

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2017**

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 Don Binkley, Kathy Norem and Charlie Chesak present and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner President Don Binkley at 6:00PM.

**RE: EXTENSION OFFICE 2018 PURDUE UNIVERSITY CONTRACT**

Extension Officer Julia Miller appeared before the Board with the 2018 Purdue University Extension Contract in the amount of \$42,650.00. Ms. Miller advised that fee was listed in her 2018 budget. The contract was reviewed by County Attorney Marty Lucas and he approved it. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the contract, seconded by Commissioner Chesak. The motion passed with all ayes.

**RE: EMS MONTHLY REPORT**

EMS Director Travis Clary and EMS Clerk Mary Lynn Richie appeared before the Board to present their monthly report. Clerk Richie advised she had received a total of \$1,559.43 from Collection Attorney Jonathan O'Hara and \$85.00 from the Small Claims Court. She advised the number of transfers has increased up to 16% and the revenue for the month was slightly down but it is slightly increased for the year. Clerk Richie stated in regard to the Medicare revalidation the paper application is complete on their end and it has been approved. She noted that now the State will visit the EMS sites you list to verify them and they were here on November 27<sup>th</sup> to conduct their review. She stated they are awaiting word on the County's official revalidation.

Director Clary advised in regard to Personnel: He has two consistent employees currently out on leave. He noted he has been picking up open shifts to minimize the amount of overtime and to keep up his Paramedic skills. They are still searching for a Part Time Paramedic.

In regard to Education he advised, the EMS Service completed the monthly Audit & Review with Starke Hospital. He noted that was the second time completing the training under the direction of the new EMS Coordinator. He stated the training was on Strokes, Altered Mental Status, and Cardiac Rhythms. Director Clary advised they also participated in a large scale mass casualty exercise with the hospital & nursing homes. He also noted that he had attended a hypothermia exercise in Valparaiso with UCAN.

In regard to ambulance maintenance, Director Clary noted he had routine services performed on the fleet in November. The last ambulance went through a tire rotation which completed the fleet which all five rigs receiving new tires. There were no major issues occurring in November.

In regard to base maintenance, he advised they had keyless entry locks installed at all three bases by a local contractor. They are working well.

In regard to Safety, Director Clary advised they experienced no injuries in the month of November and they will be doing their yearly exposure training soon.

In regard to meetings, Director Clary advised they had attended multiple meetings last month to create better communication with the local hospital and nursing homes. He noted they are continuing to meet with several departments to make sure the patients continue to receive the highest quality of care. He noted that teamwork plays a key role in patient care.

In regard to cost savings, Director Clary advised they are still getting end of the year specials from their suppliers. They are looking for the best price for certain pieces of equipment if the funds are available. He also noted they will be attending the December meeting of the County Council to transfer 2017 budgets lines and be addressing their budget issues.

## **RE: COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT**

County Highway Superintendent Rik Ritzler appeared before the Board to present his monthly departmental report. He advised in regard to grants that they will be receiving grant funding in the amount of \$1,080,000.00 for Bridge # 7; \$570,832.13 in Community Crossings Grants; and \$36,692.29 received for the Railroad Crossing Marker & Sign Grant. He also noted he has submitted their INDOT Rural Grant applications and they are for the Bass Lake Intersection improvement at CR210 & old SR10 and four hot mix truck route projects on CR1100E, CR700E, Range Road and CR400S.

He stated they will be receiving well over \$2,000,000.00 in grant money this year and will give them a great start to establish the Roadway Asset Management plan. The bid opening for their first hot mix project will be held at the December 18<sup>th</sup> Commissioner Meeting. He also advised the Community Crossing Grant funding will be used on the replacement work on Bridge 50; Bridge 47; and CR300E from SR8 to 1100 feet south of Division Road.

Superintendent Ritzler also advised he had received the notice to proceed with the Railroad Crossing Grant. He advised he will be meeting with TCS who will be completing the railroad marking project and the highway will be installing new signs at all of the County's railroad crossings. He also noted that the following bridge replacement projects are ready to begin and should be completed in 2018: Bridge 36, Bridge 58, Bridge 154 and Bridge 7.

