someone walks up and talks about COVID and then puts a restriction on restaurants. Whether we like it or not, indirectly people associate that increased cases must be caused by restaurants. We don't feel the data is there and we haven't been provided with it to prove that. Our employees are really suffering. Our employees go to church with us and their kids go to school with us. There have been significant layoffs by all restaurants when your business goes down. It is a slim margin business as well as the restaurants that have closed

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and they have lost their jobs. These are amazing and hard-working people. Some are single moms and dads. They are losing their ability to feed their family. Food insecurity, I assure you, is real and causing uncertainty is real. Loss of income, mental health issues are things I personally see on a daily basis and it is an extremely serious situation. We are going to keep fighting and doing everything we can to get through this. We want to be treated fairly. We don't want to be singled out. We are open for business and we are safe. My last request is what is the point of this testimony? What we are asking from County Council and community leaders, which you all are, and any community leader or Elected Official is to encourage people to be safe. Wear masks, use common sense and social distance. That being said we are also asking if you are under 70-years-old and healthy and don't have co-morbidities, to encourage the community to support local business right now because they need it more than ever. If you don't feel safe, we don't want anyone to do anything that makes them uncomfortable. If you feel unsafe, get carryout or delivery. If you want your local business, not just restaurants, but especially restaurants to be here in the next six months we are asking all of you to encourage people to safely patronize restaurants. Whether that is dine-in, carryout, online ordering many of us have contactless delivery and we are safe. Again, we are following guidelines and asking for your support and to be vocal. In talking to local leaders, they are unaware of how serious this situation is for local restaurants with no relief from the Federal government that we can see on the horizon. Thank you so much and I am happy to answer any questions. I know Patrick wanted to give a couple more statistics and keep it pithy. That is my update and thank you for your time.

**Patrick Tamm:** Thank you. My name is Patrick Tamm and I have the pleasure of being CEO of the Indiana Restaurant and Lodging Association. First, I would like to thank this Council for the opportunity for this type of discussion. May, frankly almost all Counties have not allowed restaurants to have this type of forum. You are to be commended for that and be thanked sincerely for that opportunity. Jimmy did a great job and it is always great to have one of your Committee Chairs do a presentation and quite frankly he is well prepared. In States where we see contact tracing, this is where data and science needs to be discussed. In New York State last week, we got the entire State's contact tracing. The Governor presented it. One point four percent in restaurants, one point four percent and yet all of New York's restaurants are closed. Private gatherings are pushing 80%. It is actually 74% in the State of New York. If you talk to our State Department of Health and many local County Health Officials, not just in Indiana but throughout the country, you will hear time and time again effectively the following: Regulated spaces which clearly are restaurants and have always been regulated and is fantastic Jimmy talked about them being partners with the County Health Department. Regulated spaces are not the challenge right now. People

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following the proper guidelines which we have discussed, are regulated spaces is 1.4% in the State of New York. To the north of us in Michigan is just over two percent. We were able to get that contact tracing the other day. But yet in Michigan, as many of you know, restaurants are closed for another second round. Most businesses will never survive being told that the best you can do is 50%. The best you can do. They face on onslaught of misinformation and other issues that scare the living daylights out of consumers. At the same time, we do know if you have comorbidities, certain ages, underlying health issues, you can play the tape and Google my name, I spoke at a Governor's press conference and we asked for the Hoosier Hospitality Promise if you have underlying health issues let us serve you safely the manner in which you should be through delivery, carryout and so forth. Let us do that for you. We are also concerned about our own employees. Don't come in if you are not feeling well. Basic common sense practices. Everything that the CDC recommended in March, we are on our fourth version of our reopening guidelines. Let me be clear where we are getting these reopening guidelines. It is not restauranters. We went straight to the FDA, CDC and Consumer for Food Protection which your local Health Department knows all about. It is leading academics and health officials throughout the entire country and the head of Ecolab and one individual from the National Restaurant Association. We went straight to the regulators in science and health officials because we didn't want to have an industry-lead reopening guideline and since we have learned new things we have updated it four times. The industry has that. You'll see on Governor Holcomb's website to follow the Indiana Restaurant and Lodging Association reopening guidelines which are those guidelines. Restaurants that follow those guidelines, we don't see those challenges. All we ask is don't force feed people into unregulated spaces particularly around the holidays and any weekend but particularly during this time. Unregulated spaces are where these challenges oftentimes are and data that we do have from other States clearly point to that. I do want to thank you sincerely and I am open to any questions or any data point that you would like. Realize 60% plus of Indiana's restaurants were not even open for two plus months. Jimmy's restaurants, for example, closed down completely during that time. It is much like my barber and I tell this time and time again, the three haircuts I missed I did not pay my barber for. Many of these restauranters behind me have accounts payable to their food supplier. Their food supplier worked tremendously to keep restaurants open across the board. They affectively are our banks. We have restaurants in northeast Indiana and restaurants throughout the entire country that will have repayment plans of \$1,000 for 100 months. They don't know if they can make that \$1,000 payment. If there is any threat in the month of December since November our business has rapidly declined. December usually carries us through January and February. January and February are always disastrous months. So many of the restauranters behind me are faced with

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depleting savings, personal and professional bankruptcy but most importantly we know our people which is who we care about immediately face the inability to pay rent and bills and utilities and to clothe their kids. That is who we really care about. That is where we appreciate the opportunity to have this discussion today. Thank you.

**Kenny Fries:** I have a question. You say that other Counties don't allow this forum?

**Patrick Tamm:** Around the State, I sincerely mean this, we are able to talk via Zoom in some cases. This is frankly hats off to you because I am sincerely thanking you for allowing this type of discussion. And particularly to have it broadcast as your public meetings are. In many cases, the opportunity to have this discussion has not been afforded to local restauranteurs. That is not a knock on anybody. I just wanted to make sure that you all knew when Jimmy and I were talking about this I was like "I'll be there". I am sincerely thankful. Many folks in this room have faced tremendous hardships. I don't think people have completely comprehended that. To have the opportunity to have people be heard, I commend you for that.

