ALLEN COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
November 17, 2022
8:30 AM

The Allen County Council met on Thursday, November 17, 2022 at 8:30 am in the Chambers in Citizens Square. The purpose of the meeting was for additional appropriations, transfer of funds in excess of the current budget, grants, and any other business to come before Council.

Attending: Robert A. Armstrong, Tom A. Harris, Sheila Curry-Campbell, Kyle A. Kerley, Paul W. Lagemann, Ken Fries, and Christopher Spurr.

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

Kyle Kerley: Good morning and welcome to the Allen County Council meeting for Thursday, November 17th, 2022. As always, we are going to start the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

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

[pause 00:00:45]

Kyle Kerley: Amen.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Amen.

Kyle Kerley: Welcome, everybody. If you haven't done so already, please silence your cell phones. Are there any changes to the agenda?

Thomas Harris: Motion to approve it as is.

Kyle Kerley: We have a motion to approve it as is.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Second.

Kyle Kerley: Motion is second. All those in favor say aye.

Multiple: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: All those opposed. Agenda is adopted 7-0. Approval of the minutes from October 20th, 2022.

Thomas Harris: Mr. President, I move for approval.

Paul Lagemann: Second.

Kyle Kerley: Motion second for approval of the minutes. All those in favor say aye.

Multiple: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: Aye. All those opposed. Minutes are approved 7-0. Financial report. Mr. Jordan.

Nick Jordan: Morning council.

Kyle Kerley: Good morning.

Nick Jordan: One item on the agenda that will not happen is for the surveyor's office on second page. The vehicle request is going to happen in '23. There was a miscommunication on the fund that it was to come from. It should have been the general fund that was not advertised accordingly. We can't do it in December, so it'll happen next year in 2023, just as an FYI. Then on your financials through the end of October. No big surprises, as we've discussed all year. One positive we are seeing, or a couple positives, that we still have the trailing pipeline projects.

You see the building and planning revenues continue to be significant on the miscellaneous revenue. At the same time, because the feds increased rates and we're sitting on not only the cash balances we've had for a few years, but also the new ARPA money, we're seeing a massive uptick in interest revenue where we'll finally hit the million dollars we have budgeted, if not more.

It's been a while since we've received interest revenue of that nature just because the fed had rates so low. You'll see the miscellaneous revenues trending about 10% on the year to date. Some of the fourth quarter contributions have already been received, and so that bumps it up along with those isolated ones that are trending ahead of our estimates, our very conservative estimates but I can take any questions.

Thomas Harris: Just the care of those federal prisoners and such. We had $3 million. It's at $2.3 million and it's 77%. Is that a reflection then of the changes that are made, or do we still anticipate another major payment coming in or something?

Nick Jordan: No, you're exactly right there, the reduction of receiving, and that line is care of state and federal prisoners.

Thomas Harris: Yes.

Nick Jordan: The reduction of not taking any federal prisoners, we do not receive that reimbursement. That reimbursement is at a greater rate than the state prisoners. We'll see some trailing pieces in there, but nothing significant because the state pays in a lump sum, approximately $1.6 million, and that was already received around July/August time frame. That's why you see that reduction there.

Thomas Harris: Yes, and nothing else. You said there would be some trailing of--

Nick Jordan: Yes. There's some miscellaneous billings, I call them, medically-related-type things or reimbursements that we receive. The fed piece, unless we flip and start receiving federal inmates, which isn't expected to happen, at least from my understanding, you won't see that $700,000 gap be bridged significantly.

Thomas Harris: Thank you. Thanks. Mr. President, I move for approval of the financial report.

Paul Lagemann: Second.

Kyle Kerley: Motion, second. All those in favor say aye.

Multiple: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: Financial report is approved 7-0. Total appropriations requested in the general fund, $134,718. Total appropriations requested in other funds, $8,268,187. Obviously with the changes that Nick mentioned earlier would lower one of those.

Thomas Harris: Did you say $8 million or $6 million?

Kyle Kerley: $8 million. Sorry, $6 million.

Thomas Harris: There we go. Just save $2 million, Mr. President. Just like that.

[laughter]

Kyle Kerley: Appreciate it.

Thomas Harris: Sure.

Kyle Kerley: Public comment.

Sean Colletine: Good morning. I'm Sean Colletine. I'm 46807, zip code. I'm here as a spokesperson for the Alternatives to Incarceration Working Group. Anybody seen the elephant in the room? It's called the jail, the new jail. We have all kinds of things on your agenda that you're working on now, but you're going to be facing this elephant in a month, month-and-a-half, whenever the commission's designed to bring it down. It's your job on council to start looking at this thing and make sure that we're doing the right thing. We're potentially encumbering the citizens of Allen County for $300 million, $350 million. Who knows?

It's an open-ended question. We have drawings from elevators, which is a major step up, so we know at least what we're talking about. This just came out and they did a presentation in front of the commissioners. In my opinion, what we're doing here with this whole jail content, we're trying to reduce labor costs. It looks like a stalag. One of the things that we need to make sure is that we're not putting people in jail. We continually do that as a way to deal with problems rather than confront them. Why don't we try and help people and do something constructive long-term rather than keep housing?

We come up with housing programs that don't work. This is a roster of the 756 people, men and women currently housed in the jail. Does anybody have any idea what they're there for? I do, because I've looked at this. The thing that we don't realize is that you got 750 people there waiting for some disposition of their case. In the meantime, we're housing them in a jail, and it's a crowded house. We all recognize that. It's a question of what are we going to do about it? Here are some of the things that people are in there for. Here's an OWI, operating while intoxicated, they've spent 433 days in jail right now.

Disregarding an automatic signal, they've been in there for 433 days. Here's another OWI. They're relatively minor charges. I'm not saying that they should be dismissed, but we have these people sitting in jail and we're going to build a new facility to house somebody for

DUI? What's wrong with us? That's insane. We need to start looking at how we're spending the money. That's money that could be spent elsewhere rather than keep locking people up. We can solve this problem right now.

175 of these could be removed right now if we insisted on the states taking them. We have 175 people that we're housing, and now we're going to build a new jail because it's overcrowded? I say relieve the overcrowded, make the state do what it's supposed to do, relieve the burden right now. We can resolve the judge's query about overcrowding right now, and we sit here and do nothing. It's not the way we can do business or should do business.

Kyle Kerley: Thank you. Anybody else for public comment? Motion to end public comment.

Paul Lagemann: Moved.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Second.

Kyle Kerley: Motion to second. All those in favor say aye.

Multiple: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: Aye. Public comment is closed. Capital Improvement Board.

Doug Johnston: Good morning, council. My name is Doug Johnston. I'm the attorney for the Allen County-Fort Wayne Capital Improvement Board of Managers. Pursuant to statute, you'll all recall that we come before counsel on an annual basis for you to review our budget and hopefully approve that today. As a companion matter, we are also responsible for the oversight of the visit Fort Wayne Budget, which we have done, and they're here with their representatives.

The Capital Improvement Board is present by Jim Cook, the president, and Bart Shaw the executive director. As you will recall, CIB runs both the Grand Wayne Center, our convention center, as well as the capital Improvement Fund. Visit Fort Wayne is here with Jill Boggs and Mark Luttik, here we go, should you have questions for VFW. With that, Mr. Cook?

Jim Cook: Good morning, commissioners. Thank you for having us. Again, Jim Cook, president of the Capital Improvement Board. My day job, I'm regional president for Star Financial Bank.

Bart Shaw: Good morning. Bart Shaw, I'm the executive director for the Grand Wayne Center. Thanks for seeing us. If you don't mind, I'll start with just a quick overview of what we've got, a couple of our accomplishments for the past year. Our budget, it looks a little different. At least what we project the end of 2022 being, not knowing as we're coming out of COVID, the revenue has come in much higher than we anticipated, which is a great thing. Our expenditures are much lower than we anticipated, which honestly isn't a great thing. It wasn't necessarily because we were overly efficient.

It was because we could not hire people. We really struggled to get through this year with the people that we had. As you look forward, you notice that on our budget next year, there is a significant jump in the expenditures that reflects a couple of things. One is just the inflationary pressures that we're seeing where everything is more expensive. Two, we've raised the starting wage. The starting wage for our entry level positions, our facility worker staff will have been raised by over 20% from year over year.

We did an in-year adjustment this year, and we've added more to that for next year. Those are the highlights of the budget. As far as the highlights of the organization, this past year, we had 50 conventions, which is tremendous. Really we're normally in the 50 to 55 range. We're really excited about being back to that level. Hosted over 270 total events. Generated over 20,000 room nights for the county. Happy to answer any questions you have on our budget. Jim, do you have anything to add?

Jim Cook: No.

Ken Fries: You talk about the starting wage increase. What is it up to now for?

Bart Shaw: For our part-time employees, that will start all of our part-time employees at $13. For anybody full-time, they're at $15.

Ken Fries: How does that compare with the Coliseum? Do we know?

Bart Shaw: I don't know how it compares to the Coliseum. When you drive around town anecdotally and what the research we've done, you see that starting wages in most of the place is around $13. Those who are our full-time staff enjoy full benefits, and our benefit packages is pretty robust. We are actually looking at, pending a survey to make sure that it's a wanted benefit, we have a healthcare benefit lined up for our part-time workers that is an opportunity to make that a little bit more of a good position for them.

Ken Fries: Thank you.

Bart Shaw: Mr. Spurr?

Chris Spurr: Same question as Kenny.

Thomas Harris: Question-- I'm sorry, Sheila, go ahead.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: How many openings do you currently have?

Bart Shaw: Right now we have three full-time facility worker openings, and we probably could use another eight or nine part-time employees.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: What are those full-time positions and what's their starting rate?

Bart Shaw: The starting rate for those is around $15 an hour. They are facility workers. They're the folks that make it happen. They're the ones that come in and clean the building, set the building, put the tables and chairs down. They're really the backbone of our operation.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Thank you.

Kyle Kerley: Mr. Harris.

Thomas Harris: What was the percentage increase that you did for full-time workers?

Bart Shaw: 5%.

Thomas Harris: 5%. Very good. Thank you. You show building revenue dropping, if I'm looking at that right for this next year. Is that going from $1.1 million? Am I looking at the right?

Bart Shaw: Oh, in terms of total--

Thomas Harris: Yes.

Bart Shaw: That reflects two things. One, it's conservative. Our revenue estimates, we always are conservative on our revenue estimates moving forward. Two, it reflects a significant increase in our expenditures for next year. We don't anticipate that same gap that we had this year with a higher than expected revenue and a lower than expected expenditure.

Thomas Harris: Do you show the revenue going down in building revenue? Am I looking at that right, or no? Maybe I'm not.

Bart Shaw: I see what you're saying. Yes, sir. Again, we are very conservative. So much of our business is booked in year. We're comfortable with that number moving into the year. Some of that, so much of our business is booked in year, we could have put our best guess, and we're always on the conservative side when we do that.

Thomas Harris: That $1.1 million was projected for '22. Are you going to hit that or is that the--

Bart Shaw: We feel comfortable we'll get that for '22. If you look, what we budgeted for '22 was the $850,000.

Thomas Harris: The forecast is that next year's going to be better than this year as far as events and such?

Bart Shaw: Where we're tracking for conventions, which is what we really track going into year to year, we are in a better position than we are year to year, from a convention standpoint. What we don't know is that in-year business, the groups that come up and want to do banquets, the weddings, those sort of things, that's the unknown going into next year. It's why we budget conservatively on the room rental.

Thomas Harris: Which is projected lower than this year.

Bart Shaw: Lower than this year's actual. Higher than last year's budget though.

Thomas Harris: All right. Very good. Thank you.

Kyle Kerley: Paul Lagemann.

Paul Lagemann: Mr. Chairman, thank you. Mr. Cook, can you talk through the economic development disbursements. Give us a sense of what disbursements occurred and what projects those might have gone to. As well as the delta between the $11.7 million and $4.8 million from last year to the coming year, or from this year to the coming year. Just highlights on some of the major disbursements, if you don't mind.

[background conversation]

Jim Cook: Sorry about that. I had this all figured out and lost a page.

Thomas Harris: Paul, you're referring to, what is it, the $11 million dropping to $4.8 million?

Paul Lagemann: The $11,763,219 to $4.8-ish million. Really the question also is about some highlights on what those disbursements in the last year went to.

Jim Cook: I don't have that list of what we disbursed this year, Bart. Do I have that?

Bart Shaw: No, that's not in there. I'm sorry.

Jim Cook: I apologize. I don't know why we don't have that list in here. I can get you that information.

Paul Lagemann: That would be very helpful.

Jim Cook: Happy to talk you through that. Last year was a heavier year. We're pretty much, I would say, fully committed on dollars right now. Every project was an economic development project related to either electric works in prior year or some other projects, parking garages and city-related and county-related projects we assisted with.

Paul Lagemann: It would be good for us to have that information.

Jim Cook: Sure.

Paul Lagemann: As well as the taxpayers. Just as we talk through your budget, one of the questions that we all receive is, you approve their budget, justify your approval. For us to be able to do that, that information is extremely helpful.

Jim Cook: I appreciate it. John, do you have the--

John Stafford: I've got a list of what expenditures were made this year, if that's what you meant.

Paul Lagemann: Just major projects. I'm not looking for a great detail.

Jim Cook: No, and I apologize. I thought we had that in here. I've seen it and I can't find it now.

John Stafford: $650,000 was paid as a commitment on the Ash parking garage project. That was a commitment many number of years ago. We've got three more years to go on that. $275,000 was for the parking garage bond issue. That was the annual debt service payment. $1,439,000 was on the pledge on the electric works lease rental bonds. Then there were couple of ongoing, there was a $600,000 commitment made for the Riverfront property. There was a $300,000 request and commitment for funds for Riverfront land acquisition that was part of a pledge made about four years ago, and the city came back, there were about $400,000 left over and requested $300,000 of the $400,000. Those are really-

Paul Lagemann: The big ones?

John Stafford: -the big ones. Yes.

Paul Lagemann: Good. That was very helpful, thank you.

[pause 00:20:05]

Kyle Kerley: Any other question? I'll entertain a motion to--

Paul Lagemann: I just want to say I've been at the Grand Wayne Center for a number of events, and you guys do a fantastic job.

Jim Cook: Thank you very much.

Paul Lagemann: Motion to approve.

Kyle Kerley: The CIB budget, yes.

Paul Lagemann: Mr. Chairman, I move that we approve the CIB budget.

Thomas Harris: And Grand Wayne Center.

Paul Lagemann: And Grand Wayne Center. Thank you.

Thomas Harris: Second.

Kyle Kerley: Motion is second. Any further questions? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye.

Multiple: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: All those opposed?

Chris Spurr: Abstain.

Doug Johnston: As a technical point, VFW is also part of that, if that's included.

Kyle Kerley: It's listed separate. Motion passes 6-0-1(Spurr)

Thomas Harris: It's actually a separate budget.

Paul Lagemann: Just, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Jordan, just to confirm our approval of the CIB budget is perfunctory, it's non-binding, is that correct?

Nick Jordan: No. You have to approve the budget. Historically, since I've been here, it has always been approved. Should it not be approved? I'm not sure what the matter of recourse in that regard. As was mentioned by Attorney Johnston, they're listed separately in case somebody did need to abstain or dissent on one piece on the other, but they're really one budget. Sharing in portions of the same revenue.

Thomas Harris: I guess I was anticipating a presentation by Visit Fort Wayne.

Nick Jordan: Yes, Ms. Boggs is here.

Thomas Harris: Good.

Kyle Kerley: Visit Fort Wayne.

Jill Boggs: Good morning.

Kyle Kerley: Good morning.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Good morning.

Jill Boggs: I'm in my ninth month, so be nice.

[laughter]

Thank you.

Thomas Harris: It's relative to what's nice. I don't know what--

Jill Boggs: Thank you. Again, I'm Jill Boggs, president, CEO of Visit Fort Wayne. With me today is Mark Luttik. He is the treasurer of the Visit Fort Wayne Board of Directors. Also, Kristen Guthrie is back there. She's Vice President of Marketing and Communications. I would like to take a moment to thank Councilwoman Curry-Campbell for her service this year on our board of directors. Thank you, Sheila. It was a pleasure working with you. The booklet you have in front of you titled The 2023 Marketing Plan has some highlights of some really exciting things we plan to do next year with our budget.

I am not going to take you through that booklet. You can read it at your leisure, but I do want to highlight a few of the larger projects. One, we would like to complete our tourism master plan. There is not a master plan regarding the travel and tourism industry for Allen County currently. We do need to look at head at 10 years and what this industry will mean to the county, the cities, the communities within. Right now, 6.5 million visitors come to Allen County and they spend $741.6 million while they're here, so this is an important investment that we look into and nurture, and grow.

Another large initiative that we're excited about is we have an aggressive group strategic marketing campaign planned to bring more groups here to aid the Grand Wayne Center or other venues, the Memorial Coliseum. We're excited about that. We do invest heavily in a new website. It's time. That's actually a two-year project. We have a lot of product to share with visitors, so we take that very seriously. It is going to be brought to you again in our 2024 budget, and hopefully we'll complete it at that time. The marketing team's been working really hard on looking geographically at new target markets.

We're going to hit new markets hard next year, to increase a new leisure base of visitors to our destination. In the back of the booklet, under the green tab is a snapshot of our budget. It is thorough. It is very strategic-minded, if you will, to help us accomplish these exciting new initiatives as well as others that I did not mention and are included in your book. The budget has been approved by the Capital Improvement Board and our board of directors. It was also reviewed thoroughly through Mark, he's chair of our new finance committee that reestablished since I've been here, and our executive committee as well. If you have any questions, I'd be happy to answer them.

Paul Lagemann: Mr. Chairman?

Kyle Kerley: Yes.

Paul Lagemann: Ms. Boggs, welcome and congratulations.

Jill Boggs: Thank you.

Paul Lagemann: First of all. Then second of all, as you take a look at the things that bring people to Fort Wayne and Allen County, can you just enumerate a couple of the biggest attractions that you see here?

