

WARRICK COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING
REGULAR SESSION
COMMISSIONERS MEETING ROOM
107 W. Locust Street
Boonville, Indiana
April 1, 2025
6:00 PM

The Warrick County Council met in regular session at the Warrick County Courthouse, 107 W. Locust Street, Boonville, Indiana.

Council Attorney Rhett Gonterman and Administrator Krystal Powless were in attendance.

Auditor Michael Dietsch, Chief Deputy Barbi Shelton, and Recording Secretary Kristine Georges attended and recorded the minutes.

The public could view the meeting via Warrick County Government YouTube channel at:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOK8y7lXcLpK9le8WV4pr9w?view_as=subscriber

Council President, Brad Overton, called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Roll Call showed the following Council members present in person: Ron Bacon, Patricia Brooks, Rob Dimmett, Brad Overton, Richard Reid, Greg Richmond, and Chris Whetstine.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT BUSINESS
ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION

President Overton read the following into the record:

Public Health Services	1161.31400.000.0000	Contractual Services	\$449,238.64
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Council Administrator Krystal Powless said it was her understanding that this needed to be tabled. But, they did have information for next month. The Warrick County Health Officer, Dr. James Heinrich, then spoke to give an update. They are trying to generate some contracts with numbers and the process is moving forward. Councilman Rick Reid made a motion to table. Councilman Ron Bacon seconded the motion. The motion carried 7-0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
MARCH 4, 2025 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

The minutes from the March 4, 2025 Regular Session meeting were presented. Councilman Richmond had one correction on the first page, change Brett to Rhett. Councilman Rob Dimmett made the motion to approve the minutes. Councilman Ron Bacon seconded the motion. The motion carried 7-0.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT BUSINESS
ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION
LOCAL HEALTH TRUST – LOCAL HEALTH MAINTENANCE

President Overton read the following into the record:

Local Health Trust	1206.31400.000.0000	Contractual Services	\$48,568.00
	1206.34210.000.0000	Malpractice Insurance	\$4,254.00
Local Health Maintenance	1168.34210.000.0000	Legal Services	\$27,110.00

Councilman Richmond asked if they should be taken apart. President Overton said he was good with that.

Local Health Trust
Contractual Services

Health Officer, Dr. James Heinrich; County Administrator, Debbie Bennett-Stearsman; and Health Board President, Melanie Lutz were present to discuss the requests. Ms. Bennett-Stearsman said that the Legacy and Trust funds were started about twenty years ago for tobacco settlements and they need to be cleared out as this is the last year for them. This is where the funding is coming from for the requests to get them closed out. The Contractual Services is to contract with an individual from the Health Department in another county to help get the new Administrator trained, help put policies and procedures in place, and various other things to get the Health Department on track. There is a not to exceed limit in the contract.

Councilman Bacon asked again about the money being transferred. Ms. Bennett-Stearsman said it is coming from the Local Health Trust. It is already there; it just needs to be transferred.

President Overton asked if the contracted individual would be taking on some of the Administrator duties or if they would just be a consultant. Ms. Lutz said they would just be a consultant. Dr. Heinrich said they would be helping the interim Administrator.

President Overton asked how long the contract was for. She said there was a ‘not to exceed’ but they could renew if they needed too. The individual will be working every day for half a day. President Overton asked if they had someone they were wanting to put in place full time as Administrator or a time frame. Ms. Lutz said that they didn’t have anyone in the position yet. Ms. Bennett-Stearsman said that the Administrator is appointed by Dr. Heinrich and approved by the Commissioners and the Health Board. It has been advertised. The Council was also told if the money runs out, they will have to revisit it. The contracted individual is being paid on an hourly basis. There was a brief discussion on this. Dr. Heinrich’s hope was that the individual comes in and helps the current nurse, Ragina Hudson, to where she can do the job and then hire Ms. Hudson as the Administrator. There was a brief discussion. Ms. Lutz said that the Board feels that this is a very crucial position. Councilman Ron Bacon made the motion to approve the \$48,568.00. Councilman Rob Dimmett seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-2 with Councilwoman Patricia Brooks and Councilman Rick Reid opposing.