**Kenny Fries:** That is the one problem I have and that is my wife and I try to go out to restaurants more now because we know you guys are having a hard time with it. That is what I tell people, if you feel uncomfortable then don't go in. Every restaurant we have been in they have done everything they can to make sure we have social distancing and all of the waiters and waitresses are wearing masks. I feel safer in restaurants than pretty much anyplace else. I would strongly encourage people and if you don't feel comfortable, then don't go. I agree, help our restaurants.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** Are you saying this is the first time you have had a platform to tell your story?

**Patrick Tamm:** Oh, no. We tell our story all of the time to the media. To local government officials, this is probably the largest amount of time and largest platform that folks have been given. We have had countless meetings with Mayors and individual Council members but a full Council meeting with Council members, no.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** So now that you have this platform is there anything you can share as far as the vaccine? Has anyone come to you and talked to you about the vaccine and how we can help with the servers?

**Patrick Tamm:** That is an excellent question and it has. I sit on weekly calls with the CDC and a National Board and so forth. We have advocated for

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hospitality workers for hotels and restaurants to be moved up. We have also chatted formally and informally with State Health Officials in regards to that same conversation. The State of Indiana, for the most part on the vaccination schedules who receives what and when and in Fort Wayne, Parkview was the first hospital in the State. We have advocated for hospitality workers to move up but that decision has not been made federally or at the State. We anticipate that to be finalized soon. We are advocating for the second wave, if you will. Currently we are on 3D or 3C. They have changed the language but we are in the middle of 3 at this point. Servers and hospitality workers are public facing and we want to get our people vaccinated a little bit sooner. The State has been very receptive to that and the CDC has been as well. Right now I think most people agree that healthcare workers and long term care facilities makes sense.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** The last question is that I know in this industry we have a lot of undocumented workers that are not eligible for some of the unemployment and extra dollars. Are there any resources that you know of that you can share with those people at home for those that don't qualify for those types of benefits?

**Patrick Tamm:** I want to personally thank you for that question. That is a very hard conversation. There are a lot of hardworking people that don't qualify. We have put together funds and we have a hospitality relief fund, our State Association, and we just got a check for \$15,000 yesterday. We give, no questions asked. They do have to prove that they worked in the hospitality industry with some pay stubs. We had to shut off applications with 11,000 people. We are working through the list. We have owners that cannot receive PPE dollars as well. It is not just servers and bartenders but across the board. You may know this but our industry is a minority majority ownership. Most people don't look like me. It is an honor for me to represent them. Usually you will see in communities, particularly urban communities, there will be 50% plus of women-owned and minority-owned businesses. We just did that in Indianapolis and they received CARES Act dollars directly which you are probably more aware of than most people because you are Elected Officials. They actually put together \$11 million in Indianapolis for rent. The landlord or the bank had to complete the application for the restauranteur and then the funds were distributed through ACH. Fifty-one percent of the \$11 million went to women and minority owners. We depleted the \$11 million and the average grant was \$18,000. The most you could receive is \$25,000. That is a lot of restaurants that took up \$11 million. Those are the types of numbers that we see and we know there are others. We do a lot of things with Spanish, Chinese, Cantonese and Japanese translators for a lot of different applications. We have been able to find some resources but the depths and needs for financial assistance is great. We have had extensive

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conversations, even as late as last night, with the Indiana Congressional Delegation and this requires cash. It requires the U. S. Treasury. I think Representative Morris is here today as well. State Legislators can be helpful but until you can print cash, which I hate to say it that bluntly, the need for Federal relief has never been greater. I think you all controlling County purse strings understand that.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** I just want people to remember that we have to support these folks that wash the dishes, clean the bathrooms and are here because they want a better opportunity. Their situation, some of these people were born into it and their parents brought them at a younger age. I think a lot of us need to have sympathy and empathy especially at this time.

**Patrick Tamm:** Couldn't agree with you more.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** If you have the money, send a check. Tell them once again how they can help your staff of undocumented workers.

**Patrick Tamm:** You can go to [INRLArelief.com](http://INRLArelief.com) and you will also see the application. You are absolutely on target 110%.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** Thank you.

**Tom Harris:** I will just add that what the citizens of this County can do is get out and go visit a restaurant. I personally feel that restaurants and churches have been hit harder in my opinion. I don't feel good about it. I turn to the Governor and say let's use a little bit more common sense to see what we can do to meet both objectives. I try to visit all of the different restaurants but I challenge the citizens of the community to get out and eat out during the holidays and help these businesses. Thank you for your leadership in this and for being here today.

**Patrick Tamm:** I will add further to that a lot of the restaurant owners that make your community and where you want to take your friends and family and business colleagues, those restaurants are the most at risk.

**Kenny Fries:** Can we get an idea of who is here and representing what restaurant? I think they should all come to the microphone and say their name and restaurant. I want the citizens to know that you care enough to take the time to come down here and that you care about your business and customers.

**Jimmy Schindler:** There are a few on the list that are not here today.

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**Kyle Kerley:** Mr. Schindler, we have had lots of conversations. (Microphone not working) Most of the restaurants that you are going to see come up here even though they have been struggling. A lot of the people at this table and Elected Officials, since March, have been delivering meals to frontline workers. A lot of the restaurants that are represented today donated thousands of meals to our frontline workers, people in nursing homes, EMT's. Fire Fighters and they have helped make that possible. A lot of these restaurants have donated at cost, below cost or free because they all know we are a community and we all have to stick together. (Microphone not working) The attitude of the restaurant owners is to put their employees first. A lot of them have mortgaged their homes and done whatever they can to keep their employees paid. I want to thank all of you for what you have done. I encourage everyone, if you are comfortable, to go to the restaurants. If you are not comfortable going out, every restaurant that I know of will deliver food. Even some of the ones that don't advertise delivery, if you call them they will get it delivered to your house. They are trying to be here for the community and we need to be there for them.

