

MONDAY, APRIL 6, 2015

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in regular session at 6:00PM in the Annex meeting room, Knox, Indiana, with Kathy Norem, Kent Danford and Donald Binkley present and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner President Kent Danford.

RE: EMS DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT

EMS Director Keith Emigh, EMS2 Travis Clary, and Clerk MaryLynn Richie appeared before the Board to present the EMS monthly departmental report. Clerk Richie presented the monthly statistical report listing the number and classification of runs, and accounts receivable. She advised they had collected a total of \$1,967.83 from Small Claims Court, and \$1,472.47 from Collections Attorney, Jonathan O'Hara. Clerk Richie advised the total number of runs increased in the month of March, having 223 total billed runs.

OPERATION PROCEDURES:

Director Emigh advised at the beginning of March the State EMS Field Coordinator, Steve Gressmire, completed a full audit of the County's EMS policies and procedures. Director Emigh advised the County passed with flying colors. He advised he is currently working on their state re-certification which is required to be completed every two years, and is due this year.

Director Emigh advised they have implemented new paperwork to be completed for runs: a new information sheet to be completed by the EMTs; a new signature sheet for the patients to sign, and also a new signature sheet for any transport refusals which states the County's charges for that service.

Director Emigh advised they are presently in the process of looking for new departmental software to be used for both billing and reporting.

He advised they have installed paperwork mailboxes at two of the bases to make sure they have the security they need to be HIPPA compliant; the third mailbox is on back order at this time.

The Director also stated they have purchased a new computer program to be used for scheduling. The new program allows the employees to access the software online, to input their availability and any needed time off, which will eliminate the several missed emails and phone calls.

PERSONNEL:

Director Keith Emigh advised he has hired three new Part Time Paramedics and has filled the EMS2 position. He advised their new EMS2 (Assistant Director) is Travis Clary, and introduced Clary to the Board. He advised his first official day for that position was the 5th of April. Director Emigh stated he has hired the two full time paramedic spots that were open and they will begin on April 19th. He noted one of the two paramedics is Jordan Kajer and the other is Louie Matzat.

UPDATE STATUS OF ALS AT ALL THREE BASES:

Director Emigh advised they are still in need of part time paramedics and will continue the hiring process as applications are received. He noted they have received drug vaults and will be installing them in the outlying bases. Once they are installed the IT Department will install software in the Director's computer to get the direct reports on the vault activity.

EDUCATION:

Director Emigh advised he is working with EMS2 to establish a training schedule for their EMTs and Paramedics.

RIG MAINTENANCE:

Director Emigh stated he is presently working with the Highway Department to make sure routine maintenance is being completely on all of their rigs.

BASE MAINTENANCE:

Director Emigh advised he has been dealing with water issues at Medic 5, having a new water heater installed there this week. Also, a new front door will be installed at Medic 3 on April 20th.

SAFETY:

Director Emigh reported there were no accidents or injuries in the month of March.

COST SAVINGS: Director Emigh advised he has discontinued using Praxair and has set up American Welding and Gas to be their new oxygen supplier at a great saving to the Department.

WORKING WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS:

Director Emigh stated their FCC license needs to be renewed and the EMA Director has been assisting them with its renewal. They are having an issue with resetting the password but they are getting it worked out.

Both President Danford and Commissioner Norem advised the Director of the nice job on his reporting. Commissioner Binkley inquired in regard to getting the Director's vehicle painted. The Director advised he has not yet gotten the vehicle painted or taken off the light bar. Commissioner Binkley suggested instead of using red and white lights on the vehicle, he should be using green lights. Director Emigh stated green lights were for an EMT's personal vehicle. President Danford stated he was fine with using the red and white lights. The Board suggested the EMT Director install the lights on the dash and in the back window instead of a light bar on top of the vehicle.

RE: COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT REPORT

County Highway Superintendent Rik Ritzler appeared before the Board to present his monthly departmental report. He reported:

SNOW PLOWING:

Superintendent Ritzler advised winter operations went well this year. A little over 90,000 miles of roadway was plowed, and they used 1325 tons of salt. His report showed the statistics for this winter season, compared to last year's winter season. (The entire report is on file in the Auditor's Office.)

