

MEETING MINUTES
Monroe County Income Tax Council
Public Safety Local Income Tax Committee

City Council Chambers
Bloomington City Hall, 401 N. Morton Street, Bloomington, Indiana
August 7, 2018

Scott Oldham called the meeting to order at 12:07 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL

Committee members present: Susan Sandberg (Bloomington Common Council), Isabel Piedmont-Smith (Bloomington Common Council), Dorothy Granger (Bloomington Common Council), Shelli Yoder (Monroe County Council), Cheryl Munson (Monroe County Council), Scott Oldham (Ellettsville Town Council), Lois Purcell (Stinesville Town Council), Jim Sims (Bloomington Common Council)

Committee members absent: None

Staff present: Dan Sherman (Council Attorney/Administrator, City of Bloomington), Jeff Schemmer (Communications Manager, Monroe County Central Emergency Dispatch), Jeffrey Underwood (Controller, City of Bloomington), Michael Rouker (City Attorney, City of Bloomington), Jason Moore (Fire Chief, City of Bloomington), Michael Diekhoff (Police Chief, City of Bloomington)

2. AGENDA SUMMATION

Oldham gave a summary of the agenda.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE MONROE COUNTY LOCAL INCOME TAX COUNCIL

A. Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) Tax Revenues and Associated Tax Rate Percentage for 2019

Piedmont-Smith asked if there were updated revenue figures from the state. Sherman said the estimate had not changed since the previous committee meeting. He displayed the percentages of revenue that would go to the four units of government within Monroe County (Monroe County, City of Bloomington, Town of Ellettsville, and Town of Stinesville) after allocations had been made to the public safety answering point (PSAP) and qualified providers.

Oldham said that the committee needed to first decide on an amount it would recommend allocating to PSAP. He said there was a new budget recommendation for PSAP that had come out of a recent meeting of the dispatch policy board. Underwood confirmed that the policy board had met and had reduced the recommended PSAP budget by \$250,000. He said the revised request was \$2,689,041 and that the reduction had come out of the capital line.

Munson said she had hoped to agree upon an amount that would provide some funding to the township fire departments while also increasing the amount left for the four units of government. She said she was happy to hear dispatch had reduced its budget by \$250,000 but was disappointed that mobile repeaters had been cut from the budget to accomplish that.

Granger moved and it was seconded to recommend allocating \$2,689,041 to PSAP.

Piedmont-Smith said she understood Munson's concerns about cutting funding for the mobile repeaters. She asked if someone could comment on the policy board's deliberations. Rouker explained that the policy board simply removed \$250,000 from its capital line in the budget. He said the board thought it was wisest to remove funding from that line, which most likely meant that the mobile repeaters would be cut. He said some of the cuts also came from savings that would be realized from the mobile data terminal communications project.

Munson reminded the committee that the policy board simply made a recommendation to the County and City governments about PSAP's budget. She suggested that there might be items in the dispatch budget that could be paid for in 2018, such as the training room, a consultant, and IUPD recording system. She thought if those projects were paid for out of the 2018 budget then funds would be freed up in the 2019 budget in the amount of \$342,000.

Sandberg said she appreciated that the dispatch budget had been reexamined and reduced to make it possible to fund other needs in the county. She was reluctant to reduce the dispatch budget any further.

Piedmont-Smith said she did not feel comfortable second-guessing the dispatch policy board's priorities and would prefer to accept its recommendation.

Yoder expressed her hope that the mobile repeaters would not be cut in order to pay for the self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBAs). She asked what other projects were in the capital category of the budget that might be cut. Rouker explained that the mobile repeaters were still a priority for the policy board, and said that the repeaters would likely be purchased in 2020 if it was not possible in 2019. He reminded the committee that there would be a \$369,000 payment due in 2019 on the radio project that had been started the previous year. He listed other capital projects that were anticipated for 2019.