**Christina Rey:** I did prepare something but I am going to cut it down a little bit. The main reason I am here is not only on behalf of my employees but the whole industry and my mother who has owned El Azteca for 47 years. In her 47 years, she has never faced anything like this. I want to speak about my employees because I spoke to them yesterday and told them I was coming to this meeting today and asked what they would want me to say. What would you want people to hear? The biggest thing is that they are scared. We are scared. Going back to 50% and no bar rail seating, many of them have already lost a lot of income. I have had to cut shifts and not just from the front of the house but at the back of the house as well. It has been tough. Their biggest thing is why has our industry been hit so hard? Why are the restrictions mainly on the restaurants? Our staff is just as hardworking as the associates at Walmart and Kroger. They are trying to feed their families and take care of their families just like all of the associates at the big box stores like Jimmy said. We definitely have implemented many things to be able to keep it safe not only for our staff but of course for our patrons. We pride ourselves in knowing that we have taken extra steps to do so. One thing they wanted me to say is how is it that we can wait on a table which is closer contact with the guests but can't serve someone seated across the bar? There is a barrier there. Many of our customers like to sit at the bar. They are choosing to come in and dine at the restaurant. They are spending their money and why shouldn't they be able to choose where they sit? They just want to know and understand how these restrictions are justified. We are fearful and many of us here are fearful that we could end up closing our doors for good. After 47 years, my mom is 79-year-old, it breaks my heart to see that is where we are. Unfortunately I have to go because I have to deliver a

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catering right now. I want to thank you for the time that you have given us. Jimmy, thank you and Patrick for coming from Indianapolis.

**Jimmy Schindler:** I would like to read the names of the restauranteurs that aren't here today. Mehrdad Deniri of Sunrise Café; Jimmy Sullivan of Laycoff's Tavern; Autumn Dennis with Ziffles Rib and One Love Truck and Baby got S'mack; John Freistoffer with Henry's; Jimmy Todoran, Jr. with Coney Island; Tom Parisi with Casa Restaurant; Dan Knepper with Klemm's Café; James Kahn with Baker Street, Hoppy Gnome and Proximo; Brian Schreffler of Southern Glaziers Wine and Spirits; Tabitha Gray was here earlier with Mancinos and the same with Melissa Earles with Redwood Inn; Jeff Parrish with Acme. Those are the ones that may or may not be here. I will let the rest of them come up and speak their piece. I will exit stage left. Thank you so much for your time and am sincerely appreciative for the voice and for what you do for the community.

**Joe Ceruti:** My name is Joe Ceruti and I own Ceruti's catering. I have been in business for over 33 years. Unfortunately because of the Governor's orders along with trying to deal with County Health Officials have had to lay off 93 of my staff. I have even filed unemployment. A lot of what we do with our catering business is very similar to the restaurant industry as well. I will try to keep this as short as I can. The Board of Health here, just so you know, the basic individual inspectors and the people that we report to, the Governor allowed the County to have events just like the restaurants to be more than 25 and up to 100. Since then it was revoked and pulled out. I've got nine weddings that were supposed to happen under that permission. I have one bride change her wedding three times. Think about this. If you have ever had a daughter or son get married, you know it is unbelievable to keep changing that. And that is besides the psychological issues. I am here to advocate for my employees that obviously are most important to me but also my clients. My clients have put thousands of dollars into these events since March and they keep getting moved or postponed and having the rug pulled out from underneath them. I understand that this body here today cannot or does not have jurisdiction or power to change these things. I sent a letter to the Governor which I will give you copies of along with Dr. Sutter. Dr. Sutter did give me a response. It really did me a lot because what I have asked for is a couple of things and want some common sense approaches to these things. As the group has said, we are professionals. We have been keeping people safe for a long time and our employees safe. My contention and I asked for this contact information, as to how many people are contacting at the social gatherings, wedding receptions and individual banquet rooms at the restaurants. I was told and I hope this Council can help me out with the County that due to Indiana privacy laws it is forbidden to give me that. I have written a letter to Governor Holcomb to address that but have yet to

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take the time to write back to Dr. Sutter. I am not asking for names of people. I am asking for the numbers. I contend that these executive orders are so arbitrary that they are discriminatory and capricious. I am working as hard as I can to get to the top but I am looking at every level of help from the County as well. I could go on and on about the hardships and the rest but I will put out two other things to you. If it is all about safety and we have been told social distancing, right? The latest Governor's orders say that if you are a private business, you may only have a meeting with your employees and we can cater in with no limitations on numbers regardless of the size of the meeting room but it must be your employees. I asked the Board of Health and they can't do anything about it. They are trying to help us any way that they can. I have a client that wants to hold a meeting for 80 people in my space and one of my rooms holds 600 people with 8,000 square feet. Throughout the entire time since March we have been doing these because companies need to train their employees. We have two to a table like this one. We serve individual meals and they don't go through a buffet line. It is safer than safe. Now the Governor has said not to worry about that. They can't rent out Ceruti's or Goeglein's or anywhere else and they must do it in their facility. I say but my place is 8,000 square feet. Right now I can do a wedding this weekend for 25 people including my staff and the room is 8,000 square feet. They are doing it because they are not going to move it the third time. Common sense was thrown out the window. This makes no sense whatsoever. The Governor's office is not listening. In fairness to Dr. Sutter and here, the Governor has kind of tied his hands too. There are other things that can be done. The County can come up with the information that I am asking for. They can come up with contact information in Allen County. It is more important there than any other County, right? It matters to my clients and to my employees. I am about ready to do pay cuts or reduce hours for the skeleton crew. This is our time to make it for the next three months. We have lost 100% of every event we had. This is the best month of the year for us. Something is going to have to change. One quick last thought and I know I have taken up a lot of time but this came from a local Board of Health employee who has been around a long time. Basically he summed it up this way, if we are on fire as the Governor has said and everything is out of control and the rates so high, why are his latest orders less restrictive than before? Why are his orders less restrictive with the retail stores and shopping that you can't even get into T J Maxx etc? There are no capacities like there used to be where we had to wait for so many people to come out of the store. If it is so bad now, why are the restrictions less restrictive? I will give someone else a chance.

