

# ATTN: THIS IS A DRAFT--NOT YET APPROVED BY COMMISSIONERS

April 6, 2009

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in regular session at 9:00 a.m. in the Annex meeting room, Knox, Indiana, with all members present and the following proceedings were held to wit:

## **IN RE: MINUTES**

Kathy Norem moved to approve the March 16 and March 24, 2009, minutes seconded by Mark Milo with 3 ayes.

## **IN RE: VENDOR CLAIMS AND PAYROLL CLAIMS**

Kathy Norem moved to approve the claims seconded by Mark Milo with 3 ayes.

Mark Milo moved to approve the payroll claims seconded by Kathy Norem with 3 ayes.

## **IN RE: E.M.S. & E.M.A.**

Mary Lynn Ritchie reported that she received \$447.40 from the collection agency and \$795.00 from the Clerk's office for small claims.

Kathy Norem moved to approve the elderly write offs in the amount of \$1,064.97 seconded by Mark Milo with 3 ayes.

Mary Lynn reported that the 4<sup>th</sup> rig was now in place and that they would be contacting the nursing homes to promote themselves for transfers.

Randy Abbey reported that there is a meeting tonight for assessment of Starke County. K.I.R.P.C. will be there also. There will be a series of 6 meetings for hazard analysis for the county. There was also one done in 2002.

Randy submitted the EMPG grants that needed commissioners' signatures.

## **IN RE: HIGHWAY**

Steve Siddall, Highway Superintendent, reported that I.D.E.M. had come out to the highway garage and that they need to get into compliance. The highway department needs to purchase a fire cabinet—a steel, lockable container. Everything else was pretty much in compliance. There were a few in house items that they were able to handle already. Steve reported that the cheapest fire cabinet they had found so far was \$678.30. They also need to purchase stickers and such for labeling hazardous things, fire exits, etc.

I.D.E.M. is to do another walk through the end of the month to make sure that they are in compliance. All aerosol cans need to be gone. Spray bottles need to be labeled, everything needs to be marked properly, and there needs to be a fire resistant cabinet to store items.

Steve and the commissioners discussed shooting calcium chloride on the gravel roads this year, as it wasn't done last year.

Steve reported that unemployment has gone up.

Bridge 156, on Range Road, North of County Road 400 North, is not on the historical list and it can be replaced, per Steve's findings. He asked if and how the commissioners want him to proceed. Kathy Norem moved to approve contacting Jeff Larrison to proceed, seconded by Mark Milo with three ayes.

The commissioners asked United Consulting to submit a stimulus proposal. They said they would not have time, so Bonar Group was asked. Bonar Group did not have time

# ATTN: THIS IS A DRAFT--NOT YET APPROVED BY COMMISSIONERS

either, so they asked Butler Fairman and Seufert. The commissioners agreed to use Butler Fairman & Seufert to make a stimulus proposal.

The sheriff will be retiring a 1991 Jeep when the department's new car is ready. The Community Corrections department would be interested in purchasing the vehicle for field reps to use. The commissioners asked the Highway Department to have a highway mechanic check to see if the Jeep is worthy to be given to another entity.

Kathy reported that she received an e-mail stating that the commissioners need to have their 2013 project plans by May 21<sup>st</sup>. She said County Road 500 North would likely be a project.

She also said she received an e-mail about a training that whoever is designated as the LPA (which should be the highway superintendent) for a federally funded project, must attend training provided by INDOT once every two years for the duration of the federally funded project.

Ken Minett, with Butler Fairman & Seufert, reported that the stimulus dollars can only be used for roads that are major collectors, and our county only has one, Toto Road. There will be four projects: State Road 39 to Highway 35, State Road 39 to County Road 625, County Road 625 to County Road 210, and County Road 210 to State Road 10. The four projects together total 10.53 miles. These projects are all eligible for stimulus money. The projects will have to be hot mix. The state will be the ones to let the bids and award the contracts. Ken will prepare the 41 page document and it will be filed. A letter of intent will need to be sent to LaPorte INDOT. The project will be \$1,000,000. Kathy Norem moved to approve the agreement with Butler Fairman & Seufert, pending the attorney's approval, seconded by Dan Bridegroom with three ayes.

The commissioners signed an insurance form for the highway department loss.

The commissioners corrected their scoring for the County Road 300 East project. Kathy is the team leader.

