

**Monday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

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:

The meeting was called to order by President, Kathy Norem. She advised the following changes to the posted agenda: the postponement of the discussion regarding the Sheriff's retirement to the next meeting, the removal of the signing of the EMA sub-grant agreement since it was completed at the last meeting, the removal of Wesley Dolinski from the agenda, the removal of Patty Choquette from the agenda, and add the discussion of the proposed Financial Reporting Ordinance.

**RE: MINUTES, PAYROLL CLAIMS & VENDOR CLAIMS**

Commissioner Bridegroom made a motion to approve the payroll claim from the pay period ending 2/18/12, totaling \$ 168,362.37. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. Commissioner Bridegroom made a motion to approve the vendor claims as presented except for the payment of the invoice received from the City of Knox in regard to the Annex Building and Jail fire sprinkler systems. The total amount of vendor claims would be \$178,279.71. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes. President Norem advised to include the invoice received from the Humane Society in the next batch of claims, to be paid out of the Commissioners' county general budget, animal control line item.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the minutes of the three employee meetings held on Feb. 20, 2012, and also the minutes of the regular meeting held on Feb. 20, 2012. Commissioner Bridegroom seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes.

**RE: EMS DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT**

EMS Director, Paul Mathewson, and Clerk, Mary Lynn Ritchie appeared before the Board to give their monthly update. Director Mathewson introduced to the Board two new EMS employees, who were present at the meeting: Jennifer Kelly and Tiffany Thompson. Director Mathewson advised the county's ALS service officially began at 7:00AM, on March 1, 2012. Commissioner Davis inquired how a determination is made if the call will be classified as an ALS call, and the Director advised they assess the patient's key vitals and visible physical signs. Director Mathewson stated he wanted to recognize the EMS Assistant Director, Keith Emigh. Emigh recently completed a two day training session, on the upkeep and maintenance of cots, and will be able to maintain the department's cots instead of outsourcing it. President Norem recognized the following people for being instrumental in the establishment of the county's ALS program: Chris Rannells, Dave Combs, Dave Emigh, Charlie Collins, Mark Smith, and also recognized all of the fire departments in the county, who have participated in the First Responders Program. Commissioner Bridegroom expressed his appreciation for the involvement of the fire departments in this effort. Norem also advised the increase in ALS billings are expected to support the cost of the ALS program. President Norem also acknowledged the quick response of Knox City Police Officer, Chad Dulin, and Wayne Noah, of the Knox Fire Department, and an EMS employee. Norem stated their quick response on Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>, when a vehicle flipped over into a ditch, saved the lives of the occupants in the vehicle. Commissioner Davis stated she would like to see them recognized at a public meeting, and asked Mathewson to bring them in for the next meeting.

Clerk Ritchie advised of the collections received from the Starke County Clerk, in the amount of \$867.00, and Jonathan O'Hara, collection agent, in the amount of \$508.68. Commissioner Bridegroom made a motion to approve the write-off list, in the total amount of \$4,860.30. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes.

**RE: COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT**

County Highway Superintendent, Steve Siddall, appeared before the Board. He advised the notices for the next three bridge projects have been posted: Bridge 51 will be opened at the March 19<sup>th</sup> meeting, and bridges 9 & 62 at the April 2 meeting. He also stated he has updated the county's website, with Joe's help, with bridge information and he also intends to be adding photos to the website. Commissioner Norem asked they also provide the locations of the specific bridges, and not just state a bridge number. She also advised they have posted the priority schedule of the bridge repairs on the county's website. President Norem stated there are three county bridges scheduled for repair during 2012 with an estimated cost of \$1.4 million, and four bridges scheduled for repair during 2013, with an estimated cost of \$ 1.7 million. She stated there is approximately \$ 1.2 million in the CREDIT Bridge Fund, and approximately \$ 500,000.00 in the Cumulative Bridge Fund. She inquired as to the schedule for funding for next year's projects. Superintendent Siddall advised the bridge books have been completed and will be presented to the Board at the next meeting. Commissioner Norem inquired as to the status of the new county highway truck. Siddall advised the truck was still not ready to go. He stated the tailgate was scratched and the truck is back in the paint booth. He added they should take possession of the truck during that week, and will be advising the Board when that takes place. Commissioner Davis inquired if they have completed a replacement schedule for the county highway equipment. Commissioner Bridegroom advised they will go through the equipment list and then prioritize the list as to what to purchase. He stated since the county will have to turn asphalt roads back to gravel roads, the county is in need of a Road Conditioner, costing approximately \$26,000.-\$30,000. Commissioner Norem reminded them to have price quotes come before the Board.

Superintendent Siddall then advised on the condition of the county's boom truck. He stated the five year inspection of the truck had expired and the truck has been locked out from being used by highway employees. Siddall advised the cost of the inspection will be \$13,342.38. Commissioner Davis inquired if this was the cost of the inspection, the cost of the repair, or the cost for both. He stated the cost would include the cost of the five year inspection and some repairs, but some of the replacement parts are not included. He stated the only company locally that could do that type of work was located in Bourbon. Commissioner Bridegroom advised the county highway has the funds to cover that expense. Commissioner Bridegroom made the motion to approve the expenditure, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes. Superintendent Siddall advised they will drop off the boom truck when they pick up the new truck.

