

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2020

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Council and meet in a joint session with the Starke County Board of Commissioners at 5:30PM in the Annex Building Meeting Room, Knox, Indiana, with Dave Pearman, Kay Gudeman, Don White, Howard Bailey, Charles Chesak, Kathryn Norem, and Bryan Cavender present, and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting was called to order by Council President, Dave Pearman at 5:30PM.

BAKER TILLY JAIL BOND REFINANCING

Andrew Mouser from Baker Tilly came before the Starke County Council and Board of Commissioners to give an update on the Jail Bond Refinancing. He advised they had sent out a request for proposals to various banks and underwriting firms on the county's behalf several weeks ago. He stated they did receive those back and the Auditor's Office has a copy as well as the Council President. Mr. Mouser went through and summarized each proposal being Fifth Third Securities, Stifel, Raymond James, KeyBanc, and Baird. He also went through the Starke County Building Corporation Lease Refunding Proposed Time Tables as provided by Ice Miller. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the resolution as presented by Baker Tilly regarding the approval of the refunding of the Ad Valorem Property Tax Economic Development Income Tax Rental Bonds of 2013. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. President Pearman asked what option would Mr. Mouser advice be to take. President Pearman stated he believes option 4 is a good option. Mr. Mouser agreed that option for is a strong option for Starke County. Commissioner Norem agreed that option 4 would be the best option for Starke County with a savings of \$628,000.00. Mr. Mouser explained tonight they would need a verbal approval to continue with Baird & Company. They will then come back next month with formal terms and conditions. Councilman Baker made a motion to move forward with the commitment to Baird & Company, option 4. Councilwomen Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Norem made a motion to move forward with the commitment to Baird & Company, option 4. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

SHERIFF – NEW HIRE THROUGH GRANT

Sheriff Bull Dulin came before the Starke County Council and the Board of Commissioners to request an added full time position to be primarily funded through a grant. He advised this is a new grant through the Indiana Department of Justice and will pay up to 75% of the approved entry-level salaries along with fringe benefits. They will provide up to \$125,000 over a three year period. He explained his department will be responsible for the 25% which will be around \$12,000 per year. President Pearman asked if this is going to affect their budget in regards to the new line they will be making for their pension. Auditor Oesterreich advised they will be paying for the 25% out of their Therapeutic Community fund. President Pearman is concerned about what will happen after the grant period is over and how they will fund this officer at that point. Commissioner Norem advised the grant period is for three years and then they are only required to keep this position for one year after that. She advised that just because they are merited officers it does not mean they can't be laid off if the budget has been reduced. Attorney Lucas agreed. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve an additional position to be funded by this grant. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Councilman Sims asked if this would mean if they would have to provide an additional vehicle. Sheriff Dulin explained that they have an extra vehicle and would not need to purchase a new vehicle. Councilman Baker made a motion, contingent on approval of the grant, that they approve the request for a new position and to amend the salary ordinance reflecting the new position. Councilman Bailey seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

ASSESSOR – PTABOA BOARD APPOINTMENT

Michelle Shouten, Starke County Assessor came before the Starke County Council and Board of Commissioners for permission to hire an out of the county resident to be a PTABOA Board member. She explained they have been having trouble getting a third PTABOA member as the position requires certain levels. She explained in the IC Code for establishing a PTABOA Board the residency requirements can be waived in up to two members. She advised she spoke to the Marshall County

Assessor and two of their board members are from outside of their county. One member serves as a councilman in Fulton County and has their level three and the other member is retired from the Department of Local Government and Finance. President Pearman asked if we would be paying this individual for mileage to come to our meetings. Assessor Shouten stated the Marshall County Assessor does not pay addition for mileage but she does give them \$150 per meeting rather than the \$100 per meeting we pay as they are level 2 or level 3. Councilman Bailey made a motion to waive the residency requirements for the PTABOA member needed for the board. Councilman White seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

