

## January 5, 2009

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in regular session at 5:00 p.m. in the Annex meeting room, Knox, Indiana, and the following proceedings were held to wit:

Dan Bridegroom requested that all cell phones be put on silent except emergency personnel.

### **IN RE: DECEMBER 15, 2008 MINUTES**

Mark Milo being the only commissioner present from the December 15, 2008, meeting as the other two commissioners' terms expired December 31, 2008, moved to approve the December 15, 2008, minutes.

### **IN RE: EMS**

Mary Lynn Ritchie explained the billing and collection process for EMS to the two new commissioners. She also explained the write-off process and informed them that there were no write-offs this month.

The commissioners were also informed about receipts for EMS and about EMS patient transfers.

The commissioners asked Mary Lynn to get quotes from others for when they needed help from other EMS services due to our ambulances already being in use.

Mary Lynn informed the commissioners that she was in receipt of a check from the County Clerk for small claims in the amount of \$130.00 and a check from the collection agency, John O'Hara, in the amount of \$171.06.

### **IN RE: HIGHWAY**

Steve Siddall, interim Highway Superintendent, informed the commissioners that he had received a letter from I.D.E.M. that everything at the garage has been passed at this time.

He also reported that our insurance agent called wanting M.V.R.s on all prospective employees. Sheriff Oscar Cowen stated that all M.V.R.s are run through the state.

Steve further reported that he had received information and forms from F.E.M.A. that needed to be filled out regarding all the damage from last year. He reported that all the work has been completed. Steve would like the commissioners and the county attorney to review everything so that the forms could be submitted back to F.E.M.A. in order to receive the balance of the reimbursement from them.

Steve stated that two springs on the overhead doors at the highway garage had broken. He called D.C. Garage Doors to repair the doors. They had to order parts that should be in on Wednesday.

Steve is concerned about the fact that there are only fifteen truck drivers (including the interim foreman) at this time and we have 18 areas to cover. He would like to see three more hired if possible, but stated he could probably get by with two if necessary. The commissioners discussed the employees going back to forty-hour workweeks versus hiring new employees. They also discussed pulling a mechanic and to stop working on other county vehicles.

Kathy Norem stated that she is in favor of eliminating a mechanic, adding a truck driver and putting the hours back to forty per week, and to continue working on other county vehicles in order to save the taxpayers.

Kathy Norem moved to eliminate a mechanic with the least seniority, to have the highway return to a forty-hour workweek, and to add a driver to the current roster, offering that position first to the displaced mechanic seconded by Dan Bridegroom with 3 ayes.

The Auditor's office informed the commissioners that the purchase of a new cell phone was on the highway's Centennial bill. The commissioners asked Steve to research why it was purchased, why we have it, and who issued it.

Sue Himes, Highway Clerk, stated that Scott Dedloff was told by John Norris to go pick up the new phone, as Scott's wasn't working. The bill shows that this entered the county into a longer contract, also. The commissioners requested that Steve talk to Scott about this tomorrow.

### **IN RE: C.R. 300E PROJECTS**

Jeff Larrison with United Consulting came before the commissioners at their request to explain the C.R. 300E projects to the two new commissioners. Charles Weaver, Director of the Economic Development Foundation, helped to explain parts of the projects.

Charles Weaver wanted to know if the state was going to offer more funding and if not, where would the funds for the shortfall come from.

Duane Arndt, spokesperson for Congressman Joe Donnelly, spoke to the commissioners about the stimulus packages coming out. He informed them that they had to be construction projects for infrastructure and the projects had to be "ready to go". These projects have to be under construction by June 1 to be eligible. Duane further stated that all the information regarding the stimulus package is not available at this time, but should be coming out soon. To be eligible, they will also look at how many people will be working on the project, and the cost of the project.

### **IN RE: MAINTENANCE, TRENDING AND REASSESSMENT**

Rhonda Milner, County Assessor, had requested bids for the annual maintenance and trending and for reassessment. Property Systems was the only company that submitted a bid. Rhonda requested, pending approval by the DLGF and the county attorney, that the commissioners sign it at the next meeting. She will not be in attendance as she will be at an Assessors' Conference.

Rhonda informed the commissioners that reassessment is to begin July 1<sup>st</sup>. The D.L.G.F. is trying to get that delayed.

Dan Bridegroom moved to approve pending approval of the D.L.G.F. and the county attorney seconded by Kathy Norem with 3 ayes.

### **IN RE: UPCOMING BIDS FOR SYSCO PROJECTS**

Charles Weaver and Van Janovic wanted to discuss the process of the bidding on the Sysco projects and wanted to explain the projects to the commissioners. Van gave the commissioners packets for all three of the projects for their perusal.

Charles Weaver informed the commissioners that the pre bid conference is to be held Thursday, January 8, 2009, at 10:00 a.m.

### **IN RE: JANUARY 2, 2009, MINUTES**

Dan Bridegroom moved to approve the January 2, 2009, minutes seconded by Kathy Norem with 3 ayes.

### **IN RE: COUNTY PURCHASING**

Mark Milo moved to continue having all purchases exceeding \$100 to go before Bob Smith, I.T. Coordinator, seconded by Kathy Norem with 3 ayes.

### **IN RE: F.E.M.A. FORMS**

Martin Lucas, County Attorney, finished reviewing the F.E.M.A. papers submitted by the highway department and stated that they all appeared to be in order. Kathy Norem moved to approve them and have Dan Bridegroom sign them seconded by Mark Milo with 3 ayes.

**IN RE: EDUCATIONAL SESSION ON EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

Most of the department heads that responded prefer that all the employees sit in on the educational sessions. The sessions will be about an hour or an hour and a half once a year.

County Attorney, Martin Lucas, said that the handbook actually looks pretty good—it just needs some editing and a little clean up, but basically good.

**IN RE: HIGHWAY CONTINUED**

Kathy Norem feels that the highway superintendent should be able to hire who they want. Mark Milo explained that in the past, they let the superintendent interview prospective employees and submit his or her preferences and the commissioners would choose from them.

Kathy Norem feels that the superintendent should be able to manage his or her own office and be held responsible. Mark Milo stated that the commissioners shouldn't have to micromanage.

Dan Bridegroom will work with Martin Lucas to come up with a job description for the superintendent.

**IN RE: SEWAGE LEAK IN PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE**

Kathy Norem called three plumbers for a quote to fix the current problem of the sewage leak in the Prosecutor's Office and to get a quote to replace all the pipes.

Mark Milo moved to allow Kathy Norem to sign and approve the lowest and best bid for the current problem seconded by Dan Bridegroom with 3 ayes.

**IN RE: I.T. OFFICE LOCATED IN THE TREASURER'S OFFICE**

Kathy Norem moved to keep the I.T. Coordinator, Bob Smith's, office location as is at the present time seconded by Dan Bridegroom with 3 ayes.

**IN RE: PERSONNEL COMPLAINT**

Kathy Norem moved to have Dan Bridegroom collect information on a personnel complaint received by the commissioners seconded by Mark Milo with 3 ayes. They will set an executive session after the information is collected.

**IN RE: RAILS FOR TRAILS**

Mark Milo submitted a letter and information from the "Trails" project for our information, as it is located in our county.

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

---

Dan Bridegroom, President

---

Kathy Norem, Vice President

---

Mark Milo, Member

---

Michaelene J. Houston, Auditor and  
Secretary to the Commissioners