Jill Boggs: Of course. Kristen, I would ask that obviously she chime in. She knows our destination thoroughly. I am still learning. I've lived in the region 36 years, but will be a new resident of Fort Wayne as of tomorrow. We're moving, but still learning everything. Obviously we reposition ourselves as family-friendly. Our attractions that really cater to families is big and important to us. Refine that in our research. The zoo, science central, the botanical gardens, our performing arts, our festivals and arts. There's just so much here. It's hard as us as curators of all these quality place amenities to package it nicely, but our team does a really great job.

Paul Lagemann: Certainly. Just as from an outsider's perspective, do you see the library's genealogy component as a big attractor?

Jill Boggs: Yes. Our marketing team reinvest in promoting the genealogy center. We have a very close relationship with the folks there. The executive director is on our board, and that is a real asset in our community for sure, in our work. As well as the Lincoln Center that is there.

Paul Lagemann: Very good.

Ken Fries: As a bicycle rider who's been up in Michigan many times on their trails, I would love to see visit Fort Wayne, the county, the city, and the state work together to try to get more contiguous trails. Because along those trails, there are small towns and they thrive when all these bike riders go on these trails. The more we can do that, the more we can make them contiguous, the more people we're going to have coming here.

Jill Boggs: Yes, sir. I agree. We are involved in the Polka-Bash connector, and certainly work within our 11 county northeast region on how we can improve our destinations collectively together. That way, the visitor economy is more than just your leisure group traveler. It all starts with a visit. A visit can produce new members of our workforce, new residents. The more we can all work together in our region, we're definitely economic development partners in that way.

Ken Fries: Hopefully we can see some asphalt laid soon.

Jill Boggs: Yes sir. My husband's a biker also, so he would like to see that as well.

Ken Fries: Good. Thank you.

Paul Lagemann: Of course, the mountain bike trails are great too.

Jill Boggs: That would be nice.

Kyle Kerley: Mr. Harris.

Thomas Harris: Wanted to find out, how many employees does Visit Fort Wayne have.

Jill Boggs: We currently have 14, including myself, and we are bringing one back into our sales department that we lost during the pandemic. I have positioned it differently. However, it will work on the lower tier accounts that generate maybe 100, 200-room nights versus just being an assistant, and that alleviate those smaller accounts from our sales personnel that really will work on top-tier accounts that will generate more room nights to get here in our destination. Another position is a special projects assistant to the CEO that will help me move a lot of our larger initiatives forward.

Thomas Harris: Two new positions.

Jill Boggs: We'll be at-- One new and one is being brought back from the pandemic.

Thomas Harris: Then your percent of increase, or what do you do for increases?

Jill Boggs: We did a cost of living, 5% increase. We normally follow the city with that. The board had tasked me when I came on, however, to review our current salaries, to look at any equity gaps. I worked with an HR firm to re-formularize those positions and put 'em in ranges that we are willing to pay to remain competitive. We have very specific skill sets in marketing in our industry. What's the low end we're willing to pay? High end? We put those positions in, so we have added some salary adjustments to the budget next year. Well-deserved, needed.

My predecessor and his foresight said have your new CEO work on this, versus him, as he was an outgoing CEO. We got that done. I will add that our largest increase in our line item and our budget is our marketing line item. We are truly working to invest. We have a surplus budget this year that's added to our budget next year, you could see is a deficit. We are sticking with our budget this year, not tapping into surplus. This can help us really accomplish and move some of these great initiatives forward for our destination.

Thomas Harris: That salary line went up 25%, that's why-- That's based on the two positions and the 5% is what's driving that.

Jill Boggs: And the adjustments that were needed to get us-- People are trying to poach. We try to poach our fellow employees and we don't want to lose our good team.

Thomas Harris: Some of that was retention, not just recruitment-

Jill Boggs: Yes, sir.

Thomas Harris: -if you will? Other than those two, your seats are all filled, and it's a matter of retaining those individuals at that point. Your health insurance benefits are up 31%?

Jill Boggs: Yes. Went up actually 15% for health. We have not had an increase in five years possibly. They obviously needed to pass on some of the cost to us. Then we also added vision insurance, which was nominal to do that for our employees. That's where that came from.

Thomas Harris: That one there is up 31%.

Jill Boggs: The health, you asked about that, yes. Some of the other insurances, we added directors and officers insurance and really made that more robust for cyber-

Thomas Harris: For the organization.

Jill Boggs: -and put a certain coverage on that personnel.

Thomas Harris: That advertising line and such is up 48%, $400,000. You mentioned leisure is something that you're going to go after to market. What's that mean in terms of your world? What's leisure?

Jill Boggs: First of all, to address the number, that is where we should be. Prior to the pandemic, that was a good number for us. We are a destination marketing organization. Every expense we have is at the sole purpose of promoting our city, our rural communities in the way that best fits them, and our county as a destination, to draw leisure travelers, so family weekends. Visiting friends and relatives is the largest travel market for Indiana. That they stay in our hotels, our Airbnb's, vacation rentals, but the group is another big entity. The large increase in that is this very aggressive strategic marketing campaign to drive and generate more groups to our destination.

Thomas Harris: That's nationwide, or is it more regional that we're trying to get people from Columbus, Ohio to come to Fort Wayne or something? Is that nationwide or--

Jill Boggs: We'll take 'em from wherever, but again, the team targets some geographical areas that we know we have a new software without diving into the details that help us know where people are coming from. We really try to adjust our investment. If something's not working, we don't stay there because it's not working, but we do need to look at new markets.

Me as the new CEO coming with a marketing background, I would like 20% of the marketing budgeted to be on trying something new. Everyone is vying for that. We are very competitive. The travel tourism industry is very competitive, but we are seeing back to pre-pandemic levels of travel. For Thanksgiving, you're at 98% of where we were in 2019 on Thanksgiving travel. We're encouraged by that.

Thomas Harris: Thank you.

Kyle Kerley: Ms. Curry-Campbell.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Thank you.

Jill Boggs: Hi, Sheila.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Thank you so much. Good morning. I know diversity, equity, and inclusion is at the top of your list. Can you share how you're using that in your marketing?

Jill Boggs: The marketing team is very purposeful in that in our photography, our messaging, in our targeting. Myself as administrator of the organization, I've shared with you, I just completed a leadership series, a year-long training in DEIB and belonging for our destination and for the organization. We also are investing as an initiative next year in doing a self-assessment.

It's a 51-point a self-assessment to make sure we are really looking at our organization, addressing DEI. For example, even vendor choice. Are we looking at diversity in minority-owned businesses, so forth, for our purchases? Anxious for a deep dive. Marketing's already leaps and bounds ahead of the rest of the organization, but even in our hiring and everything, this 51-point assessment will take us through some things to improve ourselves and our operations.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: I know you spoke about the increase in the salary. Can you give us a ballpark of what that average salary is for those 14 employees?

Jill Boggs: Oh gosh. Sheila, I might have to get back with you on that. If you include me, I would say the sweet spot's $50,000 to $60,000.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: I know it's important that we retain folks here in Allen County and Fort Wayne. We have so much economic development. We're talking about b with a billions of dollars that's coming in. I think we need to be intentional, making sure that whatever resources and marketing tools that you have, that we're attracting those people that look like me. I think we've come to a point where we're not being intentional, and the only way we're going to be able to equal the playing field is to look around and notice who is absent. I appreciate you being intentional with your diversity and your equity, and your inclusion. Thank you for allowing me to serve.

Jill Boggs: Thank you, Sheila. It is important to us. I know you know that. Thank you.

Kyle Kerley: Mr. Harris.

Thomas Harris: One of the things we always end with questioning, although we have a few more, but is to talk about maybe the highlights for '23, things that might be coming or big events that are coming at '23 for the community. Anything come to mind for big conventions and things?

Jill Boggs: '23. Bart? We have a spreadsheet of them. I'm sorry I did not bring that with me.

Thomas Harris: Your stats are showing that that's improving or your pre-pandemic--

Jill Boggs: Yes. Next year's a good year for us. What we're focusing on our sales right now is beyond next year. We'll obviously service anyone that comes in or approaches us, but we're focusing two to four years out and we'd like to really do that. We work closely with our partners at the other venues. Specific groups, I could send that to you. We do, just so you know, have a newsletter that you can sign up for.

Not that you need another email, I know, but it will show you groups in town this week. The team curates what's going on at the Coliseum or other venues, the Grand Wayne Center. We package it nice by week, and it will tell you who's coming in, and the attendance numbers. It's really a nice newsletter that you get. Just super easy to peruse and look at.

Thomas Harris: Again, congratulations. Best of luck this next year.

Jill Boggs: Thank you.

Kyle Kerley: Mr. Spurr.

Chris Spurr: Just one quick question. If you already addressed it, I apologize. On the insurance audit, legal fees and dues, that's up 295% year over year. Could you give us a little more insight into that?

Jill Boggs: Yes, that's where our tourism master plan is. That's a large chunk of that, and the professional fees. We have Destiny Destination Development Fund. We're also trying to get accredited nationally as a fine-tuned exceptional with Distinction Run Visitors Bureau that's tax-funded. We have to go through 112 standards. Myself and the team are really working on that. That cost is in there. I'm hiring a company called CFO by Design next year.

They will be looking at all our financial policies and procedures. Not because there's any concerns there, but since the pandemic, our industry has changed controls, if you will, being tax-funded and protecting those monies. We will go through that whole thing. All that's lumped into that line item. We also hired an employment law attorney. I received three bids, so I have that. Due to accreditation and rewriting a lot of our policies and procedures, I'll need those reviewed. Did I answer your question?

Chris Spurr: Thank you.

Jill Boggs: A lot of these expenses are 2023 expense only towards a master plan. We did receive from the city an ARPA funding for that. I will seek other funding, but we will be funding the majority of that, and that's what we plan for as it lives under us.

Kyle Kerley: How much did you get in ARPA funding?

Jill Boggs: Just over $53,000.

Kyle Kerley: Where is that reflected in the budget?

Jill Boggs: It is not reflected. It's not solidified yet. It was approved, but we still have to go through the federal procurement process. It will hit next year. It is not reflected in this at this time.

Kyle Kerley: Just a minor question. I see that you have a small deficit. Probably that's attributed to these one-time projects, so you're pulling from reserves. What is your reserve balance?

Jill Boggs: We have a reserve policy of-- It's from, excuse me, five to eight-- Go ahead, Mark. You go.

Mark Luttik: No, I was going to say it's the--

Jill Boggs: Five to eight months.

Mark Luttik: The organization's reserve policy calls for five to eight months of reserves. Actually, I believe it's five to seven, but either way, we are well ahead of that. I think we're sitting at more than 9 to 10 range. There's ample opportunity to spend down some of those funds for those one-time projects like that.

Thomas Harris: Mr. President, I'll move for approval of the Visit Fort Wayne 2023 budget approval.

Chris Spurr: Wasn't it already approved?

Kyle Kerley: No, that's separate.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Second. We did 'em separate after--

Kyle Kerley: Motion in the second. All those in favor say aye.

Multiple: Aye.

Chris Spurr: I abstain.

Kyle Kerley: 6-0-1(Spurr). Thank you.

Jill Boggs: Thank you very much.

Thomas Harris: Thank you very much.

Jill Boggs: Thank you.

Kyle Kerley: Airport Authority. Good morning.

Doug Robertson: Good morning.

Robin Strasser: Good morning council members.

Doug Robertson: Doug Robertson, controller for the Airport Authority.

Robin Strasser: Robin Strasser, Director of Administration and Finance for the Airport Authority. We're here this morning because we are requesting an additional appropriation due to two items. One being related to the derecho that happened in June. We had many buildings and some equipment that suffered damage. We're requesting $4,224,267 to cover those. The majority of that is related to a hangar that SkyWest operates their maintenance facility out of. Then we had some other buildings, and we had some boarding ramps that were basically, demolished.

The other $2 million is related to purchasing new passenger boarding bridges for our east phase of our project gateway. We were informed recently that the lead time on those is more than a year. In order to not interfere with our phasing of that project, we want to bring those into this year, and go ahead and get those orders so that they're ready when we need them for that project. We're requesting the ability to spend $6,224,267 more in this year. I will mention that as far as the amount related to the storm claim, we will receive the majority of that from our insurance company. We have filed claim on that.

Ken Fries: Do we have an idea on the amount? The majority, we know close, 80%, 90%?

Robin Strasser: It's going to be at least 90%, probably more. We've already received roughly $2 million of it, and so now we just collect the rest as we make the improvements, and document that. Then we'll get the remaining.

Ken Fries: Thank you.

Thomas Harris: I've gotten lost in my email paperwork over here, but it appeared to me as I looked at this previously, that the president did not sign this letter or request. Did I miss that? Your board of directors did not have his signature on it when I looked at it? When it passed, I think everybody but the president had signed. Is that any indication, or was it just an absence or something?

Robin Strasser: He was absent that month.

Thomas Harris: I didn't know if that was a message.

Robin Strasser: No, not at all.

Thomas Harris: Okay.

Kyle Kerley: Any other questions?

Paul Lagemann: Just a clarification. This is a transfer from funds that you already have to-- these aren't new funds you're requesting from general fund or anything like that, right?

Robin Strasser: No.

Thomas Harris: With that, Mr. President, I'll move for capital outlay of $4,224,267.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Second.

Thomas Harris: $44.23, and then $43.99 for contractual services of $2 million for a total of $6,224,267.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Second.

Kyle Kerley: A second? Any further discussion? Hearing none. All those in favor say aye.

Multiple: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: All those opposed? 7-0.

Thomas Harris: Thank you.

Robin Strasser: Thank you very much. We appreciate it.

Thomas Harris: Good luck.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Thank you.

Doug Robertson: Thank you.

Kyle Kerley: Economic development.

Rachel Black: Good morning.

Multiple: Morning.

Rachel Black: Rachel Black, Allen County Economic Development.

Andrew Kuehnert: Good morning. Andrew Kuehnert, Manager at Kuehnert Dairy.

Kyle Kerley: Welcome.

Rachel Black: All right. For your consideration, this morning is a resolution to approve a waiver of non-compliance for failure to submit the completed statement of benefits forms before applying for an improvement location permit. The applicant, Kuehnert Milk House, plans to construct a new 22,000-square-foot milk processing facility. They plan to sell bottled milk, cheese curds, butter, as well as ice cream at this facility. The Kuehnerts received approval back in August with the Board of Zoning Appeals for this use. That is also already finished as a part of this project.

They have also worked closely with Greater Fort Wayne Inc, as well as the Allen County Economic Development staff. Their investment for both real and personal property is over $6,000,000, and they plan to hire 20 new employees with this project. For just a little bit of details on the waiver and the need for that. On October 6th, a permit was applied for with the Department of Planning Services without Mr. Kuehnert's knowledge. I contacted Andrew, and we had some discussions about the permit that was pulled, as well as his desire to continue to apply for tax abatement, and the need then to apply for that waiver request.

He did apply then with the application fee as well as the waiver request fee. The letter that was also required in your tax abatement policy was submitted in the packet as well that you received. I would also like to mention that after all the documents were submitted, I noticed in the system that we have, our seller system, that a second permit had been pulled for the exact same permit by a different company that Mr. Kuehnert was working with.

I alerted Andrew about that. A DPS staff did contact that second applicant, and that permit then was voided. My intent in mentioning that is just to let you know that Andrew was trying to keep the communication between those parties he was working with to let them know, please do not pull permits. He tried to do that to the best of his ability. There was just some lack of communication. If you have any questions for us, we'll be happy to answer them. Yes, ma'am.

Kyle Kerley: Ms. Curry-Campbell?

Sheila Curry-Campbell: I'm sorry, are you speaking in reference to this gentleman right here is the one that you're telling his story? Can you share with us?

Andrew Kuehnert: Sure can, yes.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: You were telling us his story, correct?

Rachel Black: Yes, ma'am. I was giving some details.

Andrew Kuehnert: Me and my brother, we're fifth-generation dairy farmers at Kuehnert Dairy, located here in Fort Wayne. This year we just celebrated our family owning the dairy farm for 125 years. It's been a long time in the history of our family. For many years now, our family has tried to figure out how we're going to sustain our future, what we're going to do. Just here over the last couple years, we put plans into motion on opening up a milk house. This year we want to put down the Kuehnert Milk House, which is a processing facility of our milk, right on our dairy farm.

Within that processing facility, we'll have milk directly delivered from our cows by pipeline, and being processed into flavored milk and glass bottles, so reusable glass bottles, farm-fresh cheese curds, butter, and ice cream. With that, we want to make that available to all of Fort Wayne here. We're looking at getting products fresh right to all restaurants here in Fort Wayne, so cheese curds, butter, ice cream, everything available for everybody to have. We were looking at taking farm-to-table to a whole new level with our milk processing plant.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: What happened with the permit?

Andrew Kuehnert: With the permit, it's been through the works, it's taken a long time with our unique project. I was filling out the applications and trying to get all my numbers in line with actually having costs. This has been maybe a three, four-year time frame with everything that's happened on trying to get some accurate figures and accurate costs, and putting those down. I made clear to everybody working on this that no permits were supposed to be pulled. Between our architects, and our building company, no permits

were supposed to be pulled, and clearly, something was pulled by an individual within the company other than the people that I told not to pull those permits.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Okay, I just wanted you to tell your story.

Andrew Kuehnert: Sure. It's been very frustrating. After I was filling out the application and talked to Rachel and she had said, well, we had a permit pulled then, at that point we started talking and trying to figure out what happened and what we need to do to go forward. I would say this year we just celebrated our 10th year of our Fall Festival. We've been through many things with the zoning board, and we've always done everything we possibly can to follow rules and regulations in anything that we have in line. I do sincerely apologize about this happening, and I know those were the rules, and that's why I'm asking if we can look at this and figure out what we can possibly do to allow those applications to still be viewable.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Yes, sir, I appreciate you coming here today. I appreciate you continuing the legacy of your family farm. This is a dying industry. I hope that you get all the support that you need and, hopefully, you'll play with the right folks that's not pulling permits without your knowledge.

Andrew Kuehnert: For sure.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Thank you.

Andrew Kuehnert: Yes.