RECORDER – OFFICE FURNITURE AND PLAYY CABINET PURCHASE

Recorder Thomason was absent from the meeting but Auditor Oesterreich explained that Recorder Thomason is seeking approval for a plat cabinet and the plat cabinet purchase would be coming out of the Recorder's Perpetual Fund. She explained that the office furniture is where she was looking to be paid for out of cum cap. The Board of Commissioner did not recall the office furniture being brought up at the last meeting. Auditor Oesterreich verified that it was only the plat cabinet request that was mentioned during the last Board of Commissioners meeting. Commissioner Norem advised Recorder Thomason would need to come before the board at a later time for the office furniture request. Councilman Baker made a motion to approve the purchase of the plat cabinet only. Councilman White seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

HIGHWAY SALARY AMENDEMENT/BRIDGE 158 UPDATES

Superintendent Ritzler came before the Starke County Council and Board of Commissioners to request a reorganization of the two highway office positions.

Reorganization of the Two Highway Office Positions

He advised in November of 2018 the asset manager position was created to accommodate our expanded asset management program, the new state reporting requirements, and our expanded road improvement program. We made the position a managerial position. In order to accommodate that, we set the office manager rate slightly lower than the county's office manager rate (i.e. the Sheriff's Office Manager Rate) and set the asset manager rate above the countywide clerk rate. We realized two things over the course of the last year. First, we definitely needed a second office person for all the additional work. We were able to complete more projects, initiate new projects, satisfy the state reporting requirements and better organize out inventory date (road, bridge, signs, facilities, personnel, and fleet). Secondly, we found that two managers and no clerk has caused some work assignments problems. There was some confusion over who was to complete the more mundane office work and who was responsible for the managerial work. By combining the managerial duties of both the office manager and asset manager into one position and creating a new office clerk position in place of the asset manager to handle clerical work, I believe we will still be able to get all our work done without job duty confusion. In addition to the asset manager duties, the new office manager position will supervise the office clerk and will also provide administrative assistance to the Stellar Communities effort this year.

As part of the County's Stellar Communities application last year, the Constellation of Starke was required to assign a person to be the Stellar project coordinator if we are named as the Stellar Community designee. The County already has a position of construction inspection supervisor who does much of what would be required of the Stellar project coordinator, and thus a new position would not have to be created. The County approved that position being assigned project coordinator duties last year. However, the current construction inspection supervisor is 68 years old and probably won't be working for us throughout the Stellar process if we are named as the designee. The first thought was to make our new asset manager the Stellar project coordinator. However, that position is currently vacant and we are not sure we would be able to find someone who could handle the project coordinator position adequately. Commissioner Cavender suggested we assign Mary Perren, who is already familiar with the Stellar process, to be our new Stellar project coordinator. The commissioners agreed to this idea at their last meeting. And the Stellar executive committee also endorsed the idea at their last meeting. The last step in the process is to amend the salary ordinance to accommodate the position reorganization. We propose to set the Office Manager rate in line with the Sheriff's Office Manager rate and the new clerk position at the countywide clerk rate. This would save the County \$810.00 in annual salary payout, allow our office to function more efficiently and satisfy the Stellar project coordinator requirements.

Superintendent Ritzler then explained the Office Manager, Constellation of Starke Program Coordinator, and Office Clerk job duties. He explained some of the job duties will have to be paid out of CEDIT and they will be paying less money out of MVH & LRS. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the reorganization of the two highway positions as presented. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Councilman Sims made a motion to amend the salary ordinance to reflect the newly established clerk position's amount of pay of \$17.13 per hour. Councilman Bailey seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Superintendent Ritzler explained that the Stellar duties that would be taken on now would be on a volunteer basis and after working hours. President Pearman asked Attorney Lucas if we could be sued for this if the employee later asks for pay for the meetings. Attorney Lucas stated that because this is an exempt position it would be okay. Councilman Baker made a motion to amend the salary ordinance to reflect an increase in the Office Manager Position at the Highway to the amount of \$40,000 per year with the range being added to the salary ordinance. Councilman White seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