Malpractice Insurance

Ms. Bennett-Stearsman said this is providing Malpractice Insurance in the exact amount requested for the quote and was a requirement by their insurance company, EPIC. The Health Board voted to pay for the insurance. This is typical with other Health Departments.

Councilwoman Brooks questioned the County supplying an Independent Contractor with insurance. Ms. Bennett-Stearsman stated that Mr. Heinrich already has malpractice insurance himself, but it can’t cover the Health Department. There was a discussion on adding it to his coverage and the County covering. Ms. Lutz said this is very standard in the healthcare field. Councilwoman Brooks thought that he should reimburse the County if the County has to get the additional insurance.

Councilman Dimmett asked Counsel if any research was done on this. Attorney Gonterman said that he had as it had come to his attention and, in his review, there is no contractual basis that the County would need to pay for this malpractice insurance based on the agreement. The only thing that is required of the County, according to the Independent Contractor Agreement, is the salary component. There was then a lengthy discussion about adding additional insured, current County coverage, who should pay for it, and whether it should be reimbursable.

Commissioner Sarah Seaton got up to speak and said the insurance provider has told them that this is very necessary and it is a standard practice in healthcare. Both she and Ms. Lutz are nurse practitioners and their employer pays for their malpractice insurance.

Councilman Whetstine asked if this is something that had been paid for in the past. Administrator Powless said it hadn’t to her knowledge.

Councilwoman Brooks thought if the County purchased it, they should be reimbursed. Paying for it would set a precedence for other Independent Contractors working for the County.

Councilman Rick Reid made a motion to deny. Councilwoman Brooks said she would like to add on a motion to deny unless Mr. Heinrich reimbursed the County. Councilman Reid rescinded his motion. Councilwoman Patricia Brooks then made the motion for the County to pay for the insurance, but Mr. Heinrich must reimburse the County as an Independent Contractor. Councilman Rick Reid seconded the motion.

It was then asked if that would go against the current contract. Attorney Gonterman said that the contract does not speak to that. Ms. Bennett-Stearsman said if he is paying it back, then there is no need for the appropriation. After another brief discussion, Councilman Bacon asked if this policy required by Epic was to cover Dr. Heinrich or the County. Ms. Bennett-Stearsman said it was both. After a few brief questions asked by Councilman Bacon, he then explained to Council members that it is coverage for the position for the County. It is not for Dr. Heinrich personally, but for the position of Health Officer and Dr. Heinrich as the Health Officer. After this clarification, Councilwoman Brooks then rescinded her motion. Councilman Greg Richmond made a motion to approve the appropriation. Councilman Rob Dimmett seconded the motion. The motion carried 6-1 with Councilman Rick Reid opposing.

**Local Health Maintenance
Legal Services**

Ms. Bennett-Stearsman clarified that there is \$26,909.21, not the \$27,110.00 that was stated. This is out of the Local Health Maintenance. President Overton, after a brief discussion, stressed the need to get the Health Department straightened out. He also feels they need to get someone in who has experience with the Administrator position and hopefully get all this done sooner rather than later. Councilman Ron Bacon made the motion to approve. Councilman Greg Richmond seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-2 with Councilman Patricia Brooks and Councilman Rick Reid opposing.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS
REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT**

Economic Development Director Steve Roelle was present to give the annual report. Indiana code requires that the Redevelopment Commission Annual Report be presented to the Council in a meeting. The Council received a copy of the report to review. Mr. Roelle brief touched on the items in the report. No action was needed. There were no questions.

