

# TIPPECANOE COUNTY COUNCIL

## MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, December 10, 2019

8:30 a.m.

Tippecanoe Room, Tippecanoe County Office Building  
20 N 3rd Street, Lafayette, Indiana

**Councilmembers present:** President Bryan Metzger, Vice President Kevin Underwood, John Basham, Kathy Vernon, Ilana Stonebraker, Lisa Dullum and Roland Winger.

**Others present:** Attorney Doug Masson, Auditor Robert A. Plantenga, and Recording Secretary John Thomas.

### I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Metzger called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### II. AUDITOR'S FINANCIAL REPORT – Auditor Plantenga

The 2019 financial statement shows a General Fund beginning cash balance of \$10,224,887.37. The projected miscellaneous revenue, property taxes and deductions for circuit breakers leaves the total funds available of \$58,639,082.37. When deducting encumbrances, the 2019 Budget and minimum balances established by Council the beginning net balance is \$1,876,533.37. So far this year there have been additional appropriations of \$399,452 with \$8,457 in reductions leaving a balance available for appropriations at \$1,485,264.69. There are no additional appropriations today.

The Revenue Report will change this month and bring the Property Tax, the Financial Institutions Tax (fund 0124) and the Excise Tax (0131) up to the 100% level. November is typically a pretty quiet month with disbursement about to be made, thus the 76% of revenues is typical for this time of the year.

The fund balances show: 1) the General Fund (1000) is under the minimum balance but will not be when it is replenished with property taxes shortly. In the Cum Cap (fund 1138) we appropriated more than the Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF) approved so that needs to be reduced and will be discussed later in the meeting. The County was just ordered to add funds to the Levy Excess (fund 1167) for 2019 because the heavy equipment rental was moved from Property Tax to Excise tax, we were now told to put that in the Levy Excess fund for 2019 only. The Auditor anticipates there will be an adjustment when the 2020 budget are approved. The County Self Insurance (fund 4710) balance was up now to almost \$8.8 million. The TCSWMD Levy Excess (fund 4931) will be adjusted because of the heavy equipment rental. The LIT Property Tax Relief (fund 6203) is money received every month from income taxes and will shortly be distributed to the taxing jurisdictions.

### III. TREASURER'S REPORT – Jennifer Weston

Property taxes have been received and turned over to the Auditor for settlement to the taxing jurisdictions. The Account Balances and Interest Rates report was distributed and shows an account balance of \$189,637,461.26 with total interest of \$268,247.19 to date with the County at 98.8% of budget. Interest rates have been cut three time this year and this month's average was down to 1.8%. The Treasurer distributed a year end update summarizing collection rates, tax collections at Staley Credit Union, tax online payments, interest earnings and P-card use; all of which have increased.

### IV. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS – None

### V. CONSENT AGENDA

- Councilmember Basham moved to approve the consent agenda as distributed, second by Councilmember Winger. Motion carried.

**A. Approval of Meeting Minutes** from November 12, 2019.**B. Treasurer** –General Fund 1000

Transfer	From	\$	350	Part Time
		\$	27	Social Security
		\$	100	Travel and Training
	To			Office Supplies

**C. DOIT** – General Fund 1000

Transfer	From	\$	900	Dues and Subscriptions
	To			Part Time

**D. Parks Department** – General Fund 1000

Transfer	From	\$	6,500	Building Materials
	To			Other Machinery and Equipment
	From	\$	7,500	Building Materials
	To			Repairs, Maintenance/Buildings & Property

**E. Public Defender** – General Fund 1000

Transfer	From	\$	5,000	Part Time
		\$	6,000	Part Time / Benefit Eligible
		\$	1,500	PERF Retirement
	To			Other Professional Services

**F. Superior Court 3** – General Fund 1000

Transfer	From	\$	3,000	Lease Minor Equipment
	To			Institutional or Medical

**G. Health** – General Fund 1000

Transfer	From	\$	4,000	Travel & Training
	To			Institutional or Medical

**H. Assessor** – Reassessment Fund 1188

Transfer	From	\$	5,572	Part Time
		\$	428	Social Security
	To			Repair Vehicle & Equipment

