

MONDAY, JANUARY 4, 2021

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, Bryan Cavender, and Mark Gourley 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. Commissioner Chesak welcomed new board member Commissioner Gourley to the Board of Commissioners.

2021 ORGANIZATION OF BOARD/BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to appoint Commissioner Chesak as Board President for 2021. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Gourley made a motion to appoint Commissioner Cavender as Board Vice-President for 2021. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to appoint Commissioner Gourley as Board Secretary for 2021. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to retain Attorney Martin Lucas as the Attorney for the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Chesak advised he would like to stay on the Starke County Drainage Board. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to retain Commissioner Chesak on the Starke County Drainage Board. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Gourley made a motion to appoint Commissioner Cavender to the Jail, Commissioner Gourley to the Courthouse and Annex, Commissioner Chesak to the Highway Department, Commissioner Gourley to the EMS Department, and Commissioner Chesak to the Landfill. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Commissioner Gourley made a motion to appoint Commissioner Chesak, Commissioner Cavender, and Commissioner Gourley to the Building Code Review Board by virtue of their office. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to appoint Commissioner Chesak, Commissioner Cavender, and Commissioner Gourley to the Finance Board by virtue of their office. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to appoint Commissioner Gourley and Commissioner Chesak to the Economic Development Board. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Chesak would like to postpone the appointments made to other boards until their next meeting on January 19th, 2021. He would like those board appointments to be advertised. Commissioner Chesak advised for the K.I.R.P.C. board it would consist of one of the Commissioners as well as two additional individuals. Commissioner Gourley made a motion to appoint Commissioner Cavender to K.I.R.P.C. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to appoint Commissioner Gourley to Arrowhead. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Commissioner Gourley made a motion to appoint Commissioner Chesak to the Workforce Development Board. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Chesak advised they have two appointments for the Planning Commission one spot being (R) and one spot being (D) and two appointments to the BZA one spot being (R) and one spot being (D). Commissioner Gourley made a motion to appoint Commissioner Cavender to the Planning Commission. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Chesak advised there are two appointments available on the Health Board, one spot being a (R) and one spot being a (D). He stated they also have one spot available on the Library Board, one spot on the Aviation Board as (R), two spots on the Hospital Community Board one being (R) and one being (D), one spot on the Alcoholic Beverage Board being (R). Commissioner Chesak made a motion to appoint Commissioner Chesak, Commissioner Cavender, and Commissioner Gourley to the Solid Waste Board by virtue of their office as well as appoint Councilman Leinbach to the Solid Waste Board. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Chesak advised for the P.T.A.B.O.A. Board they will be looking for both a (R) and a (D). Commissioner Cavender made a motion to appoint

Commissioner Chesak to the LEPC Board with Commissioner Gourley as his proxy. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made

a motion to appoint Commissioner Chesak to the Emergency Management Board with Commissioner Gourley as his proxy. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to appoint Commissioner Chesak to the FEMA Board with Commissioner Gourley as his proxy. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Chesak advised they will be looking for nine appointments to the Starke County Convention and Visitor's Commission. He advised they will have one appointment for the Building Corporation as well as one appointment for the Park Board. Commissioner Chesak advised that the Safety Committee and the Records Committee will not change. He also advised they will be looking for one (R) and one (D) for the Internal Controls Committee. Commissioner Chesak inquired on reappointing the Departments Heads in certain offices of the County Government. Attorney Lucas advised that there are three departments this pertains too and in his opinion the County Superintendent serves at the pleasure of the Board of Commissioners and does not have to be reappointed but they could reappoint if they so choose to. He advised for the IT department is created by the Board of Commissioners and they have statutory oversight of this department and something that they hire and can set the terms too. He advised that at some point the Board of Commissioners may consider a contract for the IT department. Attorney Lucas advised for the EMS department they have specifics for oversight authority and that they have the right to create and operate that department which would include choosing a Director, so they have the authority to choose that person and they would work at the pleasure of the Board of Commissioners. Attorney Lucas advised that in the past there was a tradition in revisiting those appointments everyday but there is nothing required by law for any of those appointments to be completed yearly.

