

**Monday, June 4, 2012**

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in regular session at 9:00am in the Annex meeting room, Knox, Indiana, with Dan Bridegroom, Kathy Norem, and Jennifer Davis present and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting was called to order by President, Kathy Norem. She asked the Board to complete the calendar for the month of June, for the days and times they could be available in the Commissioners' Office, at the Courthouse.

**RE: MINUTES, PAYROLL CLAIMS & VENDOR CLAIMS**

Commissioner Bridegroom made a motion to approve the payroll claim for the pay period ending May 26, 2012, in the amount of \$170,945.84. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes. Commissioner Bridegroom made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes, and the final minutes of the May 7<sup>th</sup> and the May 14<sup>th</sup> meeting were then signed.

The Vendor Claims were then discussed. The following claims were in question: the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, 2012 billing from the Humane Society, in the amount of \$150.00; the claim for the payment of the Council attorney fees, for the amount of \$1,601.87 since the amount of the claim, was over the remaining balance of the Council's 2012 budget, for attorney expenses; the bill for reassessment from the Assessor's Office since that invoice was over the amount in the Assessor's 2012 budget for reassessment; and the two claims submitted by Drug and Tobacco Free Starke County for the salary of Jennie Carter, and for reimbursement of expenses. The approval of the vendor claims was postponed pending the receipt of the DTFSC claims to be brought to the meeting from the Auditor's Office.

Auditor Chaffins asked for approval to allow for the training of three employees of the Auditor's Office in the use of the county's software, Docuware. The total amount of the price quote received from Docuware, to provide the training is \$1,950.00. She advised the County had purchased the Docuware software in the beginning of 2011, and is currently being utilized in the Probation Department. The Clerk's Office has not yet implemented the software in their department. Chaffins advised the County had purchased seven licenses, and advised that would be sufficient for the Auditor's Office to utilize the program without purchasing any additional licenses. Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the Docuware training, seconded by Commissioner Bridegroom. The motion passed with all ayes.

**RE: EMS DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT**

EMS Director, Paul Mathewson, appeared before the Board to give the monthly EMS report. He advised Clerk Richie was out of town. He presented updated job descriptions for the EMS Department that included the required hepatitis and TB testing. He noted those tests will be required as part of the pre-employment testing. Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the updated job descriptions, seconded by Commissioner Bridegroom. The motion passed with all ayes. Commissioner Davis then made motion to also require all current EMS employees be tested for hepatitis and TB. Commissioner Bridegroom seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. The Board requested a copy of the test results be placed in the employee's personnel file. Director Mathewson advised, in order to attempt to keep the number and dollar amount of worker's compensation claims to a minimum, price quotes are being received to possibly purchase updated cots and stair chairs. He advised the new style equipment could minimize the severity and frequency of back injuries.

President Norem advised the Department had recently participated in a program for EMS Appreciation Week, and had solicited donations from area businesses. She advised they had received a check from one of the local banks in the amount of \$100.00. There was a discussion by the Board comparing this solicitation to the past practice of the County Highway Department soliciting donations for the annual employees' Christmas party. President Norem advised Director Mathewson, in the future, to bring the issue before the Board before their taking action on their own.

**RE: VENDOR CLAIMS**

The two claims submitted by Drug and Tobacco Free Starke County were presented to the Board. Auditor Chaffins advised the Board that she had been notified by the Indiana Department of Health in regard to the audit of the tobacco grant funding portion of the revenue for the DTFSC. She advised the Dept. of Health will not be receiving the funding to conduct the local audit, and noted she was asked to perform the audit of that tobacco grant funding. The final details in regard to the audit have not yet been completed, so there is not a definite date to verify that tobacco grant money is validated. She noted the earlier audit of the DTFSC was only for the drug grant funding, which is issued by the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute. Commissioner Davis made a motion to deny both claims, the first one for the salary of the Coordinator, Jennie Carter, and the second claim for reimbursement to be denied due to the lack of receipt documentation. Commissioner Bridegroom seconded the claim and it passed with all ayes. Commissioner Bridegroom made a motion to approve the vendor claims except the following claims: the claim payable to the Humane Society; the claim for the County Council's attorney fees; the Assessor's billing for reassessment; and the two claims from DTFSC, for a net balance of \$407,969.97

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes.