Commissioner Norem inquired if the highway department was aware of the detours on SR23, by the dam in Koontz Lake, and also on US35, at the railroad crossing. Siddall advised they were aware and are looking at detour alternate routes. Norem stated she is concerned that emergency vehicles will not be able to reach the north side of Koontz Lake in a timely manner. She also stated she has been receiving complaints in regard to the increased wear and tear on the road as a result of the detour around Bridge 51. Siddall advised the road is breaking down, and they have been applying stone to the road.

Auditor Chaffins brought up the subject of the recent audit of Floyd County, Indiana, by the SBOA, in regard to that county's lack of documentation in the sale of that county's scrap metal. She advised the county hadn't received any monies from the sale of scrap since 2008. Superintendent Siddall advised they have an arrangement with Howard & Sons—they take all the scrap from the county highway in exchange for free towing for all county vehicles. Auditor Chaffins advised they would still need documentation. Chaffins then inquired about the scrap from the Bridge 156 project, and was advised by Commissioner Bridegroom and Superintendent Siddall that the company that constructed the bridge is the owner of the old bridge—adding that was included in the bridge contract. President Norem stated she would like to see the Bridge 156 project contract at the next meeting.

**RE: IT DIRECTOR, JOE SHORT, WTH AGREEMNT**

IT Director, Joe Short, appeared before the Board to request their approval of the Data Exchange Agreement, the agreement between the County and the State, in regard to the county's GIS system. He advised the State has received a grant that will allow them to cover the cost of the County's GIS programs. County Attorney, Marty Lucas, advised it was a standard, state issued agreement. Commissioner Bridegroom made a motion to approve this agreement, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes, and the agreement was signed. A copy of the signed agreement is on file in the Auditor's Office.

Director Short then presented the Agreement Addendum in regard to the Indiana Office of Technology Geographic Information Systems Division Approved web Feature Service Site. Commissioner Davis made a motion to accept this agreement, seconded by Commissioner

Bridegroom. The motion passed with all ayes, and the agreement was signed by the Board. A copy of the signed agreement is on file in the Auditor's Office.

Director Short gave the Board an update of the situation with the ERS Company, and their claim that the county is still in a contract with them. He stated ERS had advised him the Commissioners would need to send a letter to their company in regard to the cancellation.

Attorney Lucas stated it was up to the ERS Company to prove the existence of a contract. President Norem stated he will write a letter to ERS.

In regard to the issue of county employees using the social websites during work hours, Commissioner Bridegroom advised the employees were notified during the employee meetings on Feb. 20, that they are not to use those social networks during the normal business hours of 8-4. The Board would like to see the employees follow that policy. Director Short advised the only way to block the social websites from access during the day, is to shut it off across the board. He would not be able to allow only certain departments, such as the Sheriff's, or Probation, to have access to it, without purchasing the software that would allow that.

#### **RE: REQUEST FOR PLANNING COMMISSION DEPT. CASH DRAWER**

Pam Starkey, Secretary to the Planning Commission, appeared before the Board to request permission for the Planning Commission to establish a cash drawer to enable them to be able to make change in the conducting of day to day business. President Norem advised the Auditor had received from the SBOA the Indiana Code for the establishment of a cash drawer in a county department. IC 36-1-8-2 states the fiscal body of the county would approve the request, which would be the County Council, but the Board of Commissioners need to establish internal controls in the handling of the various departments within the county to take in any revenue in their day to day business.

Commissioner Bridegroom made a motion to recommend to the Council, their approval of the request from the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes.

President Norem advised Auditor Chaffins had prepared a proposed Ordinance to address the establishment of internal controls, and provide an oversight to county departments who handle the receiving of monies. As stated in IC 5-11-1-27 (b) (2): internal control procedures; for internal control systems of local governments. The internal control standards and procedures shall be developed to promote government accountability and transparency. The ordinance requires a monthly financial report to be filed at the end of each month, with the County Auditor's Office. A copy of the reports will be presented to the fiscal body of the county, the County Council, at their regular monthly meeting and also to the Board of Commissioners at their second meeting of each month. Attorney Lucas advised since there are no fines or fees involved with the ordinance, the Board could adopt the ordinance without the advertisement requirement. Commissioner Bridegroom, stated this was an excellent policy, and made a motion to approve the ordinance, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes. The Starke County Departmental Financial Reporting Ordinance, No. 2012-01, took effect upon passage. The ordinance is on file in the Auditor's Office and can also be obtained at "electronic forms" on the County's website. Commissioner Davis stated she would like to see a listing of all the departments who handle monies.