EMS MONTHLY REPORT

Travis Clary, Director of EMS and Marylynn Ritchie, Clerk came before the Board of Commissioner to present their monthly report. Clerk Ritchie advised that the runs for the month of December where lower than previous months. However, the percentage of transfers from the hospital have increased. She explained that the second page of her report is everything they still have outstanding in billing. She advised they will be receiving \$15,046.22 from the Medicaid cost report reimbursement for the year of 2018. She stated the figure on the third sheet are accounts that are either in collections or still outstanding. Commissioner Chesak advised they had received \$1080.37 from Johnathan O'Hara and \$297.00 from Small Claims. EMS Director Clary advised our operations continue to run smoothly. We continue to operate four ambulances out of three bases located throughout our county. We have three 24 hour 911 ambulances, and the 12-hour transfer unit during the day. Personnel was back up to regular staff due to isolation of some employees and they had a full time EMT supposed to come back yesterday but she is still out due to an injury not work related. Hopefully it will be next week when she returns as she has a follow up appointment this week. He advised they had a couple other EMT's out this weekend for non-worked related back injuries. He covered the shifts on the ambulances over the weekend. He is hopeful to get back to full staff next week. Directed Clary stated in-person training continues to be difficult during this time. We are going to try to slowly ease our way back into some in-person training starting this Wednesday. We have a representative coming from Teleflex Medical. We are going to have an IO (intraosseous) in-service. An IO is a driver driven way to access someone's vascular system quickly.

Director Clary advised we actually will drill into someone's bone to gain access as quickly as possible say in a cardiac arrest situation, or when a patient's condition is critical and we don't have time to search for an IV site. The representative will make sure we are up to date on all new techniques, and placements. Placement is very important as to how quickly we can get the needed medications into the vascular system. The representative is also brining a new, and cheaper option video laryngoscope. It is called AirTraq. We currently have aging King Vision video scopes. We also have the direct/manual intubation techniques. We will put all three of these options together for our employees to practice intubation during the skills session. It will be an excellent time to check out some equipment, and gather much needed continuing education hours. We held our monthly Audit & Review virtually once again in December. A & R is done monthly with Laporte/Starke Hospital's, 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. He advised they have had an injury free month in December.

Director Clary advised that 0084 (2012 Chevy Diesel) spent about 2 ½ weeks over at the Chevy Dealer in Plymouth. It was there to have the thermostat issues on the exhaust system fixed. The faulty thermostats were causing the DEF system to go into limp mode, and give false cleaning messages that would not clear. It was running over there after it was completed, and the radiator had gone out. They

also replace an injector that was under warrant with the truck's miles. All other primary units were serviced in December being 4230, 0514, and 3308. My ALS Non-Transport Vehicle 4149 also received a full service and had a recall repaired. 0086 & 0085 our backup units had no issues/service this month. He reported having no major base maintenance issues to report for the month of December. Directed Clary advised that this weekend they had plumbing issues at medic 1 and some garage door issues at their base in Grovertown when the power was out. He stated they were out of power for several hours. He would like to look into generators for their stations, he spoke with Busse Electric today to try and get some ideas. He recommended a generator that is ready to go and one that you don't have to use gas. The ambulances and medications have to stay at a certain temperature. Busse Electric advised a natural gas automatic unit would be about \$6500. Commissioner Chesak asked if that was for all the bases. Director Clary advised that would be the price for one base but the Grovertown base would be the priority. Commissioner Chesak asked Director Clary to check with a few other electrical businesses and get prices from them as well. Commissioner Gourley suggested getting quotes from a competitor to Generac or other Generac dealers. Director Clary stated I recently attended a webinar to see about our service becoming a mass immunizer in the wake of an approved vaccine for COVID-19. It went over what would need to be done, and any potential reimbursement rate through Medicare specifically. It would be someone from our service going to a home to vaccinate someone. The reimbursement rates are rather low though. I have been in recent talks with Frank about how we can help him out when we have a community event to vaccinate. I do have several employees who have offered to help. They could either give the vaccines themselves, or Frank would need a medical professional to sit with patients after they were vaccinated for approximately 15 minutes. He advised our current PPE status is stable. We continue to keep a close eye on it, and make necessary purchases as they are needed.

