

MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2020

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in Regular Session at 6:42PM, due to the lateness of the Joint Council/Commissioners Session, in the Annex Meeting Room, Knox, Indiana, with Kathy Norem, Bryan Cavender, and Charles Chesak present and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order by Commissioner President Charles Chesak at 6:42PM.

COVID-19 UPDATE-HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Health Nurse Frank Lynch and County Health Officer Dr. Browne came before the Board of Commissioners to provide an update regarding the COVID-19 outbreak. Commissioner Norem stated that as part of the report to the public she was hoping Dr. Brown and Frank would go over the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what they have been aware of in terms of mitigating the transmission and what they are doing as the County Health Officer and Health Nurse for the public during this time. Frank advised the symptoms are cough, fever, and shortness of breath. He advised as information comes in he has been disseminating that out to the Sheriff's Department, Council on Aging, the school system, the doctors' offices, the hospital, the public, and daycare. He advised they have been trying to keep the calm as things get brought up in the media and elsewhere and misinformation gets put out there. He advised with the closing of the food establishments he has asked who will be enforcing the closure and he has not received an answer yet. He advised from what he understands if it is a Governors decree it would be law enforcement who enforces that and not the health department. He is waiting for clarification on the matter of enforcement. He advised the measures that are being put in place now are in attempts to slow the progression of the virus, which is what we need now, we do not want it to spike.

Dr. Browne advised we are in a very unique situation and he believes a lot of the answers will be down the road as to many things. He explained as the Health Department we need to be circumspect about what is true and what isn't true. Also, what we do and do not know. He advised we need to be knowledgeable ourselves about what is going on and being able to be open to the public when they ask questions about what is going on and what their thoughts are. Currently there are no diagnosed cases of the virus in Starke County but there is one case in La Porte County. Dr. Browne explained on Friday morning he was able to attend and meeting with a bunch of Superintendents, the La Porte school system, and the Knox School System. He stated they were very proactive in saying we needed to shut down the schools. He thinks social distancing is going to be very important. The more proactive we are in social distancing the better off we are going to be. He advised this virus is passed largely from person to person. There are some suggestions that the virus has some period of life on materials but we know at this time that the primary transmission is from person to person through droplets, this is why the social distancing is important. Currently, Starke County is relying on testing availability through the State, the State has a very limited supply of testing as they have very specific reasons they would allow those tests to be used. He believes that relatively shortly there will be much more testing available and as tests become available we will get a truer picture of what's going on.

Dr. Brown advised that at this time they do not know if there are undiagnosed cases within Starke County and they will not know until testing become available. As in terms of medical care they are being very careful. They are screening the patients that call for coughs, colds, and fevers. If they are having obvious respiratory difficulty or any more serious problems, then those patients need to go to the emergency room. Again, this is very fluid and the situation is changing from day to day. Frank advised that not every person needs to be tested. From everything that has been seen the symptoms are quit manageable for at least 80% of the population. It is the high risk category of individuals who are having the most difficulties. The message that we need to push is to call your health care professional first before going to the office. The average number of people that one infected person will infect is 2.5. Meaning that one infected person will infect between two and three additional persons. Commissioner Norem asked if the only place right now that a person can be tested is through their physician and only is that meet certain criteria. Frank stated yes. How this process looks, he advised, no one really knows yet because we have not have any cases here in Starke County. Dr. Browne advised at this time they can't do any independent testing. It is to be determined in how much testing will be available to. Right now the protocol is that the doctor's office would have to contact the Indiana State Department of Health to receive a testing kit. He advised he spoke to Walgreens over the weekend and they are only doing testing in hot spots where the virus is the most active.

Commissioner Norem asked what their best suggestions are for those folks who do need to get out and go to the grocery store. Dr. Browne advised to limit the need to go out and be thoughtful in what you would need. Dr. Browne advised that if you pull up to the grocery store and there are a lot of cars in the parking lot it would be appropriate to come back at a different time. Frank advised if you are sick please stay home and stay away from well people. Commissioner Norem advised that one of the things we talked about doing here in our government buildings is putting up a pleaxy glass sneeze guard. She asked if these provisions would be helpful. Dr. Browne advised this would not hurt, he stated a lot of what we are going to know the truth about the virus will not know until down the road. That is why we need to be very cautious right now. Frank then advised that the best defense is hand washing, hand sanitizing, keeping your distance from people who are sick, and if you are sick stay at home. Dr. Brown advised that many more people die from the flu, heart attacks, and car crashes but from what they can tell the mortality of this virus is 1% which is 10 times greater than the mortality of the flu and that is why this is a very serious situation. Commissioner Norem asked if they could elaborate on the 1% and that it is 10 times more than the flu.

Dr. Browne advised that is 1000 people get the flu, one of those people will die. If 1000 people get COVID-19, 10 of those people will die according to the most recent statistics. Dr. Browne advised that the real danger is if a bunch of people get COVID-19 at the same time because that will overwhelm their resources or come close to overwhelming their resources. If we can do the social distancing and at least slow the rate in which COVID-19 is contracted more than likely we will have enough resources to treat the disease. Dr. Browne advised that when we are sick, coughing, running fevers, etc. we need to try and stay away from other people. He stated we have gotten into a habit of going to work and going to the grocery store when we are sick. However, during this time it is very important that we are cautious of what we are doing when we are sick and we should be staying home when we have symptoms. Dr. Browne advised that John Hopkins has an excellent website for resources. He explained that the treatment is supportive, it is not like you can get something in an IV or take some pills that will make you better, and the treatment is supportive. Commissioner Norem asked Dr. Browne to define supportive treatment. He explained that supportive treatment would be supplemental oxygen, IV fluids, and a ventilator would be what he considers as supportive treatments. He explained that is an individual is feeling like they are sick they need to take care of themselves such as Tylenol for fever, drinking plenty of fluids, getting plenty of rest, and certainly if they do have questions or concerns get in touch with your physician or nurse practitioner's office. He believes it is going to be 6-8 weeks before they really know where this is all going.