SPRING ROAD MAINTENANCE: The Superintendent stated each spring they find it necessary to make repairs of the damage to the roads caused by the thawing frost in the roads. The Drivers have been patching the roads in their areas. He noted this year they will be using a more permanent fix to the potholes and it involves wedging cold mix asphalt. He advised a wedge is a small paving job ranging from 20 feet to 250 feet in length. He stated by adding stone to potholes and then paving a wedge over the entire area it creates a longer lasting, more permanent fix. Last week they made almost 1000 tons of that patching material. He noted that should be enough to wedge most of the blowout areas in the County and they will be wedging throughout April and May, weather permitting. The Superintendent advised they have a crew of trustees working

around the County to cleanup excess stone from last year's chip sealing and to repair any yards that may have been affected by the snow plowing. He noted they will also be cutting brush, grading roads and picking up trash.

BRIDGE INSPECTIONS: Superintendent Ritzler stated their biennial bridge inspections have begun. USI Consultants will be performing the work and the first round of inspections has begun. He noted though these inspections are in addition to the Department led maintenance inspections for each bridge. The maintenance inspections focus on erosion control, bridge cleaning, brush control and minor pavement and drain repairs.

SAFETY AND TRAINING: Superintendent Ritzler advised they have continued with their weekly safety sessions. He stated they are now focusing on spring and summer operations safety. He noted last week there were two different training sessions held at their garage, the first from Bliss McKnight and the second from LTAP/Purdue.

CULVERT INVENTORY/REPLACEMENTS: The Superintendent stated they had recently completed the County's first comprehensive culvert inventory. They counted and inspected 585 pipes and small structures throughout the County. They identified 23 pipes that will need to be replaced.

THIRD MECHANIC POSITION: The Superintendent advised they have posted the new mechanic position and the application deadline is April 17th. Interviews will be scheduled at that time with June 1st being the target date for the new hire to begin.

INDOT FUNDED PROJECTS: The report the Superintendent presented lists a chart of current INDOT funded projects, and the amount of funding provided for those projects.

ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM: They have identified 75 miles of County roadway that needs to be repaved and they will begin making their paving asphalt this month. He predicts they should be able to get the majority of those roads completed this summer.

LOCAL BRIDGE REPLACEMENTS:

Bridge 70 (on CR50E over the Smith Ditch, .1 mile south of CR500S) is now 50% complete. LaPorte Construction has just restarted the project

Bridge 79 (on CR450S over the Smith Ditch, .2 mile west of Range Road) is currently being designed. Construction should begin sometime this summer.

Bridge 1 (on CR700N over the Robbins Ditch, .3 mile west of CR500E) is currently being designed. Construction should begin this summer.

Bridge # 71 (on CR100E over the Smith Ditch, .5 mile south of CR500S) LaPorte Construction will begin this project in April.

CADA PROCLAMATION

Annette Ohman of CADA (Coalition Against Domestic Abuse) presented to the Board the document proclaiming the Month of April as Child Abuse Prevention Month. Commissioner Norem read the proclamation into the record. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the proclamation, seconded by Commissioner Binkley. The motion passed with all ayes.

IT DIRECTOR IDACS UPDATE

IT Director, Joe Short, advised he was asked by Commissioner Norem to present an update to the Board on the status of the IDACS system. He advised last year the County was notified by the State that the County needed to upgrade its IDACS system off a dial up internet provider to a high speed wireless provider. He noted it was a long process but the County is now live with wireless internet provided by Four Way. He advised previously the County was paying \$256.00 a month for a dial up service transmitting 56K, and now they are transmitting at a speed of 20mg at a cost of \$100.00/month plus an \$80.00 monthly fee for the firewall expense. Director Short advised they went live with the new provider last Tuesday and immediately noticed the improvement in the service speed.

KASEY CLARK, TREASURER REQUEST TO SET ANNUAL TAX SALE DATE

Treasurer Kasey Clark appeared before the Board to request approval of setting the annual tax sale to be held on September 28th. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the scheduling of the tax sale on that date, seconded by Commissioner Binkley. The motion passed with all ayes.

CLERK'S ELECTION REQUESTS

County Clerk Vickie Cooley appeared before the Board to ask supplemental approval of an Election Board approved Resolution # 1, establishing the date and hour for in-person absentee voting. Clerk Cooley also advised she is requesting approval of extra hours for her election department personnel during this election period. She noted they will be required to work hours on two different Saturdays and two days of evening hours prior to the May 5th election, for a total of fourteen additional hours in the month of April. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve both of her requests, seconded by Commissioner Binkley. The motion passed with all ayes.

