

Monday, Feb. 7, 2011

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in regular session at 9:00am in the Annex meeting room, Knox, Indiana, with Dan Bridegroom, Kathy Norem, and Jennifer Davis present and the following proceedings were held to wit:

RE: MINUTES

Kathy Norem made the motion to approve a draft of the minutes of the Jan. 17 and Jan. 18 meetings, and the final minutes of the Jan. 3 meeting. Jennifer Davis seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with three ayes.

RE: PAYROLL AND VENDOR CLAIMS

Kathy Norem made the motion to approve the payroll claim of Jan. 22, 2011 in the amount of \$ 166932.92; seconded by Jennifer Davis; passing with three ayes.

Discussion began regarding the claims submitted by the prosecutor's office regarding the reimbursement of expenses occurred while attending the 2010 Newly-Elected and Appointed Prosecuting Attorneys Training Seminar and Attorney General's Winter Conference, held in Indianapolis, on December 5 – 9, 2010. The claims were submitted by employees: Ryan Bratcher, Jeff Williams, Julianne Havens, and Mary Ryan. Nick Bourff and Mary Ryan of the Starke County Prosecutor's Office appeared before the board to answer questions regarding these claims. It was discovered that the four members who had attended the conference had all driven separately, incurring four different mileage claims, and four different parking bills. A large portion of the discussion centered around the reimbursement for meals, questioning the amount of money that had been spent on meals, and in turn were asking for reimbursement.

Ms. Norem made the motion to adopt the state's policy of travel allowances as the county policy. Ms. Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed. (a copy of the Summary of Travel Allowances is attached to the minutes).

After a statement from Mr. Bridegroom, which advised anyone who is attending a meeting should carpool if possible, the hotel rooms and parking were approved to be reimbursed as was requested in the claim. But on the meal reimbursement portion of the claim, only \$ 6.50/breakfast, \$ 6.50/lunch and \$ 13.00/dinner was approved. The one submitting the claim for meals will only receive up to the amount stated in the policy, It isn't an automatic payment for meal reimbursement of \$ 26.00 per day, and the claim needs to be supported by the actual receipt for the meal.

RE: EMS

Mary Lynn Ritchie appeared before the board requesting signatures on the reports of write-offs. Delinquent accounts who were classified as elderly, with no co-pay and no secondary insurance totaled to \$ 1712.28. Delinquent accounts who are deceased or had filed bankruptcy totaled \$ 3188.29. Jennifer Davis made the motion to accept these reports, and Kathy Norem seconded the motion. Ms. Ritchie also notified the board of \$ 851.81 collected from Mr. O'hara and \$ 120.00 received from the Starke County Clerk for accounts that were in collections. Ms. Norem asked to see a report of the number of runs based on the payer class. She would also like to see an aging report of the accounts receivable, which Ms. Ritchie acknowledged she could do.

Lisa Burger, the EMS Director appeared before the board to give them some statistics. She advised between Jan. 1, 2007 and 12/31/2009, a total of 11,132 runs had been completed. She also explained that when there is a paramedic intercept from Plymouth, Starke County does the billing, but Plymouth does receive one half of that billing, which is why there is a payment to Plymouth. Kathy Norem advised, in reference to the paramedic situation in Starke County, they have met with the representative from Clinton County but, so far, not the one from Wheatfield. Ms. Burger advised the EMT class would possibly be held in mid-March through Starke Memorial. She also advised the office equipment in the Grovertown office was being updated. The claim was encumbered expense. The commissioners advised her that next time they would like to know beforehand of any major expense. They did inquire if she was happy

with the snow plowing of the ambulance drives and she stated the plowing could be done quicker.

RE: COUNTY HIGHWAY

Charlie Weaver, the Executive Director of the Starke County Economic Development Foundation, appeared before the board to give a status of the CR 300E project. He advised the work was on schedule. The Commissioners inquired as to the \$ 7500.00 claim that had been submitted, payable to KIRPC. He advised it was the grant management fee and was considered our match for the grant. They also inquired about a payment of \$ 231.00 to that same account. Mr. Weaver advised he was not aware of that payment, and didn't remember a claim for that amount. They also inquired as to the status of the Sysco Project. Mr. Weaver advised it should still be a go, when the economy improves.