**Ben Hall:** My name is Ben Hall with Hall's Restaurants here in town. The brief piece on top of what you have already heard is in the 74-year history of our company, there has never been a business situation like what we have

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faced over the last nine months. There is not anything that is even remotely close or comparable. I would like to talk about something specific and I will try to make it as brief as I possibly can in picking up a little bit on what Christina said a while ago about bar restriction because this is part of the County order from the end of November. If Allen County is a red County and we currently are and were renewed as a red County and have at least two weeks left of red to go. We can't use our barroom. Bar is a word that is not defined in State or local food code. It is very subjective. A bar to me means Columbia Street West the night before Thanksgiving 1995. That is what it means to me. To some people it means what we do in the parking lot at The Deck in summers prior to the one we just got out of. To the local Department of Health bar means a large unhinged mingling social crowd in the context of the current health situation. I understand that and I agree with it. It is something to be concerned with. It is why we modified drastically what we did at our bar downtown this last summer. It was drastically different than what it had been for the last ten years. And that was for the reason that it was the right thing to do. Our restaurants have bars but they are an extension of our dining rooms. It is a funny shaped table that a certain subset of our customers likes to sit at. It is a subset of what might be 10% to 15% of our revenue. That was significant a year ago. It is even more significant now. It is also significant to the bartender that just watched 75% of his earnings evaporate. The problem is that those of us who are following the guidance, following the restrictions and following the orders whether they be Federal, State or local are paying the price because there are some operations that have chosen not to embrace the guidance the way that some of us have. Our barrooms have never been that big social thing. It is the dining space. Since on paper they are no different than a full throttle bar situation and we have taken moves in the last week or two to deal with that and it's great. Other people's business decisions don't grate on me. It is not my concern because they have bills to pay too. They are running mathematics in their heads on how they are going to make a go of it. I am not going to sweat that but at the same time it is difficult to accept when it is not something that we do but we are paying the price. You have to wear your mask and you have to be distanced. You have to be seated for service. That has been on the books since September. If you want to make us close by midnight and everybody go home that is okay too. That could have been ten o'clock and it wouldn't have made a rat's ass bit of difference. I'm sorry, I shouldn't have said that. That should have been enough. Thank you very much.

**Kenny Fries:** Why don't you call that linear seating?

**Ben Hall:** Huh.

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**Kenny Fries:** Why don't you call it linear seating? It's not a bar but it is linear seating. It's available and you can have six feet in between. It is linear seating.

**Ben Hall:** I made a pitch to State Excise to reclassify my barroom as a family room. As long as I would serve all drinks at the u-shaped table in the middle of the room from the stool side, it is no longer a bar. Now it is a lunch counter. It is no different than walking into the dining room at our Bluffton Road or State Street locations or Coney Island. You can just get a Budweiser at my lunch counter. Excise would have done that and then legally it wouldn't have been a bar anymore. County Health didn't see my thought process. Now you have bar operators that are doing clever things admittedly. They'll take some little narrow tables and we will bump them up as close as possible to the bar. They will sit in a chair here instead of a stool here. Have we changed the public health consequence? You would be foolish to suggest it. That is what we are doing, playing games. That is because those of us that have normal belly up to the bar to have a beer and a hamburger and chat with a couple of your friends that has been thrown away. Those of us in the business of trying to sell hamburgers and beers are trying to figure out a way to get through it. If a narrow little table shoved up against the bar gets it done for you, God bless you. We are playing games and nothing is different. Thank you very much for your time.

**James Kahn:** I am James Kahn and I am the owner of Baker Street Steakhouse, Hoppy Gnome and Proximo. Thanks for enduring a long barrage of us coming to talk to you about something that I know you aren't crafting. I really want to speak to that fact. When everything happened in March, we as a country, City and State were caught unprepared. As restrictions came down and they were broad to what Ben was just talking about, bar is a word that is used over and over again and has different meanings to different venues. A bar that people are coming into and are standing around in close quarters is different than a bar sitting at Baker Street Steakhouse. The risks are different. The biggest frustration is that now after nine months we haven't taken the time to specifically define how we want to govern specific industries. This venue is the perfect example of what I mean. I don't know how many square feet this is, I am sure Randy could tell us, but this is probably bigger than all of Baker Street. We are limiting this much space to 25 people and there are 25 people standing in the lobby waiting to come in here and talk. That is because we just said gatherings. There are different kinds of gatherings. I hate when people bring frustrations without solutions and I don't have a perfect solution for us but I know the restaurant community hasn't really been asked a whole bunch to be counsel on how to govern this. We are not afraid to help. I think you would be hard pressed to find a group of entrepreneurs braver than restauranteurs. For as long as I

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have been alive, restaurants have been the worst business to open. They close at a higher rate than any other brand of business in the entire country and yet we open them. The profit margins in this industry on the national average are three percent and yet we open them. We have been here with restrictions for nine months of 50% and have never left 50% in our restaurants. We are still here fighting to do it. We are not going to be afraid to continue to go by any restrictions that come our way. We are the type of people want to fight through to do what it is that we do. Frankly it is because we like it. I personally went to school for engineering and could have made an easier living doing that but I enjoy what I do in my every day job and dealing with people. If you ask Bruce or Ben or Christina or anybody out there waiting why they are in this industry, it is because they care for people. Our industry is defined as hospitality, taking care of others. The fact that we are loosely regulated is a travesty because the people we employ spend their time and effort trying to take care of the people who come and sit down in the restaurant. If you are sitting at Baker Street right now about to have lunch and you stand up to adjust yourself because you are uncomfortable, a server will stop you and ask you to please put on a mask. That is what we have been told to do. That is to ensure everyone who is not seated is wearing a mask. If they need to stretch or have to go to the restroom, someone is going to stop you and ask you to put on a mask. I can walk across the street to buy a candy bar at the BP and without a mask and walk around the store for fifteen minutes and nobody is going to say a thing. It doesn't mean they don't care. It just means that particular industry has one employee who is trying to authorize pumps, process payments and get lottery tickets and they don't have the manpower to stop every person coming in to get them to wear a mask. But we do and routinely we will schedule more people than is needed to make sure that everybody is kept safe. All I am really saying is challenge us. I don't care what restrictions are put on us but give us a chance to try to make this work. The industry as a whole is taking a hit and since May when we were allowed to reopen at 50% capacity, we have been surviving. I wouldn't say successfully so but our plan was to lose money for two years to try to endure this COVID and however long it would drag out. Prayerfully we would get to a point to start making money and paying things down again. In that time we have borrowed, not counting PPE loans, almost \$700,000 through IDAL and any other resource we can to try to maintain. We were losing money slowly up until November. When the Governor changed the guidelines from stages to color coded Counties, we were still at 50%. We didn't see a huge hit. When we, as a County, came out and said this is our restrictions and the only restriction that was going to be on us and wasn't already on us was the bar seating. While it would be a help it is not going to be the thing that kills any restaurant that you are going to hear from today. Bars that are primarily bars are a completely different story and I am not advocating that they are not important because they are. There weren't any