Munson suggested reducing the amount budgeted for overtime for dispatch. Oldham said he would not support such a reduction. Sims said he would also not support a reduction to the overtime budget. He acknowledged that there would soon be additional dispatchers hired, but he pointed out that the training for new dispatchers would take months.

Oldham asked if all of the fire departments had already converted to 800 MHz radios. Cornman said no, but said that should happen in the fall. Oldham said there was a redundant radio system already in place. He said the mobile repeaters were important, but not as urgent as the SCBAs.

Yoder said she did not consider the committee's deliberations as second-guessing anyone but rather as an effort to do the greatest good with limited resources.

The motion to recommend allocating \$2,689,041 to PSAP received a roll call vote of Ayes: 6, Nays: 1 (Munson), Abstain: 0.

B. Specific Amounts That May Be Distributed to Qualified Providers Under I.C. 6-3.6-6-8(c) for 2019

Oldham suggested that the committee discuss how to distribute funds available due to the reduction in the PSAP budget. Underwood explained that, thanks to the PSAP budget that was just adopted, the committee had approximately \$360,000 in funds available to award to township departments without impacting the original estimated amounts that would go to the four units of government.

Piedmont-Smith proposed to fund a portion of the amount needed to purchase needed SCBAs for each requesting department. She said she had prepared the funding amounts based on the number of SCBAs each department said it needed and the assumption that there would be a total of \$250,000 available. She explained that her proposal meant that the committee would spend about \$2,049.18 per SCBA. She thought the committee could decide whether to spend the additional \$110,000 that Underwood said was available on SCBAs or let that money pass to the four units of government.

Granger said she appreciated Piedmont-Smith's proposal and thought it made sense.

Sandberg wondered what the amount would be per SCBA assuming the committee allocated \$360,000 instead of \$250,000.

Oldham said that a funding proposal put forth by Munson and Yoder would total approximately \$360,000 if the committee funded only the extrication equipment for the Perry-Clear Creek Fire Protection District. He suggested the committee could follow that proposal without affecting the amounts that would then go to the four units of government. Piedmont-Smith asked how Munson and Yoder had arrived at the amounts suggested for SCBAs. Munson said that they had attempted to estimate how much each department would need for SCBAs, even if SCBAs had not been listed in a department's request. She explained how they had estimated the amounts for each department.

Piedmont-Smith said she was not necessarily opposed to Munson's proposal but noted that the requests from the four units of government were greater than the original estimated amounts.

Oldham said he did not agree with providing funding to Perry-Clear Creek for other needs when that department already had funding for SCBAs. He said he would support funding extrication equipment for that department.

Yoder suggested the following funding amounts for the various requesting departments: \$73,353 for Bean Blossom, \$50,000 for Benton, \$80,000 for Richland/Ellettsville, \$76,647 for Perry-Clear Creek, and \$80,000 for Van Buren.

Mike Cornman, Ellettsville Fire Chief, asked why the committee was proposing to fund a much lower percentage of Ellettsville Fire Department's request compared to other, smaller departments. Granger said the committee was trying to focus on funding for SCBAs. Oldham said he took Cornman's point about the relative size or call volumes of the departments and the proposed funding amounts. Piedmont-Smith said call volumes should not be part of the consideration but that every fire fighter, regardless of the department, should be equipped with a SCBA.

Granger moved that the committee recommend funding in the following amounts: \$73,353 for Bean Blossom, \$50,000 for Benton, \$80,000 for Richland/Ellettsville, \$76,647 for Perry-Clear Creek, and \$80,000 for Van Buren.

Sherman asked if the committee had established a purpose for the proposed funding. He reminded the committee that one of its criteria for applicants was whether the applicant had used past funding for the purposes it said it would.

Sandberg said she liked that the funding was flexible and thought the departments could use the funding as they saw fit.

