

# ATTN: THIS IS A DRAFT--NOT YET APPROVED BY COMMISSIONERS

March 2, 2009

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in regular session at 9:00 a.m. in the Annex meeting room, Knox, Indiana, with Mark Milo absent and the following proceedings were held to wit:

## **IN RE: E.M.S./E.M.A.**

Mary Lynn Ritchie reported receipts from the collection agency of \$433.58 and receipts from the County Clerk for small claims of \$758.94.

Kathy Norem moved to approve the write offs of \$1,445.95 seconded by Dan Bridegroom with 2 ayes. Dan Bridegroom stated that some elderly people could afford to pay and how can we go about differentiating. Martin Lucas, County Attorney, stated that maybe we could check the tax rolls for real estate owned. Kathy Norem stated that from her experience at the hospital, most elderly who can afford to pay, do pay as they take their responsibilities seriously.

Kathy Norem asked about a Risk Assessment meeting. Randy Abbey reported that it was being set up soon. There are still a couple of people needing to be appointed to the board first.

Kathy asked about the quarterly meeting with the hospital. Randy stated that it was being held this Saturday.

Randy also reported that the Oversight Committee meeting is scheduled for April 15.

## **IN RE: HIGHWAY**

Steve Siddall, Interim Superintendent, reported that he had met with Jeff Larrison regarding the draft of the bridge inspection. He said it looks good but needs signed and sent to the state for approval and review. Kathy Norem moved to approve seconded by Dan Bridegroom with 2 ayes.

Sue Himes submitted copies of the recommended priority list for 16 bridges for the commissioners' information. To replace these bridges would be \$7,426,000. Dan stated that the first 8 bridges were added to the stimulus package. He also stated that April 15 is the date that the stimulus recipients will be announced.

Dan Bridegroom stated that out of the 7 or 8 applications received, only 2 met all the criteria—one of the two is Steve Siddall. Dan moved to hire Steve Siddall as the new highway superintendent seconded by Kathy Norem with 2 ayes.

## **IN RE: I.T.**

Bob Smith received a quote for 2 computers for the Treasurer's office. The amount was a total of \$1,083.88. They are upgradeable and should last about 5 years. Kathy Norem moved to accept the quote from C.D.W.G. seconded by Dan Bridegroom with 2 ayes.

Bob also reported that they are having issues with the server at the courthouse. It was originally purchased by a grant, and the judge has no money to replace it. It is causing issues throughout the courthouse and the jail. Bob requested quotes from C.D.W.G., Florida Micro and Dell. C.D.W.G. quoted \$4,101.37; Florida Micro quoted \$4,531.00 and Dell did not respond with a quote. Both quotes have 8GB and both are expandable. Kathy Norem moved to declare this an emergency and to accept C.D.W.G.'s quote and pay for it out of Cum. Cap. Dev. funds seconded by Dan Bridegroom with 2 ayes.

Bob stated that Dan had asked him earlier about upgrading the phone system. Bob received one proposal of \$27,251.71 for a new system that would allow the upgrade without having to change all the phones immediately. Bob is trying to get more proposals. Clyde Haniford was in the audience and stated that his son-in-law does this kind of work and he would like him to be able to quote a price. Bob told him to have his

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son-in-law get in touch with him. Dan Bridegroom moved to take this under advisement seconded by Kathy Norem with 2 ayes.

## **IN RE: KEYS TO COURTHOUSE AND ANNEX**

The commissioners wanted to know who all had keys to the courthouse. Other than full time employees and elected officials, there were three others. Gordon Richie, Veteran's Service Officer—Commissioners feel he could need to get in on the weekend if he needed to help a veteran. Emily Ferch, BZA secretary—She has night meetings and needs to be able to open the building for the board members who do not have keys. Nancy Coad, EMS part time clerk—she covers for the full time clerk when she is not there.

The commissioners just want to make sure that no one is sharing or loaning their keys to anyone else.

## **IN RE: COUNTY EMPLOYEES SERVING AS VOLUNTEER FIREMEN**

Dan Bridegroom brought up the issue of the county employees who also serve as volunteer firemen and how it is handled. In the past they were allowed to go to the fire during work hours and sometimes with a county vehicle. Dan was concerned as to what would happen if they were injured while on the clock with the county at a fire or on the way to one and what about the insurance if that happens.

Kathy Norem stated that she knows of no other employers who let their employees leave work to go to a fire. Dan stated that the highway is trying to create a work plan and if some leave, it messes up the whole plan for that day.

A woman in the audience suggested that employees radio the superintendent to let him know they are leaving and have him take them off the clock to be done at the superintendent's discretion as to whether or not it is feasible to let them go. Kathy Norem stated that the highway is our first obligation and if they are scheduled to work they need to be at work.