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extra restrictions put on us but the confidence in our community is through the floor. Since that date our sales are down 70%. Since mid-November, we as a company have lost \$125,000. Of the \$700,000 that we borrowed to make sure we could get through two years of slowly bleeding cash flow, we have lost eighteen percent of it in thirty days. Like everybody has said, December is the opportunity that gives us the chance to get through the next six months of the next year. At 70% down we are not going to make that. As a Council there is not necessarily the authority to change the State guidelines or Federal guidelines but if we could somehow work to specifically assign and put the ownership on us. I don't care if the Federal government gives us immunity from lawsuits or not, I will take that risk but put it all on me. If we fail as a company then we will pay that consequence because we made the decision. At least give us the chance to make the decision. Thank you.

**Bruce Dodge:** Good morning, I am Bruce Dodge and I run Black Canyon Steakhouse on Dupont Road. I would like to reiterate everything my peers have been talking about. They have all made excellent points. Our people are the ones who are suffering along with us. Our servers who have gone from having five shifts a week to three shifts a week. Our line cooks who have gone from having five or six shifts a week to three or four shifts a week. We have got to figure out how we survive through these challenges that we have. The other point that really strikes home with me is the comments that are behind some of these restrictions. As James said 25 people in this room but 25 or 30 of us huddled in the lobby. The data that shows putting restaurants at 50% capacity is going to have a significant impact on the spread of the virus versus people gathering in their homes because they can't come into a restaurant. We just have to figure out what makes sense here. We all know that the deaths from Corona are a terrible thing. Nobody wants that. I have a member of my staff whose sister is in ICU right now at Parkview. Being able to show that the restrictions being put on our industry alone are going to shift the course is what we are looking for. Where is that data? It certainly feels like, at this point, the restaurant industry and our staffs are the ones being singled out because it is a very visible thing that can be done. We are being safe. We have put partitions between our booths at Black Canyon. We take our employees' temperatures every day. If anybody has a sniffle, they go home or don't come in. We never question folks who call and say they aren't feeling well. We don't want those folks in our restaurant. I had a hostess last night, an 18-year-old high school girl, who was screamed at by a guest because she asked him to put a mask on when he walked in the front door. That happens on a regular basis. We have an amazing staff at Black Canyon. All of us in the restaurant industry have great staffs. I have worked with a lot of these folks for a long period of time. We just want the opportunity to be treated fairly. That is all we are asking for. Thank you.

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**Tom Harris:** As someone else is coming up, I would like to challenge on a local level, while I know there is a press conference and those kinds of things happening, from our role on County Council we should put pressure on the State Reps and State Senators, not to have a press conference but to sit down with the Governor and say it is time to do something. If we wait three months before the Governor decides to change something, some of the places we are hearing from today will not be here. I don't want to see press conferences. I want to see the Governor do something to help local businesses.

**Panayiotis Bourounis:** Panayiotis Bournouis from Salvatoris Restaurants and Cosmos Restaurants. I want to say thank you for your time today. Every restaurant here pretty much said what I was going to say. I don't want to take any more of your time. Thanks again and thanks for listening to us and thanks to everybody that showed up.

**Alex Valdez:** I am Alex Valdez and I am partners with Panayiotis at Salvatore's Restaurants. Everybody had a lot of good things to say but I also want to bring up. There are no restrictions in certain areas and employees all over are wondering why we are shut down to 50% and in some places they are not. I wanted to see this with my own eyes and so this last weekend I went to different places like Walmart, Costco, the Mall and different places. They were all packed. I was taking pictures and videos to send to Panayiotis to see. It is unbelievable. The Mall was not checking for a percentage of how many people were coming in with masks or not masks or how many people were in the buildings. There was no limit at the Mall this past weekend. It was like a normal December. At all of the restaurants we have extra staff because we need to make sure they are sanitizing and are cleaning the handles and the door knobs and the bathrooms every five or ten minutes. This weekend we had to repaint because there is so much cleaning that the paint is coming off the handles. The people in the restaurants that are taking the most heat are the servers. Last year at this time we were running thirteen servers on Saturday nights. We are running five now. What are those other people doing? We have to be cutting shifts and rotating shifts from the weekends so that everybody can make at least a little money. Last year at this time we were making most of the money for the next six months but the money is not coming in. We worry about what we are going to do coming into January. It is very worrisome. We wish that all of the stipulations be fair with everybody and that everybody is following them. People not wearing masks, whole families and I think I saw one store at the Mall with someone at the entrance counting how many people were there. Every other store in the Mall had people elbow to elbow. It was just a madhouse and unbelievable to me. We as restaurateurs take pride in what we do. My employees don't want to get sick. I don't want to get sick. I don't want anybody that is sick to come into my restaurants because that will

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mean that we have to shut down. That is the last thing we want. We are taking every single step that we are guaranteeing the health and safety of our customers. Our employees are number one. Thank you for your time.