Munson suggested that the committee could specify the purpose of the allocations for each department. Piedmont-Smith agreed that it would be helpful to specify how funding for each applicant should be used. She said that funding for Bean Blossom, Richland, and Van Buren should be used for SCBAs. She said that funding for Benton was for a water tanker truck. She said funding for Perry-Clear Creek was to be used for extrication equipment. She noted that the remaining \$16,647 for Perry-Clear Creek did not have an agreed-upon purpose yet. Munson noted that Perry-Clear Creek had requested funding for personnel. Oldham said he preferred not to provide funding for personnel expenses. Sandberg wondered if that money should instead be given to either another applicant or passed along to the four units of government. Yoder pointed out that the request for personnel by Perry-Clear Creek was a one-year request to help in a transitional period. Oldham asked why the department had taken on more coverage area when it was already short on personnel.

Granger moved and it was seconded that the committee recommend funding in the following amounts and for the following purposes: \$73,353 to Bean Blossom for SCBAs, \$50,000 to Benton for a water tanker truck, \$80,000 to Richland/Ellettsville for SCBAs, \$60,000 to Perry-Clear Creek for extrication equipment, and \$80,000 to Van Buren for SCBAs.

Munson thought that all applying departments would have focused on SCBAs had they known that the committee would be focusing on SCBAs during its deliberations. She thought it was unfair to reduce the amount going to Perry-Clear Creek simply because it had requested funding for personnel.

Sandberg said that the process could be improved to help encourage the different departments to cooperate better. Piedmont-Smith thought there had been cooperation. She said that the committee had previously expressed its reluctance to fund personnel and therefore she did not oppose the proposal on the table.

Yoder moved and it was seconded to amend Granger's motion so that \$16,647 would be added to the recommended funding amount for Richland Township, for a total \$96,647.

Oldham called for public comment.

Rita Borrow, Van Buren Township Trustee, clarified how the funding amounts had been generated. She thanked the committee for its consideration of the requests.

Yoder's motion to amend Granger's motion received a roll call vote of Ayes: 7, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0.

Granger's motion as amended was to recommend funding in the following amounts and for the following purposes: \$73,353 to Bean Blossom for SCBAs, \$50,000 to Benton for a water tanker truck, \$96,647 to Richland/Ellettsville for SCBAs, \$60,000 to Perry-Clear Creek for extrication equipment, and \$80,000 to Van Buren for SCBAs. The motion received a roll call vote of Ayes: 7, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0.

C. Remaining Revenues to Be Distributed Via Public Safety Local Income Tax Certified Shares in 2019 to the Four Member-Jurisdictions Comprising the Monroe County Local Income Tax Council

Oldham noted that the amounts going to the four units of government would be generated automatically by the state based on the other funding amounts.

D. Motion to Adopt the Table of Recommendations Which Shall Be Forwarded by Staff to Committee Members to Share With Their Respective Fiscal Bodies

Sims moved and it was seconded to adopt the table of recommendations. The motion received a roll call vote of Ayes: 7, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0.

4. OTHER BUSINESS AND FINAL COMMENTS

Granger encouraged the townships to cooperate with each other and to develop more concrete long-range plans. She also encouraged them to prioritize rainy day funds. She thanked her colleagues for the thought and work they had devoted to the process.

Sandberg echoed Granger's comments and thanked those who had spent time and effort on the process.

Munson pointed out that the committee did not have but could use information about the dispatch center's long-range capital replacement plan. She also said that in the future she hoped to hear from fire departments before applications for funding were distributed.

Yoder thanked the township leaders for their presentations and for the work they did. She thought they were working together more than ever. She suggested that the committee could do a better job of making it clear to applicants that personnel funding requests would be disfavored.

Oldham noted that the local income tax did much more than provide funding for fire services. He said the primary purpose of the public safety local income tax was to provide funding to the dispatch center.

5. MINUTES

Munson moved and it was seconded to authorize the committee chair to correct and approve the minutes of committee meetings after being circulated to other committee members and staff. The motion was approved by voice vote.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:36 p.m.