Kyle Kerley: Mr. Lagemann

Paul Lagemann: [unintelligible 00:51:22] Mr. Kuehnert, thanks for joining us. Rachel, you did a great job of briefing a few of us in advance on this one. This is one of the challenges that I know you have, Mr. Kuehnert, is this is a bit of a square peg in a round hole. Our development code does not do justice to agritourism, and this is a gap that we're trying to fix. I want to assure you and folks out there that as we look forward to the next year to 2023, my hope is that we have carved out within our development plan agritourism as a business type that we can separately permit. As more of this develops, this is an important thing that we need to do.

I appreciate your patience with our process, and I do understand that going through this for several years, some contractor is going to get a little antsy and they're going to pull a permit, so I get that. I also want this council to know that they've had to go through a lot. I've had multiple discussions with Ben Rosella on this one, and it's just complicated.

Whitley County has done a fantastic job of beginning the process of permitting and setting up a system for agritourism with Joseph Decuis farm.

I hope we can do something similar because showing city folks a little bit more about how farms operate and what they do is important because we're in a county with an awful lot of farmland and an awful lot of folks and family farms doing what they're doing. keep doing what you're doing. We'll try to get the code in order so that it's a little easier to do what you do and make the permitting process a little bit more friendly.

Andrew Kuehnert: Thank you very much. Appreciate it.

Thomas Harris: Let's see, from the standpoint of the timing of first of all, it's a tough industry that you're in. Your footprint, primarily Fort Wayne or are you looking regionally or what?

Andrew Kuehnert: For sales?

Thomas Harris: Yes.

Andrew Kuehnert: Yes, regionally. We want to bring multiple people around. For 10 years of the festival, we've had thousands of people show up and say, "Hey, how can I just buy, get your milk? Where do I just find your milk?" We've always shipped with Prairie Farms here in Fort Wayne. We have a great relationship with them, but we know the next step for us is to have our own brand that we can sell ourselves.

We have gained trust from all these people over the last 10 years with our festival that we know that we can help bring more individuals from Fort Wayne. We want to become a true 12-month-a-year all-year-long destination for people to come in instead of just 7 weeks for our fall festival. Over those seven weeks, we had an amazing festival this year, and everybody is so excited to have our milk house up and running to just come and visit that.

Thomas Harris: Is it completed at this point?

Andrew Kuehnert: No.

Thomas Harris: You're underway?

Andrew Kuehnert: No. Last week we just started moving some dirt **[unintelligible 00:54:43]**. It's still going to be 11, 12 months away. That's what's so frustrating with it was back in October, we weren't even anywhere close to doing anything with groundwork anywhere. That's why I was so frustrated when permits did get pulled just for--

Thomas Harris: On a side note, your milk has made it to the 500 or no? Is that correct?

Andrew Kuehnert: Indy 500?

Thomas Harris: Yes.

Andrew Kuehnert: In 2019 I gave that away to the Indy 500 winner.

Thomas Harris: I think they splash that on their head or whatever.

Ken Fries: You can see it on YouTube.

Thomas Harris: Yes, it's on YouTube, apparently.

Andrew Kuehnert: It's quite the experience.

Thomas Harris: That's what I'm thinking.

Kyle Kerley: Okay, Mr. Spurr.

Chris Spurr: Mr. Kuehnert, can you give me an idea the size of your operation? Not in terms of revenues. I'm talking acreage, head, stuff like that.

Andrew Kuehnert: Right now we currently have around 700 total head on our dairy farm, which is 300 milk cows. We farm on right around 1,000 acres. Everything that we farm goes back to the cows.

Kyle Kerley: I know this is unrelated, but I think it's a great service to the community. Could you talk about what you do with the local schools and schoolchildren and stuff like that?

Andrew Kuehnert: For sure, yes. We've always invited school field trips and tours to come out. During our festival, we have school field trips come out all throughout the week and we have different stations around the farm. My wife and sister-in-law run that and the multiple stations and take kids around and show them exactly what we do on the farm and how important agriculture is to the world and how important milk is. We give them passes to come back during our weekend hours for the Fall Festival.

It's amazing how many kids actually come back for the festival and bring family members and just enjoy being on the farm. When we started this festival 10 years ago, we had no idea that it was going to turn into what it has. People just love coming out and seeing something different because there's nothing like it around. That's what we're trying to do with this milk plan as well. We're going to create a brand and something that nowhere else has. Across the country there's dairy processing plants that sell milk, but they do not have near the community like Fort Wayne is that we can service.

Paul Lagemann: [unintelligible 00:57:02], one more.

Kyle Kerley: Yes.

Paul Lagemann: You hosted this last year during Fall Festival the Farm Bureau annual meetings. Councilman Curly and I attended that. I believe future Councilman Wiese is in the back there, welcome, Don, attended as well. I think it's great to see that as the integration of agritourism into traditional agriculture. Continue that work and kudos to you and your family.

Andrew Kuehnert: Thank you.

Thomas Harris: Mr. President, I move for approval of resolution waiving non-compliance for Kuehnert Milk House, LLC.

Paul Lagemann: Second.

Kyle Kerley: Motion and a second. Any further discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye.

Councilmembers: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: All those opposed? Motion passes 7-0. Thank you and good luck.

Ken Fries: Thank you.

Andrew Kuehnert: Thank you, guys, very much.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: I just had one statement. If we could get away from the glass bottles and go to plastic.

Andrew Kuehnert: The glass we wash and reuse. Then you don't have plastic everywhere.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: It's true. That is true.

Andrew Kuehnert: It'll taste better. Thank you. Bye.

Ken Fries: Have a good Thanksgiving.

Kyle Kerley: Treasurer.

William Royce: Good morning, Council.

Paul Lagemann: Morning.

William Royce: William Royce, Allen County Treasurer. I'm seeking an increase in our budget line item for bank fees of $45,000. Bank fees vary from year to year, but this is the first time I've ever had to ask for an increase. That's driven by a couple of things. One is the volume of money that we're holding with the CARES money, the ARPA money, our balances are much greater than they've been in the past. Also, just basic inflation. Banks are just charging more for the services that we receive. On the plus side is that as the Fed has worked to fight inflation and raised interest rates, if you're a borrower that's not so good.

If you're in my position and you're investing, you love to hear that because last year we brought in an interest. Now this is just banks. This is not my total investment portfolio, but just banks. We brought in about $750,000 in interest where this year we're on track to bring in more than $1,250,000 in interest just in the banks. That's very positive. There are some things that I've already done to offset the fees that we're looking at. Part of it is driven by our commercial banking account at one bank which is our payroll.

There's a lot of activity, lot of draws on that and so on. Of course, we have to have the payroll dollars available. Well, all of that is subject to FDIC insurance and we have to pay for that insurance to insure that money. I have asked the bank for what's called an earning rates credit. Basically, what that means is we pay 1.25% times the dollars that we're holding for insurance. The bank will give us an additional 0.15% in interest over and above what they already pay us to offset that. I've also opened up a money market fund and moved a corpus of the money from the commercial to the money market because we can also get a yield bump from the money market. We're paying more in fees, but we're earning a lot more in interest. Bottom line is it's just the cost of doing business, the bank fee line.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Has anyone told you how long you're going to have to hold onto this ARPA money? Because I know we need to get rid of it. I'm just curious.

William Royce: As it get, as you all spend it, as it gets used up.

Kyle Kerley: Mr. Lagemann.

Paul Lagemann: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Royce, I know we changed out banks for payment fee for online payments, is that correct? In the last year?

William Royce: Not banks.

Paul Lagemann: Not banks.

William Royce: The service.

Paul Lagemann: The service. Because Star was handling that service prior to. They're not doing that anymore. Is that part of these fees or what's happening here?

William Royce: No, that's totally separate. What happened with that was for 16-plus years, Star had provided for us a service where they collected online payments, electronic check, monthly pay plan, spring, fall, pull, those things. They did it at a very, very small cost to the county, a few pennies that we were able to absorb in our budget as part of the bank fee. Well, the federal government changed the rules on how banks pull ACHs. Star's system was no longer in compliance. The federal government said you can't do it the way you've been doing it.

There was nothing wrong with the way we were doing it, but it fell a fallow of the change in the rules. Star came to us and said, "We're going to have to end that service." I was left looking for a vendor who could provide the services of paying by electronic check, but also do monthly pay plans and spring, fall pay plans. There's not a whole lot of people who do that. We did find a vendor who does that, but that is a separate contractual fee and not really anything to do with the banks.

Kyle Kerley: Mr. Spurr.

Chris Spurr: I know the number sounds like a drop in the bucket when you're comparing it to $1.25 million but in percentage terms it's actually 3.6%. That's more along the lines of a credit card transaction. Is there any way you can use the net dollars that we hold as leverage to get that fee down?

William Royce: Well, and that's what I have been doing. That's the asking for and getting from the bank the interest earning credits. That's actually.

Chris Spurr: That's after you've already negotiated it's 3.6%.

William Royce: That's after.

Kyle Kerley: Do you anticipate going forward doing an RFP to other banks to really see if they might be more competitive on the rates or actually holding our money?

William Royce: Actually, yes, I started to look at that talking with the primary banker that a lot of the fees are involved in. I told them that if we didn't do something different that's exactly the route I was going to have to go. I said I'll find somebody else who can do this. Well, we're going to run into the same thing no matter where we go. We're talking with the bank. They came up with and I discussed with them and got from them the earning rates credit. They're the only banks that offer us that at this time. The money market fund which will give us additional yield. They've done the things on their end to say, we understand here's what we can do to get you more money.

Kyle Kerley: Okay.

Thomas Harris: With that, Mr. President, I move for approval of paying fees of $45,000.

?Speaker: Second.

Speaker: Second.

Kyle Kerley: Motion, multiple seconds. Any further discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye.

Councilmembers: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: All those opposed? Okay. Motion passes 7-0

?Speaker: Thank you.

William Royce: Thank you, Council. I want to just add one more thing because it is good news again, that yesterday for the first time in, gosh, before 2008 I'm actually getting bank interests at a couple of our banks that's over 4%. I'm pretty thrilled about that. Just wanted to pass it on.

?Speaker: Nice. Thanks. Appreciate that.

Kyle Kerley: Sheriff Department.

Jamie Hardy: Good morning.

Gary Grant: Good morning.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Good morning.

Jamie Hardy: Good morning. Jamie Hardy with Allen County Sheriff's Department.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Is the sheriff coming?

Jamie Hardy: No.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: He's not coming?

Jamie Hardy: No.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Do we need the to call for a friend? I talked to the sheriff. He's not coming?

Mr. Grant: No.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Thank you.

Mr. Grant: Thank you. Today we're here for a transfer of funds. We would like to do a transfer of $273,705 from our 100 series which is our salary line item into our 400 series vehicle line item. I'm here to answer any questions if you might have them.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Where's the Sheriff?

Mr. Grant: Where's the Sheriff? This actually is a plan that elect Sheriff Hershberger and I have put together current sheriff's done in 45 days. He was consultant on this, but he really doesn't have anything to do with this moving forward.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: I know, but we just wanted him here just to support you and the new administration. We haven't seen him in some time. I've only got another month here, so I wanted to make sure that he came into the room. Thank you.

Jamie Hardy: Thank you.

Thomas Harris: $273,000. Should it say vehicle or vehicles?

Mr. Grant: Vehicle.

Thomas Harris: Vehicle. This is which vehicle--

Mr. Grant: Will be two vehicles.

Thomas Harris: You better explain all that.

Mr. Grant: Back in March we seen the need with our SWAT team to provide them a new armored vehicle. The one that we currently have is 15 years old. It's antiquated. It's not doing the job that it needs to do with the style.

Thomas Harris: What's that mean when it doesn't do the job?

Mr. Grant: It's cumbersome. It's breaking down. It's been in our service center quite a bit, getting new parts on it. Parts are hard to get for it because it's old. It's not made anymore. When we do need it, and sometimes we need it at the drop of a dime it's been locked up in the service center and we've had to get somebody to get it out to try to get it moving. We're doing anywhere from 40 to 50 SWAT callouts a year. That is a vital piece of equipment that we need to do this job. So we decided in March our vice and narcotics units have been very busy and they've seized quite a bit of drugs and money over the last couple of years.

We get a portion of that through our drug task force. We get reimbursed for some of that drug money. What we do with that is it goes into our 206 series line item, and it's the drug seizure money that we can carry over. We decided to use that. We have another injection of that after the first of the year, most likely in February or March, of about $200,000. There's currently $96,000 in there now. We've decided to dedicate that money to this armored vehicle. We're not going to receive those funds until after the first of the year now. There was a delay in a court hearing, and now we're not going to get those monies until after the first of the year.

Thomas Harris: That's the drug-

Mr. Grant: Seizure money.

Thomas Harris: -seizure money, okay.

Mr. Grant: Yes. I told you, I think if you remember right, last time we were here, we had a need because we weren't able to buy vehicles over the last year or two. It's been very scarce on getting vehicles, and we're in the need of at least 17 patrol cars this coming year. Our budget for '23 is $300,000, as you know. $300,000 is not going to buy 17 vehicles at anywhere from $35,000 to $40,000 per vehicle, and that's just to buy the vehicle, not to outfit it. What we put together is taken the $300,000 that we have in our budget, the drug seizure money, which will add up to about $300,000, and then Sheriff elect Herberger has agreed to supplement that with commissary funds of about $150,000 to buy 17 vehicles at the tune of $750,000. So we won't be asking for any extra funds next year for the vehicles we need to purchase.

Thomas Harris: Like you said, the irony, if that's the right word, the irony is that we got to the budget process and I think we recognized that it was higher than what we had agreed to. The $300,000 for cars was higher so we pulled that number back, and here we are today, allocating different funds to be able to make up that difference.

Mr. Grant: I don't know if you assume that it was higher because this council has approved $390,000 since 2019.

Thomas Harris: Which could be an error because I think we had agreed to $300,000 for vehicles.

Mr. Grant: What the three 90, I can't speak about how it became three 90 in 2019. I can't speak about that because I wasn't involved in that portion of it but '19, 20, '21.

Thomas Harris: I'm not disagreeing with you. I think what had happened, council, and I'm trying to look at that is, A, you guys may have up upped that number and we didn't catch it or because everybody's raising their amount each year by a certain percent that number just went up naturally as well. But in any case, the thought was $300,000 was the number that we had set but today we're approving $275,000 for an additional vehicle and such.

Mr. Grant: A transfer. Not giving us money.

Thomas Harris: Yes. It's fair.

Mr. Grant: This plan right here doesn't ask for one extra dime in our budget for vehicles.

Thomas Harris: What it does though is takes money from, and I could be wrong here, but it's taken money from general fund that would've been a rollover back to the county general. In essence, you're pulling money from that rollover, but yet when you get the money from the drug fee or fund, that money's not coming back to the county general. Rather, you're going to use that to buy additional cars.

Mr. Grant: Yes, for our police officers on the road they're in vehicles that are breaking down constantly right now. We haven't been able to provide vehicles.

Thomas Harris: How many cars did you buy with the $300,000 that was given or it was $390,000 this year because we we're changing 2023 so 2022 was $390,000. How many new cars did you buy with that?

Mr. Grant: We weren't able to get a lot of cars. We bought-

Thomas Harris: How many?

Mr. Grant: -probably four or five cars out of that, and then we had to use some of that money for gas because gas went way up our budget was 450,000 for gas. We were through that by June. We didn't come and ask any extra money for gasoline. We used the money that was within our budget and we tightened the belt in every other single aspect of our budget to be able to pay for $800,000 worth of gas this year.

That's what we've used that money for, and we needed five more cars last month for our vice and narcotics units and we paid for those out of commissary. We didn't come with a handout for that either. Like I said, this is a transfer of funds. We notoriously every year give money back to the general fund, and we've been very diligent with that, and we're still going to continue to do that, and we will this year. This is a portion, this $273,000 it's a portion of the unused salaries that we have this year to supply a vehicle to our SWAT team to be able to do their job properly.

Kyle Kerley: Councilman Harris, I'd just like to reiterate that a number of departments do that, as you well know, they pull money back, which takes what would be rollover away so this isn't a unique situation. The numbers may be a little bit different, but this is not a unique situation. You know that. I know that.

Thomas Harris: The difference is that we had made that change in the budget at the last minute by catching it, that they had increased that to $390,000 versus $300,000, and that doesn't change the need. I get it. The need is still the need.

Kyle Kerley: The need is more than warranted.

Mr. Grant: Councilman Harris, I would just like to say that I in no way were we as the Sheriff's Department trying to sneak $90,000 in there several years ago. That's been approved, like I said, since 2019, and that's what we thought moving forward. We didn't raise that even though we needed to because of the price of vehicles.

Thomas Harris: You're saying you only got four cars this year.

Mr. Grant: I didn't come with the exact amount that we bought this year. We bought six just a month ago out of commissary. The vehicles that we purchased out of the line item was- I couldn't give you an exact number on that.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: I have a question. I keep hearing commissary. Now, I heard they said that you guys are trying to spin this commissary down, and I keep hearing these numbers, and commissary. I want to understand, is it true that you guys are really trying to spend this money down before the Sheriff leaves office? Because that was a question for him today. He's not here to answer it, but you keep saying it and it proves the work. Is that true? Is that what the Sheriff is doing, trying to spend down the commissary before he leaves office?

Mr. Grant: No, absolutely not. There's things that are purchased for the department within-- The commissary, and I've said this before, is overseen by the State Board of Accounts. In fact, they've been in our office for four or five times in the last month going over the commissary numbers.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: I wonder why. **[unintelligible 01:15:46]** I'm just asking for a friend because I heard and they said that the Sheriff is trying to spend down this commissary before he leaves office.

Mr. Grant: Ma'am, I know that comment was made and actually the media come to us and I gave them a response on that, and absolutely not. You have Sheriff Gladieux who's responsible for the commissary account, and you have Chief Hershberger and he's the Sheriff elect. They work very closely together on what that commissary is spent on. Chief Hershberger understands that the Sheriff is buying stuff. What he's buying is legal. What he's doing for the department and getting the equipment and the things he's doing is legal. None of us need to agree with that, what he buys with it, but what he is doing is legal. We buy cars out of it. We buy equipment out of it. We buy for the police officers that are working the road to serve this public. They get the equipment that they need because of commissary.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: What else do we take out of commissary? What other things that we use commissary for? Because, like I say, I heard they said that the Sheriff- and he's not here, I just want the Sheriff to come here and say that this is not true. I invite him to come here. He's on our agenda. I expect him to be here, and so I hate that it's coming to you because this is what I would've said to the Sheriff, "Are you really spending down the commissary before you leave out of office? It may be legal, but is it ethical? And could you be doing some other things?" Thank you.