Steve Siddall, Highway Superintendent appeared before the board. He was congratulated on a job well done regarding the recent snow storms. Steve advised they have an issue with damage to mailboxes. He advised Marshall County does not replace mailboxes and neither does INDOT. He also advised a lot of the mailboxes are located in the county's right of way. The board advised they will not replace mailboxes that are damaged unless they are actually hit by a snow plow but not destroyed because of the snow pushed by the snow plow. Mr. Siddall also advised they would be widening the roads at Bass Lake and Koontz Lake. They were rolling back the roads on Monday. They also need to address the issue of yard decorations: fences and boulders that are placed on the county right away. They advised possibly they could notify the homeowners in the summertime regarding the situation of yard decorations being in the county's right of way.

RE: COUNTY FIREFIGHTERS

David Combs, President of the Starke County Fire Fighters appeared before the board to discuss the FCC radio license of the fire departments in the county. He advised he would like the name of ownership transferred to the Starke County Commissioners and some of the radio locations, and the mailing address needed to be changed. He also advised the cost of the license renewal is \$ 110.00 but the current term doesn't expire until 2014.

RE: COUNTY CORRECTIONS

Patrick Mitchell, from Starke County Corrections, appeared before the Board with the lease for their office space. Following a discussion of lessor vs. leasee and tenant vs. landlord, Kathy made a motion to approve the lease, seconded by Jennifer. They approved the new contract.

RE: ED TRUTY FMLA

Regarding the request by Ed Truty to extend the term of his FMLA, no one attended the meeting, not Mr. Truty, nor Sheriff Cowen. The Board advised they would need to see a statement from Mr. Truty's doctor before an extension could be discussed. Ms. Davis made the motion to table the request until the Feb. 21st meeting. The motion was approved.

RE: FORENSIC FLUIDS

Mr. Bridegroom advised since the county's liability insurance requires drug testing, the county is interested in pursuing Forensic Fluids to do the testing. Any county employee that drives a county vehicle would be required to take a drug test. Ms. Norem advised she believed the expense would be \$ 18.00 fee per person and possible also a \$ 18.00 fee per person for being the MRO, medical review officer. They would like Forensic Fluids to appear before them at the next meeting.

RE: BASS LAKE PIERS

A copy of the pier proposal at Bass Lake had been presented to the Board of Commissioners, by David Wallsmith. The map showing the piers also showed the mooring stations that are being planned. Mr. Bridegroom advised they will need to be concerned on how the mooring stations will affect the size of the State Beach, but according to Tom Torsell, the State Conservation

Officer, the county can say how many mooring stations are involved. Since the Board was only agreeing to piers at this time, Ms. Norem made the motion to accept the proposal, Ms. Davis seconded the motion. DNR projects PL21665 and PL21666 were officially accepted. Mr. Bridegroom also advised the county would not be policing the piers.

RE: AVIATION BOARD

Following the receipt of a letter from the Starke County Democratic Party Chairman, Kenneth Wallace, regarding Lionel Smead, Ms. Norem made the motion to appoint Lionel Smead to the Starke County Aviation Board. The appointment passed.

RE: COUNTY HIGHWAY VACATION HOURS

It was brought to the Board's attention that the clerk of the county highway had a question regarding the accrual of vacation time while the employee was actually on vacation. Ms. Norem advised the question could be of accruing vacation hours while on sick leave. Marty Lucas advised he would talk to the Clerk.

RE: INSURANCE MEETING

Ms. Norem advised of an upcoming meeting with the Board of Commissioners and the Cigna insurance representatives on Tuesday, Feb. 15 at 11:30am. The meeting is to discuss the Wellness Program and Biometrics screening.

RE: BURN ORDINANCE

Dan Bridegroom advised they had received an answer to Larry Wappel's question at the Public Hearing for the County Burn Ordinance. It also answers Linda Byer's question. The answer is that the "large pile" does not apply to them. Jennifer Davis made a motion to accept the burn ordinance as the official county ordinance. Kathy Norem did not agree. She advised she has been receiving a lot of feedback from county residents, mostly stating the county already has a burn ordinance, that meets the state's statutes, why does the county need another. Ms. Davis stated the enforcement of the ordinance is the key in the new ordinance. Marty Lucas stated there had been a problem with the indexing of the present ordinance. Ms. Norem is questioning the commitment of the county's Solid & Waste. The motion died for lack of a second. The issue was tabled until the next meeting.