AUDITOR BUSINESS

Councilman Baker made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 21, 2020 joint council/commissioner meeting. Councilwoman Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 21, 2020 joint council/commissioner meeting. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

BRIDGE 158 UPDATE

Superintendent Ritzler explained that Bridge 158 is on 700E over the Jain Ditch and the culvert collapsed last year. He advised they have had two different bridge bids for this bridge and on both occasions the bids have come in too high. He stated they are looking into some alternative methods as follows:

Replace with Continuous Slab Top Bridge

225 SQ. FT. Capacity
Cost \$475,000

Replace in Kind (Single Round 96" Pipe)

42.4 SQ. FT. Capacity
Cost with Guardrail – Approximately \$85,000

Double Pipe Arch Solution

121 SQ. FT. Capacity
Cost with Guardrail (Contractor): \$195,000
Cost with Guardrail (Own forces between \$135,000 - \$170,000)

Galvanized Steel Deep Corrugated Buried Bridge with Natural Bottom and Concrete Footers

155 SQ. FT. Capacity
Cost – Between \$125,000 and \$200,000

Modular Bridge

Capacity between 120 and 175 SQ. FT.
Cost – Still working with contractors.

Superintendent Ritzler would like to wait another 2 weeks or a month to look into the modular bridge more. Commissioner Chesak agreed. He also advised that they have about 6 vehicles ready to go to auction, possibly 9. Commissioner Chesak advised that the Lions Club in Hamlet is having an auction in April. He advised that Fisher Auctions will be handling the auction for the Lions Club. Auditor Oesterreich advised she did bring this up to Attorney Lucas because of the need for clarification of

whether or not county equipment can be sold at an auction with another entity. Attorney Lucas will look into the rules and regulations and have an answer by the next Commissioner's meeting.

SCEDF – MONTHLY REPORT

Ron Gifford from the Starke County Economic Development Foundation came before the Starke County Council and Board of Commissioners to provide some updates as requested during the last joint session. Auditor Oesterreich advised that during the last joint session the Hamlet Fire Well and SCILL appropriation request was tabled. Director Wickert was to come back with information as requested by the boards on each issue. President Pearman explained that part of the SCILL was that the council was not sure the SCEDF has met the contract requirements. President Pearman stated he could speak for the Hamlet Fire Well. He advised that Norton Packaging had a new building being built and a firm called Tyton was completing the project. Director Wickert has given Tyton permission to utilize the well. President Pearman advised he will still be speaking to REMC as Director Wickert had said that REMC has a deal in which that pump only needs to run one time and then REMC will charge the maximum rate. President Pearman explained that Director Wickert got a commitment from Tyton to pay \$2000 of the \$4300 that was an overage. Commissioner Norem stated that Director Wickert does not have the authority to give permission for the well to be used. Councilman Baker agreed. Commissioner Norem stated once we go through the bills if Tyton does not want to pay it then the Economic Development Foundation should pay it as they are the ones who gave the authority for its use. Councilman Baker agreed. President Pearman explained that if we are audited on this manner the SBOA and DLGF would expect the same thing. Commissioner Norem advised the board needs to tell Mr. Gifford to go back and tell Director Wickert that he is not allowed to give permission for the use of the well; that would have to be approved by the board.

Commissioner Norem suggested that there needs to be an evaluations of the bills for the Hamlet Fire Well to determine who used what and then go from there. Councilman White suggested that he, Mr. Gifford, and Director Wickert will get together and get this situation ironed out. Councilman White made a motion to table the appropriation request of \$15,000 for the Hamlet Fire Well. Councilman Baker seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. President Pearman passed over the meeting to the Board of Commissioners for the SCILL appropriation request. Commissioner Norem advised they did receive an annual report from the Economic Development Foundation. She stated as per their contract with the Economic Development Foundation the board can contract with an outside agency to conduct an analysis of the report that was submitted. She stated the Board of Commissioners needs to select a company so that the report can be reviewed, she advised SCEDF is contractually required to pay half of that review. Commissioner Norem stated on the SCILL side of the report she did send out an email as she had a number of questions regarding the information in the report. She asked Mr. Gifford if he had had a chance to read her email of questions and whether or not he would like to respond to them.