Martin Lucas, County Attorney, stated that the insurance issue would be a problem—such as risk from an undermanned crew at a construction project.

The commissioners asked Steve Siddall to get them a list of all the employees who are on fire departments. Steve thinks there are four or five.

Kathy Norem moved that volunteer firemen on the county clock not be allowed to accept fire calls seconded by Dan Bridegroom with 2 ayes.

## **IN RE: DISCIPLINARY ACTION & ACCOLADES**

Kathy Norem moved to send out a memo to all department heads and office holders that there be documentation for any disciplinary action or accolade given an employee in the personnel files in the Auditor's Office seconded by Dan Bridegroom with 2 ayes.

Per the National Labor Relations Board, if it is not in the official Human Resource employee files, it does not exist. Everything regarding an employee (good or bad) needs to be in the official file in the Auditor's Office.

## **IN RE: COMMISSIONER OFFICE HOURS**

The March 11 office hours are cancelled due to the commissioners being at meetings at Road School in Lafayette, Indiana.

The March 25<sup>th</sup> hours will be attended by Dan Bridegroom.

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## **IN RE: COUNTY ROAD DESIGNATED AS RURAL COLLECTOR**

Kathy Norem moved to designate CR 500N from U.S. 35 east to CR 750E and CR 750E north to Highway 30 as a rural collector as the county anticipates heavier usage due to the SYSCO project and the existing Industrial Park seconded by Dan Bridegroom with 2 ayes.

## **IN RE: STARKE COUNTY LANDFILL**

Kathy Norem moved to allow IDEM to send a letter to the property owners at the Landfill that the county is in cooperation with IDEM and proposing jointly that testing needs to be done at the landfill seconded by Dan Bridegroom with 2 ayes.

## **IN RE: ECONOMIC STIMULUS**

The commissioners received a letter from State Senator Edward Charbonneau requesting our stimulus list with a one page explanation on each request. Kathy Norem said she could forward it to him. The commissioners are also requesting some miles of hotmix and will review the list with Charlie Weaver at the Development Foundation. The Senator wants to know if the projects are "shovel ready" meaning we have the plans and or permits needed to proceed.

## **IN RE: POKAGON BANK OF POTAWATOMI INDIANS**

The commissioners are in receipt of a letter from the Pokagon Bank of Potawatomi Indians requesting the opportunity to vie for any board appointments, etc. if Native Americans are required.

## **IN RE: 2010 U.S. CENSUS**

The commissioners received a letter from the U.S. Census requesting that we let them know of any homeless shelters or any place where people are being housed that do not have a physical address so that they can be counted on the Census.

## **IN RE: SAN PIERRE PLANNING GRANT**

Dan Bridegroom moved to approve the disclosure report for the San Pierre Comprehensive Plan Grant in the amount of \$48,600 seconded by Kathy Norem with 2 ayes.

Dan reported that the project is on hold right now due to a home in the area of the project that is inhabited. The grant cannot displace people. They are also a little short of matching funds.

## **IN RE: MINUTES**

Kathy Norem moved to approve the minutes of the February 16, 2009 meeting seconded by Dan Bridegroom with 2 ayes.

## **IN RE: HIGHWAY (CONTINUED)**

Steve Siddall asked the commissioners if the foreman, now that it is official, could go on the foreman's pay. He also wanted to know if the foreman would be able to go to Road School as long as they left someone in charge at the garage.

Kathy Norem moved to allow the new foreman and superintendent to attend Road School seconded by Dan Bridegroom with 2 ayes.

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Steve asked if there could be a contract with the stipulation that he could go back to truck driver if not allowed to stay as superintendent as he doesn't want to lose his job. Martin Lucas will check this out.

## **IN RE: ANIMAL CONTROL AND DOG KENNELS**

Martin Lucas, County Attorney, brought up the animal control issues, the dog kennel ordinance, and animals running at large. Kathy Norem stated that the house passed an onerous dog kennel ordinance that practically prohibits large dog kennels.

Until the Planning Commission ordinances comply with state and federal law, the commissioners will not approve them. Martin Lucas will be sending a letter to the Planning Commission.

## **IN RE: PAYROLL AND VENDOR CLAIMS**

Dan Bridegroom moved to approve the 2-27-09 payroll claims seconded by Kathy Norem with 2 ayes.

Kathy Norem moved to approve the vendor claims but to hold the check for ERS pending completion of the project seconded by Dan Bridegroom with 2 ayes.

There being no further business to come before the board, Dan Bridegroom moved to adjourn seconded by Kathy Norem with 2 ayes.

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Dan Bridegroom, President

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Kathy Norem, Vice President

ABSENT

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Mark Milo, Member

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Michaelene J. Houston, Auditor and  
Secretary to the Commissioners