

June 17, 2013

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Council and meet in a regular session at 5:30PM in the Annex Building Meeting Room, Knox, Indiana, with Dave Pearman, Tony Radkiewicz, Marvin McLaughlin, Mitch Semans, Bryan Cavender, and Freddie Baker present, and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting was called to order by Council President, Dave Pearman. He advised Councilman Sims could not attend the meeting.

RE: MINUTES

Councilman Semans made a motion to approve the May 20th Council minutes, seconded by Councilman McLaughlin. The motion passed with all ayes.

RE: REQUEST OF APPROPRIATION OF NORTH JUDSON LIBRARY RAINY DAY FUND

Jane Ellen Felchuk, Director of the North Judson Public Library, appeared before the Board to request their approval on the \$20,000.00 appropriation of the Library's Rainy Day Fund. She advised the current balance of their Rainy Day Fund is approximately \$40,000.00. She noted the appropriation is being requested in order for them to:

- Replace their out-dated and unsupported Sagebrush/Winnebago integrated library system for the circulation of materials.

- Replace two PC workstations.

- Replace the thermostats controlling the heating and cooling equipment.

- Conduct a study on solutions for problems with the original building's box gutters.

Councilman Semans made a motion to approve the appropriation request, seconded by Councilman Cavender. The motion passed with all ayes.

RE: COUNTY CLERK'S REQUEST FOR APPROPRIATIONS

County Clerk, Evelyn Skronski, had submitted a written request to reimburse the Election Board budget's appropriations from the expenses due to the Knox School Referendum. Clerk Skronski was not present for the meeting. Auditor Chaffins advised the County has received the \$17,732.28 in election costs from the Knox Schools, and now the Clerk is requesting the Election Board budget's appropriations be reimbursed for the referendum expense. Councilman Radkiewicz made a motion to approve the appropriations requested, in the amount received, \$17,732.28. Councilman Semans seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes.

RE: COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS & CREATION OF NEW EMPLOYEE POSITION

County Highway Department Superintendent, Rik Ritzler, appeared before the Board to request approval for additional appropriations, in the amount of \$450,000.00 in order for the Department to purchase three new trucks and beds. President Pearman advised the Public Hearing portion of the meeting was now open (at 5:40PM), and opened the meeting for public comment. Richard Budka, a concerned Starke County resident and former Highway Department employee, questioned why the County was purchasing a Freightliner, since the County had always purchased International vehicles from Wiers. He stated since Wiers is a local company the County should buy locally. President Pearman advised him Wiers International is located in Marshall County, and therefore, they are not paying Starke County taxes. Mr. Budka also had some questions concerning the equipment on the trucks and the price quote/bidding process, which the Superintendent answered. There being no further public comments, the President closed the Public Hearing portion of the meeting, (at 5:45PM). President Pearman stated he wondered why the County Highway Department had always purchased International trucks, and why they were always purchased from Wiers International. Councilman Semans made the motion to approve the purchase of three new trucks and beds. The motion was seconded by Councilman Radkiewicz. Councilman McLaughlin advised that was not the issue, rather the issue was for the request for additional appropriations. He inquired as to the balance of the Highway Department. Auditor Chaffins advised in the paperwork she completed the amount of surplus in the Highway Department Fund, including the increase in the MVH revenue beginning in August, was \$617,635.00. Councilman Semans made a motion to approve the request for the additional appropriation. Councilman Radkiewicz seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes. Auditor Chaffins noted the paperwork will now be submitted to the DLGF for their approval before the trucks can be purchased. Councilman McLaughlin inquired if the DLGF will take that additional appropriation into consideration when approving the County's 2014 budget. County Attorney, Marty Lucas, advised since the Highway Department, is not a County General Department and is not supported by property taxes, their budget is not treated the same way.

