

**HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING JUNE 23, 2020**

The Howard County Council met in Regular Session on Tuesday, June 23, 2020, at 4:00 p.m. in Hearing Room 338 of the Howard County Administration Center. Those in attendance included Council President James Papacek; Council Vice-President Jamie L. Bolser; Members Stanley E. Ortman, John J. Roberts and Thomas N. Trine. Also, in attendance was County Attorney Alan Wilson and County Auditor Martha Lake. Councilman Alexander and Councilwoman Fatum were not in attendance. The meeting was called to order by Sheriff Jerry Asher and conducted by President James Papacek.

Council President James Papacek led in the Pledge of Allegiance and gave a word of prayer.

**IN THE MATTER OF APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

The minutes of the March 24 and May 26, 2020, meeting, having been previously submitted and reviewed, were approved on a motion made by Councilman Ortman. Councilwoman Bolser seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

**IN THE MATTER OF ORDINANCE NO. 2020-HCCO-25 - ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR 2020:**

Auditor Martha Lake read Ordinance No. 2020-HCCO-25 – Additional Appropriations one time, and the ordinance was acted upon as follows:

	<b>Additional Appropriations</b>	<b>Requested</b>	<b>Approved</b>
<b><u>8151</u></b>	<b><u>HOWARD COUNTY CORONER’S SUID/SDY DHHS GRANT</u></b>		
	<b><u>FUND:</u></b>		
47210	Equipment (Autopsy Tables, etc.)	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00
	<b><u>Total Coroner’s DHHS Office Grant Fund:</u></b>	<b><u>\$7,500.00</u></b>	<b><u>\$7,500.00</u></b>
<b><u>8901</u></b>	<b><u>HOWARD COUNTY COVID-SAFE RECOVERY SITE GRANT</u></b>		
	<b><u>FUND:</u></b>		
23640	Supplies (Hygiene Supplies, Office Supplies, Towels, Totes, Cleaning, First Aid, OTC Meds, PPE, Snacks, Clothing, Misc.)	\$26,815.00	\$26,815.00
23401	Food	\$46,637.00	\$46,637.00
31200	Contract Services (HMIS System Set-up)	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
31200	Contract Services (Staff Costs)	\$240,448.00	240,448.00
32160	Marketing/Communication	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
35640	Rental/Lease Fees (Shelter Facility)	\$40,000.00	\$40,000.00
30000	Other Services & Charges (Transportation / Moving Support)	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
47210	Equipment (Heat Treatment, Laptops, Office Copier / Fax, Security Cameras, Cell Phones, Supply Cabinet)	\$19,100.00	\$19,100.00
	<b><u>Total COVID-Safe Recovery Site Grant Fund:</u></b>	<b><u>\$380,000.00</u></b>	<b><u>\$380,000.00</u></b>
<b><u>9525</u></b>	<b><u>HOWARD COUNTY VETERAN’S PROBLEM SOLVING COURT – SUPERIOR COURT II GRANT FUND:</u></b>		
12012	Case Manager	\$47,700.00	\$47,700.00
11700	P/T Case Manager	\$25,000.0	\$25,000.00
15210	FICA	\$3,649.00	\$3,649.00
15220	PERF	\$7,012.00	\$7,012.00
23745	Incentives	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
23710	Other Supplies (Participant Services)	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00
23710	Other Supplies (Printing / Supplies)	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
23710	Other Supplies (Graduation / Ceremonies)	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
31200	Contract Services	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00
32640	Drug Testing	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
32130	Travel / Training	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
	<b><u>Total Veteran’s Problem Solving Court – Sup. Court II Grant Fund:</u></b>	<b><u>\$119,861.00</u></b>	<b><u>\$119,861.00</u></b>

**TOTAL ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS ALL FUNDS:**

**\$507,361.00**

**\$507,361.00**

**8151 – Howard County Coroner’s SUID/SDY DHHS Grant Fund – Dr. Steven Seele:**

Dr. Steven Seele addressed the Council regarding SUID, sudden infant death syndrome. He stated that at the end of last year, he began communicating with the Indiana State Department of Health concerning the child fatality rate and sudden infant death. Howard County has higher numbers than some counties; however, Indiana as a whole has a high infant mortality rate. Therefore, the Indiana State Department applied for a Federal Grant to do a study to try and reduce these numbers in Indiana. Howard County was awarded \$7,500.00 to be applied towards the purchase of a new autopsy table for the morgue; which will cover the majority of this expense. The Grant is effective May of 2020 and ends in September of 2022. This grant is a reimbursement grant which we are required to pay forward. Dr. Seele stated that he also applied for a grant which was awarded for supplies used in the field such as body pouches, masks, etc. This grant has covered some of the smaller expenses; however, is not a money-based grant; it only allows specific purchases from a provided catalog.