**Dan Knepper:** I am Dan Knepper from Klemm's Café on Wells Street. The issues I have are first and foremost the Board of Health does a great job. They are in and out and are professional. The first 50% reduction when we talk about bars. I have a small diner and it seats 40. Ten of the seats are bar. In the first restriction we were allowed to set the bar as long as there was proper spacing or if people are in the same family. If I and three of my kids walk in together, we can sit at the bar. No one can sit six feet to the left or right of us but we are using the space to sit people together. That was the first wave and then the rules changed. We went to 75% and then it went up and down. This time around they reduced it to 50%. The Board of Health comes in on a complaint that we weren't wearing masks. I offered them into the office to watch the film for that day. We had it all on video and let's check it out. They weren't interested and said no, we don't want to do that. They said they believe me but you can't sit people at the bar. No one can be at the bar. I said okay but I think in March you guys were in and said the bar was okay as long as it is spaced and there is no alcohol being served. She said that she didn't think that is how it is now. I said do you not think or do you know or where can I find this. They give me the executive order and it is not necessarily that clear. I guess the question becomes where can we get consistent on bar? A lot of people mention bar in their space. I said what is a bar and she said that there is food exchanged over the counter. I told her no problem we would have the girls run around the counter and hand the food to them over their shoulder like we generally do. I can put up a plexi glass barrier from the kitchen to the bar. They said we can't do that. We are all trying to find solutions. Plexi glass isn't good for us but I go the Waffle House in Anderson and it is shower curtains hanging between the tables and they can set at 100%. It is just those little inconsistencies and when you ask the question and the answer is we don't know. I understand this is an ever evolving, very fluid and never before seen situation. I guess it is no one's fault. We shut the bar down and now we can set twelve people and by the grace of God carryout is doing well. I am not up here to give a sob story about how I don't have money and those things. We know what we are getting into. It is just the consistencies when we ask questions of why and they say we don't know. I understand they don't know because they are just doing their job and I am just doing my job. My big thing is what is a bar? We were using it as a place to set people that were together. By my understanding you are allowed to eat together as one family or household. Now you can't use that space because it is a bar. The hardest thing we sell is orange juice. My original thought was bars and people loitering and getting close drinking and hugging and saliva is flying. We have someone come in for nine minutes and

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eat their pancakes and they go. We do our best to monitor and have all of the signs and sanitizing and it is a small space. It gets wiped down constantly. No more than 20 people can fit in there at this point. Like all of these guys have said it has been challenging and I am not complaining. Just need some clarity on stuff like that.

**Kenny Fries:** I have a problem that they don't know. It is their job to know. Who else is supposed to know but them?

**Dan Knepper:** We are not sure. I am not sure either. Or they come in because someone said we are not doing this or that. Fortunately every week we have things recorded. They say they don't want to look at it. They will write it down and the next time they come in they will shut us down.

**Kenny Fries:** I know you can't afford to do it but I would be tempted to say okay, shut me down. I would like to fight that. It is seating, linear seating and you are not serving alcohol.

**Dan Knepper:** I am all for that because Florida sounds lovely right now. I have none people that rely on me to make the right decision and not the decision based on emotion. We just don't know what to do.

**Chris Spurr:** I would like to concur with Councilman Fries. I think anytime a government moves to constrain liberties, they had better know. I have heard a lot of what seems to be unknowns today. I just want to concur with Councilman Fries. We need more definition.

**Dan Knepper:** It is that common sense metric that everyone is talking about. That is all I have and I really appreciate your time. Thank you.

**Joel Benz:** A lot of frustration and unintended consequences certainly. Is there any further public comment? Auditor Jordan, you have a note?

**Tom Harris:** Oh, a different issue.

**Joel Benz:** It is almost 11:00. Do you feel we need a five-minute break here?

**Nick Jordan:** From John Modezjewski, 1317 Putnam Street. This is in the form of questions. "Now that the Allen County Council has decided to act as the financial body and do their elected job, how are fiscally conservative Republicans going to handle their fiscal responsibilities? 1. Will they hold the line on raising taxes or raise our taxes like the Bridge Tax? 2. How much taxpayer money is being rolled over from last year's budget? 3. Local Income Tax money that has not been used is sitting on the sidelines? 4. How much

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taxpayer money is sitting in the Rainy Day Fund and is not being used? 5. Looking at Allen County information, is it true there is over \$130 million sitting and not being used or earmarked for any projects? Can I get a copy of the last ten years' rollover tax money? What is the true cost of the Cook Road facility in additional manpower and programs? Are we being overtaxed or underserved by our elected Allen County Council members and other Allen County Officials? Where is the conservative, fiscally responsible Republican leadership? 6. I have heard rumors that the Allen County Commissioners want to change the use of Motor Vehicle Highway (MVH) tax money and raising the MVH taxes. 7. What is the Allen County Council legislative agenda for 2021? Can I get a copy of this agenda if it exists? 8. What is the Allen County Commissioners' legislative agenda for 2021? Does it line up with the Allen County Council's agenda for raising the MVH taxes and changing the use of MVH tax money? Will the DLGF need to approve any changes of the use of MVH tax money, ie: raising the Bridge Tax? 9. I have already answered some of these questions myself. The ones I can't answer, I will copy you on the responses. If not, you can choose as you would like to do.

**BREAK**

**Joel Benz:** Good morning, go ahead.

**Rachel Black:** Rachel Black, Allen County Economic Development. For your consideration this morning is a resolution approving a Statement of Benefits for QuikCut, Inc. They are a metal fabrication business which was established in 1997 and is located along Allen Martin Drive. The company continues to grow. You had seen them back in 2018 as well as 2019 and they have invested around \$2.3 million in personal property over these last couple of years. They also have created 20 new jobs. They currently employ 51 with salaries around \$2.6 million. The proposed project is an investment of over \$1 million in personal property. The installation is expected to begin in December and be completed by the end of 2024. The company plans to create 25 new jobs with salaries at almost \$1 million. Based upon your review system, they are eligible for a seven-year tax abatement. Over that seven year deduction period, they will be paying about \$38,000 in taxes while saving around \$34,000. We have Carey Sipe here and Mark Webb to give you more details and answer any questions.

**Tom Harris:** I know you have been here in the past but maybe tell us a little bit about what you do.

**Mark Webb:** I am the CEO and Carey is the President and CFO. We have been definitely blessed over the last few years. With growth, we have a new opportunity with a new client which is a very large company and this could

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increase our business by roughly 50% over the next multiple years. We have experienced this opportunity and worked hard at it. We are looking to invest in some new equipment and are working on finalizing the purchase of another building as well. We are trying to create new jobs for our community. We feel very good about the company that we are bringing in. The business we are bringing in is from out of state and bringing outside dollars back to our community. I started the company and bought a company from my father-in-law and I have been doing this for about 26 years.

