

The Journal Gazette

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JGLOCAL (/NEWS/LOCAL)

Friday, August 05, 2016 10:09 pm

Community Corrections expands GPS monitoring

ROSA SALTER RODRIGUEZ | The Journal Gazette

Allen County Community Corrections is expanding its GPS monitoring system and saving the county money at the same time, county commissioners heard at their meeting today.

Jeff Stevens, the agency's senior finance manager, said the department is expanding the number of units by up to 250 -- but has negotiated a new leasing arrangement with improved terms.

Instead of the units costing \$3 a day with an 88-cent activity monitoring fee, the cost will be \$2 a day with a 50-cent fee. That will save the county at least \$90,000 a year, he said.

In response to a question from Republican Commissioner Nelson Peters, Stevens said the department is switching from owning the units, which monitor the activity of people sentenced to house arrest, to leasing them because there can be maintenance issues and the lease is easier to include in annual budgets.

The switch to GPS also saves clients money because they do not have to have a land-line phone, he said. About 150 clients now have GPS units, either leased ones or ones the county purchased through a grant, he said. About 400 clients would eventually get GPS, Stevens added.

"Our goal is being 100 percent GPS," Stevens said, adding the switchover began July 1.

In other business, commissioners heard an update on activities at Fort Wayne International Airport, agreed to build a new storage building for the sheriff's department, approved a volunteer policy for employees and okayed several road projects and plan commission actions.

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