**I. Cary Home** – General Fund

Transfer	From	\$	13,462	Full Time
		\$	1,030	Social Security
		\$	1,508	PERF Retirement
	To			General / Machinery & Equipment

**J. Cary Home** – General Fund

Transfer	From	\$	5,848	Part Time / Benefit Eligible
		\$	15,000	Part Time
		\$	1,595	Social Security
	To			Repairs, Maintenance/Buildings & Property

**K. TEMA** – Wm. "Smokey" Anderson

LEPC HMEP Fund 8431 FF20

Grant Appropriation	\$	15,000	Travel & Training
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**L. Community Corrections** – Jason Huber

Justice Partner Addiction Response Fund 8653 FY20

Grant Appropriation	\$	40,000	Counseling Consultants
	\$	2,500	Other Professional Services
	\$	2,500	Travel & Training
	\$	15,000	Other Supplies
	\$	60,000	Total Requested

Councilmember Stonebraker asked for additional information from Mr. Huber and he stated that the grant is from the State Department of Health for the pretrial program and provides counseling for those who cannot afford it.

**ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS:****A. Superior Court 2**

Jury Pay Fund 2584

Appropriation	\$ 5,000	Jury Expense
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- Councilmember Winger moved to approve the appropriation as distributed, second by Councilmember Dullum.

Councilmember Winger stated that they anticipated increased jury expenses in several courts and this will cover three trials before the end of the year.

President Metzger asked if there were any additional questions or comments. Hearing none he called for the vote. Motion carried.

**B. Tippecanoe Co. Solid Waste Management District – Commissioner Murtaugh**

TCSWMD Operation Fund 4930

Appropriation	\$ 80,000	Professional Services / Other
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- Councilmember Stonebraker moved to approve the appropriation as distributed, second by Councilmember Underwood.

Commissioner Murtaugh stated that the increase in recycling costs are due to 1) the closing of the West Lafayette drop off site, 2) depressed prices for recyclables thus lower revenues, 3) establishing the remote drop off locations and 4) the facilities at the Trash Transfer center. The District has adequate cash reserves for the appropriation and the 2020 budget has been increased by the same amount.

President Metzger asked if there were any additional questions or comments. Hearing none he called for the vote. Motion carried.

**C. Commissioner – Commissioner Byers**

Fair Grounds Construction Bond Fund 4818

Appropriation	\$ 108,000	Engineer & Architect
	\$ 183,000	Other Professional Services
	\$ 4,309,000	<u>Buildings Municipal</u>
	\$ 4,600,000	Total Requested

- Councilmember Stonebraker moved to approve the appropriation as distributed, second by Councilmember Underwood.

Commissioner Byers stated that they met with Tecton and refined next year's spending with the amount requested covering expenses for six months.

President Metzger asked if there were any additional questions or comments. Hearing none he called for the vote. Motion carried.

**VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

-The Romney Sewer project has been going for 5 years and is changing legal council to the Withered and Burns firm. Of the 5 condemnations filed, four have settled and one owner is still not cooperating.

**VII. UNFINISHED/NEW BUSINESS – None****A. 2020 Council Assignments/ Appointments/Meetings**

The list of Councilmember 2019 departmental assignments, the Councils' appointments to local boards and commissions and the 2020 meeting dates are in councilmembers' packets. No Councilmember has asked for a change in their assignments, so those will not change, however, there are five appointments that expire, and their respective organizations have recommended changes. Councilmember Winger reminded the Council that if they new of anyone that would be a good appointment it is their responsibility submit a candidate. Both lists will be voted on in January.

## B. Otterbein Library Board Appointment

- Councilmember Stonebraker moved to approve Michael Humphrey to the Board as proposed, second by Councilmember Vernon.