John Roberts asked Dr. Seele to expand on why he believed Howard County has a high infant death rate. Dr. Seele stated that he is not able to answer this question as this is the reason for the study. The study will address SUID in situations of co-sleeping and sudden death in youths from overdose and accident related injuries. Dr. Seele stated that he did not have the Howard County numbers with him, but would email the numbers to Councilman Roberts after the meeting.

Dr. Seele stated that he will come before the council again next month requesting an additional appropriation due to the fact that his budget was established at \$175,000 for autopsies and toxicology and due to the increase in caseload, he currently has between \$42,000 and \$45,000 remaining. He stated that the department has 42 more investigative cases than this time last year. 2020 shows an increase in overdoses and violent deaths. Dr. Seele said he is seeing the highest numbers since he has been in office; however, the numbers are higher in other counties across the nation as well.

**8901 – Howard County COVID-Safe Recovery Site Grant Fund – Commissioner Paul Wyman:**

Commissioner Wyman addressed the Council regarding the COVID-Safe Recovery Site Grant provided by the Federal Government through the State of Indiana in in the amount of \$380,000.00. The grant budget needs to be appropriated by the council. Mr. Wyman stated that the fund to date has expended \$29,000.00. The funds spent to date are for the startup of the site which includes the 6-month lease and the cost of C.A.M. (Coordinated Assistance Ministry) to maintain the services to the site. The cost of this program is covered entirely by the State Grant. To date, only one individual has utilized the site which is a good sign for our community.

Mr. Roberts asked Mr. Wyman to expand on the Grant and the status of the program. Mr. Wyman stated that the COVID-Safe Recovery Site Grant was awarded for Region 5, which also includes Cass County. The Grant addresses the most vulnerable population such as those living in homeless shelters and those living in close scenarios and what could happen if there is an outbreak of the COVID virus. Because the homeless shelters were required to close immediately, the proposal included the provisions of the safe site which would provide for the ill homeless allowing homeless shelters to reopen. It would also accommodate the Work Release Program to utilize the safe site for an individual who tests positive for the virus.

**9525 – Howard County Veteran’s Problem Solving Court – Superior Court II Grant Fund – Judge Parry:**

Judge Brant Parry addressed the council with the State Grant proceeds for the Veterans Treatment Court. The Veterans Court began in April of 2018. The courts utilized the funds to begin a program service dog for PTSD and anxiety. The canine “Kadence” will be going to her training and finish sometime in November or December of this year. She will be working with Veterans in the courts, in probation, and may also be utilized in the Juvenile courts as needed. The program currently has fourteen participants which will include one female. The Veterans Court currently covers Howard, Miami, Cass and Fulton county residents. Judge Parry presented information to the Council regarding how the program works: information booklets, t-shirts, fundraisers, the tradition of the military, and utilizing dog tags to indicate the accomplishments of the individual. Other counties have contacted Howard County Sup. Court II, asking to utilize Howard County’s ideas in their county. Judge Parry has partnered with Kokomo Veterinary Hospital for care for Kadence.

All additional appropriations having been presented, Councilwoman Bolser made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2020-HCCO-25, Additional Appropriations, as read. Councilman Roberts seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

**IN THE MATTER OR ORDINANCE NO. 2020-HCCR-5 – TRANSFERS:**

Auditor Martha Lake read Ordinance No. 2020-HCCR-5-Transfers one time, and the ordinance was acted upon as follows:

	<b>Transfer From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Allowed</b>
<b>1000</b>	<b><u>HOWARD COUNTY GENERAL FUND:</u></b>			
<b>0062</b>	<b><u>Howard County Clerk’s Election – General Fund:</u></b>			
31210	Maintenance & Service Contracts	23710 Other Supplies	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
33130	Meal Reimbursement	23600 Office Supplies	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
<b>0235</b>	<b><u>Howard County Community Supervision Probation – General Fund:</u></b>			
11345	Asst. Chief Prob. Officer	12012 Case Manager	\$4,514.00	\$4,514.00

**1000.0062 – Howard County Clerk’s Election General Fund – Debbie Stewart:**

Clerk Debbie Stewart addressed the council with the request for transfer due to the COVID-19 requirements which required additional supplies for the election voting centers.