HIGHWAY MONTHLY REPORT

Highway Superintendent Ritzler came before the Board of Commissioner to present his monthly report. He advised as they have been tracking all year, he advised he was expecting a 5% to 10% loss and they are currently just under 5% for both MVH and LRS. For MVH this means they had received \$140,000 less and for LRS it was \$19,000 less. He presented the board with a chart that lists the funds and the account balances in those fund as of January 1, 2020 and January 1, 2021. He advised that for the month of December they mostly spent hauling stone for their summer road improvements. We did have a few minor snow events that acted as good training events for some of our new drivers. I met with the Surveyor today to inspect some of the sand they are taking out of the Yellow river as part of their dredging, cleaning program. We may be able to use it for our winter salt sand mixture. This will save our County a great deal of money in material costs. Superintendent Ritzler advised that Bridge 137 – CR300E over the Yellow River, just South of CR50N estimated completion date, Fall of 2022 or Spring of 2023. They choose a consultant last month and will be meeting with them regarding the designs. Bridge 7 – CR1200E over the Yellow River is in design, it will be completed with the Fall of 2021 or Spring of 2022. Bridge 59 – CR700S over the Bogus Run, the grant application will be submitted for this replacement, the estimated completion date will be Fall of 2022. He advised the bridge structural inspections phase II is almost completed and they should have a draft later this month, this will be presented at the February meeting.

Superintendent Ritzler stated that the final draft of the County map was approved at the last Commissioner's meeting, and we should be receiving out quota of maps soon. HE advised this month we found out that we were awarded grants for two projects in Round 2 of the 2020 CCMG program. In 2020, we were awarded four projects and the maximum total award amount of \$1,000,000. The two projects awarded this round were: 1) Pipe replacement on 300E, just N of 800N, 2) Hot mix asphalt paving on 600 E between 800N and 900N. Over the last four years we have received over \$3,000,000 in CCMG funding. He advised INDOT recently announced a Federal grant opportunity. We submitted three applications for this call for projects. Unlike Community Crossings grants we are somewhat limited in what projects we can submit for this round of grants. The roadways must be in the National Highway System. All bridges are eligible as well. 1) 500N from US35 to CR750E HMA road resurfacing – This project also goes through Hamlet. Hamlet is partnering with us on this project. They will pay the funding match for their section of roadway. 2) Bridge 59 replacement, CR700S between CR100W and CR200W. 3) Toto Road sight distance correction at CR300E. He advised that they were notified a few weeks ago that all their projects were accepted for the presentation round of the grant process. We will be presenting these in front of the INDOT panel on January 14th. We are the only LPA in the LaPorte district with three projects this round. Over the last few years, we have been awarded over \$3,000,000 in INDOT call the project grants and other minor grant programs such as the railroad crossing improvement grant. These grants combined with our CCMG grants total over \$6,000,000 in the last four years. We have essentially maxed out our budgets ability to match these grant awards.

Superintendent Ritzler presented the board with a list of entities that are allying for the Federal grant opportunity. He advised the third reading of the Driveway Permit Ordinance will be read tonight. He met with Edwin Buswell on December 16th. The grant process is moving ahead and we will be starting on the Road Safety plan sometime in the next year. The road safety plan will also enable us to get more grants than we have in the past. One thing that we have focused on in the last few months is our facilities. The new generator installation we be January 9th, two new garage doors on January 12th, new front door for the office, new lighting in the areas around our equipment storage shed, and repairs to the salt shed. This is all done with money in our existing budget. Superintendent Ritzler advised there was a US30 Coalition meeting last week. As you know we have been on the sidelines monitoring this, and there has been some movement on this. It looks like there has been an EIS completed which is an Environmental Impact Statement. INDOT already has plans for a J turn improvement to the intersection of SR23 and US30, this is planned for about two years from now. As you know we have not paid our dues but we are still on the committee and they are still allowing us to be on the committee. Superintendent Ritzler advised that the IACHES Indiana Association of Highway Engineers and Supervisors held its annual meeting. During that meeting he was appointed to the group's Board of Directors (six members). HE advised he is the new director for the Northwest District, which aligns with the 13 counties in INDOT's LaPorte District. This will help us in lobbying efforts for the highway funding and legislation. Commissioner Gourley asked about not being current on the US30 Coalition dues. Superintendent Ritzler explained that was a decision made last year by the Commissioner because it did not look like the committee was going anywhere and it really hasn't. He explained that it did not look like INDOT was going to support the US30 Coalition project either. It was the Commissioners decision that if we were not going to benefits from this then it was not worth pay the dues. He agreed with them because it didn't look like the project was going anywhere. This is some movement now but that does not guarantee anything. Commissioner Gourley asked if because there is some movement on this now, we will need to keep an eye on it. Superintendent Ritzler agreed and he advised they will know more after the meeting next month. Commissioner Cavender asked if the road improvement project on 600E should state 700N to 900N and not 800N to 900N. Superintendent Ritzler explained that the grant portion of the project is from 800N to 900N but they will be completing 700N to 800N as well using the highway's own funding.

