



## VANDERBURGH COUNTY

ONE N.W. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BLVD.

CIVIC CENTER ROOM # 305

EVANSVILLE, INDIANA 47708

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

**CHERYL MUSGRAVE**, PRESIDENT

**JUSTIN ELPERS**, VICE-PRESIDENT

**MIKE GOEBEL**, MEMBER

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Commissioners' Office

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### **Board of Commissioners Adopt Resolution Supporting Opioid Settlement Funds to Aid in Sheriff's Office Mental Health Programs**

EVANSVILLE, IN – April 25, 2024 – The Board of Commissioners of Vanderburgh County adopted Resolution NO. CO.R-04-24-005, a resolution supporting the use of restricted funds from opioid settlements to strengthen mental health programs and services at the Vanderburgh County Jail. The resolution underscores the county's commitment to addressing the opioid crisis and supporting mental health initiatives within the jail population.

Through outside counsel in multiple nationwide cases, Vanderburgh County has been actively engaged in litigation pursuing damages caused by opioids. Settlement from these cases, which is ongoing, must be used for treatment, education, and prevention programs for opioid use disorder and other co-occurring substance use disorder or mental health issues. The Commissioners believe allocating these restricted funds to enhance programs, services, staff, and operations at the jail will fortify efforts to combat opioid abuse and address mental health challenges.

Sheriff Noah Robinson, Chief Deputy Nathan Sugarman, and Jail Commander Dave Guetling attended the Commission meeting in a show of support for the resolution. Southwestern Behavioral Healthcare, Inc. representatives were also in attendance including Community Support Services Outpatient Clinical Manager Dan Haviza, Assertive Community Treatment Team Lead Dannielle Schoenfeld, and Community Support Services Outpatient Forensic Therapist Kelsey Hawkins.

Sheriff Robinson outlined plans to utilize opioid funds, in addition to the \$1 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds previously allocated by the Commissioners, to implement a new jail mental health wing that will include ten (10) beds in the Mental Health Treatment Unit and thirty-two (32) beds in the Substance Use Disorder Unit. He further explained the Sheriff's Office is in discussions with Southwestern Behavioral Healthcare, Inc. to utilize their services to staff the mental health wing to provide mental health and addiction-based services to inmates.

"Additionally, we plan to partner with the State of Indiana and their Integrative Recovery and Community Support Program to put peer-based, peer support individuals inside the facility, providing the treatment and counseling to inmates, and hopefully fund a community-based organization to provide substance abuse counseling for inmates who are rotating out of the jail and coming back into the community," Sheriff Robinson stated.

President Musgrave acknowledged the longstanding efforts of the Commissioners to address mental health and substance abuse issues within the jail system. She stated, "I'm truly excited about this. It has been our intention since we learned that opioid funding might come our way to create this new program at the jail. The Commissioners for several years, even predating some of the members who are currently on the Commission, have been working towards this happy day."

Commissioner Elpers commended the evidence-based approach of leveraging the Innovative Recovery and Corrections Support (IRCS) program to address substance abuse within the jail population.

Commissioner Goebel thanked Sheriff Robinson for his work stating, "I think this can be a great plan for Vanderburgh County."

The resolution was unanimously adopted by the Commissioners, signaling a unified commitment to leveraging resources effectively to address pressing community needs.

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**RESOLUTION NO. CO. R-04-24-005**  
**RESOLUTION TO DESIGNATE THE**  
**RESTRICTED FUNDS OF OPIOID SETTLEMENT TO THE PROGRAMS AND**  
**SERVICES AT THE VANDERBURGH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

**WHEREAS**, Vanderburgh County, Indiana has been actively engaged in litigation pursuing damages caused by the manufacture, sale and distribution of opioids through outside counsel in multiple nationwide cases;

**WHEREAS**, settlement proceeds from several cases have begun to be distributed to Vanderburgh County, Indiana and payments will continue for varying periods of time in the future;

**WHEREAS**, portions of settlement proceeds are required by I.C. § 4-6-15 to be used for treatment, education and prevention programs for opioid use disorder and any co-occurring substance use disorder or mental health issues ("restricted funds"); and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Commissioners of Vanderburgh County, Indiana, after due consideration, has determined that it is in the best interest of its citizens to designate these restricted funds to support the programs, services, staff and operations of the Vanderburgh County Sheriff's Office ("VCSO") that are directed to opioid abatement and mental health related issues.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of Commissioners of Vanderburgh County, Indiana that Vanderburgh County, Indiana, having considered I.C. § 4-6-15, hereby resolves that Vanderburgh County, Indiana shall designate these restricted funds to support the programs, services, staff and operations at the Vanderburgh County Sheriff for treatment, education and prevention programs for opioid use disorder and mental health issues including post-incarceration programming and services.

Duly adopted by the following vote of the members of said Board of  
Commissioners of Vanderburgh County, Indiana this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of April, 2024.

**THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF  
VANDERBURGH COUNTY, INDIANA**

By:   
Cheryl Musgrave, President


By:   
Justin Elpers, Vice President

By:   
Michael Goebel, Member

ATTEST:

By:   
Brian A. Gerth, Vanderburgh County Auditor

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM:

By:   
David L. Jones, Vanderburgh County Attorney