**1000.0235 – Howard County Community Supervision Probation General Fund – Dustin DeLong:**

Howard County Community Supervisor Dustin DeLong addressed his request for transfer. He stated that due to a retirement in his department, he would like to move funds to the Coordinator in the Veterans Court to make provisions for the 3% increase in pay which was not accounted for prior. This line item now shows account line 1000.12012.000.0235.

Councilman Ortman made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2020-HCCR-5, Transfers, as read. Councilwoman Bolser seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

**IN THE MATTER OF ORDINANCE NO. 2020-HCCO-26- AMENDING SALARY ORD. FOR 2020:**

Auditor Martha Lake read Ordinance No. 2020-HCCO-26- Amending Salary Ordinance one time, and the ordinance was acted upon as follows:

	<b>Salary Amendments</b>	<b>Requested</b>	<b>Approved</b>
<b>1000</b>	<b><u>HOWARD COUNTY GENERAL FUND:</u></b>		
<b>0235</b>	<b><u>Howard County Community Supervision Probation – General Fund:</u></b>		
11345	Asst. Chief Probation Officer	\$(4,514.00)	\$(4,514.00)
12012	Case Manager	\$4,514.00	\$4,514.00
<b>9525</b>	<b><u>HOWARD COUNTY PROBLEM SOLVING COURT – SUPERIOR COURT II GRANT FUND:</u></b>		
12012	Case Manager	\$47,700.00	\$47,700.00
11700	P/T Case Manager	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00
15210	FICA	\$3,649.00	\$3,649.00
15220	PERF	\$7,012.00	\$7,012.00

Auditor Lake explained that the Salary Amendment items were also covered under the Additional Appropriations and Transfer documents which the council previously approved. Councilman Ortman made the motion to approve Ordinance No.

2020-HCCO-26, Amending Salary Ordinance, as presented. Councilman Roberts seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

**IN THE MATTER OF NEW BUSINESS:**

**Merrell Brothers CF-1 abatement form approval for 2020-2021 tax year**

Auditor Lake addressed the abatement for Merrell Brothers which is generally due on May 15<sup>th</sup>, however has been extended to June 15, 2020 due to the COVID-19 delays. Auditor Lake stated that there are 2 forms to be approved by the council and signed by President Papacek. The real and personal property assessed value are as follows:

<b>Property</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Assessed</b>	<b>Project Required</b>
Personal Property	\$5,800,000.00	\$505,354.00	
Real Property	\$3,914,713.40	\$4,926,533.71	\$1,000,000.00

Councilman Roberts made a motion to approve the CF-1 (abatement) for both personal and real property for Merrell Brothers, as presented and authorize President Papacek to sign on behalf of the Council. Councilwoman Bolser seconded the motion, and the motion carried. Councilwoman Bolser asked for additional information from the Auditor at the next council meeting.

**Greentown Public Library Declaration**

Auditor Lake addressed the Greentown Public Library Declaration requiring the overview of the County Council; however, according to the declaration, the Library Board is required to adopt the budget and the Council would then oversee any changes or additional appropriations requested thereafter. Changes were made to the declaration per I.C. Code and in question of whether this declaration of overview is binding or non-binding. As the Library Board did not provide the information needed to decide on the declaration before the council, Councilwoman Bolser made a motion to table this topic pending receipt of further information at the next council meeting on July 28, 2020. Councilman Roberts seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

**Council comments**

Councilman Ortman addressed a concern regarding a ditch project that had additional appropriations approved in the sum of \$900,000.00 earlier this year; however, has not been set in motion. Greg Lake, First Deputy Surveyor, stated that although the county has approved the funds to begin the project on the ditches; due to the COVID-19 pandemic, he wanted to ensure the county would not need to redirect the LIT Economic Development Funds towards a COVID-19 project before beginning with the ditch project and expense. Councilwoman Bolser stated that if it is the consensus of the council, with the additional appropriations having already been approved, she would recommend the project to be started as soon as possible. It was the consensus of the Council that the project begin with the funds already set aside.

