

MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2020

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in Regular Session at 6:00PM, in person at the Starke County Annex Building, Knox, Indiana, with Charles Chesak, Kathryn Norem (via Zoom) and Bryan Cavender present and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order by Commissioner President Charles Chesak directly at 6:00PM.

BID OPENING FOR COURTHOUSE SIDEWALK PROJECT

Attorney Lucas asked Auditor Oesterreich if she had received the sealed bids for the courthouse sidewalk project in a timely manner. Auditor Oesterreich agreed. Attorney Lucas then opened the first sealed bid as present by Mark Milo Enterprises. The bid read as follows: Package one \$38,994.00, Package two \$48,000.00, and Package three \$114,894.47. There was then a discussion regarding what the different packages consisted of. Package one is partial sidewalk construction only, package two is drainage construction only, and package three is both sidewalk construction and drainage construction around the entire courthouse square. Attorney Lucas then opened the second sealed bid as present by Reith-Riley Construction. The bid read as follows: Package one \$70,310.00, Package two \$55,785.00, and Package three \$142,895.00. Commissioner Norem advised that if they are going to do this it would be more cost effective to do the entire project. Commissioner Cavender agreed. Commissioner Chesak asked where the funds are coming from for this project. Commissioner Norem stated that the funds should come from Cum Cap as we have sufficient funds available to do this project within that fund. She said even with this amount we would not over extend the fund, that we do have the appropriations within the fund for this amount. She advised there is more money in there that could be appropriated next year as well. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to accept the bid of Mark Milo Enterprises, subject to the engineer's review/approval, in the amount of \$114,894.47 and for the project to be paid for from cumulative capital development. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

STARKE SOLAR LLC REZONING

Attorney Lucas advised that the way the rule is written it is required this discussion come up at the board's meeting today. However, the Board of Commissioners have 90 days to rule on this issue. Starke Solar LLC is requesting additional time and that the board does not get to the merits of it as there is additional work being done in ironing out some of the issues that have arisen. Chris, via Zoom, advised that is correct they are working with neighboring landowners and other stakeholders in Starke County with the issues that have arisen. Commissioner Norem stated that there were some concerns that the Petition was not completed appropriately. She asked if Attorney Lucas's concerns have been satisfied. Attorney Lucas advised not yet but they are working on this. Commissioner Norem advised that one of the biggest concerns was that less than a year after the Board of Commissioners had passed the ordinance for solar farms, the choice was to go around the ordinance and ask for a rezoning and this is a concern for herself. She advised she hopes everyone keeps in mind that there should be at least a one mile perimeter around the lakes because they are some of our best properties in Starke County. The ordinance was done with the intention to try and make sure everyone was satisfied. Commissioner Cavender agreed. Attorney Lucas advised the issue at hand is the request for Starke Solar LLC to have some additional time before we get to the merits on this to try and sort these issues out including the procedural issues. After further discussion from the Board and Attorney Lucas Commissioner Cavender made a motion to table this discussion until the second Commissioners meeting in January 2021, Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

EMS MONTHLY REPORT

Travis Clary, EMS Director and MaryLynn Ritchie, Clerk came before the Board of Commissioners to give their monthly report. She advised that in November they had a few more runs than last month. They are still at about 32% of their runs being hospital transfers. They are hoping to get the revenue up to about \$950,000 by the end of the year. Director Clary advised that our operations continue to run smoothly. We continue to operate 4 ambulances out of 3 bases located throughout our county. We have 3 24 hours 911 ambulances, and the 12 hour transfer unit during the day. The transfer unit seems to do just as many 911 calls in our Center/California Township area. The transfer unit also does many coverages for other ambulances as needed. Personnel has been a challenge over the last month. Our area

continues to be hit hard with COVID-19. We have had nearly half of our staff out on isolation in the last month. We have also had one full time EMT out on injury. That EMT was injured outside of the workplace. We are hoping for that EMT to be back early in December, but she is not out until the first part of January. We continue to be very fortunate for others to step up, and help out during these difficult times. I continue working the ambulance as needed, but I couldn't do it without the amazing team we have built over the last several years. I am thankful for our office staff, EMT's, and Paramedics. It has truly been a team effort.