President Metzger stated that this is a co-appointment with the Benton County Council and they have already signed the form.

President Metzger asked if there were any additional questions or comments. Hearing none he called for the vote. Motion carried.

## C. 2020 Budget Approval – Auditor Plantenga

All funds requiring approval by the Department of Local Government Finance have been submitted, thus there are no requested appropriations for those funds today. Next year all funds will be required to be submitted to DLGF, so he proposed there be no appropriations on the agenda next December. In 2019 the Council approved a Cumulative Capital Fund budget larger than expected revenues because we know that not all the projects will progress. The DLGF reduced the budgeted amount to be consistent with revenues. Commissioner Byers briefed the Council on what adjustments will be made to the 2019 Budget to meet DLGFs' requirements.

## D. Voting Equipment – Julie Roush & Randy Vonderheide

Randy Vonderheide sent an email (attached) to Council members and Ms. Roush stated that the voting equipment is functioning well, and no votes have been lost. While there have been some touch screens that have not worked correctly during the last elections, those were immediately taken out of service and the Board of Elections and Registration (BER) has acquired 40 used machines with less use than ours as replacements. The existing voting system does have a paper trail but is not voter verifiable. The BER have been looking at some of the new machines, (only 4 vendors are currently state certified) but the only Indiana approved machines are old technology with just a printer attached. Because of that, the existing machines will be used in the 2020 elections.

There was concern among councilmembers that voting machines be auditable and voter verifiable and about the schedule for machine replacement. Ms. Roush and Mr. Vonderheide stated that most of the issues have been with the E-Pole Books and new books have been purchased that perform much better. New equipment will be purchased in the future and the County has established a fund to start saving for new machines that may cost in the range of \$1.75 million. In 2021 the BER will begin seriously evaluating replacing the existing machines with ones that have a voter verifiable paper trail.

## VIII. COMMISSIONER FYI – Commissioner Byers

- The Department Heads Luncheon is December 17<sup>th</sup>.
- Ornaments for the Villa are available in the Commissioner office.
- Council President Metzger recognized Ilana Stonebraker for her service on the Council.

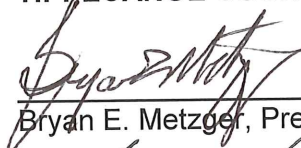
## IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

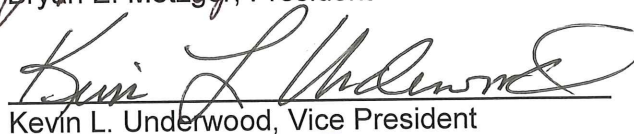
- County Extension Director Amber Noll stated that: 30 new Master Gardners have completed the classes, the 4H enrollment deadline is January 15, the Community Development position is still open, and February 20<sup>th</sup> is the Extension Board dinner and Councilmembers will receive an invitation.
- Patti O'Callaghan stated that she supports acquiring the best voting system possible and encourages early voting.
- Heather Maddox stated that she is concerned how hard it is to gauge the public's trust in the voting machines and the process. Our voting machines are almost 20 years old and while they do not count votes wrong and there is a virtual paper trail, they need to be replaced. She also stated that the 2020 Census is coming April 1 and it is important for everyone to complete their information. A post card reminder will be sent to every address and filling out the Census will be done on line. The Census is hiring part time employees (at \$18/ hour) that will follow up nonresponses so that there are neighbors counting neighbors.

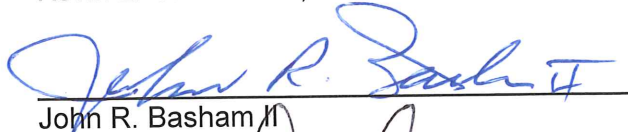
**X. ADJOURNMENT**

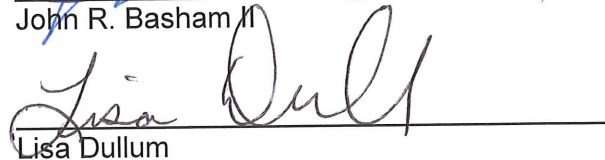
- Councilmember Winger moved to adjourn, and the President adjourned the meeting.