Councilman Ortman addressed the conference center project and made a motion to dismiss Council President James Papacek as the authority to sign on behalf of the council for this project. Councilman Ortman stated that due to the fact that the project has been halted, he has discussed this with Mr. Papacek, and believes this is an appropriate measure. Councilman Roberts stated that setting the reset button is appropriate at this time. Councilwoman Bolser stated that she believed it appropriate to reduce the appropriation for the project. Councilwoman Bolser seconded the motion to remove President Papacek as the signing authority for the council on the conference center project. The motion carried. Auditor Lake stated that the appropriation would have to be advertised as a reduction should the council decide to reduce the appropriation for the conference center project.

Councilman Ortman asked that the Cum Cap and Health Fund be reviewed at the next council meeting for the new council members. Councilman Ortman will meet with Auditor Lake to determine the reports he would like to review.

**Federal C.O.P.S. Grant – Sheriff Asher**

Sheriff Jerry Asher addressed the council with the request for approval of a federal grant he will be making at the next council meeting on July 28, 2020. He gave a preface of the Federal C.O.P.S. Grant that his first deputy and Pam Isaac, Project Manager, worked on to obtain and get approval. He stated that this would be an addition to the already approved appropriations for the 2 deputies replacing the 2 retiring deputies. The federal grant would provide for 5 new deputies at 75%

of salary and benefits with a 25% local match by the county and a maximum of \$625,000.00 over a 3 year period. This grant would provide for up to \$125,000.00 per deputy. The grant stipulates that once the grant expires, the county would be required to retain the 5 deputies for twelve months and pay 100% of the salary and fringe for those 5 deputies. Councilwoman Bolser inquired if the grant could be used for other education and training of lower level employees, to which Sheriff Asher replied that the grant only allows for salary and not training.

**Commissary funded incentive plan**

Sheriff Asher addressed his desire to implement a lateral transfer policy in order to attract seasoned deputies to the Howard County Sheriff's Department. He has discussed this with the merit board and would like to propose utilizing the commissary funds in order to offer a \$5,000.00 lateral transfer to officers upon entry into the department that have experience elsewhere and have already been through the academy. In a new sign on package, he would also like to offer those individuals transferrable longevity and vacation, time upon entry. Sheriff Asher stated that this lateral transfer incentive package for experienced officers would actually reduce the cost to the county. If he hires a new deputy, the salary and the 15-week police academy training costs the department approximately \$15,000.00 per individual. The lateral transfer from another agency would require the individual to submit to a screening and interview process with the merit board as well as pass a field training program and sign a contract to work for the department for a minimum of 3 years. Sheriff Asher stated that his first deputy discussed this with Lori Rogers from SBOA who stated that the incentive would need to go through the Auditor's Office in order for this to be implemented. He has compared the department salaries and incentives to that of the city and although the city does not offer a \$5,000.00 transfer incentive, they were given a pay increase of 20% over the next few years and just approved for the C.O.P.S. grant for 10 new officers.

Sheriff Asher and Councilwoman Bolser discussed the expected turnover with retirements in the department. She also discussed the future plans for retention and promotion of criminal justice in order to attract qualified individuals. Auditor Lake discussed the proposed transfer of funds from the commissary fund to the specialty pay for the lateral transfers and how it should be processed to comply with the SBOA.

Councilman Roberts asked about the morale of the department amongst the officers and deputies. Sheriff Asher stated that he personally does not watch the news as there is not a lot of good news being shared for law enforcement. He stated that like all entities there is always good and bad within any facility. He does strongly believe that the majority of individuals in law enforcement who take the oath to preserve and protect, are safety minded individuals who desire to protect the community and serve the public. There are however, a few that should not serve in this field. The department remains positive as a large part of the community and this country supports law enforcement and does not desire police offers to be defunded. Councilman Roberts stated he supports our law enforcement and that it is his desire to ensure that the officers are able to do their jobs effectively and make it home safely to their families.

*There being no further business to come before the Council*

*At this time, the meeting was adjourned at 5:17 p.m., on a motion made by Councilman Roberts. Councilwoman Bolser seconded the motion, and the motion carried.*

HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL

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JAMES T. PAPACEK, PRESIDENT

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JAMIE L. BOLSER, VICE PRESIDENT

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BRYAN ALEXANDER, MEMBER

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LESLIE G. FATUM, MEMBER

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STANLEY E. ORTMAN, MEMBER

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JOHN J. ROBERTS, MEMBER

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THOMAS N. TRINE, MEMBER

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MARTHA J. LAKE, AUDITOR  
HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING JUNE 23, 2020