Commissioner Norem stated that a portion of the reported given on the SCILL states that they are there to improve wages in Starke County. As it stands right now, per the State of Indiana's report, Starke County average wage is \$14.49. She asked why we are supporting SCILL if nothing is being done to raise the wages in Starke County. Mr. Gifford asked if SCILL is the only entity or organization in Starke County that is responsible for that wage. Commissioner Norem stated she did not say it was, she stated that SCILL is not improving things and as a part of the SCILL report it states that the SCILL program is here to support employers, it is an arm of economic development, and that it is here to help raise the wage. Commissioner Norem advised that the contract that SCILL has with the Board of Commissioners says that it is designed to help raise the wages in Starke County. Commissioner Norem commented that the welding program is probably SCILL's crown jewel. Mr. Gifford introduced Albert Hanselman to the Board, he explained Albert is the Executive Director of the North Central Vocational Corporative. Commissioner Norem stated that in the report, Mr. Gifford had mentioned that this SCILL program is the only one in the State that offers programs like this, she asked what other schools in Indiana are doing. Mr. Hanselman explained that most school corporations go together and work corporately because none of them are large enough to do it on their own. He explained that in his corporative he has 10 school corporations. In most corporations the students attend a career center. For example, in Valparaiso there is one career center for 7-9 different school systems.

Mr. Hanselman explained that he gets funding from different locations, part of it depends on the enrollment of students. Some money comes from the State of Indiana and also from the Carl Perkins Grant that he applies for every year. Commissioner Norem asked out of the 10 superintendents that Mr. Haselman reports to being Marshall, Fulton, and St. Joseph, and Starke County, do their counties

provide dollars for these programs? Mr. Haselman stated that Marshall County has LLN, which is the Lifelong Learning Network, this is similar in some ways to SCILL. He explained LLP provides funding and years ago they got most of their dollars through a grant, some of the money comes to the corporative through interest from the grant. Commissioner Norem stated this would be from a grant that is permanently endowed, but not from their tax base. Mr. Hanselman stated no, he does not believe they received money from other counties tax base system. Commissioner Norem asked Mr. Gifford why the Starke County tax base system should fund the SCILL program if no other counties are funding their programs. Mr. Gifford stated that the statistics show that a large percentage of SCILL participants are from Starke County. Mr. Hanselman explained that out of the 10 school corporations he serves there is a set amount per student, who participates, that is charged to the school corporation. Commissioner Norem stated she understands this concept, but right now we have only Starke County putting money into these programs coming from their tax base. She added that in this program that is funded by the tax base, we are not just serving Starke County students. After further discussion regarding the SCILL program and how the cost of the SCILL program Commissioner Norem stated that it is very difficult to decide whether the tax base system of Starke County should fund the SCILL program without getting the SCILL's financials to see how much money is coming in and what money is going out. Councilman Baker made a motion to table the SCILL appropriation based on the future recommendation of the Board of Commissioners. Councilwoman Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

After having no public comments made Councilman Baker made a motion to adjourn at 7:25PM. Councilman White seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

**FEBRUARY 17, 2020
STARKE COUNTY COUNCIL**

ABSENT

Dave Pearman, President

Brad Hazelton, Vice-President

Kay Gudeman

Don White

Howard Bailey

Robert Sims

Freddie Baker

Rachel Oesterreich, Starke County Auditor and
Secretary to the County Council

**FEBRYARY 17, 2020
STARKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Charlie Chesak, President

Kathryn Norem, Vice-President

Bryan Cavender

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

