

December 20th, 2010

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in regular session at 7:00 p.m. in the Annex meeting room, Knox, Indiana, with all members present and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting was called to order.

IN RE: KNOX INDUSTRIAL PARK

Charles Weaver, Economic Development Director, appeared at the joint meeting of the council and commissioners to speak to both the council and the commissioners regarding the Knox Industrial Park. He presented aerial maps for them to view. He spoke about renaming the Industrial Park to the Starke County Rail Park-Knox. He stated that he had approval from his board to do this and, as a courtesy; he also got the consent of the Knox City Council.

Kathy Norem moved to approve seconded by Jennifer Davis with 3 ayes.

Judy Benninghoff moved to approve seconded by Bob Sims with 6 ayes.

IN RE: PAYROLL CLAIMS

Kathy Norem moved to approve the 12-11-10 payroll including the extra payroll check due to a void on the original payroll seconded by Jennifer Davis with 3 ayes.

IN RE: MINUTES

Jennifer Davis moved to approve the 12-6-10 commissioner minutes seconded by Kathy Norem with 3 ayes.

Jennifer Davis moved to approve the 12-10-10 commissioner minutes with one correction—Jennifer Davis is a “proposed” appointment to the health board—seconded by Kathy Norem with 3 ayes.

IN RE: VENDOR CLAIMS

Kathy Norem moved to approve all vendor claims that exclude the specific prosecutor claims under review seconded by Jennifer Davis with 3 ayes.

Julianne Havens, Prosecutor, submitted amended claims and is withdrawing all the original claims except for Marilyn M. Jones and one for Smith Radio Shack in the amount of 49.97.

Jennifer Davis moved to approve these new claims contingent on fund and appropriation availability seconded by Kathy Norem with 3 ayes. If there is not the availability of funds and appropriations, the commissioners will meet at 9 am December 30th to discuss this right before their executive session on the same day at 9:30 am.

IN RE: COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS GRANT APPLICATION

Pat Mitchell, Chairman of the Advisory Board for Community Corrections, presented the grant application for budget years 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 for the commissioners’ approval. Kathy Norem asked if the work release program was part of this and Pat said no. Pat explained the four components of the grant.

This grant is for a two-year period with yearly review at \$183,718 per year. They are expecting on collecting approximately \$183,000 in user fees which is what they are working on the work release with.

The advisory board approved the grant application at their Dec. 7th meeting.

Dan Bridegroom asked if the grant continues, and Pat stated that in 25 years the state has not reduced a community corrections grant and that there is no county funding involved.

Kathy Norem moved to approve the grant application seconded by Jennifer Davis with 3 ayes.

IN RE: PROPOSED STARKE COUNTY FOREST

Bruce Wakeland gave an update on the proposed Starke County Forest. The new plan was created by the D.N.R. The trust agreement states that management must follow the plan and the area must remain a classified forest. This is a more complicated plan than most in the state.

Mr. Wakeland submitted a tentative budget for the Forest.

Mr. Wakeland stated that different sections were put into classified forest at different times and needs to be redone as one classified forest with a legal surveyor doing a legal description of the property.

He further stated that the trails need to be maintained and mowed and that the trash needs to be picked up. If restrooms are needed, they could use porta-potties for 6 months out of the year as they wouldn't be needed during the winter.

He then stated that income should come from hunting deer during the open season and timber sales. In 40 years there should be around \$100,000.

Mr. Wakeland's attorney, Jerry Humphrey, and Martin Lucas will get together to work this out.

IN RE: FINAL REPORT ON 1ST RESPONDER TRAINING

Charlie Collins and Kris Rannells gave the final report for the 1st responder training. There are now 9 certified (8 within the county) since November 15th. They have been operating since that time. They also reported that all scored above 90% on their certification. Every fire department now has at least one 1st responder.

There was more discussion on the program protocols already written and approved.