Mr. Grant: I told you he's not doing that, so I don't know how much more I can say if he's not, and you've asked me that a couple of times now, and I'm telling you that he's not spending it down to do it on purpose. It's stuff that he had. I remember being in front of the council when there was $1.3 million in the commissary account, and why is there so much in there? Now we're having a discussion because it's lowered and he's done some projects and bought some equipment and bought some cars this year, and it did get spent down to a certain amount because of the equipment that was needed in his last year in office.

Kyle Kerley: Mr. Lagemann's first.

Paul Lagemann: Mr. Chairman, thank you. After getting my hand up it's got a little tired, but first of all, Mr. Grant, congratulations on your appointment as the next Chief Deputy.

Mr. Grant: Thank you. Appreciate it.

Paul Lagemann: Looking forward to working with you in the coming year. Second of all, to me this is a lot less about some of the commissary account or some of these other issues. This is about how do we support our SWAT team. In the city of Fort Wayne I sit on the board of Save, which has to raise $50,000 to $75,000 a year just to outfit an under-outfitted operation in the Fort Wayne SWAT team. It's sad. It's unfortunate. You guys, the guys on SWAT team as Councilman Freeze was, as you were, I know as incoming Sheriff Herberger was, you're the tip of the spear and in the most dangerous and difficult situations, I would not hesitate to say, the best equipment ought to be out there.

We ought to be eager to move forward with purchase. The Bearcat that you guys are looking at, I've been in the Fort Wayne SWAT team's Bearcat. It's a great piece of equipment. It is a safe piece of equipment. It preserves the lives, not only of the officers that are on the front line trying to do what they have to do, but it also preserves the safety of the people they're trying to arrest without having to go into a gun fight.

That piece of equipment allows you to put CS gas into a house so that it calms the person down, or at least causes them to drop their weapons and come out because they can't see because of the CS gas, and it doesn't put our cops in the gunfight. It also doesn't put the person in the house in a gunfight. This is an important piece of equipment and the role and the mission of our SWAT team is important. I don't want to get caught up in a lot of other stuff when we can be outfitting and doing what Fort Wayne has lacked and not done by outfitting our county SWAT team in the best possible way.

I applaud Councilman Freeze as a Sheriff buying the original version of that Bearcat. I applaud you guys for seeking this piece of equipment to keep our guys safe. All I can say is I'm for it. I hope we move this quickly and I hope we get this done and keep your officers safe. Thank you.

Kyle Kerley: Mr. Armstrong is next.

Robert Armstrong: Yes, you stated that the State Board of Councilmen and looking at books whatever. Have they found anything? Because I'm like you. I'm under the impression he spends commissary and it has to be signed off and approved by state board. Has any red flags come up that there's been misappropriations or anything?

Mr. Grant: Not to my knowledge, no.

Robert Armstrong: Okay, thank you.

Kyle Kerley: Mr. Spurr.

Chris Spurr: I would just like to add to that as well, that that's statutorily defined. We keep coming back to the commissary, commissary, commissary, but it's statutorily defined. This body can do nothing about it. If you want to do something about it, it's got to be done down at the state level. Besides that, it's not up for discussion.

Thomas Harris: It's always up for discussion, I guess but--

Ken Fries: What's going to happen to the old one, the old Bearcat? because I like Councilman Lagemann says, I have a warm place in my heart for you.

[crosstalk]

[laughter]

Mr. Grant: It served us well. I will tell you that, it has served us well and I would hope that it would continue to serve somebody well if we decide to sell it. There's a lot of smaller departments, as you know, that can't afford equipment like that and would never dream of being able to afford something like that. We would look at maybe doing that. I think I want to sit down at the first of the year with our SWAT team leaders and reevaluate the vehicle situation that we have with them and see if there's a need to keep it as a backup. If not, then we probably will sell it.

Ken Fries: That's who we did the old one. You remember we gave it to **[unintelligible 01:22:09]** County.

Mr. Grant: Yes, absolutely.

Thomas Harris: Mr. President, I just want to compliment the incoming Sheriff on the basis of using commissary to buy cars this next year. I think you've indicated that he's going to use some of that commissary money to buy the additional cars. Did I miss that? Yes. Thank you. That commissary piece has been going on with Squadrito and Sheriff Herman, and it's been going off very long time. [laughs] Every season, I think.

Robert Armstrong: Every election. [laughs]

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Speaking of the commissary since nobody wants to talk about it, how much is in there right now?

Mr. Grant: I don't know.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: How much is in there?

Mr. Grant: I don't oversee-- Ma'am I--

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Go ahead.

Mr. Grant: I'm going to apologize to you.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: You can call me Sheila. I don't care.

Mr. Grant: Sheila, I'm going to apologize to you. I don't run the commissary account. That's for the Sheriff and his matron to run the commissary account. When we need equipment, it's my job to go to the Sheriff and say, "We need this equipment." I go to our comptroller. If it doesn't fit in the budget, I go to the Sheriff and ask him if we can buy this out of commissary. He makes a phone call and he lets me know yes or no.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Okay, may I speak with you? Do you know anything about numbers? You're the comptroller, correct? I'm just curious. Can you share anything with numbers in the commissary today?

Jamie: I cannot. I don't oversee the commissary.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Okay, you have no idea what numbers remain or what was spent this year out of commissary. Okay, thank you. Thank you.

Paul Lagemann: Mr. Chairman?

Kyle Kerley: Yes.

Paul Lagemann: I appreciate the interest in commissary. Personally, I'm interested in our SWAT team. I appreciate your interest in our SWAT team and, Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that we finish this discussion and focus on the point of our discussion which is the safety of the members of our SWAT team. Hopefully, we can move forward with a vote quickly.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Is that a motion?

?Speaker 1: A motion to end discussion? [laughs].

?Speaker 1: Say it again.

?Speaker 1: I move to end the discussion.

Speaker 1: Second.

Speaker 8: Motion and second to end discussion. All in favor, say aye.

Councilmembers: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: Okay, now a motion.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Motion to--

Speaker 1: Motion two. What's the total?

Sheila Curry-Campbell: $273,705.

Paul Lagemann: Motion to transfer $273,705 for the purpose of the vehicle purchase.

Thomas Harris: Second.

Kyle Kerley: Motion and a second, I'm going to make a note and I apologize to the auditor, we talked about this. Please signal your vote with raising your hand so that the people that are transcribing our meetings can more quickly identify how we are voting.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: There's a sheet also that is being passed around, sir.

Thomas Harris: Yes, the format is a little bit different, but basically we're to sign on each agreement-

Kyle Kerley: How you vote.

Thomas Harris: -each vote. What's going to happen with this document it can rotate around and then it'll rotate back as each vote happens. We can do it that way as well. I did want to make a comment on that commissary piece that the council has been getting an updated commentary about every six months, I think, from the auditor's office. We get an email about what they've spent and how they've spent it. That's been going on for a while.

?Speaker: Statutorily we get it twice a year.

?Speaker: I believe we have a motion and a second, Mr. Chairman.

Kyle Kerley: Motion and a second to transfer $273,705, from the 100 series to the vehicle fund. All those in favor say aye.

Councilmembers: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: All those opposed? Motion passes 7-0

Speaker 5: Thank you very much.

Speaker 8: Thank you. How was your, [crosstalk] raise your hand.

Kyle Kerley: Oh, let's see. Prosecutor.

Speaker 5: Should be the surveyor.

Mike Fruchey: Good morning, council members. Mike Fruchey, county surveyor, and Sheila, I am here. We won't be talking about the vehicle today. I want you guys to be aware of what I'm trying to do to catch up in the department. I think I'd mentioned to a couple of you at AIC that we have a very aging vehicle that is scored out well above the garage replacement number. I think the replacement number is 25 and this vehicle scored out 37. It's a 2009 Silverado that has a lot of maintenance costs and I wanted to get that. It's been on our CIP the last four years to get replaced and we could not get the previous surveyor to act on it. We have Dawn in purchasing has located a vehicle for us, that we should get hopefully in the first quarter of next year.

I wanted to get your approval for that appropriation for that but we can't do that today because of how it was advertised. I'll be back in January for that request. Are there any questions about that vehicle replaced with a similar vehicle? To do the fieldwork that we need for installing storm lines. Anyways the second thing that I'm on the agenda for you as the council had already approved raising the cap for 2023, I'm asking that you'll raise it for the rest of this year for me as well. I didn't anticipate that I would have our whole inspection staff off on medical leave. That's [laughs] where we're at right now.

We're sending office staff out to watch storm line inspections because it has to be done. We we're not a large staff. We still have two open positions, 15 member staff and we've got three people off with medical leave. It's a little bit of a pinch right now, but we're getting through it. We think this might be an opportunity to hire some recent retired staff that would have the qualifications to go out and watch a storm line project. This will just give me more flexibility and certainly is room in our 100 series to cover whatever cost would be incurred if we were able to get someone to do this for us. Do you have any questions about that?

Kyle Kerley: Mr. Spurr?

Chris Spurr: Just real quick, just for clarification, you are up to and including $40, not $40 flat across the board.

Mike Fruchey: Yes, exactly.

Chris Spurr: I just wanted to make sure the public was aware of that.

Thomas Harris: This is the same rate that's been approved for next year?

Mike Fruchey: Yes, sir.

Thomas Harris: Okay.

Ken Fries: I have a question, probably more for the auditor or somebody else much more intelligent than I am. Coming up ahead, we have the county services also going to request establishing an ordinance of part-time pay range up to $35. Can't we just do them both at the same time? Can't we just make the pay range up to minimum part-time pay range up to 40 for county-wide as costs go up?

Mike Fruchey: Yes. For example, but council has taken exception to Board of Health has it, I think $150 an hour. Different departments have different rates based on what they feel the need for their part-time employees. You can make it $40.

Thomas Harris: The risk on that is that anybody can go up to $40 and pay $40 an hour throughout the county for any position part-time, which is, I think risky.

Ken Fries: Do we not trust our department **[unintelligible 01:29:55]** and elected officials?

Thomas Harris: Of course, we do. However, they ought to be-- [crosstalk] I was just going to say this system gives us the ability to understand what those individual departments need. If we were to say carte blanche why stop at $40? We could pay $75 an hour and make sure that everybody can stay under $75 an hour.

?Speaker: Okay, is that a motion?

Thomas Harris: I think this makes sense and it's particularly since we had done it for next year anyway.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: We we're doing evaluations right now with salaries and one of the things that I think how we got in this situation is by having individuals, elected officials approving salaries. Then now we're finding ourself trying to fix it with HR right now. Like I said, I'm on my way out, but I'm saying that's how we got here is when you have elected officials and individuals approving different salaries for different individuals, family and friends or retirees, whatever the case may be.

Now you, you run into that same. I'm hoping that HR will be able to fix this because we're going to go right back through that same cycle of individuals being able to come in or hire individuals at a certain pay rate. Now you have that discrepancy from someone else that's sitting there. They got vacancies anyway, but I'm just saying we're going to run into that same problem. Thank you.

Thomas Harris: Mr. President, I'll move for consideration of a salary ordinance amending the part-time rate range from minimum wage of $20 per hour to a minimum wage of $40 per hour, retro to 11/08/2022.

Paul Lagemann: Second.

Kyle Kerley: Motion and a second. Any further discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye.

Councilmembers: Aye.

?Speaker: Raising my hand.

Kyle Kerley: All those opposed.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: Okay.

?Speaker: Thank you.

Kyle Kerley: Were you abstain? No, he was just looking at me.

?Speaker 1: You waved at somebody?

Kyle Kerley: Yes, you voted. Sorry. You're going to be dangerous to wave our three. I've voted for it. Okay, so 6-1(Sheila). That's what I was trying to get at. Thank you.

Bob Armstrong: I'm just not used to this high tech technology. Hiding the whole waving thing that psychomotor skill that goes along. Do we need a red flag or a green flag?

Sheila Curry-Campbell: There's a paper going around. It hasn't come back.

?Speaker: Yes, it will.

Kyle Kerley: Prosecutor.

Nick Jordan: Prosecutor's Office is under the impression they didn't need to come, which is fine. I can handle it. In their high tech crime grant fund, 888, they hired an individual that does not need per and health insurance. They're moving that money to supplies to buy more supplies for the operation. Just for clarification on the votes, we just need to know who votes know. You don't need to raise your hands on Yes, you don't need to sign the sheet. It's a matter of if you're going to vote No, just raise your hands so that we can tell. Because when the video and or sitting back here, it happened last month, we can't tell who's voting one way or another.

Tom Harris: We could always invite you back to the table up here if you'd like to join us.

Nick Jordan: It's still for the media for people watching. You can't tell. It's very hard to decipher.

Robert Armstrong: Are we still working on getting a board? Do we know?

Nick Jordan: If we move to something I think it would be amongst all the bodies that use both rooms between this room and the other room. Yes, there's vast technology out there between.

Robert Armstrong: Is the hold up on the county side or on the city side?

Nick Jordan: No, we can go ahead and move to do something if that's what the council wants to do and let anybody else-- I can reach out to Lana Keesling, Clerk Keesling and ask if she's already looking at something and that way, like I said, both county and city can make use of it as we do with a lot of IT items, but you don't need to, again, all we need signified is the no side of it. If you just raise your hand on the no, we can tell right away who it is.

Bob Armstrong: I only asked that question because I didn't know if there was red tape holding up.

Nick Jordan: No, you guys oversee your own operations, so if you want me to get an electronic type voting thing, we can definitely do it.

Thomas Harris: I'd like to see the bid on it first or the cost before.

Bob Armstrong: We'll go to commissary.

Ken Fries: What about that prosecutor thing here?

Tom Harris: With that, hey, Mr. President, I move for the transfer of the high tech crime unit fund 888 of $10,000 from proof and health insurance to supplies to $10,000.

?Speaker: Second.

?Speaker: I will second fighting crime in that way.

Kyle Kerley: Motion and multiple seconds. Any further discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye.

Councilmembers: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: All those opposed? Motion passes 7-0.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: I'm sorry, sir. I didn't say aye, but I meant to say aye.

Thomas Harris: No hand. That's good. It's all good. It's all good.

Kyle Kerley: County services.

Dawn Rose: Good morning. Dawn Rose, County Services Director. I am here to ask for a salary ordinance for a part-time pay range between minimum wage and mine was $35 an hour. If you have any questions.

Kyle Kerley: Any questions?

Tom Harris: Any thoughts or reasons why that's happening or what?

Dawn Rose: We are very short staffed, the service center especially. As you heard, the sheriff has ordered many, many vehicles that will be coming in. We have at least one tech off for medical leave for a very extended amount of time. We're trying to find somebody to come in part-time and help keep things going.

Thomas Harris: That's a moving up from what?

Nick Jordan: She doesn't. County services doesn't have one. Dawn needs to establish--

Thomas Harris: This would be establishing one. Should that be a range?

Dawn Rose: It is a range.

Nick Jordan: We always set a minimum wage for everyone that--

Thomas Harris: I see. I'm sorry I missed that. I thought that was a minimum of $35, but it's a minimum wage. Well, Mr. President, I'll move for consideration of salary ordinance establishing a part-time range of minimum wage to $35 an hour.

?Speaker: Second.

Kyle Kerley: Motion and a second. Any further discussion here?

?Ken Fries: I know you're probably going to get one because it's a former employee, but at that price are you going to be able to get more? Because I know mechanics charge a lot more than that.

Dawn Rose: I am just trying to get one. I will probably be back once I gather the troops to possibly ask for additional staff, permanent.

?Ken Fries: I would think so.

?Speaker: I have a question.

Dawn Rose: Thank you.

Robert Armstrong: With all these cars coming in, fleet cars, whatever, where do we work on all those? I know it's out on Pontiac. Is that where most of them are dressed?

Dawn Rose: All of them. All of them. Yes.

Robert Armstrong: Okay.

Dawn Rose: We are running out of space.

Robert Armstrong: I was going to say your parking lot isn't that big. [laughs]

Dawn Rose: Yes, we need more staff and we need a bigger space, but.

?Speaker: All right. Thanks.

Kyle Kerley: [unintelligible 01:37:20] entertain motion and discussion.

?Speaker: Motion and discussion.

Kyle Kerley: Okay. Motion and discussion, we will vote. All those in favor establishing the ordinates for part time pay range of minimum wage of $35 an hour say aye.

Members: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: All of those opposed.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: Ok. Thank you.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: It's nothing personal. Like I said I think we are going to have another problem. This is what happens when you can--

Kyle Kerley: Motion passes 6:1(Sheila). Okay.**[unintelligible 01:37:54]** adult probation.

[crosstalk]

Angela Terry: Good morning **[unintelligible 01:38:04]**. Angela Terry, finance director for **[unintelligible 01:38:07]**. We are here to request a transfer in our probation user fees from unused salaries into our supplies in **[unintelligible 01:38:17]** to fulfill rest of the year our obligations for drug screening and drug screening supplies. I'm here to answer any questions that you may have.

?Speaker: Any questions?

Robert Armstrong: The two probation officers, the 20000 and the 30000 those are 100 line series that are empty positions. You are not using those funds to the end of the year?

Angela Terry: Correct.

Kyle Kerley: Okay. Will this openings that happened mid-year were never filled or--?

Angela Terry: There are extra salary lines that we have that are user fees fill if our general fund budget does not completely cover our probation officer for a full year. So these are supplemental fund that we use from what we collect from our probationers.

?Speaker: Okay.

Chris Spurr: Were you asking how long those positions have been out there unfilled?

Thomas Harris: You might **[unintelligible 01:39:21]**

Chris Spurr: Do you know how long those two positions have been out there for?

Angela Terry: They're not completely vacant positions. They're aligns that we have setup in out user fees budget in case we need to supplement the lines that we have in the general fund. These lines are being as in a general funds budget. This is funds that we're not going to use for the rest of this year.