## **IN RE: CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION**

Annette Schoyck and Chuck Bachelder with CADA requested approval of a proclamation to make April Child Abuse Prevention month in Starke County. Mark Milo moved to approve the proclamation, seconded by Kathy Norem with three ayes.

## **IN RE: REASSESSMENT**

Rhonda Milner, County Assessor, submitted reassessment bid results:

IAS	\$422,726.30
Property Systems	\$452,500.00
CLT	\$595,600.00

In researching the bids, the attorney found problems with the IAS bid. The assessor and county attorney recommended Property Systems to the commissioners. Kathy Norem moved to approve the recommendation, seconded by Mark Milo with three ayes. The contract will be brought to the commissioners meeting on April 20<sup>th</sup> for signatures.

## **IN RE: INDIANA STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

Todd Wyckoff, from the Public Health and Emergency Response Division of the ISDH, wanted to introduce himself to the commissioners. They help Health Departments to be ready in case of emergencies. He submitted the information and explained the process. (Information is on file in the auditor's office).

## **IN RE: TEA PARTY ON COURTHOUSE LAWN**

Linda Gutierrez requested permission to use the courthouse lawn for a tea party. This is in order to give the citizens a voice in the problems in the community. It is endorsed by

# ATTN: THIS IS A DRAFT--NOT YET APPROVED BY COMMISSIONERS

many organizations but is purely a public event. The intention is to organize a rally and so far there are about twenty people interested. It is being organized all over the country. Martin Lucas stated the rhetoric is pretty harsh on review of web sites for the organizations being cited—Patriots for America and Grassfire. TEA stands for “Taxed Enough Already”. The party would last approximately two hours, starting at 10:00 a.m., April 15<sup>th</sup>. The commissioners expressed their concerns that they didn’t have enough time to research this in order to make a decision. Martin told the commissioners that this is allowed, per the constitution, as long as it doesn’t interfere with business. The commissioners cannot approve or deny this, but they did let her know they would appreciate it if the party was after hours and she was advised to seek a permit from the City of Knox.

## **IN RE: SHERIFF’S DEPARTMENT**

Sheriff Oscar Cowen explained his plans regarding the overcrowding at the jail. He talked about having other counties house some of our prisoners, with a \$35/day cost. The commissioners want to get a committee together to go through problems and issues. Oscar stated that Community Corrections will help.

## **IN RE: BASS LAKE EASEMENT**

Mr & Mrs Leon Kipp returned to the commissioners, regarding his problem with the easement next to his property. He brought the new board up to date on what has already happened over the last couple of years. He would like a statement from the commissioners acknowledging restrictions on the ten foot easement. He read two deeds giving interest to the property from the property owners on both sides. The deeds were issued in 1993.

The problem is that someone is mooring their boat there. Steve Dodge, the Kipp’s attorney, stated that this piece of property is not an easement. It was deeded, fee simple, to the commissioners and the commissioners accepted the deed with the restrictions. Mark Milo moved to have Martin to look into this and give a legal opinion at the next meeting, seconded by Kathy Norem with three ayes.

## **IN RE: TERMINATED EMPLOYEE**

David Singleton filed a grievance to the commissioners, after being terminated March 27<sup>th</sup>, by the Starke County Health Board. A copy of the grievance went to the Health Officer, Dr. Fritz. David stated that executive sessions were held, but nothing was resolved. Commissioner Norem and the auditor confirmed there were no warnings in David’s employee file. There was nothing on file, good or otherwise. Commissioner Bridegroom reported that he checked with the state, and they said our septic failure is less than 1%, which is an excellent record. David is certified by the state.

Health Board Member, Brenda Stanojevic, verified an executive session was held for the health board with David present. Dan Bridegroom stated that regardless of anything else, the health board did not follow policy. As far as the commissioners are concerned, there is nothing in David’s file to lead them to believe he is less than an exemplary employee.

Martin Lucas stated that the commissioners are administratively responsible for the health board. It is within the power of that supervisory authority to review the discharge and decide whether to reverse the health board’s decision. Dan Bridegroom moved to reinstate David Singleton to his position as Starke County Sanitarian. Mark Milo seconded the motion as nothing has been presented to the board as fact against Dave. The motion to reinstate David passed with three ayes.