SHERIFF DULIN'S REQUEST TO PURCHASE SECOND K-9

Sheriff Dulin appeared before the Board to request permission to purchase a second K-9 for the Sheriff's Department. He noted the second K-9 would be at no cost to the County as he was requesting permission to hold fundraisers and collect donations for the purchase of the dog, for its training, its food and any vet costs. President Danford inquired as to how the Sheriff would be able to use an automobile to transport the dog when he had previously asked to use an SUV for the first dog. The Sheriff advised there is a smaller dog kennel which would fit in a Crown Vic and the Department still has a Crown Vic they will be using for this dog. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to allow the Sheriff to hold fundraisers and collect donations in order to purchase a second K-9 for the department. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes.

Commissioner Norem asked the Sheriff to explain the inmate program the State is considering holding in the Starke County Jail facility. Sheriff Dulin advised Judge Hall and himself have met with representatives of the State in regard to setting up a Meth and Heroin Treatment Program, a Therapeutic Community, for inmates and they would be housed at the Starke County Jail. He noted the program would allow for the maximum number of 50 inmates and the county would receive \$35.00 per inmate per day for housing them and holding the program. He advised if approved Starke County would be the only location in the State. He noted any county in the northern part of the state could participate in Starke County's program. If approved

by the State the program would begin on September 1st. He advised the other specifics are still being negotiated. Commissioner Norem stated she recommends if the County is approved and begins collecting that revenue a special fund should be created for the Sheriff to pay for his additional staff that will be required, a dedicated fund to help with staffing. Auditor Chaffins asked why a separate fund and not be receipted into County General when the Sheriff's Departmental Budget and the Jail Budget both come out of County General. Commissioner Norem stated because the Sheriff wants it in a separate fund. The Sheriff stated he would like to be able to pay for the additional staffing and possibly also a transport vehicle.

Commissioner Norem then addressed the issue of the mowing of the new jail grounds. She stated she had asked Auditor Chaffins to prepare a pro-forma spreadsheet of the next five year costs of contracting the work done versus the County doing the grounds work themselves. As there were so many unknown costs, the Auditor instead prepared a document listing the pros of going with a mowing contractor versus the County completing the work. Commissioner Norem read aloud the complete document and then asked the Sheriff for his comments. The Sheriff stated he would still like the part time maintenance person to complete the mowing, and also the snow removal. Commissioner Norem noted the original mower they had in mind to purchase would not be adequate for that mowing job and they would need to purchase a heavy duty model that could cost between \$3,500.00 to \$6,000.00; a mower with a 48"-54" inch deck. Commissioner Norem made a motion to allow the maintenance person to do the mowing, seconded by Commissioner Binkley. The motion passed with all ayes. The Sheriff was asked to obtain price quotes for the purchase of a lawn mower.

While Sheriff Dulin was still in front of the Board, Commissioner Norem advised the Board she had received a complaint from Judge Kim Hall in regard to the company that provides the medical/nursing care to the inmates. She explained the Judge had scheduled the date of the Chavez Hearing but the Inmate Nurse stated Mr. Chavez was scheduled for surgery and would not be available for the hearing, and was not willing to work with the Court's schedule. Commissioner Norem stated they had reviewed the contract with Quality Correctional Care and in order to terminate the contract a thirty day notice is required. She stated the County needs to have a nursing staff that is willing to work with the Community. She stated the Sheriff should begin searching for another company to provide those services.

WIC DEPARTMENT OFFICE LEASE

Jennifer Salyer, the Nurse Coordinator of the WIC Department, appeared before the Board to request approval of their new office lease. She advised office space had opened up a couple of doors down from where they are presently located on Main Street for the same amount of rent, \$600.00/month, but this space would include the utilities along with the rent. She noted the landlord would be Greg Underwood, and the new office address will be 15 N. Main St. Attorney Lucas stated he had reviewed the lease agreement prior to the meeting and it looked fine to him. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the lease request, seconded by Commissioner Binkley. The motion passed with all ayes.

SCEDF DIRECTOR'S REQUEST FOR PROJECT APPROVAL

The Director of the Starke County Economic Development Foundation, Charlie Weaver, appeared before the Board to discuss their latest proposed project. Director Weaver stating he is presently working on the creation of a joint ordinance, between the City of Knox and Starke County, designating specific roads as truck routes to the Knox Industrial Park. He stated once such an ordinance is created he would meet with the IT Director to send the information to the four major GIS providers so that truck drivers will know the proper routes to take. He also noted the Town of North Judson is experiencing a similar situation with semi-truck traffic throughout town.