In regard to the 2018-2021 Bridge Inspection Project, Superintendent Ritzler stated he submitted their choice of United Consultants to INDOT for their review.

In regard to the US30 Coalition he stated he had attended the US30 meeting in Warsaw with SCEDF Director Charlie Weaver. He stated the County was ahead of schedule in preparing to the possible upgrade of US30 into a freeway. He noted they should be done with their initial round of data collection in Mid-February and he will recommend that the next meeting of the Starke County US 30 Group will be held in March to review the first draft of their US30 traffic report.

In regard to Roadway Safety Supt. Ritzler advised they will be completing their audit soon of the 2017 vehicular accidents in Starke County. He will present a summary of the statistics to the Board of Commissioner during his January report. He noted there has been a decrease in the number of accidents once again this year.

In regard to Winter Preparations, he stated they are fully prepared for winter. They have completed multiple snow plow trainings and have all the necessary supplies and equipment on hand. They are just waiting on the snow and ice.

In regard to Training/Personnel Supt. Ritzler advised they have begun their annual evaluations as is required by the County Handbook and should be completed by the end of the year. He noted they will be filling the truck driver/maintenance worker position next week, and will have two new driver positions to fill in January. Once those positions are filled they will have a full roster of employees. Superintendent Ritzler then advised they had hired an employee and that employee wanted to be put on the County's health insurance as soon as he could. He stated the employee had read the County's Handbook and that didn't state that he had to wait thirty days and then the first day of the next month. He advised the Handbook stated the employee only has to wait the thirty days. Supt. Ritzler stated they had called the insurance company and they advised they could make the necessary arrangements to begin that employee earlier than the standard terms if the Board of Commissioners agreed with that decision. After a brief discussion Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve that employee for early health insurance. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. Attorney Lucas stated he would be updating the County Handbook and he would be changing the wording on the health insurance coverage to match the original terms stated by the insurance company.

Superintendent Ritzler advised last week six of their employees attended the LTAP Road Scholar Course # 4, public purchasing. He noted beginning next year they will be making LTAP Road Scholar training mandatory to all their employees. Commissioner Norem stated the employee should have at least one year employment experience prior to taking that extra training.

Supt. Ritzler advised, in regard to equipment, that they will be sending out specification for the bidding for the purchase of new equipment in 2018. They will be obtaining vehicle replacements which are two dump trucks, a paver, a pickup, and a used van for the summer road crew. The additional funding they will be receiving will be used for the vehicle replacement plan.

In regard to fuel usage, he provided a chart showing the usage in gallons of fuel used.

In regard of CR450W, north of Toto Road, he advised he was contacted by DNR Bryan Boggs who asked them to consider transferring the ownership of that portion of CR450W to the DNR. The DNR stated they could maintain it better than the Highway Department since it is adjacent to their property. He noted that Mr. Boggs had contacted most of the property owners that would be affected and they all agreed to the change. Supt. Ritzler noted that the Highway Department receives a total of \$1,400.00 for that road, north of Toto Road, but it requires a lot of work to be completed to it, approximately \$10,000.00/year. Commissioner Norem questioned the DNR's request and asked why the County would be so willing to give up that road. She stated she would need more information before deciding. Attorney Lucas stated he would also like to see a written agreement with the neighboring property owners.

### **RE: AUDITOR'S BUSINESS: MINUTES, VENDOR CLAIMS DOCKET, PAYROLL CLAIMS DOCKET**

Commissioner Chesak made a motion to approve the Payroll Claims Docket for the pay period ending on November 18, 2017 with a pay date of November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017 in the total gross amount of \$231,880.35. Commissioner seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes.

Commissioner Chesak made a motion to approve the Vendor Claims Docket in the total gross amount of \$88,818.17. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes.

Commissioner Chesak made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 20<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes.

### **IN OTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD**

In regard to the request for GIS for the Kankakee River Basin Commission, Commissioner Norem made the motion to table this discussion for now until they have been notified that there will be a \$250.00 fee for that information. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes.