SHERIFF – CLEAN CITIES GRANT

Matron McDonald explained she had sent out an email that included the grant agreement of the grant they had applied for earlier in the year. The grant was completed through South Shore Clean Cities. She advised the grant was approved for the amount of \$50,000. The stipulations are that they do have to purchase two vehicles in order to get the \$50,000, she advised the total of the two vehicles is \$77,806. This would be for two 2021 police interceptor ford explorers. What they are requesting is the additional \$27,806 through cumulative capital development fund to be able to purchase these two vehicles. Commissioner Chesak asked if before they discussed this grant but we were going to received \$50,000 toward the purchase of one vehicle. Matron McDonald stated that was correct that they did submit the grant for the purchase of one vehicle but they were told they need to purchase two vehicles or they will not be eligible for the grant. After further Discussion Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the purchase of the vehicles and that \$27,806 to be paid from cumulative capital development. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

AUDITOR BUSINESS

Commissioner Gourley made a motion to approve the payroll docket in the amount of \$259,709.22, including deductions in the amount of \$79,227.83 for the pay period ending on 12/26/2020 and pay date of 01/04/2021. Commissioner Cavender 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 \$1,305,585.84. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the minutes from December 7th and December 21st of 2020. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

OTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD

Commissioner Chesak presented the Ordinance Providing for Permitting of Private Drive Connections to County Right-of-Way for the third reading. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to adopt the

Ordinance Providing for Permitting of Private Drive Connections to County Right-of-Way.
Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to continue the closure to the public in the county buildings until their next meeting. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to extend the FFCRA COVID pay until their first meeting in February. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve government building keys to Treasurer Lauri Venckus, Commissioner Mark Gourley, and Deputy Rhonda Graves. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Auditor Oesterreich presented the quotes received for the purchase of the new Coroners vehicle. The quotes are as follows:

- 1) Lochmandy Ford Commercial, 2021 Ford Expedition \$40,377.00
- 2) Auto Park GMC, 2020 Chevrolet Suburban, \$42,114.00
- 3) Auto Park GMC, 2019 Chevrolet Tahoe, \$37,859.00
- 4) Auto Park GMC, 2020 Chevrolet Suburban, \$42,064

Auditor Oesterreich advised that they do have about \$32,000 remaining in the COVID grant fund. The most they would be paying is around \$10,000 from cumulative capital development. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the purchase of the 2021 Ford Expedition from Lochmandy Ford in the amount of \$40,377. The CARES funding will be used and the remaining to be paid from cumulative capital development fund. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

A discussion was held regarding the Starke County Economic Development foundation and the discussions that will need to take place prior to March 1, 2021 when the contract expires. A discussion was held regarding the rezoning application that will be held at the next meeting.

A discussion was held regarding the solar farm project and that it will be discussed at the next Board of Commissioner meeting. Attorney Lucas is still waiting for a revised Petition on the project with the signatures of the landowners affected.

A discussion was held regarding the Sysco resolution proposal. Councilman Pearman will be reviewing the draft proposal as well as Commissioner Chesak.

Councilman Pearman advised the it was the suggestion of the council to purchase a vehicle for the coroner but that purchase was not to exceed over \$32,000 and the purchase was to be for a used vehicle.

PUBLIC COMMENT

With there being no further public comments and no further business, Commissioner Cavender made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

JANUARY 4, 2021

Charlie Chesak, President

Bryan Cavender, Vice-President

Mark Gourley

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