#### **IN OTHER BUSINESS:**

President Norem asked that the Planning Commission, at their next meeting, address a property in the English Lake area, on CR250S, west of CR650, which appears to have illegally at least three mobile homes on the property. It is located on the south side of the CR250S.

Commissioner Bridegroom made a motion to accept and approve the KIRPC contract for the Yellow River Debris Cleanup Project. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes.

Annex Building Custodian, James Coad, advised the Board he has not received the revised Simplex Contract. The Board advised Mr. Coad to replace the sprinkler heads in the Annex Building, at a cost of \$1200.00.

Charles Householder appeared before the Board to discuss his frustration in his attempt to get county road access to his property. The property is located at the south end of Garfield St. in North Judson area, but Garfield St. turns into a private drive before it reaches the Householder property. There was a discussion as to if this was an issue for the Planning Commission or the BZA to decide. Attorney Lucas advised Mr. Householder should search for the "right away grant" and the only way to get it settled would be to get a judgment from a judge, in court. President Norem advised Mr. Householder should appear before the Planning Commission with his concerns regarding permits, and to hire an attorney to represent him in court.

Alan Hildebrand appeared before the Board with a letter of proposed dedication in regard to the streets in the subdivision located at the Chesapeake Run Golf Course, outside of North Judson. Commissioner Bridegroom advised he is concerned that the street lights and stone fences with wrought iron gates are located right on the easement line. Attorney Lucas stated once the streets are taken over by the county, they would have the capability of removing the street lights or fences if they are ever damaged. But once dedicated, the county's decision is to maintain the streets, or not. Commissioner Davis stated her initial reaction is no, since they can't guarantee the growth of this subdivision. Attorney Lucas advised North Judson could possibly annex that subdivision. He stated an annexation doesn't have to be limited to continuous property. Commissioner Bridegroom made a motion to table the issue until Attorney Lucas could do more research and have Mr. Hildebrand talk to the Town of North Judson. There was no second to the motion. Commissioner Davis made a motion to reject the proposal for the time being, seconded by President Norem. The vote on the motion was two ayes, and one nay. (Commissioner Bridegroom voted against the motion.)

President Norem advised John Thorstad, Probation Officer, and Evelyn Skronski, County Clerk, will be present at the April 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, to present the Eagle Accounts Group as a means to collect past due accounts.

Commissioner Bridegroom asked the proposed amendment to the travel policy be tabled until the March 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. President Norem advised the issue of "consent agenda" will also be tabled until the March 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Commissioner Bridegroom made a motion to accept the proposal from attorney Brian Hurley, representing PNC, in regard to a home outside of Knox that had received a stop work order. The proposal itemized the repairs to be completed, and which contractors that will be completing the repairs. The proposal also requests the Board waive any penalties. Commissioner Bridegroom made a motion to accept Mr. Hurley's proposal, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes.

President Norem advised the March office hours of the Office of the Board of Commissioners has been completed. Note: The hours have been posted on all exit doors of the Annex Building, and the Courthouse, and also posted on the county's website.

President Norem gave an update on the situation of alleged financial improprieties by Jennie Carter of the Drug and Tobacco Free Starke County. She advised the County Council has frozen the funds of the DFTSC and also the Convention and Visitor's Commission, until the financial improprieties have been resolved. She stated Ms. Carter had turned over financial records to the County Auditor, late afternoon on Monday, March 5<sup>th</sup>. The records have been forwarded on to the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute who controls the grant funding for the drug portion of the Drug and Tobacco Free Starke County. The ICJI sent the county a copy of a letter they had sent to the DTFSC Board President, Judy Jelinek in regard to the improprieties. Also the County Prosecutor has advised a state trooper has been assigned to investigate the improprieties.

Auditor Chaffins inquired if the Board could establish a county policy which would reduce the amount which required a department to receive three price quotes before making a purchase. The department is required to present the three quotes to the Board for their approval. Currently the state statute is set at \$25,000.00. President Norem advised the current system is not being enforced. Commissioner Davis advised she would discuss that issue with the department heads at their afternoon meeting.

Commissioner Davis noted the tragic tornadoes that occurred in Southern Indiana and expressed concern over the notifications in the event of bad weather. Ted Hayes, of WKVI, advised he will meet with EMA Director, Ted Bombagetti to discuss the notification process. He will report back at the next meeting.

Public Comments: Betty Dotlich advised the BZA has tabled their decision in regard to the complaint they had filed.

Deputy Auditor, Ruth Jensen, appeared before the Board to discuss a proposal to implement a time card system in the county. She advised it is imperative for the county to keep accurate records of the employee's time worked. President Norem asked Deputy Auditor Jensen to set up some possible demonstrations of time clock systems. Jensen inquired if a committee could be formed to look into this issue. Commissioner Davis advised she would discuss the issue at the meeting with the department heads that afternoon.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Bridegroom. The motion passed with all ayes, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:10PM.

**March 5, 2012**

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Kathy Norem, President

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Dan Bridegroom, Vice President

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Jennifer Davis

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Katherine Chaffins, Auditor &  
Secretary to the Commissioners