### **RE: COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT BUSINESS**

County Highway Department Superintendent, Steve Siddall, and Kenny Jones and Mark Wilson of Wight-Petrie appeared before the Board to give an update of the progress of the replacement of Bridge 51. Mr. Jones advised the design plans for the construction of the bridge have been left with Supt. Siddall. He also advises they will be applying for all necessary permits during that week. Mr. Wilson advised the bridge will be a three span, continuously reinforced, slab bridge. He noted the estimated timetable for the project is: to open bids at the Commissioners' July 16 meeting; and to begin construction by August 1 with a ninety day construction timeframe. He advised it will be necessary to hold an updated wage hearing since the timing of the March 7 wage hearing, which was called for the Library project, will expire. Commissioner Bridegroom advised he will initiate the wage hearing meeting with the State. Mr. Wilson advised they will prepare the bid packaging and direct it through the County Auditor's Office. He noted he is working on the bridge specification and the document will be provided to the County for their Attorney's review.

Mr. Jones advised the County will be receiving an invitation to attend the July 20<sup>th</sup> ribbon cutting of the Koontz Lake Sewer Treatment Plant.

Supt. Siddall noted the Bridge 9 and Bridge 62 projects are progressing on time. He advised the deck has been poured on Bridge 9, and the Bridge 62 project is approximately four weeks behind Bridge 9's progress, but it is not behind schedule.

### **RE: LOW FINANCIAL SOFTWARE CONTRACT**

Andy Low, of Low Financial, appeared before the Board with the contract for the new County Financial Software to be implemented in the County Auditor and Treasurer's Offices. County Attorney, Marty Lucas, advised he had reviewed the contract and noted an automatic renewal clause, and also a 150 day notice to cancel the contract. The Board reviewed the cost of the software and the source of the funding for the project. The amount of \$55,160.00 will be due in 2012; \$28,296.00 in 2013; and \$28,295.00 in 2014. Auditor Chaffins advised of the \$55,160.00 due in 2012--\$15,000.00 will be paid from the Treasurer's savings of lockbox fees that is currently appropriated in the IT Department budget; and \$25,000.00 will be paid from the Auditor's Transfer Fee Fund. President Norem noted the balance could be paid from the Commissioners' share of the additional CEDIT money for 2011 and the first four months of 2012, which the State recently paid out. Commissioner Bridegroom made a motion to approve the signing of the contract; seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes. Commissioner Davis requested formal reports be submitted to the joint meetings of the Council and the Commissioners, as to the progress of the software installation and implementation. Mr. Low advised the process should take approximately two months to convert the software and requested the Auditor not record the County's 2013 budget projections into the software until Low Financial is installed. Auditor Chaffins advised the budget information will be loaded into the State's Gateway Program, so the information is compiled for the DLGF budget workshop, that will be held the second week of July.

### **RE: PROPOSED WELDING PROGRAM**

Starke County Economic Foundation Director, Charlie Weaver, appeared before the Board to discuss a proposed welding education program that will be available for both students and adults. He advised Knox Community Schools has offered the use of their Middle School wood shop at no cost, but the electrical and air filtration systems will need to be updated and in compliance. He noted the instructor of the class will be Andy Odel, of North Judson. There will be 13 separate welding labs and the classes will be producing students with job ready skills. Once they complete the classes, they will be presented to the local industry for possible hiring. Mr. Weaver stated there are six businesses in the county who are currently in need of qualified welders. Director Weaver stated he was asking for the approval of expenditures out of the CEDIT Fund, 0093, line item 000-3000.04, the SCEF, which currently has a balance of \$756,746.00. Commissioner Bridegroom inquired as to how many students will be taking the classes, and Mr. Weaver advised the classes were more than full. Commissioner Bridegroom then inquired as to what would happen if the program doesn't work out and Mr. Weaver advised the Starke County Economic Development Board would reimburse the County. Commissioner Davis stated she believes in the program, and made a motion to approve this project, seconded by Commissioner Bridegroom. The motion passed with all ayes.