Dan Bridegroom moved to move David’s office into the Planning Commission, as he works closely with the Planning Commission. He will still be under the authority of the health board, but they are reviewing the possibility of answering to another department. Kathy Norem, seconded the motion and it passed with three ayes. Martin is checking to see if law permits the commissioners to pay David the pay he missed.

# ATTN: THIS IS A DRAFT--NOT YET APPROVED BY COMMISSIONERS

## IN RE: TAX SALE PROPERTY

Jerry Deturk appeared before the commissioners regarding a tax sale property he bought that has been in litigation. The judge says there were no delinquent taxes owed on the property, but the auditor and treasurer have certified that there were. Technically it is still in litigation for thirty days, due to the possibility of an appeal.

## IN RE: JAIL REPAIR PROPOSALS

Three electric proposals were received:

Warner Electric	\$6,201.40
Arctic Air 16 <sup>th</sup> )	\$12,700.00 (quote is good for 30 days from March 16 <sup>th</sup> )
Busse Electric	\$6,895.47

Mark Milo moved to have the specs and quotes given to the county attorney for review, accept the lowest and best bid, and have it reviewed by the person who wrote the specs. Dan Bridegroom seconded the motion and it passed with three ayes.

Kathy Norem wrote specs for the maintenance contract for the plumbing repairs at the jail, on an as needed basis. The specs are to be mailed to all licensed plumbers in Starke County. Mark Milo moved to approve the mailing of the specs, seconded by Dan Bridegroom with three ayes.

## IN RE: FEE INCREASES

Kathy Norem moved to approve a fee increase for TB tests, from \$5.00 to \$10.00, due to increase in costs. The motion died for lack of a second and the commissioners tabled this until the next meeting.

Resolution #2009-06 was approved, which authorized the sheriff to charge \$200 for sheriff sales and \$100 would continue to be receipted into County General and \$100 would be receipted into the Pension Trust for the Sheriff's Department. Mark Milo moved to approve this resolution, seconded by Dan Bridegroom with three ayes.

## IN RE: RECORDER'S OFFICE

Recorder Jackie Bridegroom, and her deputy will be gone April 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> for Recorders Meetings. Dan Bridegroom moved to have the floater work in the recorder's office during this time, seconded by Mark Milo with three ayes.

## IN RE: COMMISSIONERS OFFICE HOURS

The following commissioners will be present during the office hours this month:

Mark Milo	April 8 <sup>th</sup> from 9a.m.-11a.m.
Dan Bridegroom	April 22 <sup>nd</sup> from 4p.m.-6p.m.

## IN RE: BASS LAKE BEACH

The lease says the expenses will be abated off of the lease. Mr. Callahan, lessee, submitted a spreadsheet with no actual receipts. Kathy notified him that his lease said water and sewer improvements only and stated that there must be actual receipts. He is in the process of getting these receipts together.

A gentleman in the audience complained about motor homes parking and camping on the beach side. Dan said he will check the lease.

## IN RE: E.R.S.

Kathy stated that we have had many problems with ERS, with service and with bills. They finally sent Kathy a copy of the contract, after various e-mails. The person in

# ATTN: THIS IS A DRAFT--NOT YET APPROVED BY COMMISSIONERS

charge of contracts for ERS, Amy Knox, said we were paid through December 2009. Kathy feels we should start looking at other contractors. She would like a committee to be put together to solve the problem.

## **IN RE: COURTHOUSE FLAGS**

Bob Wolfe requested that the commissioners authorize approximately \$125.00/year to keep the courthouse memorial flags. He said he would like the county to make sure to keep the tradition. The commissioners said they will put it in next year's budget.

## **IN RE: VETERAN SERVICE OFFICE**

Terry Turner, in the public, emphasized that he feels the Veteran Service Officer is doing a great job, but is overwhelmed. He feels they need more part time help in that office.

## **IN RE: NEW PHONE SYSTEM**

Bob Smith, IT Coordinator, updated the commissioners on the problems we are having with the phone system, including five hours without phones. He is requesting bids for a new system, incorporating the courthouse, annex, jail, and possibly the highway garage. The new phone system would save us approximately \$2,200 in phone bills.

There being no further business to come before the board, Mark Milo moved to adjourn seconded by Kathy Norem with 3 ayes.

---

Dan Bridegroom, President

---

Kathy Norem, Vice President

---

Mark Milo, Member

---

Michaelene J. Houston, Auditor and  
Secretary to the Commissioners