PURDUE EXTENSION COPIER CONTRACT

Purdue Extension Corporative Services provided the Board of Commissioners with a Customer Purchase agreement (be email) that they are requesting to be approved tonight. Commissioner Norem advised this will be less expensive than what they are currently paying so she made a motion to approve the contract as presented. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

STELLAR COMMUNITIES CONSULTANT CONTRACT

Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the Troyer Group Stellar Communities Contract as presented. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

TAXABLE LEASE RENTAL REFUNDING OF BONDS

Commissioner Norem explained they have locked in the rate for the jail bonds. She advised from the emails received and the summary letter we are going to be at a flat 2.0% rate, the repayment will be shortened by 2 full years, and the very last payment will be significantly reduced. This will give us a net savings of \$781,414.08. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the Resolution as presented. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Norem advised this type of bond was possible only through special legislation. The length of this was originally 25 years and now with this process they are shortening it by 2 years. There is going to be a 7 year period of time before this expires. She advised that council/commissioners going forward they will need to take a look at this down the road.

AUDITOR'S BUSINESS: VENDOR CLAIMS DOCKET, PAYROLL DOCKET

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the Claims Docket in the total gross amount of \$103,351.93. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. Commissioner

Norem made a motion to approve the Payroll Claims Docket for the pay period ending on 03/07/20 with a pay date of 03/13/20, in the total gross amount of \$259,694.92 and deduction amount of \$76,949.55. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion passed with all ayes.

ADOPTION OF STANDARDS OF INTERNAL CONTROLS

Attorney Lucas advised the Internal Controls Ordinance is an adoption of the state's internal control standards as a minimum basis plus also a separate running of materiality of \$500.00 as anything equal or above that reporting to the State Board of Accounts, should there be a loss of that. He explained there was action taken a couple years ago setting up a committee. The committee has not recommended any additional standards other than what was recommended by the state. He explained that this ordinance does not have fines, penalties, or impact the public in any way for the rules can be suspended and this can be adopted tonight. Commissioner Norem made a motion to suspend the rules and adopt the ordinance as written. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

COVID-19 TEMPORARY POLICY

Attorney Lucas presented the Temporary Policy regarding COVID-19 procedures. He explained it did not have as much research and development as he would have liked. He advised Health Nurse Lynch will be reviewing it for medical accuracy. Attorney Lucas advised it would be his preference to wait to adopt the policy until after the review of the policy by Nurse Lynch and the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Norem advised that they recess the meeting instead of adjournment and they can meet again tomorrow evening to approve. Attorney Lucas suggested that they review the document and email any suggested changes to him tomorrow morning.

ELECTION UPDATE

Clerk Manuel presented information to the Board of Commissioner regarding the election. At this time the State Election Board Division is asking all Clerk's to reduce their polling places. She advised the Starke County Election Board will be meeting tomorrow to discuss precinct polling places for the spring election. She advised both the Starke County Election Board and the State of Indiana Election Division is thoroughly requesting that people vote by mail for the spring election this year.

LEAD TRACK SERVICE REQUEST

Larry Wickert, Director of the Starke County Economic Development Foundation came before the Board of Commissioners to request repairs to the Lead Tracks. Director Wickert explained they just had an inspection done on the lead tracks, the inspections showed that it is in need of some repairs. He had a company come out and give a price quote on the repairs and he also had a few Commissioners come out to look at the repairs that are needed. On the first curve the tracks have shifted and needs corrected. He advised he did have another company come out and give a price quote as well. He also had the two biggest users of the tracks look at what repairs need to be done, Bob Shaw and Tim Gutner. He presented the two quotes as follows:

Rail Works Track Services

Track Repairs \$48,600.00
Greaser Upgrade \$17,900.00

Tranco Industrial Services Inc.

Track Repair \$65,862.00
Greaser Upgrade \$17,810.00
Track Inspection \$5,848.00

The reason for the price difference on the track repairs is Rail Works quoted 210 rail ties were as Tranco quoted the use of 300 rail ties. He would recommend Tranco to complete the repairs. Commissioner Norem asked if the group that utilizes the track has a recommendation. Director Wickert they would prefer Tranco as well. Director Wickert is asking for the Commissioners approval to completed the track repairs and then he will complete a cost analysis with Auditor Oesterreich before he has the greaser upgrade done. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the Tranco quote for the track rail tie

upgrade as well as the greaser upgrade pending the cost analysis. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

OTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD

PUBLIC COMMENT

There being no further public comments and no further business, Commissioner Norem made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. The meeting was recessed at 8:07PM until 5:00PM tomorrow evening, March 17, 2020.

MARCH 16, 2020

Charlie Chesak, President

Kathryn Norem, Vice-President

Bryan Cavender

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