### **RE: REPORT FROM SHERIFF OSCAR COWEN**

Sheriff Cowen and Office Manager, Chris Smith, appeared before the Board. The Sheriff stated he is asking permission to purchase three new vehicles for his department this year. He advised the estimated cost per vehicle would be \$25,000.00. President Norem advised him to get actual price quotes for both cars and trucks. She asked him to submit a list of his current fleet, the year of the vehicle, and the number of miles on each. Commissioner Bridegroom also requested it state the driver of the vehicle. He asked the Sheriff why a jailer was driving a county vehicle, and why there was another county vehicle parked at a residence, northwest of Knox. The Sheriff advised the jailer had revived an old county vehicle, and the vehicle north west of Knox, was being held there until their new hire began on June 10<sup>th</sup>. He noted the new hire is Robert Gray, and he will be replacing Officer Furgeson. President Norem requested the Sheriff get price quotes from local dealers, and receive the government fleet rate.

The Sheriff inquired if the County could prepare an employee handout specifically pertaining to the employees of the County Police Department: the officers, the jailers, and the dispatchers. He advised they are experiencing some questions in regard to their employees' vacation time. Attorney Lucas agreed that the police department's employees would require a handbook with language different than the regular county employee, or the highway department employees. President Norem advised the need to create a work session for the police department and asked them to mark the areas of the current county employee's handbook that need to be specific for their department. Sheriff Cowen stated that part of the issue with vacation time is that the Merit Board established a policy for officer's vacation time, back in 1988. The other issue with vacation time is comparing time worked, when some officers work 8 hour shifts for five days, and some work twelve hour shifts over a period of four days, with four days off in between shifts.

The date and time for the work session was set for Monday, June 11, 1:00-3:00PM. It was also decided to have a work session, from 3:00-5:00PM on that same day, to review the document received from Municode, in regard to the codification of the county ordinances.

The Sheriff advised he is looking at purchasing financial software for his department that could assist in the management of the Sheriff's Cash Book. He noted the initial cost for the software would be \$8,000.00; with a \$3,200.00 per year maintenance fee. He stated this particular software is currently being used in sixty counties in the state. Ms. Smith advised she will be sending out information about this proposal, to the Board and Attorney Lucas,

President Norem advised there has been an issue with the number of prisoners being held in the County Jail. She noted the jail capacity is at sixty two, but during the Memorial Day weekend, the number of inmates reached seventy four. The Sheriff advised he had reached a verbal agreement with the Sheriff of Pulaski County; so when the number of prisoners currently held by the county reaches sixty two, any excess prisoners over the number of sixty two to be housed in the Pulaski County Jail, at the rate of twenty dollars a day per inmate. He noted Marshall County would charge the County a fee of \$35.00 a day, if they were to house any of the County's inmates at their facility. President Norem advised there are currently twelve Starke County inmates being housed in Pulaski County. The Sheriff stated Pulaski County has a jail with a bed capacity of 130, but are currently only housing 55 inmates. President Norem advised the County

needs to enter into a written contract with Pulaski County and also needs to discuss the source of funding this expense. Commissioner Davis advised the County go back to creating a review committee to look at the disposition of prisoners to see how they could keep the total number of inmates down. President Norem suggested the funding for the expense of the out of county housing could be paid from the Commissioners' portion of the CEDIT Fund, or the Rainy Day Fund. Commissioner Bridegroom suggested this issue be discussed at the next meeting of the County Council/Commissioners. President Norem stated this same issue will be discussed at the next meeting of the Jail Committee since Paul Downing of DLZ, is working on options for the county. The Sheriff advised he will discussing the contract with the Pulaski County Sheriff.

In another Jail related issue, the Sheriff advised, because of a worker's compensation matter that resulted from an incident in the dispatch area of the jail, he has posted that no other department's officers are allowed in the dispatch area, unless they are bringing in a prisoner.

#### **RE: IT DEPARTMENT REPORT**

IT Director, Joe Short, appeared before the Board to request some guidance in regard to the County's 911 maintenance contract, and the narrow banding proposal. He advised the 911 system is old and outdated, and so is the county's radio system. He noted when the county does go to the narrow banding frequency the area of radio coverage will decrease and the county is already having issues with reaching the San Pierre, Monterey, and the Koontz Lake areas. He advised one tower should be sufficient for county coverage but there is currently a tower in San Pierre, Washington Township, and Koontz Lake but they are still experiencing problems. He noted the existing problems will escalate once the narrow banding is in effect. The Board advised Director Short to receive proposals from at least three different companies, since the county does need a maintenance agreement on their radio and the 911 equipment. Mr. Short advised one of the companies, RayCom is advising they charge to come to the County and evaluate their communications system, a fee of \$795.00, which would be reduced from their billing if the County was to enter into a contract with them. President Norem inquired as to the status of the 911 grant and the narrow banding grant that EMA Director, Ted Bombagetti, had submitted. Director Short advised the County is still in the running for those grants. The Board asked him to report back at the July 2nd meeting with the price quotes/proposals, and a company will be chosen.