Director Weaver stated the project he is proposing is the Division Road Intersection Project and involves Division Road at its intersection with CR300E. He noted the changes to the intersection they are proposing are to the southwest section of the intersection, as the northwest corner is a private residence, and the east side of Division Road is a dead end street by the railroad tracks. He noted the project would include the purchase of ½ acre of land on the SW corner. He advised the estimated cost of the expansion/widening of the intersection to be \$343,000.00. He stated the funding could come from the following account line items of the CEDIT Fund, # 1112:

Division Road Appropriations of 2014/2015: \$5,004.70; the remaining balance of the SR8 Intersection Project of 2014: \$114,959.92; the remaining balance of the CR300E Project of 2014: \$128,596.85; and 2015 CEDIT unappropriated funding: \$94,626.53, for a total of \$343,188.00.

He stated once the Knox roadways were completed they would move on to Hamlet to make their roadways more easily accessible to the Hamlet Industrial Park. Commissioner Norem asked the Director to share with the Board his 5 year vision for the County. She stated the Board would like to see a written 5 year plan. President Danford asked if the County would see any new business from the roadway improvements; Commissioner Binkley inquired if their approval could wait until it was definite someone was interested in the property. President Danford stated he was still upset over the Hamlet/Sysco project that never happened. Commissioner Norem noted the biggest problem the County is facing at this time is all the work that the County Courthouse needs and that is why they would like to see his 5 year plan so they can prioritize the projects and the spending of the CEDIT funding. She also stressed the fact that the County needs the creation of some new jobs. Director Weaver continued with his lists of projects from the CEDIT funding. He advised they will need to fill in a pond in the Hamlet area at a cost of \$15,000.00; and would need to get land certified with the state in both Hamlet and Knox, to be shovel ready, which would involve wetland delineation/phase 1/archeological studies at a cost of \$35,000.00. Commissioner Norem noted she had asked Carl Goodrich, Courthouse Custodian, to obtain price quotes on tuck pointing the Courthouse, repairing the plumbing and heating systems, repairing the leaking roof, updating the wiring system, and the remodeling of the Courthouse into other usable office space. She advised part of the repairs can be paid out of the Jail CEDIT Fund, but a lot of the repairs will need to be paid out of the regular CEDIT Fund. Director Weaver suggested the County talk to NIPSCO to see how they could contribute to the updating of the Courthouse's electrical wiring. Commissioner Norem advised DLZ is bringing in engineers to thoroughly inspect the Courthouse for potential repairs. Commissioner Norem then inquired if it was possibly time to shift the SCEDF's focus, which has always been on industrial business, to attracting other businesses such as retail stores. Director Weaver stated no, not on retail, on tech businesses possibly, but not retail. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to review both the SCEDF Five Year Plan, and the price quotes on Courthouse repairs prior to making a decision on the request to move ahead with the Division Road/CR300E Intersection Project. Before a second on the motion was made, Director Weaver advised there is a possibility the Industrial Park in North Judson could be completely filled. He noted even though North Judson is no longer contributing to the SCEDF, the SCEDF has not given up on North Judson. The Director stated a sale is pending on one of the vacant parcels, and the other will be used in the expansion of a current business in the Industrial Park. He also advised the SCEDF has been assisting with the sale of the only grocery retail store left in

North Judson, noting if it were to close there would not be a grocery store in North Judson. He advised the project could be in the hands of the North Judson Town Board as it was being proposed to them at their meeting that same evening to possibly assist with some type of loan funding assistance to the potential buyer of the grocery store.

IN OTHER BUSINESS

UMBAUGH SERVICES AGREEMENT

Attorney Lucas advised he had reviewed the proposed financial agreement from Umbaugh Financial Services prior to the meeting and noted there were no new changes to the present agreement. He stated it was not for a particular service, just for a general financial consulting agreement, a type of "retainer" agreement. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the proposed financial agreement, seconded by Commissioner Norem. The motion passed with all ayes.

AMERICAN LEGIONS/MEMORIAL DAY FLAGS

Commissioner Norem advised the Board had received an additional letter from the Knox American Legion Post as a response to the telephone call she had made to the Legion's Commander, John Everage. She noted in the conversation she had profusely apologized for any aggravation this issue may have caused the Legion; that was not their intention. She also stated she had made it clear during the conversation the Board was willing to completely reimburse them in full for the total amount of expense they would have in the purchase of both flags and the flag holders for honoring the Veterans' gravesites on Memorial Day. She advised the follow-up letter stating the Knox American Legion could not take a cut in funding and provide the same service so therefore they would not be able to cover the gravesites in both California Township and Washington Township. The letter stated the Board should communicate with the American Legion Post in North Judson to cover California Township, and the American Legion Post in Hamlet to cover Washington Township. Commissioner Norem suggested a letter be written to the Knox American Legion requesting the lists of Veterans from both California & Washington Townships and also to write letters to both American Legions in North Judson and Hamlet advising them of the request from the Knox American Legion. The Commissioner advised they had appropriated in their budget a total of \$6,000.00 for this expense and would like to see it be divided equally. She noted the Knox American Legion had already received a check in the amount of \$2,000.00, and their original claim was for \$3,000.00. Commissioner Norem advised President Danford she was leaving on vacation for two weeks and asked the President to work with the Auditor on writing the letter and delivering it to the Post in person.