**COMMISSIONER BUSINESS
ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION
OPIOID FUNDS**

President Overton read the following into the record:

5A. Opioid Restricted Funds 1237.31400.000.0000	Contractual Services	\$401,633.00
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Ms. Bennett-Stearsman was present to discuss this agenda item. The Council received a handout. Ms. Bennett-Stearsman said the County received opioid funding and this is the restricted use. They need to start spending it. She got with Warrick County Cares, which is made up of several different groups, to ask what they thought their needs were. They are all fighting against opioid addiction. She worked with Jo Gilreath and Carla Kidwell to develop an application for these agencies that are in need. This will be similar to the ARPA funding. She would like to put this in Contractual Services. The money is restricted to what it can be used for. The contracts will be capped at \$25,000.00 per applicant and will be approved by and entered into with the Commissioners. President Overton appreciates that there is a Commissioner with a medical background that will be involved with this. Ms. Bennett-Stearsman also said that this money has been sitting for at least four years and more money will be coming in. *Councilman Rob Dimmett* made the motion to approve 5A. *Councilwoman Pat Brooks* seconded the motion. The motion carried 7-0.

ARP FUNDS

President Overton read the following into the record:

5B. ARP Corona Local Recovery 8950.31400.000.0000 Contractual Services \$15,000.00

Ms. Bennett-Stearsman said that the Coroner is requesting a four-person cooler. Commissioner Sarah Seaton spoke to this as a former Coroner. She said she was denied in 2020 when she asked for a cooler. At that time and currently, they are using Vanderburgh storage as they don't have a place in the County for storage. The fee for this storage, up until now, was a flat \$100.00. It will be going up to \$300 each with a fee for daily storage. It will get very expensive very quickly. There was a brief discussion on the portable morgue that was purchased during Covid and how it will not work for continuous use. Commissioner Seaton said it takes three days to cool it down to the correct temperature. There were also other issues with using it. It was always meant to be used in a mass casualties situation and is not practical for everyday use. The one they did have for daily use has not worked for a long time and most likely has no value. President Overton asked about the portable morgue possibly being sold since it isn't used. He was told they would check into it.

Councilman Ron Bacon made a motion to approve the appropriation. *Councilman Greg Richmond* seconded the motion. There was a brief discussion with Councilman Bacon going over some of the history of the Coroner's Office during his time and facing the same issue. Councilman Whetstine asked about how long the cooler would last. Commissioner Seaton feels like it would last as long as any industrial cooler unit. It will run all the time and be housed in a secure location. The motion to approve carried 7-0.

HANDBOOK POLICY, REIMBURSEMENTS, TRANSFERS OR CORRECTIONS

President Overton read the following into the minutes:

Transfer Veteran Services Transfer			
Transfer From:	1000.35000.000.0012	Continuing Education	\$900.00
Transfer To:	1000.44100.000.0012	Furniture	\$900.00
Additional Appropriation/Salary Ordinance Handbook Policy Payout			
Highway Appropriation	1176.11362.000.0531	Sign Tech	\$2,820.00
Highway Salary Ordinance		Sign Tech	\$2,819.40

Councilman Ron Bacon made the motion to approve. Councilman Rob Dimmett seconded the motion. The motion carried 7-0.

(April Appropriations is located on Page 4 of these Official Minutes)

OTHER BUSINESS
SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION

Holly McCutcheon with Soil and Water Conservation came before the Council. She presented a handout and also thanked the Council for the funding for their new employee. She also discussed some of their projects, grants they were working on, and summer plans and workshops they will be hosting. Councilman Bacon said he would like to see a system that will help with sewer systems and education. She also talked briefly about the study on Little Pigeon Watershed. They are also writing a grant for the Cypress Watershed. There were no questions.