Director Short also advised he has a verbal agreement with DC Tech at \$75.00 per hour, to have someone cover for him when he would be on vacation. He noted he did not have an appropriation for extra help in his 2012 budget. President Norem advised him to work it into his 2013 budget.

#### **RE: ANTI-NEPOTISM IN EMPLOYMENT AND CONTRACTING**

County Attorney Lucas stated, in order to be in compliance with the State's requirement against nepotism in employment after July 1, 2012, he was amending the County's existing anti-nepotism ordinance. President Norem added, to be in compliance with the certification portion of the State's requirement, she wants a standing date of December 1 of each year, be set as the time each department head would submit their certification. Attorney Lucas noted, if the county is not in compliance with the State's requirements, the DLGF stated their 2013 budget could be affected. Commissioner Davis made a motion to suspend the rules for the changing of an ordinance, seconded by Commissioner Bridegroom. The motion passed with all ayes.

Commissioner Bridegroom then made a motion to approve the amended County Anti-Nepotism Ordinance, effective immediately, to be in compliance with the State. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Davis, and passed with all ayes.

Attorney Lucas then advised he has composed a resolution addressing anti-nepotism in the County's contracting. Commissioner Bridegroom made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes. Attorney Lucas noted the resolution does not prohibit contracting with relatives, but if allowed, certain requirements need to be met. A copy of the Starke County Commissioners Ordinance 2012-02, Ethics: Anti-Nepotism Ordinance, and Starke County Commissioners Resolution 2012-03, Ethics: Contracts with Relatives; Disclosure, are on file in the County Auditor's Office.

#### **IN OTHER BUSINESS:**

Commissioner Davis made a motion to appoint Mike Risner to fill the open position on the Starke Drainage Board, left vacant by the passing of Drainage Board member, Bill Schacht.

Commissioner Bridegroom seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes. His term will expire on Dec. 31, 2012. President Norem advised political affiliation is not a factor on appointments to the Drainage Board.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the County's agreement with the Starke County Council on Aging, in the amount of \$10,000.00. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bridegroom and passed with all ayes.

President Norem advised Auditor Chaffins to include the City of Knox' billings on buildings that contain sprinkler systems, in the next claims register. She noted the Annex Building and the Jail are both billed annually at a rate of \$142.00 per building, and should be paid out of their utilities budget line item.

President Norem requested Auditor Chaffins post the Webinar being presented by the State, on Monday June 11, from 8:30AM-11:30AM, in response to the statewide smoking ban that goes into effect July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012.

Commissioner Bridegroom advised he has received a couple of telephone calls in regard to the placement of tents at the Bass Lake Campground, and the rude, discourteous actions of the campground's management. He noted the callers have been concerned for the safety issue at the campground with the placement of the tents blocking access to emergency vehicles.

He also advised, at the Bridge 51 site, someone had removed the old concrete pilings. He stated it appears someone slid them up the bank, and now they are gone.

President Norem inquired as to the situation at the pocket area of Bass Lake. She advised the brush in that area was cut by the highway department using a Bush Hog. Commissioner Bridegroom advised he will have the Highway Dept. Superintendent send the guys back through that area with chainsaws and clean it up.

Auditor Chaffins inquired as to the process of naming one of her deputies as her First Deputy. The Board advised the County Council would need to set a job description, and create a salary ordinance for a First Deputy. Attorney Lucas advised, per SBOA regulations, only certain county departments are allowed to have a First Deputy.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Kenny Wallace stated he would like to see the Sheriff purchase locally any additional vehicles, because he hasn't done that in the past. President Norem assured him that is what was asked of the Sheriff.

With there being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Bridegroom made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:21PM.

June 4, 2012

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Kathy Norem, President

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Dan Bridegroom, Vice President

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Jennifer Davis

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Katherine Chaffins, Auditor &  
Secretary to the Commissioners