

Monday, July 21, 2014

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in regular session at 7:00PM in the Annex meeting room, Knox, Indiana, with Kathy Norem and Jennifer Davis present and the following proceedings were held to wit:

Commissioner Davis called the meeting to order at 7:00PM. Commissioner Kent Danford was absent from the meeting.

BASS LAKE BEACH & CAMPGROUND MONTHLY REPORT

Richard Callahan, the leasee of the contract with the County in regard to the Bass Lake Beach and Campground, and his attorney, Dave Wallsmith, appeared before the Board. Mr. Wallsmith advised he had responded to a complaint in regard to the unclean condition of the restrooms. Mr. Callahan advised he no longer has his son as his chief assistant but has hired a couple of employees to do the work. Mr. Wallsmith advised they had received a price quote from Cardinal Supply in regard to the replacement of the fence at the Bass Lake Beach. He noted the approximate fence cost would be \$25,000.00. Commissioner Norem inquired if Mr. Callahan had submitted the current statement of insurance coverage yet with the Auditor's Office. Mr. Callahan advised they had contacted his insurance company and he should have the report the next day. County Attorney Marty Lucas stated he had heard from Commissioner Danford and he advised the safety equipment is in place at the Bass Lake Beach. President Davis stated she has received two written complaints in regard to the facilities and they are in regard to the unclean condition of the restrooms. President Davis also advised Attorney Lucas has been researching the conditions of the lease of the beach and campground and advised the County and the Leasee of the facilities, Mr. Callahan, need to be in compliance with the State's Land & Water Conservation Project which does not allow for any permanently enclosed structures on any public outdoor recreational facility. President Davis advised once the facilities are closed for the season, whatever Mr. Callahan decides the date will be for 2014, all campers will need to leave the campground. No campers are allowed to stay after the campground is closed for the season. Mr. Callahan advised he already has some campers who are requesting to camp throughout the winter, and noted he would like a year to let his customers know of this change. He stated the campers participate in the winter sports such as ice fishing and snowmobiling. Attorney Lucas advised the public can participate in the winter activities but the campers are not allowed to stay at the campground since rental for a year is considered a permanent fixture. President Davis asked Attorney Lucas to draft a statement noting those terms, and also starting with the 2015 season, campers will only be allowed to stay in 15 day increments just like it is in any other State Park in Indiana. Attorney Lucas advised he will include the state statute numbers in the statement he prepares.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT BUSINESS

County Highway Department Superintendent, Rik Ritzler appeared before the Board and presented the revised bid on the Bridge 27 repair project. He advised the only bid received was from LaPorte Construction Company and the pricing was much higher than had been anticipated. After meeting with the Construction Company and reviewing the bid prices versus the bid specs it was discovered some of the pricing was based on certain criteria that didn't apply in this bridge repair. Because of that LaPorte Construction was able to reduce their proposed bid to the total amount of \$78,536.00. He stated the bridge repair could begin tomorrow, July 22nd, and can be completed by August 15th. Attorney Lucas stated this bridge repair was a pressing project and should be decided at this meeting. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the amended bid project cost of \$78,536.00, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes. There was a question from the audience in regard to when Bridge 27 is scheduled for replacement. Superintendent Ritzler advised it is scheduled for replacement in 2018, and will be a \$2,000,000.00 project.

AUDITOR BUSINESS:

Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 7th meeting, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes, and the final minutes of the June 16th meeting were also signed. Auditor Chaffins presented for the Board's review copies of the Estimated Revenue Report as of July 21st, and a report of Fund Balances. President Davis advised the County has received the yearly agreement with Government Fixed Asset Services, Inc. contracting with them to provide the County's capital asset reporting for the fiscal year ending 12/31/14, for a total consulting fee of \$1,950.00. Attorney Lucas advised he does approve of this agreement, and they do provide a good and valuable service for the County.

Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the agreement with Government Fixed Asset Services, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with two ayes.

Auditor Chaffins inquired, since the County has been waiting since last April to establish the correct employee authorizations/rights of the Property Tax Software, if the Board would give her temporary authorization to establish the correct assignment of the employee security rights. President Davis advised she would like to speak with the IT Director when he returns from his time off, before authorizing that request.

Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the payroll claim for the pay period ending on July 5, 2014 with a pay date of July 11th, in the total gross amount of \$199,491.21. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. In regard to the vendor claims docket, Commissioner Norem made a motion to table the two claims payable to the Starke County Economic Development Foundation, for the tree clearing project, until she can do some research on them, but to approve the rest of the vendor claims. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. The total net amount of vendor claims approved was \$350,715.00.

Auditor Chaffins presented to the Board the Ratification of Resolutions 2013-1C and 2013-2C which established the Cumulative Bridge Fund and the Cumulative Capital Development Fund for 2014 pay 2015. Attorney Lucas advised the County Council had originally gone through the complete process and adopted the resolutions establishing both of those funds but have been advised by the DLGF the Board of Commissioners are instead the entity to re-establish those two cumulative funds, and not the County Council. Auditor Chaffins stated Mike Duffy, the Attorney for the DLGF, advised if the County Commissioners would ratify the resolutions approved by the Council, it would be sufficient for the DLGF, which is why it is now being presented to this board. She noted the whole process had been followed including the proper advertisements and the holding of the public hearing. There was a discussion in regard to the re-establishment would mean there would be an increase in the county tax rate, since the both resolution states the Council would be allowed to establish a tax rate per fund not to exceed \$.0333 per \$100.00 of assessed valuation. Commissioner Norem advised since Commissioner Danford was not present she would like to see this issue be addressed at their next meeting.

IN OTHER BUSINESS:

Commissioner Norem advised she had personally received a letter from Sheriff's Deputy, Robert Manning which she read aloud for the record commending the Highway Department and Superintendent, Rik Ritzler, of the great job they are doing. A copy of the letter received is on file in the Auditor's Office.

President Davis advised the County had received a Letter of Engagement from Waggoner, Irwin, & Scheele in regard to consulting services to be provided by their Consultant, Paula Reimers, in the task of updating the County's Employee Handbook. Attorney Lucas noted the fees were quite high and he was not sure once the work was completed if it would be any better in assisting the County in preventing litigation. President Davis advised they do not want to proceed at this time and will decline the proposed Letter of Engagement.

In regard to the old County Landfill property, President Davis stated Commissioner Danford was to contact Mike Maxwell of Weaver Boos in regard to the pending IDEM inspection. There was a discussion in regard to the possibility of the County offering to purchase the property from the present landowner, for the price he had originally purchased the property, the taxes paid and an annual 2% interest earning. Auditor Chaffins was asked to prepare the amortization spreadsheet showing those figures and then that would be the amount the County would offer to purchase that property. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve that amount as an offer to purchase the old landfill property, and for it to be paid out of the Commissioners' portion of the CEDIT Fund, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes. Attorney Lucas advised once he has received the figures from Auditor Chaffins he will send out a letter of offer to the landowner. President Davis advised the County had received a letter from Coroner Kris Rannells who advised as of January 1, 2015 the County will have a newly elected County Coroner and he would like the County's Coroner equipment to be moved out of the Rannell's Funeral Home no later than January 15, 2015. Commissioner Norem also noted the County does have an old ambulance that could also be utilized by the newly elected Coroner. She suggested the Auditor work with Adam Gray the only candidate in the fall election for the Coroner position and encourages him to participate in the preparation of the 2015 Coroner's budget.

PUBLIC COMMENT

George Dotlich inquired as to the load limit on Bridge 27 after the new repairs, and also inquired as to when the trees would be finally cleared from the Hamlet Industrial Site after they had been cut down.

EMS Interim Director, Keith Emigh, inquired as to the scheduling of the Bass Lake Festival activities especially the fireworks, for his scheduling purposes. He also advised Superintendent Ritzler will be stopping at the Knox EMS base the next day to look into the necessary repairs to the flag pole.

Veterans' Service Officer, Terry Turner, advised the word when a flag is to be flown at half-mast technically comes from his office, after he receives the official word from the State. Commissioner Norem requested when he does receive that information he needs to contact all Department Heads to notify them. President Davis reminded him that they still have not yet seen his monthly report.

With there being no further public comment, and there being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Norem made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by President Davis. The motion passed with all ayes, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:20PM.

July 21, 2014

Jennifer Davis, President

Kathryn Norem

Kent Danford

Katherine Chaffins, Auditor &
Secretary to the Board of Commissioners