They stated that we now need to work on “paramedic chase”. The commissioners would like them both to be involved in this. They are looking in to the possibility of grants. Kathy Norem would like to put together a committee and meet after the first of the year. She would like the committee to include the commissioners, council, Kris Rannells, Charlie Collins and the E.M.S. Director initially and then go from there. This meeting will be held the 18th of January at 7 pm.

IN RE: KOONTZ LAKE PROJECT

The commissioners are writing a letter of support for the Koontz Lake Project-the dredging of Koontz Lake. Kathy Norem will bring the letter to the next meeting.

IN RE: HEALTH INSURANCE BIRTHDAY RULE

The insurance company asked that since we had a spousal carve out, did we want to invoke the “birthday rule” for their children. We do not have to do this.

Dan Bridegroom expressed his concerns regarding the added expense to some families due to the spousal carve out. Two employees called him and stated that their insurance will cost them over \$200 more a month with the carve out.

Kathy Norem stated that 1/5 of the county general budget is for insurance and we need to do something to curb the costs.

Kathy Norem moved to not invoke the “birthday rule” seconded by Jennifer Davis with 3 ayes.

IN RE: STARKE COUNTY LANDFILL

Dan Bridegroom received correspondence from Chad Bellamy with Weaver and Boos. Mr. Bellamy sent an estimate for drilling service at the landfill. The total estimate is \$26,654 for what needs to be done. Mr. Bellamy also wanted to know if the wells are still being monitored, which we don't think they are. Dan will reply to Mr. Bellamy.

IN RE: DEAD END ROAD AT 2535 S 100W, NORTH JUDSON

Cecil Risner stated that he bought property at the end of a dead end road known as 2535 S 100W, North Judson. He said that the road has been maintained by the county for 60 years and now they are not maintaining it. The snow plow goes part way and blocks him so he cannot get out.

Dan Bridegroom stated that it is not a road and if the county was maintaining it, it was out of the kindness of their heart. Dan said he would check with Steve Siddall, Highway Superintendent.

Mr. Risner stated again that it has always been done. Dan said that doesn't mean they will keep doing it if it shouldn't have been done in the first place.

Mr. Risner stated that there had been a lawsuit on this in 1998 or 1999.

Kathy Norem asked what could be done to petition to dedicate this road to the county.

IN RE: SNOW EMERGENCY DAYS WHEN COURTHOUSE IS CLOSED

The county had a level 1 snow emergency last Monday (Dec. 13th). Dan Bridegroom stated that in the past he was informed that the employees got paid for snow days. They stated that most places don't get paid if they don't come to work.

There was much discussion on whether or not the employees have to use a vacation day for a snow day. The Auditor is to contact LaPorte and Porter Counties to see if they paid their employees as they were also on a level 1 snow emergency.

Jennifer Davis moved to pay them for last Monday's snow day only and then to work on a policy from there. Dan Bridegroom seconded with 2 ayes 1 abstaining (KN).

Dan disagrees with paying them, but due to past practices and since no policy is in place, he seconded the motion.

Jennifer Davis moved that snow days from now on, when the courthouse is closed, must be used as a vacation day or a non-paid day and sick days cannot be used for this. Kathy Norem seconded the motion with 3 ayes.

Those employees that did not come to work Tuesday due to the weather have to use it as a vacation day or they do not get paid.

There being no further business to come before the board, Jennifer Davis moved to adjourn seconded by Kathy Norem with 3 ayes.

Dan Bridegroom, President

Kathy Norem, Vice President

Jennifer Davis

Michaelene J. Houston, Auditor

December 21st, 2010

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in special session at 9:00 a.m. in the Annex meeting room, Knox, Indiana, with Dan Bridegroom and Kathy Norem present along with council president, Mark Smith, and the following proceedings were held to wit:

IN RE: ORIENTATION FOR NEWLY ELECTED OFFICIALS

The commissioners showed a slide presentation to the newly elected officials on the county handbook and county policies and ethics. Mark Smith, Council President, spoke on the budget process. They answered all questions as well.

After this they took the newly elected officials around to the county buildings and offices.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Dan Bridegroom, President

Kathy Norem, Vice President

Jennifer Davis

Michaelene J. Houston, Auditor