Director Clary stated in-person training continues to be especially difficult during this time. We continue to postpone all in-person courses such as skills days etc. We have switched to a virtual audit & review with Starke Hospital. Audit & review is done monthly with Laporte/Starke hospitals, our Medical Director Dr. Marovich and our EMS coordinator Dale Lanham. We review patient care charts during this time, and see where we can improve with patient care protocols. Continuing education is required to be kept up with even throughout the pandemic. It has been a rather unique year in regards to training, we are making sure our staff gets the hours that they need. Out Paramedics need approximately 60 continuing education hours every years, and an EMT is about half of that. We like to average about 10 hours a month in training opportunities. If you average everything out they are required to get to 5 of those 10 hours of opportunities. I will be getting creative with local nursing homes, and other folks in or community in the coming months that need to keep up their CPR & other certifications. I am going to try to do a virtual class with them. American Heart Association had an initial extension on certifications when the pandemic began, but everything went back to normal on their end and I believe June/July. Nurses, Techs, Doctors and everyone involved in healthcare are still required to keep up with these certifications. He advised they had another injury free month in November.

Director Clary stated that 4230 (2019 Ford Gas) received an oil change/service at Ford in Knox. It also received caster bushings on the front end, two new front tires and an alignment. 0514 (2015 Chevy Diesel) received an oil change/service at our County Highway Department. It also had the heat repaired to the rear of the ambulance. Fire service performed that work, since they manufacture wheeled coach ambulances. 0084 (2012 Chevy Diesel) received an oil change/service at our County Highway Department. It also had the DEF system regenned at Ford in Knox after going into limp mode. 3308 will be going in for service this week. 0086 & 0085 had no issues/service this month. Director Clary advised that they had no major base maintenance issues to report for the month of November. Director Clary stated I have attended multiple meetings this month. The most unique only happens a couple of times a year. It was the Countywide Crisis Committee meeting with all 3 local schools. It was an excellent opportunity to collaborate with them on how we are all dealing with our current pandemic, and brush up on other emergencies that might happen within our schools. I also have been taking on the task of making sure our county continues the paperwork needed with the state in regards to PPE in the absence of an EMA Director. I recently went to Indianapolis to get 1000 surgical masks, N95 masks, KN95's and gowns. I will make sure we continue to keep up with this until we get a new EMA Director.

HIGHWAY MONTHLY REPORT

Stephen Ritzler, Starke County Highway Superintendent came before the Board of Commissioners to give his monthly report. He advised that the total revenue loss for this year in MVH was -5.71% and for LRS it was -5.07%. He then presented a chart for the LTAP Asset Management Submittal & Paser Ratings. This has to be submitted to LTAP every year to be eligible for the grant programs for the next year. The chart he presented listed the paser rating for the last four years, this chart shows that the percentage of poor roads have decreased over the last four years, and the fair roads have increased. Ritzler stated that November is a transitional month, they are preparing for winter, conducting as much training as possible, and hauling in material for the next summer's road improvement operations. For December we plan on continuing to stockpile materials and plow snow when needed. He then presented an update on the bridges:

Bridge 137 – CR 300 E over the Yellow River, just south of CR 50 N. Estimated completion date, Fall of 2022. They have scored the letters of interest based on INDOT proscribed rating system. Three consultants submitted letters of interest. JPR paired with BFS and that combination scored the highest and he would like to recommend the Commissioners approve BFS and JPR as the designer for Bridge 137. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve JPR & BFS to get the bid as the contractor for the bridge. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Bridge 7 – CR 1200 E over the Yellow River – In design. Estimated Completion Date, Fall of 2021.

Bridge 59 – CR700S over Bogus Run – Grant application being submitted for this replacement. Estimated Completion Date, Fall of 2022.

Bridge Structural Inspections – Phase II is nearing completion.