Ronnie Clemons and Matt Fox, former Post Commander and present Post Commander of the American Legion Post 92 in North Judson appeared before the Board. Mr. Clemons thanked the Board for the opportunity for the Post to speak. He also thanked the Board for their yearly contribution for the purchase of Memorial Day flags for the veterans. He advised their Post covers 8 different cemeteries in which they decorate the veteran's graves with the Memorial Day flags and in 7 of those cemeteries they experience no problems. However that is not the way it is at the Round Lake Cemetery. He explained after Memorial Day the flags and the metal flag holders are taken down. He does not know what the Cemetery does with the flags and the metal holders as they have never spoken with that Cemetery. He also stated that Cemetery does not allow the bronze plaque that is placed at the foot of a veteran's grave, which is a 12" x 24" foot marker. Mr. Clemons stated that the flags are all left at all the other cemeteries year long and they will replace any tattered flags. Attorney Lucas noted the Round Lake Cemetery, which is out in the Country, is handled by a Board of Directors and not by the normal Township Trustee. Mr. Clemons advised he would appreciate it if the Board of Commissioners would discuss this issue with the Round Lake Cemetery. President Binkley advised they would speak with them.

President Binkley opened the Public Hearing in regard to the UTV Ordinance at 6:41PM. Betty Boggs who lives on CR250S spoke against the proposed ordinance. She had read a letter she had written. Then there was a brief discussion involving several men who were in favor of the ordinance and against Mrs. Boggs. President Binkley closed the Public Hearing at 6:55PM. Attorney Lucas read the entire UTV Ordinance into record as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading of the ordinance. He stated the ordinance would become effective on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018. Commissioner Chesak made a motion to approve the UTV Ordinance. Commissioner Norem advised she would not second the motion, and it was seconded by President Binkley. Commissioner Norem stated she personally didn't care for this ordinance and she had received word from three individuals who were against it. They were her husband & Mrs. Boggs and didn't state the third individual. Commissioner Norem noted she used to work with Betty Boggs and she is a

wonderful person and is a wonderful nurse. She stated she could tell Mrs. Boggs comments meant a lot to her. However, Commissioner Norem stated the majority of the public is in favor of the ordinance so therefore she will be voting in its favor. At that time the voting of the ordinance passed with three ayes. Commissioner Norem stated Mrs. Boggs should talk with Sheriff Dulin in regard to this ordinance as the Sheriff was the one who first came to a meeting with a group of people and presented the idea to the board. Attorney Lucas noted that this ordinance does not include anyone's personal property and the speed limit to follow is the speed limit of the road they are on. He also noted that the Highway Superintendent could close a County Road from UTV traffic. Attorney Lucas advised the signed ordinance should be published in the legal section of The Leader and published on the County's website. Anyone requesting a sticker for their UTV should contact Sheriff Dulin.

Commissioner Norem advised she has completed a listing of appointment openings for 2018. Anyone interested in serving on any open board should send their letter of interest to the Board of Commissioners in care of the Auditor of Starke County. She noted the deadline for the letters of interest was December 27<sup>th</sup>.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Attorney Lucas advised he is working on the updating of the County Employee Handbook. He stated it could be completed at the next meeting and he is planning on also updating the Highway Department's handbook. He noted the update to the wording on the insurance coverage would also be completed.

Attorney Lucas stated he has been in contact with IT Richard who was advising him of a recent major slowdown of the fiber link connection between the Justice Center and these three County buildings here in Knox. He stated the Justice Center is more secure for the servers but the fiber link is too small being only 100 mgh link. He noted that the paperless Court system would be causing a lot more business for the servers. He stated Richard had asked about raising the capacity of the fiber link which could be increased up to approximately 10 times its current size. Attorney Lucas stated he had advised Richard to get a price proposal from MediaCom who provides the fiber link and also ask for a 10 day trial period to see if the increased size is helping the productivity of the County. He also advised Richard to get that increase in the fiber link approved at a public meeting of the Board of Commissioners.

There being no further public comment and no further business, Commissioner Norem made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. The meeting was adjourned at 7:21PM.

**DECEMBER 4, 2017**

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Don Binkley, President

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Kathryn Norem, Vice-President

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Charles Chesak

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