

## February 21, 2011

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Council and meet in regular session at 6:00pm in the Annex meeting room, Knox Indiana with Mitch Semans absent, and the following proceedings were held to wit:

### **IN RE: MINUTES**

Judy Benninghoff made the motion to approve the minutes of the Jan. 4 meeting; seconded by Bob Sims. The motion passed with all ayes.

### **IN RE: APPROPRIATION REQUESTS, 2011-01:**

Charlie Weaver, The Director of the Starke County Economic Development Foundation appeared before the board to request the appropriation of CEDIT funds. Mr. Weaver advised: The Starke County Council annually appropriates out the County Economic Development Income Tax (CEDIT) collections, monies for: 1. Economic development; 2. County bridges and 3. County Commissioners uses. Last year (2010), a fourth category was created to provide the local match to rebuild the first phase of CR300E. Approximately 80% of the project is being paid through an INDOT Local Projects Grant. To provide the local match for the grant, the fourth category (the CR300E EDIT fund) was created in 2010 by transferring money out of the County Commissioners CEDIT Fund (\$50,000.00 in 2010 and \$75,000.00 each year thereafter) and also transferring out of the County Economic Development CEDIT Fund – (\$75,000.00 in 2010 and thereafter) and placing those monies into the respective CR300E Rebuilding Accounts. The two CR300E CEDIT funds are being drawn down proportionately until used up or the project is completed at which time any remaining and unspent funds will be re-appropriated back into the CEDIT Fund from which it came (County Commissioners Uses CEDIT Fund and County Economic Development CEDIT Fund).

Pursuant to a long standing agreement between the Board of Commissioners of Starke County, the Starke County Council and the Starke County economic Development Foundation, CEDIT is appropriated and allocated as follows:

1. 37.5% of the annual CEDIT monies into Economic Development (3/8)
2. 50% of the annual CEDIT monies to replace and maintain the County's bridges and (1/2)
3. 12.5% of the CEDIT collections for use by the County Commissioners (1/8)

The Board of Commissioners have agreed, however, that in the event of a special or significant economic development project or need, that some or even all of the money which would be appropriated to the Board of Commissioners or for the bridges would be appropriated for economic development. At this time, there are no such projects in the offing. Starke County, as a Unit, in 2011 will receive the sum of \$1,014,694.00 (about \$200,000.00 less than for 2010) as its share of the 2011 CEDIT. The breakdown of requested appropriation is as follows:

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The CEDIT Economic Development Fund will receive 37.5% or \$380,510.25 out of the 2011 CEDIT collections. Those collections and the not yet spent portion of the 2010 appropriations (\$541,631.77) are requested to be appropriated for use as follows:

1. SCILL \$80,000.00
2. Hamlet Fire Well \$13,000.00
3. SCDEF Consulting Contract \$180,000.00
4. CR300E project \$75,000.00
5. Starke Co. Economic Development Fund \$32,510.25

6. CR300E project rollover from 2010 \$39,054.05
7. Starke Co. economic Development Fund rollover from 2010 \$502,277.72

#### BRIDGES

50% of the 2011 CEDIT collections are requested to be appropriated into the Bridge Fund. The not yet spent portion of the 2010 CEDIT Bridge Fund of \$709,067.00 is also requested to be appropriated back into the Bridge fund. The 2011 appropriation request is as follows:

1. 2011 CEDIT collections into Bridge Fund \$507,577.00
2. Not yet spent 2010 CEDIT collections into 2011 Bridge fund \$709,067.00

#### COUNTY COMMISSIONERS USES FUND

The Commissioners are requesting that 1/8 or \$126,836.75 of the 2011 CEDIT collections be appropriated for their uses. Not yet spent 2010 collections in the sum of \$68,530.02 are also requested to be appropriated for 2011. The Commissioners requested appropriation is as follows:

1. Commissioners Uses CEDIT fund \$51,836.76
2. Commissioners Uses CEDIT fund rollover from 2010 \$42,494.00
3. Commissioners CR300E Fund \$75,000.00
4. Commissioners CR300E fund rollover from 2010 \$26,036.02

Judge McLaughlin made the motion to pass the requests for appropriations; seconded by Tony Radkiewicz. The motion passed with all ayes.

At this time Councilman Mitch Semans arrived to the meeting.

Lisa Minix, the Starke County Recorder, appeared before the Board to request the appropriation of the funds in the Recorder's Redact Fund. She is requesting to use \$25,000.00 of the \$27,282.29 that is currently in the fund for the purpose of purchasing new, updated software. She explained since social security numbers are not allowed to be printed on any paperwork, the software redacts the numbers on those forms. The office is currently using Manatron software, and is not happy with its performance. She advised she will appear before the Board of Commissioners to request their approval of the software purchase, and also other counties in the area have been switching from Manatron to a software vendor named Fiddler. Judge McLaughlin made the motion to approve this appropriation request, seconded by Judy Benninghoff. The appropriation was approved with all ayes.