RE: ANIMAL CONTROL

Mr. Bridegroom advised he had received a request from the animal control officer to purchase some new equipment. It was decided there was not enough funds appropriated for purchasing new equipment. Also in discussion was a claim submitted for payment to the Starke County Humane Society, which was a billing for boarding animals during the fourth quarter period of 2010. Mr. Bridegroom advised they have had that discussion before, and they were not compensating the humane society for boarding animals that are taken there by the county animal control officer. He stated once the animals are taken to the humane society they become the property of the humane society and are no longer county animals. He advised the owners of the animals are responsible for the billing.

RE: SNOW DAYS

The Starke County Clerk, Evelyn Skronski appeared before the Board to asked them to reconsider their policy of not paying employees for the time the county offices are closed due to bad weather. Mrs. Skronski advised her employees were upset over the policy. If you have no vacation time accumulated, the employee loses \$ 103 a day. Ms. Davis inquired as to how the work is made up when the workers lose a day. Mrs. Skronski stated her workers come in early or work during their lunch time. She inquired if the employees could work on Saturday mornings to make up the lost day. It was the consensus of the Board that the makeup of lost hours be allowed at the discretion of the department head or responsible elected official.

The makeup work must get preapproval from the department head, and also the department head should have the necessary makeup work recorded in writing as to what needs to be completed.

Also it is up to the department head to verify the worker actually completed the work, and didn't just come in to the office and put in time. Ms. Davis asked Mrs. Skronski to notify the other department heads at the upcoming meeting, that afternoon, at 1:00 in the conference room of the courthouse.

At this time in the meeting, Ms. Norem needed to leave.

RE: PAY CLAIMS

In the process of reviewing claims, Mr. Bridegroom inquired as to why the official bonds of the elected officials are paid out of the commissioner's fund. He advised he would like to know what the history of payment shows in the past couple of years.

Also discussed was the purchase by the previous Prosecuting Attorney, of chairs for the 911 dispatchers, and desks for the county's detectives. It was decided those were the claims that had been allowed back in December, when her original claims were discussed. Mr. Bridegroom did advise the department heads need to have preapproval being making any major purchases.

Also on the Merit Board, the check to Al Amidei, be made payable to the Estate of Al Amidei for meetings from May and June, 2010.

Jennifer made the motion to approve the payment of all claims, except for the claim to the Starke County Humane Society in the amount of \$ 375.00. The motion passed.

RE: IN OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Bridegroom advised there is a training conference on March 4, to learn the usage of software that helps locate specific points in the county. Attending the conference was recommended by Rhonda Milner.

Mr. Bridegroom also advised they needed to make sure they remained members of the Association of Indiana Counties.

In regard to naming a replacement to the BZA board it was decided a non office holding appointee to the planning commission could be named also to the BZA board.

Kathy Norem made the motion to appoint Denise Marks to the Starke County BZA Board, Seconded by Jennifer Davis.

Also discussed was correspondence received from 1st National Bank of Monterey regarding some abandoned funds. Marty Lucas advised that should probably be handled by the Secretary of State.

Mr. Bridegroom advised Ted Bombagetti had inquired if he could use an old county vehicle during weather emergencies. He believed it was the 4WD vehicle that had been briefly used by the Starke County Corrections Department, that had originally been used by the Sheriff's Department. No decision was made, until it is determined if the vehicle is plated and insured.

In reference to the cleaning of the courthouse, it was determined the cleaning has been started, but additional work is needed to wipe down the residue left from the cleaning products. Approximately 60% of the work has been completed.

Mr. Bridegroom inquired if the auditor's office could actually reject claims. Marty Lucas advised the claims process should be handled as is, but the auditor's office could "red flag" potential problematic claims.

Mr. Bridegroom announced the receipt of a request by Justin Davis of North Judson to be appointed to the Starke County Health Board. Marty Lucas advised it would be allowed for Ms. Davis to vote on the appointee, considering he is her nephew.

Mr. Bridegroom made the motion to appoint Justin Davis to the health board, seconded by Jennifer. The motion passed with two ayes. Ms. Norem was absent.

Robert Smith, the ITT Director, appeared before the Board to request signatures on a purchase order with the Vermillion Systems Co. to purchase video surveillance for the county jail, and a

maintenance agreement, which covered the probation department's copier. Jennifer Davis made the motion to approve the documents for signatures. The motion passed with two ayes.

Jennifer Davis made the motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed.
The meeting was adjourned at 12:50pm.

Dan Bridegroom, President

Kathy Norem, Vice President

Jennifer Davis

Katherine Chaffins Auditor &
Secretary to the Commissioners