**Joel Benz:** We appreciate you waiting with us here through the numbers of public comment. This is not a business as usual year and you expanding and growing is a good thing for our community. Council have you had an opportunity to look at the scoring sheet here? I will also point out that they are agreeing to contribute a percentage of savings back into our Development Fund which we appreciate.

**Tom Harris:** I guess I will add and maybe a question. I think when we spoke to you a year or two ago that the challenge was just in finding people. It looks like you are adding eight additional welders, painters and assembly. Have you been able to recruit and retain folks?

**Mark Webb:** I will defer to Carey because he handles our HR and he is doing some exciting things.

**Carey Sipe:** We have had a great relationship with the Career Academy at Anthis. Earlier this week we had nine students out there doing some jobs. They have been virtual for quite some time and to see their eyes light up when they walked into a 100,000 square foot multi-building facility was encouraging. Over the last two years we had interns that came in and hired them full-time. One of our Team Captains, this is how we refer to our Supervisors, is 19 years old and been with us a year and a half. He is running one of our largest product lines. We are really excited about the youth that is coming up right now and the opportunities we have for them. Don't get me wrong. There are certainly challenges right now in finding people especially when you are looking to grow as quickly as we are looking. We are encouraged because many of the individuals that we have gotten are referrals and so our associates really sell the business by talking to friends and family members. If anyone is looking to apply for those positions, we are looking.

**Mark Webb:** We are also involved with the Made by Me Steering Committee which is through Greater Fort Wayne. We go out to the schools and we have Counselors come in so they can see what we do and they can talk to the students. We are having a big push to educate students beyond what they think is out there for them.

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**Tom Harris:** And keep that applicant flow process in place. Good for you. I see you have a full range of benefits and you are starting at about \$16.80 an hour.

**Mark Webb:** It averages out to about that, I guess.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** Thank you for being here. And thank you for sharing your story and what you are doing with the youth. Are we being intentional in trying to diversify to make sure that the women and minorities know about these opportunities? Are we being very intentional as far as that with your company? Thank you.

**Carey Sipe:** I will say that the last four individuals that we brought in are minorities. It is very intentional, yes. We are a shop that over the years has been predominately male in the welding industry particularly. Many of those positions are filled by males. We are seeing a resurgence right now in that as well. Three of the students that came in out of the nine were females and so that was very encouraging. It is very intentional and we are looking to expand our horizons.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** Thank you for sharing that. I think people at home don't really know about some of these opportunities. I am a firm believer in sharing the knowledge and making sure that our young people are telling their stories to their friends and neighbors to know about these opportunities. I know Work One has really had a hard time just filling internships and that was before COVID. These opportunities where people know that college is not for everyone that there is a short track to employment and there is an opportunity through East Allen County University and Fort Wayne Community Schools Anthis Career. I am just saying that hearing this over and over again, telling the story and maybe even putting some marketing dollars into this where we are really trying to target the next generation. I am a firm believer that if you can make it with your own hands that you will always have a job. These are opportunities of a lifetime. Thank you.

**Mark Webb:** I will add that the Made by Me Coalition, if you are not aware is the avenue that we are looking at. We are trying to connect those dots together. It is an uphill climb. It is also educating the parents of the students that may have a different perception than the students and what the reality is. We are putting dollars towards that. Thanks for the question.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** Thank you. These could be opportunities for parents and children are side by side in these programs and just turning their whole life around. We just talked about the criminal justice system and some of the things they are doing. Wendy was just before us and spoke about those. How

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do we tie these programs in together where we are saving and serving the whole family? I commend you for what you are doing. Thank you.

**Tom Harris:** With that I will move for consideration of Resolution 2020-12-17-01 approving a Statement of Benefits for QuikCut, Inc.

**Kenny Fries:** Second.

**Joel Benz:** We have a motion and a second. All in favor say aye, those opposed, like sign. The motion passes 6-1 (Spurr). Moving on, we have the Coroner's Department. He was here all morning and during the break asked if he could take off. Councilman Fries, are you going to handle this?

**Kenny Fries:** Yes. They want to transfer money from the Coroner's General Fund in the amount of \$1,512 to pay for Overtime, On Call Pay, FICA, PERF, and County Match 401A. I will make the motion to transfer from Automotive Equipment to those in that amount.

**Bob Armstrong:** Second.

**Joel Benz:** We have a motion and a second. All in favor say aye, those opposed, like sign. The motion passes 7-0.

**Nick Jordan:** I think I have the rest of what is on the agenda. Items one through six, as it is listed right now will become items one through eight. I need to add into the From as well as into the To. I am adding COVID Supplies for \$150,000 and moving that to what would become number eight, Work Comp. The total transfer will be \$709,000 from lines one through three and into line four through eight. I am adding Work Comp because we have exceeded another banner year in Work Comp claims. We will be at about \$1.3 or \$1.4 million mark in Work Comp claims.

**Tom Harris:** Any luck on the Mod Factor?

**Nick Jordan:** No. I can keep going if you want me to. The next one is in CUM CAP. Originally a million dollars was budgeted in Elevator Service and Repairs. The actual came in less than was budgeted. We are making this reduction in order for the 2021 budget to be approved at the dollar amount that you passed. In essence, the DLGF has to look at the prior year's budget and assume that it will all be spent unless you do an appropriation reduction. We are doing this reduction to show that the million dollars will be available to fund the 2021 budget. That is why number seven is being done. Number eight is my office's request for the Commissioners in accounting. They had items that were in the 300 Series which are Services and we would prefer

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that they have them in the 200 Series, Supplies or Capital which is Building Repair s in Supplies and Equipment and Machinery and Miscellaneous Capital which are capital lines. That is strictly an accounting change.

**Tom Harris:** With that I will move for items one and two from Easter Seals Arc for \$59,000 and COVID Capital for \$500,000 and COVID Supplies for \$150,000 to items four through eight. That is for a total of \$709,000.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** Second.

**Joel Benz:** We have a motion and a second. All in favor say aye, those opposed, like sign. The motion passes 7-0.

**Tom Harris:** I will move for the appropriation reduction in CUM CAP Development Fund 321 in the amount of \$1 million.