Thomas Harris: How does the user feed fund look?

Angela Terry: We're sitting in about $70000 in cash.

Thomas Harris: How's the user fee process working? Is that working better or is that's coming in more consistently?

Angela Terry: Yes. We have a great collection rate on our user fees.

Thomas Harris: What about a percent, a ballpark?

Angela Terry: I don't know the percent off the top of my head. I can look that up and email it to you after the meeting.

Thomas Harris: If you could. That's been a challenge in your world, we get it.

Chris Spurr: What's contractual looking like for the necessity for the transfer?

Angela Terry: Contractual, we use for drug screening. A portion of what AADB collects goes back to them. We use the contractual line to give their fees that they've collected back.

Chris Spurr: Thank you.

Thomas Harris: With that, Mr. President, I move for movement 50,000 from Probation Officer lines to Supplies and Contractual for a total of $50,000.

Ken Fries: Second.

Kyle Kerley: Motion and a second. Any further discussion? Hearing none. All of those in favor say aye.

Councilmembers: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: Aye. All those opposed? Motion passes 7-0.

Angela Terry: Thank you council.

Thomas Harris: I'll look for that email then, thank you.

Kyle Kerley: Mr. Jordan?

Nick Jordan: You guys have an addendum. Let's do Coliseum first. We're ready for the next **[unintelligible 01:41:05]**.

Kyle Kerley: Coliseum.

Nick Jordan: You have a separate page addendum. Transfer for the Coliseum.

Kyle Kerley: Got it.

Thomas Harris: [inaudible 01:41:23] Nick, you had given us the addendum. It is a different piece of paper?

Nick Jordan: Yes.

Thomas Harris: Okay.

Kyle Kerley: Morning.

Clement J. Steigmeyer: Good morning. CJ Steigmeyer, Vice President of Finance, Chief Operating Officer at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum. We are requesting today a transfer of funds in two different-- There's two different transfers we're requesting. The first one is in our operating fund, fund 240. When we budgeted last year, we budgeted a lot of things in services as we had been-- We'd repair vehicles when we would repair the building. We would quote those accounts to, quote those expenses to maintenance and repair expense lines and things like that, so maintenance repair for the building, maintenance repair for equipment.

In the process of trying to realign across the board, across the county, different expenditures and trying to make sure that everything gets into the appropriate line, we have had request to change where certain things are being appropriated and where the expenses are hitting. If we are doing the work, and we're purchasing items to repair something, that expense should go to supplies.

We're having more expenditures coming out of supplies versus the repair services line. If we have somebody come in and do the work, it would go out to services. If we have us doing the work and just buying the items to repair it, that comes out of supplies. We've had quite a bit more coming out of supplies than what we had budgeted, so we have to transfer some funds from the services lines to our supplies line.

The first one is requesting $50,000 to transfer to computer software, which used to come out of services as well for us, building maintenance materials, and then cleaning supplies as well, breaking those down into $50,000 total, transferring just from the 300 series to the 200 series. We're not appropriating any more funds, we're not requesting any more funds from the council. This is just literally an accounting transfer for those dollars. I can continue and talk about the 248 fund if you want to hit these both at the same time or if you have to do a separate vote--

Kyle Kerley: Just keep going.

Clement J. Steigmeyer: Keep going? Okay. In fund 248, which is our professional sports and convention development fund, which are capital dollars, the same scenario, we've had things coming out of services. When we have purchased in the past, everything come out of one line item, so we are adding different appropriation lines and just transferring funds into those lines. The same scenario has applied, changing it from a capital line to a service line if somebody's doing the work and so forth. We're requesting a transfer of $128,000 from our 4310 capital line to 3118, which is our contract and services line.

Thomas Harris: What's that for?

Clement J. Steigmeyer: That is going to be for different projects that we're trying to do. We've got a parking lot renovation project, we have some computer services. We're buying new switches. They are programming the switches, they're installing the switches, so there's different expenditures there. There's also-- Drawing a blank now. The biggest one is the parking lot renovation project, which is $79,000. Then there's some other minor renovation projects that have added another $10,000 to $15,000 there. It's basically pulling it out of the capital, putting it into the services line with another, third-party is doing the work.

Ken Fries: Question. CJ, were you guys able to address these accounting changes for the 2023 budget so you won't have to come back again next year with these?

Clement J. Steigmeyer: We addressed it as much as we could, yes.

Ken Fries: Thanks.

Thomas Harris: How does business look? Every time I drive by the Coliseum, I try to see how many cars are out there and everything. It's starting to fill up a little bit more, but what are you projecting? [crosstalk]

Clement J. Steigmeyer: Business has been good. When we looked at our numbers through September-- We're still in the process of finalizing everything from October-- September had an increase in our use days but a decrease in attendance. The number of days, we had about a 25% increase in use days. A use day is the rental of one space for all or part of one day.

We're up over 1,000 use days through September. Last year, we were lower than that, but the attendance was higher. I shouldn't say last year was lower, yes it was, but also, compared to 2019, which was our last year of-- if you want to call it normal activity, the activity from 2019 were increased activity in terms of use days, but our attendance is down.

Chris Spurr: How much is our attendance down by as a percent, would you say?

Clement J. Steigmeyer: I think if I recall correctly, about 14%.

Chris Spurr: 14%?

Thomas Harris: '23's looking good?

Clement J. Steigmeyer: '23 is good. Several announcements just came out this week of events that are happening in March and April. There's other events that will hopefully be announced soon. It's been very, very busy. We're still operating a little short-staffed, but the number of activity, the number of events have been very big. We've had several concerts, a two-week period where we had something going almost every night. We're trying to keep people from getting burn out already, which is not good when you're going into your busy season.

Thomas Harris: The llamas are back it looks like too, right? Or it seems like the llama.

Clement J. Steigmeyer: Oh, don't say llama.

Thomas Harris: Sorry.

Clement J. Steigmeyer: Don't say llama, it'll be alpaca.

Thomas Harris: Alpaca.

Clement J. Steigmeyer: Those are the ones that have been there in the past, yes.

Thomas Harris: [inaudible 01:48:07] Mr. President, I move for approval of moving from professional services $50,000 to computer software, building materials, cleaning supplies for also $50,000.

Paul Lagemann: Second.

Sheila R. Curry-Campbell: Second.

Kyle Kerley: Motion and multiple seconds. Any further discussion? Hearing none. All those in favor say aye.

Councilmembers: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: All those opposed? Motion passes 7-0

Thomas Harris: I'll also move for transferring from capital 128 to contractual 128,000.

Ken and Paul: Second.

Kyle Kerley: Motion and multiple seconds. Any further discussion? Hearing none. All those in favor say aye.

Councilmembers: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: All those opposed? Motion passes 7-0 Thank you.

Clement J. Steigmeyer: Thank you very much. Have a good day. [crosstalk]

Thomas Harris: Thank you, and good luck.

Kyle Kerley: Now, Mr. Jordan.

Nick Jordan: All right, council. The first item you have on there, you may recollect, you may not. Back in 2020, the Indiana Finance Authority gave us a chunk, approximately $12 million of COVID funds. That went into a specific fund. At the end of the year, as the rules played out, we were able to reimburse ourselves for safety-related expenses because we dumped about 10 million into the general fund. One of the things that got lost was we had POs that were in the original fund they went into, and those POs, they got moved over to the general fund, but the appropriation did not. All this is doing is if we would've done it correctly in 2020, we would've moved the appropriation to file these POs. That's all that's doing. It's appropriating the money to pay those POs. That's item number one.

Thomas Harris: With that, Mr. President, I move for the COVID Capital of $89,718.

Chris Spurr: Second.

Kyle Kerley: Motion and multiple seconds. Any further discussion? Hearing none. All those in favor say aye.

Councilmembers: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: All those opposed? Motion passes 7-0

Nick Jordan: All right. Items number two and three. Way back, early in the year, you guys approved positions for the Building Department. It was unanimous. On the specific sheet I included in your notebook so you could see, I had incidentally included the word Exempt. It should be Non-exempt. That's all it's doing, is correcting these to Non-exempt Retroactive to when you first approved them. Then items four, five, and six, which were approved 6-1. Councilman Armstrong, he voted no for those, in case you want to vote the same way again. The similar situation you'll see on those sheets that I had noted Exempt and they should be Non-exempt.

Thomas Harris: Those were typos, not changes?

Nick Jordan: Yes, they're typos. You can even see on the sheet we wrote on to operate--

Thomas Harris: I think the challenge was to have HR make sure that--

Nick Jordan: Whether or not those should be, that's completely aside from what was approved at the time. What was approved at the time was under the understanding they were Non-exempt positions. It's just the sheet said Exempt.

Thomas Harris: I probably liked them because they were Exempt.

Nick Jordan: You voted yes.

Thomas Harris: I know. That's because they were moving to Exempt. With that, Mr. President, I move on items two through six for those positions to move from Exempt to Non-exempt, Retro to 4/21. There's 2/17 also listed.

Paul Lagemann: Second.

Kyle Kerley: Motion and multiple seconds. Any further discussion, Mr. Armstrong?

Robert Armstrong: I'm not going to change my vote. With that being done, four, five, and six, I voted no.

Nick Jordan: Got it.

Robert Armstrong: I'm staying no. How do you want me to vote?

Nick Jordan: You're fine. We'll just make that point you voted yes for two and three. Four, five and six **[unintelligible 01:51:39].** [crosstalk]

Ken Fries: You have to hold your hand up. There you go.

Nick Jordan: He communicated it. It was a singular comment we got in. Good.

Kyle Kerley: [laughs] That was a clarification. We're going to vote on two, three, four, five, and six. All those in favor say aye.

Councilmembers: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: All those opposed? With Mr. Armstrong's notations for four, five, and six.

Robert Armstrong: Six, no.

Kyle Kerley: Thank you. Items 2 & 3 pass 7-0. Items 4-6 pass 6-1(Bob)

Nick Jordan: All right. I got Community Corrections here as well. Community Corrections takes their operational funding for three different buckets, the general fund, their state grant, and then their project income fund. Recently, the IDOC, as of their last audit, what we would historically do is at the end of the year, whether it be paying a vendor or paying somebody's salary, it carried over into the new year. We **[unintelligible 01:52:30]** encumber those monies and we would use the new grant monies to pay for that expense.

The IDOC has told us, "No, we don't want you to do that anymore." The salaries are okay. They can understand that. If you're going to pay an expense, it needs to be done within the calendar year of the grant. What we're doing here, since we can't use those grant monies, the new grant monies, we're moving these expenses, or we're doing a transfer on fund 236 to cover what would've been paid from the grant in the new year.

Operationally, going forward, what we're going to try to do is exhaust the grant monies from the state as soon as we can, whether that be through the salaries or the 200 or 300 series so that when it comes to the end of the year, we don't have the predicament of "We still have grant monies to use." We need to make sure we use them before 12/31. Otherwise, we can't use them anymore and they'll roll back.

What the state does is they just take it out of our new funding. We're not talking a ton of money. This is actually a large sum. It's usually not that significant. Probation, the circuit court, they get a piece of the grant as well. They spend theirs, so historically, it's never been a problem. It's just something that came up in the last audit. That's what's happening here, is we're having to correct what the IDOC doesn't like. We're paying those from 236 to fix the issue.

Thomas Harris: Did they say anything about the million that they owe us, IDOC? [crosstalk]

Nick Jordan: No. I know you keep bringing that up, but they have not.

Kyle Kerley: Checks in the mail.

Nick Jordan: You can check with them.

Thomas Harris: Very good. Mr. President, I move for Extra Deputy Hire and Overtime for $136,575 to Supplies, Gas & Oil, Household Laundry, Supply & Repair Parts, Contractual and Drug Screening for $136,575. [crosstalk]

Chris Spurr: Second.

Ken Fries: Second.

Kyle Kerley: Motion and multiple seconds. Any further discussion? Hearing none. All those in favor say aye.

Councilmembers: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: All those opposed? Motion passes 7-0. Thank you. HR.

[background conversation]

Nancy Steigmeyer: I'm just going to introduce them.

Nick Jordan: You want it?

Nancy Steigmeyer: Yes, we want it. Good morning, council. Nancy Steigmeyer, Human Resources Director.

Kyle Kerley: Morning.

Thomas Harris: Morning.

Nancy Steigmeyer: There has been a comprehensive compensation study for the entire county that council approved back in March to fund. Today, we have Clemans, Nelson here. I'll allow them to introduce themselves in a moment. Really, this compensation study was entered into to address some key areas, wage compression within our departments, turnover issues with specific classifications, and fair pay throughout the county for all positions. The consulting company is going to present their findings today. This is really just for discussion and for information only. At this time, we're not asking for a vote. Just going to turn it over to them.

Heidi Miller: Heidi Miller. I'm with Clemans, Nelson & Associates.

Ryan Woodward: Ryan Woodward.

Kyle Kerley: Welcome.

Heidi Miller: Thank you.

Ryan Woodward: Thank you.

Heidi Miller: Thanks for having us today. As Nancy had mentioned, we are going to go through, essentially, the process that we undertook when we did the classification and compensation study, and essentially, at the end of this, present our preliminary findings. Just to give an introduction on Clemans, Nelson, we've been around since 1976. We are based in Ohio. Basically, we specialize in human resources and labor relations, consulting. Most of the clients that we represent are public employers. As part of the project, basically-- I haven't listed up here the project scope.

I don't need to read that to you, but what I do want to sum up is, essentially, the major components, which is that we did a market study. That's done to ensure that what you guys are paying compared to others is competitive. The other big piece that came from this was really digging into the compensation system-- We will talk more about that-- and essentially just determining, is the system working, if it's not working, what can we do to fix it? That's essentially what this study covered. Again, market study that measures external equity. The point factoring is your internal equity. Then we take those two pieces, put them together, and develop our recommendations from there.

As part of that external equity, we did conduct a wage survey of 14 public sector jurisdictions, which I have listed on the screen. Those covered a span of Indiana, Ohio, Michigan. We have a couple-- One in Texas, South Carolina. It certainly was a broad range of counties that we looked at. Those are selected, obviously, based on location, your Indiana counties, what is close to you. Then also, other counties that are similar as far as population size, median household income, that's how those are selected.

In addition to this, we also compiled private sector information from two databases that we have so that way, we could ensure that what the county is paying their positions is also competitive with the private sector. What information do we gather when we do a market study, essentially? I think I've already mentioned this. We're looking primarily at wages, so where our positions, what's the starting rate, where can they top out at, and then also, we do look at what are those employees making right now in that job.

Then for Allen County, we did look at 50 classifications as part of that market study. This is essentially a summary of what the data showed. You're going to see up here, there's these abbreviations, which are-- I'll explain what they are-- OSS, PAT, POLE, and LTC. Currently, there are these various pay scales. OSS is your office support workers. PAT is professional, administrative, and technical. POLE is going to be like your-- Help me out here. [crosstalk]

Ryan Woodward: Police officer, law enforcement, protector type positions.

Heidi Miller: Then the LTC is the labor trades and crafts. That's how this is broken out. That's essentially how we analyze the information that we can look at each pay scale separately and determine if that pay scale by itself is comparable to what other counties are doing. As you'll see here, if you compare your ranges, your minimum and your maximum, to what other counties in the private sector were paying, the office support workers, they were just under market when compared to the public sector, with the minimum being at 95% and the max being 82%. Just so it's clear, market would be 100%. Anything below 100% is below market, anything above 100% is above market. In the private sector, the county's actually over on the min at 107, and the max is at 100. For your professional employees--

Thomas Harris: Heidi, can I ask-- Going into the weeds a little bit on this one. These numbers are comparing our rates in 2022 before we apply a 5.5% increase. Is that correct?

Heidi Miller: This will, right here, correct. Yes.

Thomas Harris: From a council perspective, we should think we're hitting these numbers without the 5.5% increase. Once we apply a 5.5, these numbers should be even better, is that **[unintelligible 02:01:18]**? [crosstalk]

Heidi Miller: Correct. We'll actually talk about that shortly, because how I'm going to show you our recommendations will account for that 5.5.

Thomas Harris: Very good.

Heidi Miller: We did this basically in the middle of 2022, so this is the data that we have.

Thomas Harris: Got it.

Heidi Miller: You'll see professional is coming in under market. Your POLE is just slightly above, and then your LTC is basically above or right there when compared to the market. A major, and I really do mean major component of this was the internal equity analysis. Ryan's going to cover this portion of the presentation because this was kind of his baby throughout this project. [chuckles]

Ryan Woodward: Yes. A part of the project was an internal equity part. As we've said, all parts of this is to get fair pay on the market, and also internal. You have several positions, several departments, and we want to make sure pay for similar work is equal. The unique situation with Allen County was, you already have an Oliver System in place, which is exactly that it is a type of point factoring to get you internal equity. It has a step further that not many people use, which also was the break it down into those four categories that we're looking at, the market.

Most people, sometimes, put them all together and give them a point system to spread them out, but that was the point of-- The Oliver System was created back in the '70s, but mostly for the federal government, was to also then lump similar type work together so that your trades, your professional, your office staff-- You guys have adapted that and used it. We could've taken your Oliver and just made sure it was working for each individual position and move forward, but one of the questions we got right from the beginning was, "Is our Oliver System working?"

There were a lot of questions and concerns. That was when Heidi mentions-- A big part of the project was-- we took a lot of time to go back and look at how it was working, your Oliver System that is, and we found it does a great job of spreading it out. If you look at your current pay grade, that's your OSS one through seven, that's the point of the internal equity. The wording on the Oliver hadn't been changed or updated. There was a lot of very general broad words. In fact, general and broad were some of the words used **[unintelligible 02:03:46]** position, so a lot of people were lumped right in the middle of the Oliver scoring.

No one was getting the minimum, no one was getting the max, and you saw a large group of employees' positions being right in the middle of your pay grades. On further inspection, we thought to make it be able to be repeated year after year after year. If the new staff come in to use the system, we wanted to change the wording to best actually reflect the positions and the essential functions you guys have, so we reworded the scoring system to take away a lot of subjectivity, a lot of that broad language and put-- Look, for the office staff, these are the positions they do. We can rank them on those duties, and we'll put-- Those are the factors we're looking at.