Superintendent Ritzler stated that with the updated county map, the first draft was completed by WTH. They have reviewed for necessary edits and sent it back to them. They are awaiting the next draft. He advised that last month he told the board that although we were awarded the maximum grant of \$1,000,000 for projects in the 1st round of 2020 CCMG, those projects underbid and we only used \$960,000 of those grant awards. This is allowing us to apply for more projects on the second call of the 2020 CCMG grants. The projects are: 1). Pipe replacement on 300 E, just N of 800 N. 2) Hot mix asphalt paving on 600 E between 800 N and 900 N. We are still waiting for the award announcement. They were notified a couple hours ago that the awards will be announced tomorrow. Superintendent Ritzler advised they have submitted three projects for the INDOT Federal call for projects. Those projects are 1) 500N from US35 to CR750E MHA road resurfacing, this project goes through Hamlet. Hamlet is partnering with us on this project. They will pay the funding match for their section of roadway. 2) Bridge No. 59 replacement, CR700S between CR100W and CR200W. 3) Sight distance improvements at 300E and Toto Rd. They will need to go up and defend these projects either sometime in late December or early January. After that they will see if they get awarded these projects. Superintendent Ritzler stated that for the driveway permits Marty has completed the draft of the ordinance, they are just about finished reviewing it and he will create a permit form to match and will send that out to the Board of Commissioners.

Superintendent Ritzler stated that they continue the high reflectivity upgrades, Louis and Jeremiah have finished upgrading all the stop ahead signs to high reflectivity. The stop signs were finished a few months ago. We are currently upgrading the double arrow signs at intersections. They are almost complete. The next sign to be upgraded are bridge markers and curve chevrons. He advised the Washington Township Helicopter landing area no parking signs have been installed. He stated that the auction that was held on November 24th, after auctioneer fees, the highway department received \$27,094.77. This will go towards the purchase of a new pickup as per our vehicle replacement plan. This will replace the pickup that sold at the auction. Superintendent Ritzler advised that the generator that was purchased through the CARES Act will be installed this Wednesday through Friday. He will be meeting with Edwin Buswell from KIRPC on December 16th for the KIRPC Safety Grant. He advised they will be replacing two of their garage doors later this month at the highway department. He also stated the US30 Coalition meeting will be this Friday, December 11th. In training this month they had grader training and APWA accreditation training. They have also been doing training with the new drivers for the snow routes. Superintendent Ritzler then presented the quotes for the 2021 material prices. The good news is that they are all pretty much the same as they were in 2020.

AUDITOR BUSINESS

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the payroll docket in the amount of \$275,427.58, including deductions in the amount of \$84,386.68 for the pay period ending on 11/14/2020 and pay date of 11/20/2020. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the payroll docket in the amount of \$277,520.34, including deductions in the amount of \$85,489.19 for the pay period ending on 11/28/2020 and pay date of 12/04/2020. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the vendor claims docket for a total in the amount of \$430,372.08. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the board minutes from November 2nd and November 16th, 2020. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

OTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the Tax Sale Resolution for the Certificate Sale that will be held in Spring, 2021. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Auditor Oesterreich explained that the county had been awarded around \$74,000 from the Indiana Safety Awareness grant to promote public safety awareness about COVID-19 and the spread of COVID-19. This has to be completed and invoiced by December 31st. She presented a proposal for radio ads

from WKVI in the amount of \$30,000 for canned radio ads. Attorney Lucas suggested using more personalized ads. Commissioner Norem suggested using \$15,000 for the canned radio ads but then using \$15,000 toward personalized ads that are recorded by people such as Health Nurse Frank Lynch and Katie Bombagetti so that it hits closer to home. It was also suggested to put ads in the newspapers regarding safety awareness for COVID -19 and the spread of COVID-19. Commissioner Norem made a motion to move forward with the radio ads as well as newspaper ads. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Commissioner Chesak advised that they will need to purchase a new vehicle for the Surveyor's Department. He presented three quotes as follows: 1) Quote from Lochmandy Ford Commercial, 2020 Ford F150 Crew Cab XL 4X4 in the amount of \$30,867.00, 2) Quote from Lochmandy Ford Commercial, 2020 Ford F150 SuperCab XL 4X4 in the amount of \$29,435.00, 3) Quote from Team Chevrolet, 2021 Chevy Silverado 1500, in the amount of \$33,496.25. After discussion regarding the three different types of vehicles Commissioner Cavender made a motion to go with the Ford quote of \$30,867.00. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

The Board of Commissioners agree that the County Government will remain closed to the public through December 21, 2020 at which time they will address the issue again. Attorney Lucas advised he would like the Commissioners to vote on the newly updated Employee Handbook at their next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

With there being no further public comments and no further business, Commissioner Cavender made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 PM.

DECEMBER 7, 2020

Charlie Chesak, President

Kathryn Norem, Vice-President

Bryan Cavender

Rachel Oesterreich, County Auditor
& Secretary to the Board of County Commissioners