Superintendent Ritzler then advised he is requesting approval on the creation of a new employee position, part time mower. He advised he would like to hire three part time mowers, so the regular full time drivers could concentrate on their other duties. He noted since the Department is short one full time driver, they have the funding available in that budget line item to fund the expense of the part time mowers. He advised he would pay them \$13.50 per hour, which is \$2.00 less than the pay of the full time drivers. He stated he would hire applicants who possess a CDL license, and would utilize that positions up to and through the month of October, weather permitting. He stated he will be losing two full time drivers this fall since they will be retiring, and he would like, at that time, to move up the three part time mowers into the full time driver positions. Commissioner President, Kathy Norem, stated the Board of Commissioners had approved his request for the part time mowers at their last meeting, but noted the part time employees will be required to work less than 130 hours per month. There was then a brief discussion in regard to the State's mowing policy for this summer, and the need to have the intersections of the County Roads with State

Highways mowed to increase the visibility and safety at those intersections. Councilman Semans made a motion to approve the request for the creation of the part time mower position. Councilman Cavender seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes. Councilman McLaughlin advised he would like to see a budget line item be created for that new position.

OTHER BUSINESS:

President Pearman advised at the last Council meeting an appropriation of CAGIT Certified Shares funding, in the amount of \$90,000.00 had been approved for the legal costs involved with the federal lawsuit, Jack Haut v Starke County. But, he noted, after speaking with Commissioner Norem, and Auditor Chaffins, he would like to suggest considering the appropriation of the CEDIT Rainy Day Fund instead. He advised that particular Rainy Day Fund was created in 2009 with additional CEDIT money the County had received. The present balance of that fund was now \$266,351.78. He also added, that would leave the CAGIT Certified Shares Funding to be available to pay other expenses, such as funding the County’s Police Pension. Councilman Semans made a motion to reverse the appropriation from the CAGIT Fund, and approve the appropriation of the CEDIT Rainy Day Fund, in the amount of \$90,000.00. Councilman McLaughlin seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes.

President Pearman advised the Board of Commissioners had recently approved the Part Time Employee Status Policy at their last meeting, which created the definition of part time employment, an employee who works less than 130 hours per month. He noted Attorney Lucas will be writing up the official County Policy. Councilman Semans made a motion to approve the new Part Time Employee Status Policy, seconded by Councilman Baker. The motion passed with all ayes. Attorney Lucas noted the reporting for this policy will go into effect on July 1st.

In regard to the 2014 County budgets, President Pearman advised he had met with Auditor Chaffins, and he would like to propose the following schedule of budget meetings: July 23 or 24 hold the Council’s budget workshop, hold the public hearing for the budgets at their regular August 19th meeting, and then adopt the final budgets at their regular September 16th meeting. It was decided to hold the Council’s budget workshop on Tuesday, July 23rd, beginning at 8AM. Auditor Chaffins advised she was willing to meet with any new Councilman who has any questions in regard to the budget process. President Pearman advised a tentative meeting has been schedule for the Council on Monday, August 5, to hold the public hearing for the North Judson- San Pierre School’s budgets. He noted Auditor Chaffins would be calling the NJ-SP Treasurer to attempt to reschedule that public hearing to their July 15th meeting. President Pearman advised he had asked the Department Heads to attempt to maintain their budgets at their 2013 budget levels. He also advised the Department Heads could be asked to appear at the Council’s budget workshop to answer any questions the Board may have.

President Pearman advised of the SBOA State Called County Council Conference to be held in Plainfield on June 29th. He advised it will be a one day conference, and he will be driving down to the meeting, leaving at 5AM. He noted his vehicle does seat seven for any Councilman wanting to attend.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mike Moore inquired of the policy to be placed on the Agenda, since he is concerned with the County Surveyor not having the necessary tools to do his job. He specifically was referring to the need for the County Surveyor to have a metal detector in order to locate the metal permanent markers, in the ground. There was a discussion in regard to that not being a job of the County Surveyor, and Mr. Moore should hire a private Surveying Company to survey his property. Mr. Moore stated he doesn’t want his property surveyed, only the property stakes located. President Pearman advised the issue will be taken under advisement, and they will be checking with the County Surveyor.

With there being no further business, Councilman Baker made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilman McLaughlin. The motion passed with all ayes and the meeting adjourned at 6:22PM.

June 17, 2013

Dave Pearman, President

Mitch Semans, Vice President

Bryan Cavender

Marvin McLaughlin

Tony Radkiewicz

Robert Sims

Freddie Baker

Katherine Chaffins, Starke County Auditor and
Secretary to the County Council