Each one is going to be now different. The trades, the peace officers, the professional and the office staff all have different scoring systems now to meet what they are doing. The end result, with a lot of help from the HR department because they know all the positions-- We actually also talked with all the departments themselves too, to show them where we start ranking them to help us know that is it working, to show these are the positions that would essentially be at the minimum of those factors, all the way up to the top.

A lot of great feedback from across the county to get to a position where we can produce the new scoring system and a new ranking for all the departments and each of those sections, because based on that ranking then, I hand it back, and put the market data to get to the next part that you said is the compensation plan. That's what we spent most of the summer doing, because we had to rewrite the thing from scratch, get a lot of different feedback, make some edits to produce what we are at now. I probably skipped through a couple of those systems. I put it all in there. I hit all those topics. If you want to have any questions on them, feel free to let me know.

Heidi Miller: That process then essentially takes us to what we will ultimately recommend as part of the classification and compensation study. Just to outline, before I go into a little bit more detail, essentially, as Ryan had mentioned, we've revised the scoring system, we've revised pay scales. What I mean by that is one, ultimately, what everybody knows is LTC, OSS, PAT, they'll have a different name. Now, the structure of those scales will look very familiar, except for the fact that you'll see more pay grades in most of those with the exception of POLE.

The other thing that I've put up here that you can see is how employees will progress between each step. Currently, it starts at the hire date, six months, and then there's not another step until three years. Under what we're proposing is that you'll have hire, six months, and then after one year, there will be a step increase. Then it'll go basically from there 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, just as you've had it before. The thought process behind that is essentially a recruiting effort to just move employees through the scale a little bit quicker at the beginning.

That is a summary of the recommendations. This and what you all should have as a handout, is essentially taking the pay scales that we are recommending and providing you all with a cost of what that would be if you implement that pay scale. To explain what this is-- I'll use this first one as an example. We'll use LTC. When I go back and I look at that data, and then I input in the 5.5% that was approved for the 2023 budget, and you compare to the 2022 market, your cost for LTC would be $64,510. There's no shift in the scale because essentially, your 5.5% that you gave in 2023 was enough to already bring it to market.

That's when you compare to 2022 data. I know this is confusing. Then if you wanted to account for the fact that counties are going to be giving a cost of living adjustment in 2023, I've provided that second option for you that essentially just gives a little bit more to make sure that you're accounting for that so that you're not falling behind, going into 2023. That's what that second option there is on that right side.

Thomas Harris: You've got, as an example, LTC 4%, OSS 5%, POLE no shift, and then PAT at 10%. Where did those numbers come from? You're getting that from those same groups that you turn to, or are those averages in the region or nationwide or--

Heidi Miller: That's based on the market data. When I look at that and I say, "They're going to give 5.5% in 2023. How much more do we need to do on these scales to at least get them to market?" you'll see, if you compare to that 2022 data, all of the scales except for PAT, there's no shift needed. Now, PAT still needs 5% more on the scale to get it where it needs to be. Then if you want to go above and beyond, so you're comparing more to 2023--

Thomas Harris: So this is the movement of the scale?

Heidi Miller: Correct. [crosstalk]

Thomas Harris: I was thinking these were average increases going on in the market.

Heidi Miller: This is the movement of the scale.

Thomas Harris: I see.

Heidi Miller: Exactly.

Kyle Kerley: Where did you find the '23 market numbers? Did you go back to all those municipalities and ask what they did? Or did you just use an arbitrary COLA number?

Heidi Miller: It's going to be, on average, somewhere in that 4% to 5% range, and that's just based on what we've seen. I just look at that market data and I say, "If I do 4%, is that going to get the scale about into that 4% to 5% cost of living adjustment."

Kyle Kerley: That's what I was-- Did you get actual data from those markets? Or did you just say, "I'm going to use 4%, I'm going to use 5%."? [crosstalk]

Heidi Miller: We do have data. Yes. Erica actually collected that recently for us.

Kyle Kerley: That's what I was wondering.

Chris Spurr: Just for clarification-- I'm probably going to muddy the waters even more here, Mr. Harris-- before we initiated or voted on the adjustment of the 5.5%, what we're saying is these figures go back prior to that. Essentially, when I look at the sheet, for PAT, we're looking at an increase of 15.5%, correct?

Heidi Miller: Before you take that into account, yes.

Chris Spurr: Right.

Heidi Miller: That's initially where I was with that scale, before I applied that 5.5%, before that was even a discussion.

Thomas Harris: One of the neat pieces in your recommendations, I think, is that slide that move people faster as new hires into some kind of an increase because **[unintelligible 02:11:02]** I think we've looked at some of those turnover rates in the past, and we've been losing people at the earlier stages, but not necessarily throughout their tenure. That allows people to move up faster. The other thing is, more-- not steps-- the steps you're talking about, but you're actually getting eight levels, or nine. What is it? Nine?

Heidi Miller: Eight.

Thomas Harris: Eight? That's up from what you had previously **[unintelligible 02:11:31]--** [crosstalk]

Heidi Miller: Correct. It's one additional, and that's just because we're incorporating that one-year movement basically.

Thomas Harris: How about turnover rates? Nancy, I think **[unintelligible 02:11:40]** ask her, interested in understanding those turnover rates. I saw some recent data that said that even 10% is normal for companies and not abnormal, but be interested in understanding this.

Nancy Steigmeyer: Nick is sharing a handout that we have of turnover rates that have your 2021 and 2022 data. It does represent certain classifications. POLE, for example, has been our highest turnover for the past two years trending. Then this year, our second highest is OSS. Those would be classifications that would be addressed in this comp study as well.

Thomas Harris: Let's take a look at '22 turnover by pay grid as an example. When you're looking at terminations now, terminations, they happen for all kinds of reasons. We don't know that that termination number is equating to salaries. We're assuming, or we're trying to look at this and say, "Those people are leaving because of their pay." but that may not be the case.

Nancy Steigmeyer: We don't know all the data, correct.

Thomas Harris: 10% is our number for 2022 of 144 people. Again, that's only 10%, but we don't even know if that 10% reflects a pay issue. Those people could be leaving for all kinds of reasons.

Nancy Steigmeyer: It could be natural attrition, it could be retirement. There's a variety of different things. We know significantly from talking with department leaders that there has been a challenge in attracting and hiring new talent because of the pay issue at the front end, as well as some of our benefits and things like that, which we're working to address in this study.

Thomas Harris: This recommendation would help that hire. We had talked about on council some time ago, the idea of allowing department heads to flux in those first few years or a hiring in number, I should say, in order to recruit and retain some of those new hires. This system creates a process, so it's not arbitrary or discretionary, up to the department. They have to get a certain amount, and that probably helps HR not to have everybody playing in that. That's not **[unintelligible 02:13:52]**

Nancy Steigmeyer: Not moving everybody to a special occupation because they **[unintelligible 02:13:54]** outside of **[unintelligible 02:13:55].** Yes.

Kyle Kerley: Councilman Fries.

Ken Fries: Nancy, there's got to be a statistical baseline for percentage of turnover, historically-

Nancy Steigmeyer: As far as classifications?

Ken Fries: -for public service and private-- Every year, a certain amount of people leave employment with some county, and it's got to be statistically analyzed over years. I would think there's got to be a baseline. [crosstalk]

Nancy Steigmeyer: There is data by industry that we can look at. There's a variety of different ways that we can slice and dice it. Then, given the COVID scenarios and things like that, there's the great resignation, there's the great evaluation, there's a lot of different reasons that people are leaving organizations right now. The competitive market is different. Employers privately and publicly are upping the ante and offering the world to employees. It's just changed everything dynamically. There's a lot of different things we can slice and dice. With our new HRIS system, we'll be able to track a lot more of that internally in the future. [crosstalk]

Ken Fries: Are we going to do exit interviews with all the people that leave because--

Nancy Steigmeyer: We attempt to do exit interviews with those that are resigning.

Thomas Harris: Somehow we've got to keep going after that. I like the idea that we're addressing comp overall. I think you need to do that to stay competitive and such, but at 10%, and only 144 people out of 1400-- even if you take 60% of that number, or 70% is based on wages, that number gets smaller and smaller at that point.

Nancy Steigmeyer: It's a mixed bag. Really, our wage situation currently is a lot of that, is the attraction component to bring in top talent to refill positions of people that are retiring after 30 or 40 years as well.

Thomas Harris: You won't see that on here because they're not coming to the county.

Nancy Steigmeyer: Right.

Thomas Harris: The challenge becomes, even though the turnover rate's lower, we don't know that 150, or 200, or 500 people have come to the county and said, "Oh, my gosh, you're not paying enough. I'm not coming." That number's not going to get reflected in here, right? [crosstalk]

Nancy Steigmeyer: Right. Absolutely.

Kyle Kerley: Mr. Spurr.

Chris Spurr: One thing I'd like to mention-- I've voiced my concerns with this before to y'all is, I'm not a fan of the steps. I understand the reasoning behind it. You try and reward those that are here to stay, I get that. The problem is when those people either age out, or they leave for whatever reason that is, it doesn't allow you to tap the current market and bring in a seasoned professional. If you do bring them in, they're hired in at step one. To me, that creates a problem from the beginning. Again, we've talked about this before.

I would like to see a phaseout of the steps. There's not many organizations that do that. I'd like to see a phaseout of that. I'd like to see that this process move to a range, that way the person that does the hiring, the department head can pay that professional what they're truly worth, and that, in turn, in theory, brings them much to a more market-driven approach rather than start at step one, and now you got to work your way back up at longevity. I understand the idea behind the steps, but I think in reality, it overcomplicates things, whereas if we had a range established, it would be much more competitive system.

Nancy Steigmeyer: We did take that into consideration as we started our conversations with Clemans. It would be a paradigm shift for our entire workforce right now. There are options, once we get approved, where we're going as far as the funding for this, as our pay philosophies, how we develop that, and how we train department heads and elected officials, how they can bring people in if they have somebody that has extensive experience in 10-plus years or something, can they skip a couple steps or what does that look like. There's also some hybrid approaches that we can enter into and discuss as well, as part of our pay philosophy. Those are later discussions, once we figure out where we're going, and then that will be the tying everything together.

Ken Fries: Thank you. You also have to be careful of disenfranchising those current employees that have been there for 10 year-- [crosstalk]

Nancy Steigmeyer: Correct. We don't want to punish any of our current employees that have been loyal employees for 30 or 40 years.

Chris Spurr: Ideally, if you had a range, in theory, that wouldn't necessarily happen, because if the good employees you'd want to retain, they'd already be in the higher end of that range.

Nancy Steigmeyer: Many of them are already at the maximum?

Chris Spurr: Right.

Paul Lagemann: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Nancy, and our friends from Clemans, Nelson, as we took a look at getting our employees to market rate, there were two considerations. Can you all speak to those two considerations-- They were public and private markets-- where we are now, and how we're getting to where we need to go as far as competitiveness, for wages? Can you talk a little bit about that?

Heidi Miller: Hopefully, I'm understanding what you're wanting. Basically, what we have done is, these recommendations essentially put you in a spot that make you competitive with the public sector, so with the counties, because that's what you all are. That's our number one when we're looking at this. What we do though, with that private sector information, is we look at that from an individual perspective. Positions where we know that's going to be an issue, we're identifying and looking at it position by position to make sure that those individual positions are where they need to be. The overall pay scale is going to be compared to the counties.

Paul Lagemann: Right. The reason I ask the question is, we're not just taking a look at how do we compare with other local governments regionally, but also, how do we compare with the private sector, because every employee has the ability and if they're thoughtful, they're going to take a look at all their options. We want to be competitive with both. As we took a look at those, one of the things that I noticed in the numbers that you all provided was, they were actually pretty competitive from a private sector standpoint, where we were behind as local government. Do you want to talk to that a little bit?

Heidi Miller: I'm going to backtrack here if that's okay, just so I can refer to this correctly. What was interesting is that for your office support workers, when you compare to the private, basically at market, or just over market, but compared to the public sector, it appears to be low. Not appears to be, it is low. That though, for office support workers, that picture that you're seeing, that's actually pretty common. That's truly not a surprise.

Thomas Harris: Which is common? Say it again, Heidi.

Heidi Miller: For office support. Your administrative assistants, those employees, oftentimes, the public sector pays more for those jobs than what the private sector does. That's the picture that you see there.

Ken Fries: Is that because the step increases? You don't typically get that in private sector.

Heidi Miller: Yes, it absolutely could be. Again, these are the ranges though. I guess I shouldn't say that because that's your starting point and that's your max out, so not necessarily. Then I think the other one, professional, again, that's low on both ends, public, private. Again, not surprising there. Hopefully, that addresses what you were hoping to cover.

Paul Lagemann: I just wanted to point that out. I think it was really helpful as we went through this process to understand where we sit in the overall job marketplace so that as our employees consider, "Do we stay or do we go?" and then what does that look like, do we stay in public sector and move within the public sector or move into the private. I thought you did a really nice job of framing where we sit in both markets. That was certainly helpful to me at least.

Nancy Steigmeyer: Absolutely. From a recruitment and a retention perspective, that's really important.

Paul Lagemann: Right.

Ken Fries: The graphic you have up there, Heidi, according to this, to stay at market in 2023, we need to be in the far right column?

Heidi Miller: Yes, correct.

Ken Fries: With the total bill at the bottom of $4,219,262.89?

Heidi Miller: Yes. Quite honestly, an ultimate recommendation for me would be to go with that right column, but I felt it important to still show the data we have is 2022. I want to show you what that truly is and what that would be.

Thomas Harris: That is to market, not as an example, lagging market at 95%. This is actually to market. One thing that's intriguing to me is the OSS. If you look at the previous-- You had a previous slide up there on the first one. If you look at OSS, what that's telling us is that compared to private, we're doing okay. Is that what that's telling us?

Heidi Miller: Yes.

Thomas Harris: Yet if you look at turnover rate that Nancy's handed out council, and if you look at OSS, it's 15%, almost the highest. POLE is the other one. 37 people left and yet, according to our private comparison, we're doing okay. Yet that scored high in turnover.

Nancy Steigmeyer: There could be a lot of different things. As part of the study, we're reevaluating all those jobs and descriptions within OSS. Some of them will be shifting to PAT because they are more professional positions. Some of that is skills advancement, somebody that starts here that maybe he doesn't have an education and then moves on to something else with an education and moves out of a role. There’s a lot of different reasons that play into that OSS role. Sometimes those positions don't require higher-level educations or professional certifications.

Thomas Harris: As we know, turnover, a lot of time correlates with that supervisor. Right?

Nancy Steigmeyer: Absolutely.

Thomas Harris: It's the relationship, so there could be other factors playing into this a little bit. Executives, one of the special **[unintelligible 02:24:19]**, one of the objectives that we had was trying to just look at those special **[unintelligible 02:24:23]**. How many did we move out of special **[unintelligible 02:24:26]** into PATs? Or how many are left in the special **[unintelligible 02:24:29]** category, maybe?

Heidi Miller: I think it's probably important-- I made a note here because I didn't want to forget about that-- that we expand a little bit on special **[unintelligible 02:24:36]** just so everybody can hear. As you just mentioned, one of the goals was to really look at those jobs and determine "Should they in fact be in this special occupation category, or should they be back in the professional pay scale?" That was also a major component. I don't know, Ryan, to answer his question. If you can--

Ryan Woodward: Forgive me for forgetting to mention that part during the internal equity part. That was a major question that you guys at the council asked for this project. Looking at their job descriptions and their functions, we agreed to score them on the PAT or the new scale that encompasses the professional category. I found that overwhelming majority fit right in, so they're right in there.

The other ones that are scoring expectedly high, were your executives and a handful that would maybe still be special, for example, a psychologist, someone with a very advanced degree, very technical in that job and it's going to be very connected to its market what its rate should be, not necessarily a nice fluid going to based on its scoring. That said, on how that screen looks, the PAT and the executive covers, I would almost say, more than 90% of your special occupations.

Thomas Harris: How many does that leave?

Ryan Woodward: How many are left?

Thomas Harris: Yes. Ballpark.

Ryan Woodward: I looked at a quick--

Nancy Steigmeyer: Most of its elected officials are the really unique positions and the chief deputies.

Thomas Harris: I think we started with, what, about 60 or 80 or something like that, special **[unintelligible 02:26:09]**?

Nancy Steigmeyer: Close to 80.

Thomas Harris: That number is down to just probably elected officials primarily?

Heidi Miller: And the chief deputy.

Ryan Woodward: And the chief deputies, because they're tied to them based on percentage of wage. They are excluded from that.

Heidi Miller: There maybe, what, like five?

Paul Lagemann: We have some special medical--

Ryan Woodward: There's **[unintelligible 02:26:26]** a nurse practitioner, the psychologist, I can think of some staff attorneys. It's those ones you can just name them, but **[unintelligible 02:26:33]** really high masters.

Thomas Harris: From a council perspective, this study took care of that problem. That’s a good move from that perspective. Chances are that would be received well from all those incumbents to be able to move into the PAT category, because before they were not getting those tenure improvements or wage increases. Now they're going to. Was there a recommendation on how to put them on the grid or anything at this point?

Ryan Woodward: Coming first from the question of council, look, what can we do with looking at them, Nancy's already mentioned it twice, the wage compression issue, that was where the studies were showing the major wage compression within the county was based on maybe the top three people in a department. Then when the people in the pack coming up next to them, not on a grid and on a grid and they got close.

By putting them all together should eliminate a lot of that. There’s still some math I'm looking at, just to make sure that there aren't, once we get the recommendation, what you want to go through, we can make sure that all those compression issues have been taken care of and if there's anything **[unintelligible 02:27:40]** close, or we can point them out.

Thomas Harris: The challenge is-- They're going to go on the grid based on tenure. It is entirely possible if they now go on with a PAT grid that the people in second or third, fourth positions have had more tenure. Will that not enhance or increase the compression issue in those cases?