COUNTY INNKEEPERS' TAX

Attorney Lucas advised the issue of having the County collect the local innkeepers' tax instead of the State has been moving quite slowly. He stated they had prepared a draft of a possible reporting form for the innkeepers to use in their monthly reporting. Attorney Lucas noted an unfortunate issue had arisen in his reviewing of the state statute in regard to the innkeepers' tax and that is campgrounds are exempt from collecting the tax unless they have permanent cabins they are renting. Since County campgrounds have paid the tax in the past they would be eligible to apply for a refund. Debbie Mix advised the main issue was more to do with the businesses who should be collecting and submitting the tax but aren't.

THE RETIREMENT OF THE COURTHOUSE CUSTODIAN

Commissioner Norem advised she had spoken with Carl Goodrich, the Courthouse Custodian, and asked him to reconsider his retirement in early June. She noted Custodian Goodrich has not changed his mind, so the Board will need to move ahead with filling the upcoming vacancy. She advised the Board should set the date to hold an Executive Session in order to interview the applicants for that position. A date of April 28th, at 6PM was established and Auditor Chaffins was asked to schedule the interviews in thirty minutes intervals. The Board asked the applications to be sent to them for their review prior to the Executive Session.

RE: AUDITOR'S BUSINESS: MINUTES, PAYROLL CLAIM, VENDOR CLAIMS

Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the Building Corporation Claims Docket in the total net amount of \$319,127.21. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the payroll claims docket for the pay period ending 3/14/15, with a pay date of 3/20/15 in the total gross amount of \$195,709.41. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the payroll claims docket for the pay period ending on 3/28/15, with a pay date of 4/2/15, in the total gross amount of \$191,071.06. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the Vendor Claims Docket in the total gross amount of \$377,719.03. Commissioner Norem noted the Deputy Thomas had flagged two claims: the increase in cost of the reimbursement for a CDL physical; and the payment of a prisoner meal consultant out of the prisoner meal budget line. Attorney Lucas advised he didn't see an issue with either claim. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. Commissioner Norem commented on the good job by Deputy CarLa Thomas in noting questionable claims. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 16th meeting, seconded by Commissioner Binkley. The motion passed with all ayes. Auditor Chaffins presented the Notice to Voters (in regard to the City of Knox Municipal Election) and advised she would like their authorization of this notice prior to it being posted in The Leader's legal section. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the notice seconded by Commissioner Norem. The motion passed with all ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

John Ahlenius, a registered contractor in the County, inquired as to how the contractor was chosen to complete the renovations to the North Bend Township polling center. Commissioner Norem advised the Election Board was in charge on the project not the Board of Commissioners. Attorney Lucas noted the bid process is not required until a project reaches the \$150,000.00 price mark, and it would have been up to the Election Board to request price quotes for the work. The Board advised Mr. Ahlenius the funding for the renovations is coming from a Grant obtained in 2014 for such renovations. Mr. Ahlenius questioned why a contractor out of Francesville was doing the work when there are so many available contractors in the County. Kenny Wallace, who was in attendance, and is currently on the Election Board, advised him to go to the Clerk's Office to see the paperwork, as it was approved at an Election Board meeting.

Skyler Ellinger, President of the County's Park Board, advised there will not be a meeting in the month of April, but the Park Board will be visiting the Bass Lake Beach & Campground on April 23rd to inspect the property. He also advised the Board is still in the process of gathering information on the various park areas in the County. Commissioner Norem noted the

Board is being very proactive. Mr. Ellinger inquired if the Bass Lake Beach & Campground needs to be ADA compliant. Attorney Lucas noted under the regulations of the Land & Water Conservation Act, it is a goal to be ADA compliant, but it is not strictly enforced.

Sheriff Bill Dulin stated on behalf of the Sheriff's Department and himself he would like to thank the Board for their help in his achieving his goals. Commissioner Norem stated his success makes them all look good.

There being no further business, Commissioner Norem made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. The meeting adjourned at 8:35PM.

APRIL 6, 2015

Kent Danford, President

Kathryn Norem

Donald Binkley

Katherine Chaffins, County Auditor
& Secretary to the Board of County Commissioners