**Kyle Kerley:** Second.

**Joel Benz:** We have a motion and a second. All in favor say aye, those opposed, like sign. The motion passes 7-0.

**Tom Harris:** I will move for the transfer in CUM CAP Development Fund 321 from Building Repair of \$29,811 to items nine, ten and eleven for \$29,811.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** Second.

**Joel Benz:** We have a motion and a second. All in favor say aye, those opposed, like sign. The motion passes 7-0. Again, we have the resolution of our Board Appointments.

**Kyle Kerley:** I am going to do this one by one. There have been a couple of changes since the last meeting. I think Sheila has one name that she wants to enter in. I will do position by position and we can do quick votes. If there is any discussion, we will go from there. I nominate Ozzie Mitson for an annual term to serve on the Alcohol Beverage Commission with the term to expire 12/31/2021.

**Joel Benz:** Technically he has already been nominated, correct?

**Nick Jordan:** You didn't recess and so you can't carry it over.

**Tom Harris:** I will second that.

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**Joel Benz: We have a motion and a second. All in favor say aye, those opposed, like sign. The motion passes 7-0.**

**Kyle Kerley: I nominate Roger Brugh to the Child Care Facilities Board with an annual term ending 12/31/2021.**

**Tom Harris: Second.**

**Joel Benz: We have a motion and a second. All in favor say aye, those opposed, like sign. The motion passes 7-0.**

**Kyle Kerley: I nominate Mike Clough and Patty Tritch to the PTABOA Board with an annual term ending 12/31/2021.**

**Tom Harris: Second.**

**Joel Benz: We have a motion and a second. All in favor say aye, those opposed, like sign. The motion passes 7-0.**

**Kyle Kerley: This next one had a little bit of a change after talking to Councilman Harris and Councilman Benz and Councilman Armstrong. I nominate Councilman Benz and Darren Vogt to the Redevelopment Commission for an annual term ending 12/31/2021.**

**Kenny Fries: Second.**

**Joel Benz: We have a motion and a second. All in favor say aye, those opposed, like sign. The motion passes 7-0.**

**Kyle Kerley: I nominate Tom Harris to Woodburn Economic Development Commission for an annual term ending 12/31/2021.**

**Bob Armstrong: Second.**

**Joel Benz: All in favor say aye, those opposed, like sign. The motion passes 7-0.**

**Kyle Kerley: I nominate Joel Benz to Visit Fort Wayne for an annual term ending 12/31/2021.**

**Tom Harris: Second.**

**Joel Benz: All in favor say aye, those opposed, like sign. The motion passes 7-0.**

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**Kyle Kerley:** I nominate Sharon Tucker to serve a four-year term on the Library Board with term ending 12/31/2024.

**Tom Harris:** Second.

**Joel Benz:** All in favor say aye, those opposed, like sign. The motion passes 7-0.

**Kyle Kerley:** I nominate Mark Hagar to the Allen County Economic Development Commission to a four-year term ending 12/31/2024.

**Tom Harris:** Second.

**Joel Benz:** All in favor say aye, those opposed, like sign. The motion passes 7-0.

**Kyle Kerley:** I nominate Thomas Black to the Board of Zoning Appeals to a four-year term ending 12/31/2024.

**Tom Harris:** Second.

**Joel Benz:** All in favor say aye, those opposed, like sign. The motion passes 7-0.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** I want to nominate Sean Johnson to the Park and Recreation Board.

**Kyle Kerley:** This would replace Mitch Sheppard. I second Sheila's nomination.

**Tom Harris:** Can you share some information about him?

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** He is a local young man, millennium, and has been very active in our community. He has been trying to get on Parks and Rec for a couple of years now. There is opportunity today and I hope you all agree.

**Joel Benz:** Do you have a resume?

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** I do not have a resume.

**Tom Harris:** Just for clarity, you nominated the two names on here.

**Kyle Kerley:** She nominated Sean Johnson. I was also going to nominate Stephanie.

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**Joel Benz:** Let's go ahead and vote on Sean Johnson. Is there further discussion?

**Kenny Fries:** Does Mitch Sheppard not want it anymore?

**Tom Harris:** Mitch Sheppard is involved with the City Parks. She has a thorough understanding of the whole Park system including the City Parks system.

**Nick Jordan:** Jeff Baxter called yesterday and Mitch and Stephanie were both still interested in the appointments.

**Chris Spurr:** How long has Mitch been on the Board?

**Bob Armstrong:** She has been on there quite a while. She has been there at least two eight-year terms.

**Tom Harris:** As a matter of process, we have one nomination at this point. Do you take another nomination?

**Joel Benz:** No, we need to vote on this nomination.

**Tom Harris:** That is before you will consider a second nomination.

**Joel Benz:** Correct. I will call for the vote. **All in favor of Sean Johnson for Parks and Rec signify by saying aye. All opposed. The motion passes 4-3 (Harris, Fries and Benz).**

**Kyle Kerley:** My second nomination is for Stephanie Veit to a four-year term ending 12/31/2024.

**Tom Harris:** Second.

**Joel Benz:** All in favor say aye, those opposed, like sign. The motion passes 7-0.

**Kyle Kerley:** I nominate Bob Armstrong for a four-year term to the City Economic Development Commission ending 12//31/2024.

**Kenny Fries:** Second.

**Joel Benz:** All in favor say aye, those opposed, like sign. The motion passes 7-0.

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**Kyle Kerley:** I nominate Craig Dellinger to New Haven Economic Development to an annual term ending 12/31/2021.

**Tom Harris:** Second.

**Joel Benz:** We have a motion and a second. All in favor say aye, those opposed, like sign. The motion passes 7-0. Are there any discussions about liaison assignments or anything else going on?

**Tom Harris:** Approval to waive the reading on any matter approved today for which it may be deemed necessary for the County Council meeting of December 17, 2020.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** Second.

**Joel Benz:** All in favor please signify by saying aye. The motion passes 7-0.

**Kyle Kerley:** Move to adjourn.

**Sheila Curry-Campbell:** Second.

**Joel Benz:** All in favor please signify by saying aye. Opposed like sign. The motion carries 7-0.