Ryan Woodward: For **[unintelligible 02:28:03],** but that's why at this moment **[unintelligible 02:28:07]** a separate executive scale to take them slightly out. I have to change the min and max, mostly looking exactly on that reason to avoid that. If I did put them hypothetically one step higher, there's going to be a compression issue, but if I start all over and put them on a different scale that meets-- We did get market data from a handful of those positions, so I could use all that together.

Thomas Harris: There is an executive grid that now is a recommendation? Cool. That takes care of that problem.

Nancy Steigmeyer: The criterion's the same as the PAT grid, but it just elevates to the next level because it's direct department supervision, those types of things.

Thomas Harris: That's good.

Kyle Kerley: I have a question. As part of this, when you talk about compensation, wage is only part of the equation. Did you also do a comparison of benefits, both what the benefits are and what the cost of the benefit to the employee is, should they choose to take them?

Heidi Miller: What we did is we did compile benefit information. I know we had quite a few discussions on benefits. The major issue when you look at benefits is how they're valued. I may value benefits differently than Nancy values benefits. It’s how do you put a number to that to determine what one person may like and one person may not like. They are looked at. It is going to be provided to the county, provided more for informational to make sure that what you all are doing as far as your benefit package that you're able to stay competitive from that end.

Kyle Kerley: I guess my deeper question is, every employee's going to put a different value on benefits, but the benefits that we offer have a cost. At some point, that cost has to be taken into consideration. When I say cost, for example, we have a very, very good health benefit that has a very minimal cost to the employees.

When you look at some of the surrounding counties, they're paying as much as 300 to 400 times what our employees are paying in deductions for the same benefits. They may be being paid a higher wage, but their net pay is actually lower once they take that benefit because those benefits have a cost to us as a council, and that's something we have to take into consideration as well when we're looking at the entire package. That's something that we do in the private sector when we analyze salaries and benefits as well.

Thomas Harris: Did you quantify the benefit package as an average?

Heidi Miller: We did not quantify, no. It can be done.

Thomas Harris: Can we still or is that an addendum to the contract or is that something that you can still **[unintelligible 02:31:12]**

Heidi Miller: No, no, it can be done. I think the hard part of it is not doing it for you all. That's easy. It's comparing it to what the others **[unintelligible 02:31:21]**

Thomas Harris: I think it would be beneficial from council's perspective, just to understand an average benefit package from the county. By the way, from a recruitment standpoint too we come in at being able to pay you X. Gosh, and the person might go and to your point, that might mean something or might not. Your base pay average wage pay is X but on average, our benefit package represents X amount of dollars to you. For some people, that'll mean a lot. To be able to communicate that, I think is crucial for the counties.

Nancy Steigmeyer: Absolutely. I look at benefits as it's definitely a retention tool. It's a part of the hiring practice but it's also a retention tool. The older we get, the more we need them. It depends on also the ages and those types of things. Heidi had mentioned, a lot goes into that. It depends on the deductibles. It depends on if you have a high user or not. That's where the variations make it difficult to compute, but she can at least compute the basic information like by monthly pays, and that type of thing.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: May I speak?

Thomas Harris: Yes.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Let's go back to compensation beyond insurance. What are some of the other compensation items that the county is looking at maybe adding to the packages of the new hire?

Nancy Steigmeyer: We're looking at being a little bit more aggressive with our vacation policy that hasn't been yet approved by the board of commissioners. We're in the process, hopefully, in the final stages of our handbook renewal. We have a 2023 handbook anticipated with some a little bit more aggressive changes that are more helpful for employees as they come on board to be able to allow them to be able to have some benefits up front, as well as healthcare benefits, being available quicker, and not having to wait 90 days, that can be a burden for somebody that has a family. Some of those types of things.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Thank you.

Ken Fries: I guess my suggestion is if we can't meet this dollar amount which is going to be shifting, I guess, is removing people from OSS to PAT and PAT it's going to move some, but we ought to look at some more ideas of benefits, maybe more days off or something that we can give them that doesn't actually cost taxpayer money.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: We are on that already.

Thomas Harris: Good. Thank you. From a recommendation standpoint, and next steps are the process, moving to that first column isn't a mistake. It's just not--

Heidi Miller: You're going to fall behind, essentially, because 2022 is almost over and most everybody has--

Thomas Harris: It's going to move up something.

Heidi Miller: Exactly.

Thomas Harris: Now, your last line on each of these are redlined. That means that 52 people will be above. With these recommendations 52 people and then how do we state that? I think we needed to state that they're--

Nancy Steigmeyer: They're already at their maximum on the scale.

Thomas Harris: Thank you. **[unintelligible 02:34:14]**

Nancy Steigmeyer: They're not necessarily that they're in a position and their midlife of their career. They're already at the maximum of their scale because they've been here for 20 years.

Thomas Harris: Counsel, I figured out through these discussions. I was concerned about that red line number because, oh my gosh, 52 people, 55 people, 70 people, 46 people are already not going to get an increase because this grid is going to set them up but they're already there, which I didn't really put together through these discussions. We have a lot of people already maxed out. They're already at the maxed-out amount.

When we do a COLA increase each year, that amount goes up, so they still get an increase. They're not maxed out and that will still be the case in this scenario. I was worried about all these people being redlined. Now, that's probably not all of them. There are probably people that are still being redlined that wouldn't be able to get an increase. Is that right or no?

Nancy Steigmeyer: There may be people that have elevated in their roles that are being put on a grid or something like that and they might be redlined for a year because they received a raise early or something like that. Ryan could talk more about that.

Ryan Woodward: I don't have a number on that and I can still **[unintelligible 02:35:23]** because that was from doing the internal equity, some people might have been in the wrong category to begin with. That's why we had a lot of opinion to see where they should be. If someone had been maxed out at the very end of one that came down to one, but the numbers of that--

Nancy Steigmeyer: It's a very small percentage.

Ryan Woodward: There's not many of those that happened.

Chris Spurr: That was my question, as well as is those that are redlined, what do those numbers really look like that wouldn't receive the COLA moving forward. Then how long would that take play? How long would that affect them?

Heidi Miller: I think it's those numbers that we have in front of you but how long is the questions [crosstalk]

Thomas Harris: Right. Exactly.

Heidi Miller: It depends where we go as far as our scales.

Thomas Harris: Exactly.

Ryan Woodward: The scale moves each year. One thing I thought, Mr. Harris, is back-- Where is this? On the top is where you were current. You have a lot of people that were maxed out at that step seven. **[unintelligible 02:36:24]** proposal, if we add the step one, now they're maxed out at this step eight, but all that shifted to account for that one so there's a percentage increase for that, then plus the COLA gets the market. They weren't ever just, "Oh, they're not moving at all." They got a move from that, plus the market. There's no one recommended to stay where they were a year ago.

Thomas Harris: Got it.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Can you make that just a little bigger? I don't know. I guess I'm getting old. I just can't see it.

Ryan Woodward: In PowerPoint **[unintelligible 02:36:54]**

Heidi Miller: [unintelligible 02:36:56] bigger. Can I do this? **[unintelligible 02:37:00]** PowerPoint

[crosstalk]

Ryan Woodward: I was going to say [crosstalk]

Sheila Curry-Campbell: It must be my glasses. Thank you.

?Heidi Miller: I don't know if he can.

Thomas Harris: I'd put mine on too.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: I'm sorry. **[unintelligible 02:37:13]**

Ryan Woodward: [unintelligible 02:37:14] we can do it from this.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Nick, it's okay. I think it's big.

Thomas Harris: Then you lost the signal.

Kyle Kerley: That's **[unintelligible 02:37:19]**

Thomas Harris: [unintelligible 02:37:20]

Chris Spurr: What you're saying is, when you added the one-year mark, you shifted the steps forward as well, progressively.

Ryan Woodward: I know the discussion kept changing. I said that just to let you know and all the concerns that someone might be redlined and not moving at all. They got moved from that and they can get moved from any recommendation to catch up with 23. By making that step, there was a focus on the recruitment part. I'll get to that, but it benefits all the people with longevity because it moved everyone up.

Also OSS and PAT were behind on the max. That was a way to also get you at the max. Now we can change the min. Then there are people when they are a job seeker looking to apply here, will only look at that min and make a decision. There's also, we know from our knowledge from where we work, and Nancy brought it up with her knowledge, people are also looking because they turned over and probably three years. They won't know where they're at in three years because we're adding that one, and they can look at that three. They're probably not looking at the end of your scale, they're looking at those, and they can just have certainty. A lot of people make their decision based on that.

Thomas Harris: That's where my question is at, is because we do have the steps, that person can be on hold for a period of years, in theory, because they won't hit that extra step yet. If they're maxed out and they're still in that box, do you see what I'm saying, then they won't be able to jump up to the next, does that make sense?

Sheila Curry-Campbell: I think so.

Heidi Miller: They **[unintelligible 02:38:51]** be maxed out though if they're in. Hopefully, I'm saying this correctly too as I'm speaking. Basically, they'd have to be in that 20-year because they're getting slotted on to a **[unintelligible 02:39:03]** based on how long they've been there.

Thomas Harris: 20 years is still 20 years-

Heidi Miller: Yes, exactly.

Thomas Harris: -whether it's on step seven or step eight is still--

Ryan Woodward: Behind the numbers there's a new scale that has steps one through eight for different pay scales, and based on their year of service, which we have, they all go right into that one. The only people who would be maxed and couldn't move anymore will be at the very last step because everyone is going to be in a brand new 5, 3, 5, 10, 15 years.

Thomas Harris: Because the steps will slide.

Ryan Woodward: We moved them to where they are and they should be.

Nancy Steigmeyer: This is why you see on the pole, even though they were at market there's still a cost associated with that because we're adding steps in there.

Ryan Woodward: That's true.

Paul Lagemann: For clarification, regardless of steps, they're still getting pretty much the annual increase. Everyone's always **[unintelligible 02:39:55]**

Heidi Miller: Because the scale changes every time we **[unintelligible 02:39:56]**

Paul Lagemann: Every year.

Speaker 7: [unintelligible 02:39:57]

Thomas Harris: Actually twice. If you're moving up on this step, and you're getting a COLA, you're actually going to [crosstalk]

Paul Lagemann: Sometimes **[unintelligible 02:40:06]**

Chris Spurr: Because it moves a **[unintelligible 02:40:05]**

Thomas Harris: Every five years or whatever that number is.

Paul Lagemann: I just think it's important to state that because we talk about redlining and all of that, no one stays static for more than a year.

Thomas Harris: The maximum, yes. Unless we decide to not give a pay raise.

Chris Spurr: How about **[unintelligible 02:40:26]** Like Kenny says, that's one factor, too. That could come into effect but like Paul mentioned, ideally, it'd be about a year.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Hopefully, people stay because they enjoy working for the county, and because of our benefit package. I think the county is a great place to work. We need to tell our story, make sure that we're attracting the right folks. This equity piece that you guys are working on is really going to make a difference. Thank you.

Thomas Harris: Chris, on your point, the elimination of those steps, I think could only happen is if you implemented some kind of a merit assessment of performance, which you're talking about a paradigm shift for government **[unintelligible 02:41:22]** Because in order to move people if it becomes a range, how do you move within the range versus this thing takes that discretionary assessment out.

Chris Spurr: I was going to say this makes it a little easier.

Thomas Harris: Oh, and I wanted to ask that, if I could, before I forget it, I'm sorry. How many other governments or local governments or comparative governments do the step process. Maybe you said that earlier but I forgot.

Heidi Miller: I don't know that I can answer a number. Sorry, if I interrupted.

Thomas Harris: Is it standard? Is it not standard? Do most of them have an open-range process or do they have steps?

Heidi Miller: I've found that it's been an interesting trend because when I started at Clemans Nelson in 2014, I had to think about it, sorry, basically, the trend at that time was to get away from steps to have arrange as you're suggesting. It wasn't until the last year, year and a half, that we've had clients coming back saying we need steps because we need that transparency. We need it to be black and white. We need to show our employees where they're going to go. It's definitely been a back-and-forth. I imagine that this trend towards steps will trend backwards at some point. It just depends on where things are at, I think, in the market,

Chris Spurr: They are even as it takes away a little bit of the gray area. How do you weigh somebody's qualifications or skill set so that it takes that out [crosstalk]

Thomas Harris: Or you're my buddy, so I'm going to hire you for more money.

Chris Spurr: Exactly. That's the argument that you'd have on the other side of the fence if you remove the steps.

Thomas Harris: A lot of people in government don't like that argument because you've worked on a campaign, therefore, you start at a higher rate than the person that didn't work on a campaign.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Exactly. We want to make sure that we've proven our work and that we're not letting folks come back in and do the same thing that we're trying to fix right now. That's giving the gift to the family, the friend, whatever, that's what we're trying to fix right now. Going here with the steps where we're being transparent, versus giving someone a range where they could, like I say, up their buddy, we're trying to fix this.

Thomas Harris: It doesn't exist. We don't do that now. No we don't.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Oh my God. We probably don't, but I'm sure that the equity, the lens that they were looking at, there were things that they found that there was some discrepancy and that there was opportunities for individuals to make those-- I'm going to stop right now **[unintelligible 02:44:07]** Thank you.

Chris Spurr: My only question is that I'd be interested to see the demographic breakdown of the average age of the workforce. As those people age out or whatever you want to say, how do we tap seasoned professionals and bring them back into the mix? Maybe those seasoned professionals are younger, and we want to get them in, in our system and have them stay. With the steps, that makes that much more difficult to do that because without some discretionary measure in place, you can't do that. That's my only argument for that.

?Speaker: [inaudible 02:44:53]

Nancy Steigmeyer: We have a compensation committee that will be building that philosophy around that with the advice from Clemans as well. That'll be something that we'll be definitely focusing on and we've been talking about,

Paul Lagemann: It's been a point of conversation throughout this entire process. It's a really good point and it's something that we see as from a recruitment standpoint, a critical component, at least on the Comp Committee. I think we've had really good discussions about it.

Thomas Harris: Thoughts on next steps, what would be the next steps in this process for consideration?

Nancy Steigmeyer: [unintelligible 02:45:30] for approval for 2023, we will be doing the appropriation ask in 2023. We would need to have some direction from council for sure where we want to be.

Thomas Harris: Those of us, and I say those, it could be this individual that thought that we should go into 95%. If you adopted that first column, you're in essence doing 95% because the market will continue to grow. If input it'd be an improvement for the county, overall, implementing the systems and the processes, but we'd be just slightly behind where you would project market to be. Then if we can get the understanding of what that benefit package might be, we can look at that in comparison to market and see how close we get.

Paul Lagemann: One more question, Nancy, from an implementation standpoint once Council approves the additional cost, what's the process for implementation? What's your projected timeframe for moving various job classifications around making sure that the appropriate classifications apply to each individual? What's that timeframe look like?

Nancy Steigmeyer: We haven't received a final timeframe with Clemans Nelson yet because there's still some behind-the-scene things we have to do. Once we get the approval of how much we can go to on our scales, then we can start plugging that in. Ryan, I would defer to you on that as far as that because then we'll have to also train supervisors and things like that, too.

Heidi Miller: It'll come down to first of all, how involved do you want to send that process. Of course, it's part of what we signed up to do, so that's not the issue. It's just how quickly we can get that coordinated. That's what it comes down to really [crosstalk] the first quarter.

Paul Lagemann: Is this is like a six-month process or a three-month process just off the top of your head, or is that **[unintelligible 02:47:34]**

Nancy Steigmeyer: I'm hoping it's a three-month process in the first quarter that we can get this ironed out and finalize.

Ryan Woodward: Is updating your computer system to scale one of the things **[unintelligible 02:47:43]**

Nancy Steigmeyer: Yes, exactly.

Paul Lagemann: That's a six-month process.

Thomas Harris: That line item we didn't talk about was the elected officials and that 66,000, I think is you've got to **[unintelligible 02:47:54]** change in here. That stayed the same in both columns. Then that 66,000 could be one position, but help us understand what that represents. We can't touch those. That would be the exception counsel, that we can't touch those in 2023 because **[unintelligible 02:48:14]**

Ryan Woodward: This is some data that we've just gathered just pretty recently so I wanted to throw it in there. I still have some more questions for a handful of **[unintelligible 02:48:20]** committees on those numbers. I'm seeing **[unintelligible 02:48:26]** elected officials to the market data that I got. There wasn't a lot to move. A lot of them were over and I can show those numbers later. The wages and the numbers are different because I'm also using what I just got was the budget I think with the five and a half. There's no recommendation to also move into what the market will be next year. It's just one number at this point **[unintelligible 02:48:51]**

Thomas Harris: If you had to ballpark that, how many elected officials are in that 66,000? Is that one position or five or does that ring a bell?

[laughter]

Ryan Woodward: I think it's three.

Thomas Harris: It's three about three.

Ryan Woodward: I think it was three.

Thomas Harris: I guess one of the questions that we had at the last meeting that we had was, are there any glaring, really bad situations that counsel should understand? We don't have to do that right now, but as part of the recommendation, you would say, "Oh, my gosh, there's three or four positions, either elected officials or overall that might be glaring and you've got to fix this one." This becomes a path.

?Paul Lagemann: It looks like **[unintelligible 02:49:33]** is the biggest issue.

Ryan Woodward: It's an issue because it's the most people and it was the process behind.

Thomas Harris: The process behind.

Ryan Woodward: That's what the reason the study is for, is to help you show that, and then we can **[unintelligible 02:49:47]**

Thomas Harris: I wasn't looking at the categories **[unintelligible 02:49:50]**

Ryan Woodward: [unintelligible 02:49:50] a certain position or glaring.

Thomas Harris: Yes, there's a position in the board of health that is way off that blah, blah, blah or something and **[unintelligible 02:49:57]** nothing like that. It's good.

?Speaker: It's a good customer.

Chris Spurr: What's interesting is under the PAT, is that the turnover isn't that bad at all but yet, they're the ones that need to be brought up the most. That's interesting.

Thomas Harris: Which could reflect seniority, too, meaning they may be at a stage age in their careers where they're saying this works.

Chris Spurr: Sure, fair enough.

Kyle Kerley: I guess my question to you Nancy, is my understanding of the next step for you, you're going to go back to the department heads with the scoring or however you want to call it and make sure they're comfortable with how their employees scored in relative to each other in the department and across other departments, correct?