OTHER BUSINESS
SENATE BILL 1 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

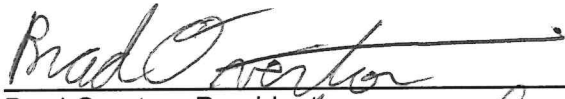
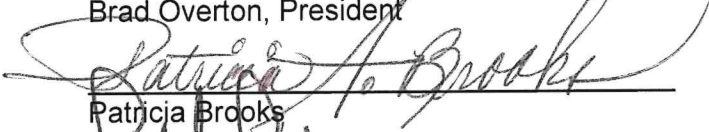
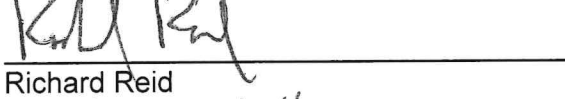

Councilman Bacon updated the Council on Senate Bill 1. He said he spoke with the State Treasurer, which was encouraging, as they talked about some of the ways that money could be made up, however, Senate Bill 1 is still currently in limbo. There are still two more months before the end of the regular session. There was a brief discussion on whether this will happen or if the legislators will override a governor veto. Council members also discussed time frames and what stipulations may need to be added for the County budget if it is passed. It will continue to be watched closely.




ADJOURNMENT

The next Warrick County Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 6, 2025 at 6:00 PM in the Commissioners' meeting room. Councilman Rob Dimmett made the motion to adjourn. Councilman Rick Reid seconded the motion. The motion carried 7-0.

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 PM.

WARRICK COUNTY COUNCIL


Brad Overton, President

Patricia Brooks

Richard Reid

Chris Whetstine


Ron Bacon, Vice President

Robert Dimmett

Greg Richmond

ATTEST:


Michael J. Dietsch, Auditor
Warrick County, IN

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Kristine Georges, Official Recording Secretary

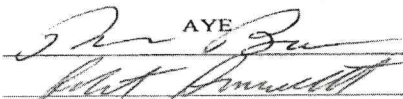
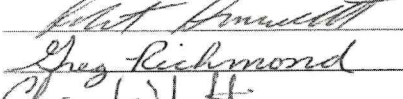
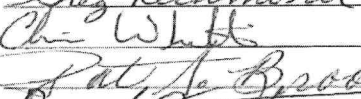
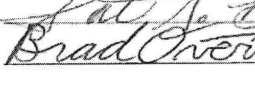
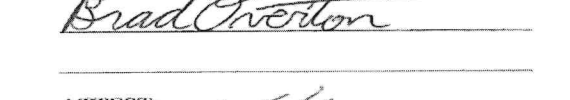
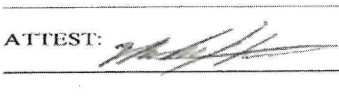
ORIGINAL

Sec. 1 Be it ordained (resolved) by the Warrick County Council, Warrick County, Indiana, that for the expenses of the taxing unit the following additional sums of money are hereby appropriated out of the funds named and for the proposed specified, subject to the laws governing the same:

FUND	APPROPRIATION NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT REQUESTED	AMOUNT APPROVED
Highway	1176.11362.000.0531	Sign Tech	\$2,820.00	2820
Local Health Trust	1206.31400.000.0000	Contractual Services	\$48,568.00	48,568
	1206.34210.000.0000	Malpractice Insurance	\$4,254.00	4,254.00
Local Health Maint.	1168.34210.000.0000	Legal Services	\$27,110.00	26,909.21
Opioid Restricted Funds	1237.31400.000.0000	Contractual Services	\$401,633.00	401,633
Public Health Services	1161.31400.000.0000	Contractual Services	\$449,238.64	Table
ARP Corona Local Rec.	8950.31400.000.0000	Contractual Services	\$15,000.00	15,000

Taxpayers appearing in the meeting shall have a right to be heard. The additional appropriations as finally made will be referred to the State Board of Tax Commissioners. The Board will make a written determination as to the sufficiency of funds to support the appropriations made within fifteen (15) days of receipt of a Certified Copy of the action.

Adopted this 1 day of April, 2025.

ATTEST:  Mike Dietsch - Auditor Warrick County