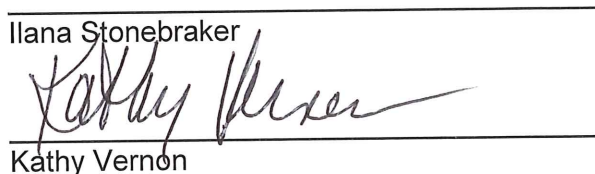
**TIPPECANOE COUNTY COUNCIL**

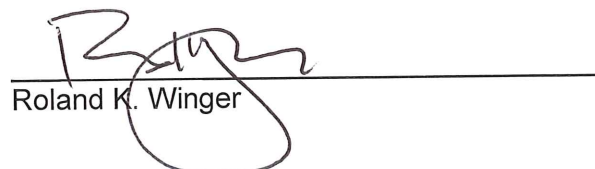
  
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Bryan E. Metzger, President

  
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Kevin L. Underwood, Vice President

  
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John R. Basham II

  
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Lisa Dullum

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Ilana Stonebraker  
  
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Kathy Vernon

  
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Roland K. Winger

ATTEST:

  
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Robert A. Plantenga, Auditor 1/14/2020

Minutes prepared by John Thomas, Recording Secretary

## Julie Roush

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**Subject:** FW: Board Of Elections and Registration (BER) --voting machines

**From:** Randy Vonderheide <rvonde@vonderheideknecht.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 4, 2019 3:50 PM  
**Subject:** Board Of Elections and Registration (BER) --voting machines

Hello Roland/Lisa, wanted to give you a "head's up" that I've talked to Julie Roush and understand that the county council may be interested in the election board's thoughts about replacing county voting machines. I expect to attend or be available to address the council on December 10. I also expect Kent Moore and Julie Roush will be available. You could even use this email as a "report" to the council if considered more appropriate.

I believe that I'm speaking for the consensus of the election board that:

1. We don't expect any further consideration of replacing existing equipment for the 2020 election year. Existing equipment (including the approx. 40 machines Julie was able to obtain at no charge from White County) will be adequate for the 2020 election. Further, it wouldn't seem prudent to run what might be the biggest election we've had in years with new equipment, even if money and installation of new equipment was available.
2. The county will eventually be obliged to replace voting machines with equipment that provides a voter verifiable paper trail. The BER is in no rush to replace existing equipment for reasons including new voting equipment is perceived as transitional/changing and it would be hoped we obtain the latest version of equipment certified by the state. There's also the outside chance that such equipment could be funded, at least in some part, through state or federal grants. The cost of new equipment is estimated to be in the \$1.75 mil range (comparison is Elkhart County).
3. Existing equipment is accurate and functional. Some people have problems with the touchscreens but such problems as slow or temperamental touchscreens occur in a very small minority of cases. No one has accused the existing equipment of losing their vote, no voter has been disenfranchised. A very small but vocal minority of people are clamoring for new equipment now. It is expected that the election board will make it known that if a voter truly objects to using existing equipment that they could vote "on paper" using a traditional absentee ballot. That availability will involve some forethought on the voter's part (they have to request an absentee ballot) and management issues with staffing but the process already exists.
4. I invite council members and other public servants to be on the alert for voter complaints. The BER perceives that the vast majority of Tippecanoe County voters are satisfied with the overall voting process, particularly adoption of vote centers and the availability of early voting. Next year, early voting is expected to be more important to avoid lines and the wait frequently encountered in presidential election years.

Naturally, it is recognized that there will be a process associated with further looking at alternatives to the county's existing equipment. I ask you to reply or call or set a time to meet or ? if you have questions or other concerns about the voting process in Tippecanoe County.

Randy Vonderheide  
Vonderheide & Knecht, P.C.  
tel. 765-423-2557

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