Nancy Steigmeyer: Yes. We are finalizing some data that Ryan has put together. We went through all of that over the last month. We met with department heads the week of, I think it was beginning of October and we're going to go back to them. They all walked through any positions that were out of area or should not be on OSS or PAT or whatever. We're going to go back to them and say, "This is where they're at now with their scoring. Do you agree with this so that we can plug all that in all the data in as far as the dollar figures and things like that?"

Sheila Curry-Campbell: You spoke about training for these department heads? How much training **[unintelligible 02:51:31]**

Nancy Steigmeyer: It'll be minimal. It's really more just training on the new **[unintelligible 02:51:34]** that they would submit when they're putting in people, or for reclassifications, and things like that, what does that look like, so all of those types of things. Just really the process again.

Thomas Harris: They still don't see the scoring sheets or anything? Just checking.

Nancy Steigmeyer: Correct.

Paul Lagemann: Mr. Chairman, just one last comment. Nancy, this process with the committee has certainly had its ups and downs, but you and your team have done a great job as have the Clemans Nelson folks. I applaud you all for the hard work, time, and effort that you've put into it, so well done.

Nancy Steigmeyer: Thank you.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: [unintelligible 02:52:11] your team has done an awesome job. I just want to thank you, folks, that still here left in the room.

Nancy Steigmeyer: I think that they're the only ones left.

[laughter]

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Certainly, the only ones left, but kudos to your team.

Nancy Steigmeyer: They have done a marvelous job.

Thomas Harris: Thank you. I think we've rounded third, we're looking toward home so that's **[unintelligible 02:52:32]**

Heidi Miller: If I may too, I just like to second on your HR team, how awesome they've been through this process. They really have been hands-on and very helpful.

?Speaker: Great Is that it?

Nancy Steigmeyer: Any other questions at this time?

?Speaker: No.

Nancy Steigmeyer: We will be back then.

Thomas Harris: Thank you.

Nancy Steigmeyer: Thank you.

Thomas Harris: Thanks for visiting from Columbus.

Paul Lagemann: Mr. Chairman, as we consider board appointments, I would like to move that nominations for various board appointments be stricken from this meeting's agenda. Further that the nominations and approvals be set for a date certain at the December meeting of the Allen County Council to provide adequate preparation for those board appointments.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Is that a motion?

Paul Lagemann: It is a motion.

Thomas Harris: I don't think it needs to be a motion. Nick, **[unintelligible 02:53:34]**

Paul Lagemann: According to our attorney, it does.

?Speaker: [unintelligible 02:53:37]

Thomas Harris: Nick, does that throw any curbs if we move those board appointments? We're still on the timeline to be able to do it.

Nick Jordan: Board appointments have no effect and as I've explained to some, is even if you did them in January, you may miss one meeting of certain boards, but it's nothing.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Don't do it. Do it in December. Don't say January. Nick, don't give **[unintelligible 02:53:55]**

Nick Jordan: No, from the auditor's office standpoint, it makes no difference **[unintelligible 02:53:58]**

Thomas Harris: I will second that if it's a motion.

Sheila Curry- Campbell: I was saying that don't give them that priority.

Thomas Harris: However, I have a question that doesn't that change the agenda that we said we weren't going to change? We already adopted the agenda.

?Speaker: [unintelligible 02:54:06] changes any time.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Oh, what happened?

Paul Lagemann: Here's what I would say, is it's a discussion. We just said that we would discuss the board appointments. We didn't say that we would make the board appointments. What I'm suggesting is that within the agenda that we adopted, that we have move the actual appointments to next week or next month.

Ken Fries: Basically, we've already discussed it as the agenda said.

Paul Lagemann: Yes, sir.

Ken Fries: Okay, that works for me.

Robert Armstrong: The reason for the motion at the beginning is you save yourself. Somebody may need to come in early, they need to get back to their office, and those things all sort of accumulate. If you know them beforehand, you can take care of that right at the beginning of the meeting, but it doesn't forestall.

?Speaker: I'm sorry.

Thomas Harris: We've got another month.

Kyle Kerley: We have a motion and a second to move the nominations and appointments to December. All those in favor say aye.

Members: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: All those opposed. Okay. Since we're still in the discussion phase, I'm just going to remind the public that anybody that's interested, I encourage you to go to the council website, look at the appointments that are expiring in December, and reach out to your council member or reach out to me. We have a number of positions, and one of the reasons we had to move this back is we have received very little. I think I've received communication from 2 people out of 16 openings.

I've had two people reach out to me. There's a lot of opportunity to get involved and we would like the community to get involved. Otherwise, all of us at this table will be filling those spots.

?Speaker: Maybe.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: You have your lone Democrat here. I know you need a Democrat for one of those appointments.

Kyle Kerley: On to that the next item that we need to discuss would be if we're going to set a level for the transfers within series and what that's going to be and what we're going to direct our auditor to do next year and give guidance to those departments.

Ken Fries: What's our auditor's recommendation?

Nick Jordan: My recommendation would be when you adopt an appropriation or a budget, to address it at that point in time, not after you approve an appropriation or a budget.

Thomas Harris: We would do that during the budget season. Is that what you're saying?

Nick Jordan: For any meeting that there's an appropriation. If you look at the agenda, and there's a contractual line, and you don't want to approve the contractual appropriation that's on the agenda, then at that meeting, you say, "Hey, what's in here?" or, excuse me, preferably doing it in advance, so we can take action on it, or the council can take action at the meeting. The way you're doing it now, you're approving something. You've approved budgets, you've approved appropriations, and then you're turning around and saying, "We don't like them. You just approved it. If you don't like it, then don't approve it, to begin with."

?Speaker: There has to be some oversight from this **[unintelligible 02:57:25]**

Nick Jordan: There is when you approved it. It's like the cattle farmer. If he leaves the gate open, and the cattle goes out, then he wants to shut the gate.

Thomas Harris: You should have brought that up to Andrew while he was here.

Nick Jordan: Andrew didn't have a problem with **[unintelligible 02:57:37]**

Thomas Harris: He knows that.

Nick Jordan: If you don't like that or use the **[unintelligible 02:57:40]** appropriation just happened last meeting. You have appropriated $70 million. If you don't like the two lines that it's in, don't appropriate. Don't turn around and say, "Well, we approve it now. We want you guys to put the constraints on the **[unintelligible 02:57:55]**

?Speaker: For the record, I didn't.

Nick Jordan: Well, for the majority, excuse me.

Thomas Harris: Thank you for this.

Nick Jordan: We can do it **[unintelligible 02:58:02]** bouncing back to **[unintelligible 02:58:03]**

Chris Spurr: My point is, and you know this, my point is, it's just another added level of transparency to the taxpayer. That's how I feel about it.

Nick Jordan: Agree. You chose not to add that level at the beginning.

Chris Spurr: I understand that.

Nick Jordan: Looking at yourself **[unintelligible 02:58:19]** majority.

Chris Spurr: Now that I'm leaving, I would like to see that carry forward.

Nick Jordan: I don't disagree and please understand on the transparency aspect. I just think it's backwards to approve a budget with the transparency not there.

Chris Spurr: Basically, you're saying revisit next year prior to. I get it.

Nick Jordan: [unintelligible 02:58:41] on the front end not approve something **[unintelligible 02:58:43]**

Chris Spurr: I get it. I hear what you're saying and that's up for this body to decide.

Kyle Kerley: There's always going to be transfers between series within series. It doesn't matter how finite we ask our departments to get. **[unintelligible 02:58:59]**

Nick Jordan: I agree.

Kyle Kerley: [unintelligible 02:59:00] Councilman Spur's asking is when you come to us with a budget, you say you're going to use it for this. If you're going to use it for something else, just let us know you're using it for [crosstalk]

ken Fries: I think a prime example is what happened today with Councilman Harris when he asked about is it a vehicle or vehicles. When we see that, we should know what are we transferring? Is it contractual? What does that contractual mean? Before we decide, yes, we're going to allow that to happen, we need to know what does that mean?

Paul Lagemann: I agree. That's a legitimate question.

Thomas Harris: Can we put that as-- You'll be here in six months. Put that as an action item to make sure that that gets built into the 2020--

Nick Jordan: Yes, if you want to do that, we're going to start it today and telling departments that, "Hey, FYI, for the 2024 budget, your contractual 300 series items, if you know you have--" I can't put a dollar amount on because significant for cooperative extension is a lot smaller than significant for the Sheriff's Department. It would be at their discretion or counsel if you set a threshold of 25,000, and a contractual line, some departments will do nothing. Others will have to do work. The moral of the story is that if you have those broad base contractual services type lines, counsel would like to see some delineation on what's in there. Whether that'd be breaking it out into six other lines, or whether that'd be giving you guys a document showing here's within contractual, that would be the majority of counsel to decide.

Ken Fries: I would like to see that done only because you hear a lot of times people oh, they're doing contracts for their buddies **[unintelligible 03:00:42]**. If we can see it, no, they're not. This is what the contracts are for.

Chris Spurr: Nick, while I have you walking on the ledge there. I'm just kidding.

Nick Jordan: I'm sorry bro.

Chris Spurr: [unintelligible 03:00:51] you know. We've talked about this many times before, and it's up for us to vote on. I get it, but you're totally okay with that voting system moving forward being software and like Councilman Armstrong says, maybe a board that the public could see or whatever. I understand Councilman Harris's position. He doesn't want to do it open-ended, because we don't know what the cost is. I get that. You're totally fine with that, it's not going to add laborious amounts of work to your office or anything?

Nick Jordan: No, **[unintelligible 03:01:24]** one year in time, we'll create new line items for those that are necessary. Then we'll be done with them and each year, the department budgets **[unintelligible 03:01:32]**

Chris Spurr: I'm also just talking about something separate. I'm talking about the vote tally.

Nick Jordan: You mean the software?

Chris Spurr: Yes, like the software. It wouldn't add gobs of time for your office.

Nick Jordan: [crosstalk]

?Speaker: We put a board up here with **[unintelligible 03:01:47]** in it.

Chris Spurr: There we go.

[crosstalk]

Sheila Curry-Campbell: [unintelligible 03:01:50]

?Speaker: Red and green.

Nick Jordan: There's **[unintelligible 03:01:54]** technology out there. You guys, if we can get an app, you all have electronic devices.

Chris Spurr: I would like to see that in the next session.

Kyle Kerley: We could get seven **[unintelligible 03:02:01]** arrows and just say yes or no.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: [unintelligible 03:02:04] we just slide it to the right or left.

?Speaker: Get the toggle switch.

Nick Jordan: Back to the transfer piece, if you try to set a threshold, not to circumvent it, the department can always as we mentioned in the last meeting, if it was 25,000, whatever it is, we'll go to 24, and do 24 transfer and 1000. You stay below and you don't have to go before the council.

Kyle Kerley: In lieu of that, can we just say we just want to report at every meeting of all the transfers **[unintelligible 03:02:31]**

Nick Jordan: We definitely can do it. If we're going to do that, at least for operational purposes, we need to know if that report will be contingent on council approval because we will have to hold the checks so that we don't pay an expense that you potentially don't approve the transfer for or if it's just strictly a, "Hey, here's a review type thing for your FYI."

Thomas Harris: Review would be good, I think because otherwise, you're going to screech government to a halt.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: [unintelligible 03:02:57] a review, I think, would survive. I don't know if that [crosstalk]

Thomas Harris: Then come back with some teeth in the next budget from an engineering point. That'll give us six months to assess and evaluate it before you lock it in.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Yes, **[unintelligible 03:03:12]**

Nick Jordan: To all fairness to departments, if you're aware of lines you don't like because you have the budget book, they're readily available, tell me what they are so we can reach out to the departments and get them addressed instead of September of next year it gets brought up for the first time.

Kyle Kerley: Let's chew on it until December and come back with a recommendation.

Chris Spurr: I'm happy with that. I just don't want to see **[unintelligible 03:03:40]** continuously get kicked down the road.

Kyle Kerley: We tied it to the budget. We have to give him some direction. Otherwise, he's going to have to bring the transfers to us.

?Speaker: I understand.

Thomas Harris: We pass that resolution, in essence, to reiterate what state law requires anyway.

Kyle Kerley: That's what I'm saying. If we don't do anything he's going to have to bring in every transfer to us.

Thomas Harris: Is that how you looked at it?

Nick Jordan: We have to follow state law. As I mentioned before, council historically has not looked at that state law as stringent as possibly this council wants to do. We looked at it as if it was used for a purpose in the 300 series, whether it'd be A-line, B-line, C-line, or D-line, it was okay. If this council wants to micromanage A, B, C, or D, that's where we need to know.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: This is only a discussion.

Nick Jordan: You've already passed it for '23. Between our December meeting, we need to know for the beginning of the year.

Thomas Harris: We have to give him guidance too.

Nick Jordan: My recommendation it'd be a review-type thing. If you want to make it more stringent then we do it for 24 budgets so that departments are able to adjust something on the front end.

Chris Spurr: To go with what you're saying about because I know what you're saying about what's going to happen about you can play this game if you're a department head. You can play that game but what it'll do is it'll establish a historical record of this person that want to play by the rules, maybe that requires another look. The department, they can think, "Oh, I can get around this." That's fine. You can think that but, what will happen is it'll establish a history.

Nick Jordan: No, please understand. I'm not implying anybody will do that. When it comes to waiting a month to get approval, there could be an issue with having to pay, getting an expense.

Chris Spurr: I just think it just adds another layer of transparency for the tax payer.

Nick Jordan: Agree. No disagreement.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Are you satisfied with what we're going to do in December?

Chris Spurr: As long as something's adopted. This body has to adopt something because on the last vote, we have to move forward with something. We can't just leave him out there in limbo. I'm fine with that.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: You're fine with that for December. Thank you. I'm with you.

Kyle Kerley: Any liaison reports?

?Speaker: I do have one. Sorry.

Thomas Harris: Greater Fort Wayne Chamber, they have now passed the letter out of the subcommittee that will be voted on by GFW. I believe it's been voted on so I might be off just a little bit on that one. Basically, the letter is going to and I'm going to use this term, but it might not be exact. You will get this letter. It's all coming to council but it encourages council to have dialogue with the Allen County Library in regards to their needs in the future. GFW will pass that or has passed that. Then that letter is going to be showing up in your mailboxes soon just basically stating that.

Robert Armstrong: They are telling us that we have to go to the table and talk?

Thomas Harris: No, I think that's probably a little strong. I think they said counsel and the library should have dialogue. That was more discuss the needs. That's what **[unintelligible 03:07:08]**

Paul Lagemann: As you all probably know Councilman Kerley and I are both on JPB, which is the joint permitting board. We've seen a lot of work happen there this year. We've talked a little bit about that with the **[unintelligible 03:07:25]** upgrades. I wanted to report back. It's not often that you really see massive improvement. We'll begin in January with going to the various contracting associations, AIA, BCA, ABC, Home Builders, all of them, with an instruction on how to work **[unintelligible 03:07:53]**, especially with some of the upgrades. What's exciting about that is, because I interact with a lot of contractors I have for 30 years, those guys have constantly said, "It doesn't give us this information.

It doesn't give us that information." We're going to really address those areas now and allow the contractors to speak directly with the folks that run the system on being able to access what important information they need to move those permits along to keep things going. It's been a bit of an ongoing frustration for some of the contractors. They don't know how to work it and it's not an easy system to work. This will hopefully open some doors and move our permitting process along and make it a lot easier and a lot more user-friendly, which is what government ought to be doing. Super excited about that.

Thomas Harris: That's great. I've heard as well, concerns and continued concerns. This may exist already. I don't know if it does, but if there could be some standard set to say as an example, a certain permit should be approved in a certain amount of period of time on a standard as established.

Paul Lagemann: We do that right now as matter of fact. DPS has a standard for all their permits and that's where everything originates.

Thomas Harris: Then it would be great to look at that because the contractors are still saying, "Oh my goodness, it takes so long for approval." In order to fix that I think they had a record or track or measure, how much we're missing it by and then determine what the reasons are why we're missing those standards.

Paul Lagemann: We do actually record that and that's a metric that JPB looks at every single time. We meet four times a year, but we talk a lot more in between and that is a metric that we're constantly reviewing. The biggest problem that we run into, from a time standpoint, is the state. When permits go to the state because all permits have to run through several departments but it's centralized in Homeland Security for any new construction project, all of those permits start there and the backlog at the state level, particularly if it has to go to IDEM or DNR is way, way backlog. **[unintelligible 03:10:15]** stuff turns around, just so you have a sense, DPS and building department which are the primary places, you'd have to get permits, those things turn around in usually 24 to 48 hours. It's fast.

Thomas Harris: [unintelligible 03:10:27] variable from a citizen standpoint is the system or the software is not working fast enough. Somehow being able to articulate and measure that better, I think, would be beneficial to everybody.

Paul Lagemann: I think that's a good point. That's part of this continuous improvement conversation that Kyle and I have been having with every department that goes through the permitting. Some of the stuff we do have to go through Fire, Department of Health. It just depends on the permit type and what you're doing. Some of those have not been moving as fast as they probably could be. Some of them we don't have any control over whatsoever, because that's city department too.

What's good is we're really having these conversations, everybody's at the table having the conversation. I got to throw kudos out to **[unintelligible 03:11:22]**, Patrick in his office, and Caleb Jacobson for really stepping up and putting a lot of extra time into this process. Thanks to those folks.

Kyle Kerley: I was going to give an update on the Coliseum, but CJ was here and said most of the stuff. One thing he didn't say was they're not going to need any money this year. That's a good thing.

Thomas Harris: It's a great thing.

Kyle Kerley: They have a lot of job openings on that.

Thomas Harris: With that, Mr. President, I move for the approval to waive the second reading of any manner approved today for which it may be deemed necessary for the county council meeting of November 17th, 2022.

Sheila Curry-Campbell: Second.

Kyle Kerley: The motion and second. All those in favor say aye.

Members: Aye.

Kyle Kerley: The next county council regular meeting will be held at 8:30 AM Thursday, December 15th, 2022 in the chambers room of Citizens Square. With that, I will entertain a motion to adjourn.

Tom Harris: So moved.

Kyle Kerley: Second. I'll adjourn.