The next request to be discussed was the one from the Sheriff's Dept. Sheriff Cowen was not present at the meeting. The request was to transfer funds within the sheriff's budget, and then another request to transfer funds from the jail's budget to the sheriff's budget. Bill Dulin and Chris Smith were present from the Sheriff's Department to answer questions from the council. Mr. Smith advised the transfer requests were an attempt to restore the budget to what the Sheriff had originally requested. The budget had extra money to pay for additional jailers. In 2009 there were three full time jailers, while the 2011 budget allowed for five full time jailers. They were requesting to transfer one jailer salary to patrolman salary, and then transferring \$612.50 from chief deputy salary to chief detective salary. After much discussion and confusion in the reading of the 2011 budget (the budget lines don't line up); it was discovered the line item on the appropriation request should say 0101 005.1000.13 and not the 0101 005.1000.1. Mitch Semans made the motion to pass the request, seconded by Bob Sims. The motion passed with all ayes.

Linda Belork, the Starke County Treasurer appeared before the Board to request the appropriations to add a Deputy Treasurer. She stated a councilman had visited her in the office to advise her the county doesn't have any money for the additional staff person. Ms. Belork advised them she had recently sent out 2000 collection letters to taxpayers with delinquent taxes. She had collected \$ 76,233.87 as a result

of those letters and was calling that new money for the county. She advised she was saving the county money by not turning those over to a collection agency. Last year the American Financial Agency, the collection company had turned over \$114,121.64 in taxes they had collected. Judy Benninghoff stated she believed that amount was also new money for the county. Mark Smith reminded the council that the state sets the budget levy amount with the assumption the taxes are collected. Judy stated they were remiss at budget time to allow the removal of funding from the commissioner's budget which caused the floater person to be eliminated. The floater person had been a full time position. Linda also advised if she could add the full time position, she wouldn't need the budget for the part time person. Mark Smith advised this was not the time to ask for additional appropriations. He also stated the commissioners set the number of employees and the council approves the funding. Marty Lucas stated the state does penalize a county that asks for additional appropriations, especially this early in the year, even though there was not an official policy from the state. But, that has been the experience of the county, in the past. Judge McLaughlin and Judy inquired as to what the balance was of the unappropriated funds of the county general fund. Mark responded that they could only spend what had been appropriated. Linda Belork stated if she didn't receive the extra deputy she wouldn't put in any effort to collect delinquent taxes. Mark Smith stated that is her job. Judy Benninghoff stated if the Treasurer has to lose a worker, every office should lose a deputy. Mark inquired as to what happened to the funds for the floater worker and was advised by the commissioners in attendance, that they had been transferred to the sheriff's budget. They also advised possibly the funding for an additional deputy treasurer should come from another portion of the budget so the state wouldn't cut any of the budget. Judy stated it should come from the commissioner's budget. Commissioner Bridegroom, asked the Treasurer what portion of the tax bill is received from the collection agency. She will let him know the answer. Mark asked the commissioners if they would consider reinstating the floater position. Bob Sims made the motion to table this request until the next meeting, so that the treasurer would have a chance to speak to the commissioners about the request. Mitch Semans seconded the motion. The vote was 6 ayes and one nay. Judy Benninghoff voted no.

Robert Smith, the IT Director appeared before the board with a request to appropriate funds to purchase video arraignment equipment. The total invoice from Vermillion Systems is \$ 6061.00. He advised 1/3 of the cost would come from city court's pretrial diversion fund, 1/3 of the cost would come from the county prosecutor's pretrial diversion fund, and 1/3 from the county's cumulative capital fund. The total the county would be responsible for is \$ 2012.50. Bob Smith advised the video arraignment would eliminate the prisoner chain gang going to court. The court would have a audio recording of the proceedings, which is what the Judge requires. The process would take place in a room in the jail over a fiber optic network. Mr. Pearman inquired as to what would happen when the equipment is out of warranty and needed to be replaced. Mr. Smith stated it could come out of the court's budget. Bob Sims made a motion to approve the appropriation request, seconded by Dave Pearman. The request passed with all ayes.

#### **IN RE: BZA BOARD APPOINTEE**

Mark Smith advised the council needs to fill the position on the Board of Zoning Appeal that was left vacant by Roger Chaffins. He advised no one has shown an interest to be on the board, but there is a need to fill the position quickly, since that is a five person board, and the chairman can not vote. Judy Benninghoff stated the appointee does need to be a Democrat. Mitch Semans asked if the person needed to represent a certain area of the county, and they do not. Mitch made a motion to table the appointment until the next meeting, seconded by Judge McLaughlin. Motion passed with all ayes.

#### **IN RE: COUNTY TRAVL POLICY**

Mark Smith stated he would like to see a dual agreement between the council and the board of commissioners in reference to passing the county's travel reimbursement policy. It was discussed the requirement of receipts be attached to the claim form, is mandatory. The Board of Commissioners have adopted the State of Indiana's policy of travel reimbursements. Mr. Smith advised he would like to have Marty Lucas draft an ordinance on travel which includes meals, mileage, parking and lodging, with attached receipts.

**IN RE: BLANKET COUNTY BOND**

Mr. Smith also advised he would like Mr. Lucas to draft an ordinance to allow the county to purchase a blanket bond to cover the office holders that are required by state policy, to be bonded. Mr. Lucas advised the council needs to authorize the purchase. Mitch Semans made the motion to authorize the purchase of a county blanket bond, seconded by Judge McLaughlin. The motion passed with all ayes.

There being no further business, Mitch Semans made the motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Judge McLaughlin. The meeting was adjourned, at 7:40pm.

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Mark Smith, President

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Mitch Semans, Vice President

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Judy Benninghoff

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Marvin McLaughlin

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Dave Pearman

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Tony Radkiewicz

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Robert Sims

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Katherine Chaffins, Starke Co. Auditor  
Council Secretary