

March 21, 2011

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in regular session at 7:00pm, in the Annex meeting room, Knox, Indiana and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting was called to order by President Dan Bridegroom.

IN RE: PAYROLL CLAIM

Commissioner Norem made the motion to approve the payroll claim from March 5, 2011 in the amount of \$167,249.68; seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with three ayes.

IN RE: MINUTES

In reference to the minutes from the March 7 meeting, Commissioner Norem questioned Marty Lucas if the Board of Commissioners had the authority to set the fines and fees for the Health Department. Mr. Lucas stated that according to IC 16-20-1-27 the fines and fees specified by the local health department need to be approved by the county executive, which on the county level is the Board of Commissioners. Also, it should be noted that the cost of the soil scientist conducting a soil survey would be an estimated \$ 200.00 – 250.00 approximately. That is not a determined amount. She also inquired if the Starke County Health Department minutes are posted on the Starke County web page; and they are. She also stated the County's BZA minutes should also be posted. Commissioner Davis noted that in reference to the discussion regarding the Lausten property, from the March 7th minutes, that she suggested the Surveyor, Dennis Estok also accompany her when she visits Mr. Lausten. Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the minutes from March 7, second by Commissioner Norem. The motion passed with all ayes. Also signed were the final minutes of Feb. 21, 2011.

IN RE: GRANT, FISCAL AGENT

Ted Bombagetti, EMA Director, appeared before the Board to request approval to name the County as the fiscal agent on a grant proposal he is working on. The reimburseable, \$ 10,000.00 grant through Nature's Way would assist with the training of animal rescue, and animal injuries, during a disaster situation. The grant is a District II grant. The county would receive a 3% fee for being the fiscal agent, which would be \$ 300.00. Mr. Bombagetti also advised that grant proposal could open the door for other grants through District II and the Indiana Grants Management System (IGMS). Commissioner Norem made a motion to allow Mr. Bombagetti to continue the pursuit as grant administrator, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes.

Commissioner Norem also discussed the topic of courthouse security. She advised both she and Mr. Bombagetti serve on the courthouse security committee and recently attended a meeting where the discussion focused on posting a no weapons sign outside every entrance to a government building. They recommended the Commissioners approve and adopt a resolution to that effect, in particular the security at the courthouse, which would carry a fine to anyone carrying a weapon into a government building. Ms. Norem stated the discussion involved possibly having the signs constructed at the county highway, but she stated that was not possible since the highway department receives their funding from the gasoline tax. They should probably receive quotes from sign shops, such as Gary's Signs. Marty Lucas also stated that the resolution would need to be advertised since there is a fine attached, and also hold a public hearing on the matter first. Commissioner Davis inquired as to how the resolution would be enforced. Ms. Norem stated that Larry Keiser, is presently working the courthouse security on a fairly regular basis, and believed he could be deputized. A question was asked by Councilman Tony Radkiewicz, in the audience, if there is a state ordinance already in effect, that would cover that specific situation. Mr. Lucas advised he will check into that. Councilman Dave Pearman, also in the audience, inquired if the Starke County Employee Handbook states a policy where an employee is to leave their weapons in their vehicles. President Bridegroom stated yes there is, Section 12.01 in the handbook. Ms. Norem stated that only applies to the employees, and not the visitors to the county buildings. Commissioner Davis made a motion to move forward with an ordinance/resolution not allowing

weapons in a county government building. Ms. Norem seconded the motion. It passed with all eyes. Mr. Lucas stated that he did not locate a state statute restricting weapons.

IN RE: ELECTION BOARD

Starke County Clerk Evelyn Skronski and Jim Henriott, of the Election Board appeared before the Commissioners to ask for support and approval for another year, on the request to relocate Precincts I, II, III and IV to the Knox Community Center. It is a yearly renewal. Mr. Henriott advised Knox was serving as a learning experience to help with the county in preparing for next year's presidential election. Commissioner Norem inquired if a resolution is needed to reduce the number of poll workers. Commissioner Norem stated it is in the state code 3-6-6-38. Mr. Lucas stated a resolution by the local election board with the exact wording of the reduction of the number of poll workers-- which is important, is required. The resolution has to pass unanimously by the election board. Mrs. Skronski is proposing to reduce the poll workers in this year's city election, by two sheriffs, and two inspectors. Ms. Norem inquired if they table the request until Mr. Lucas could work with the election board, would that cause a delay in the preparation for the election. Mrs. Skronski advised she would be back in two weeks, at the April 4th meeting at 9:00am, with a change in the resolution. Ms. Norem stated they want to reserve the integrity of the election. She also requested the election board send the minutes of their board meetings to IT Bob, to have them posted on the county's website. Mrs. Skronski requested to use the Commissioner's Room on the first floor of the courthouse as the election room, since the courthouse elevator is out of order. The Commissioners agreed to the request, but allow them a couple of days to remove their property first.

IN RE: AMERICAN RED CROSS

Peter Cavadini, of the St. Joseph Chapter of the American Red Cross appeared before the Board to discuss the need for volunteers from the Starke County area. Currently there are 299 fully trained volunteers in St. Joseph County, one in Pulaski County, and none in Starke County. The American Red Cross provides the training classes, which are free to the volunteers. They will also come to Starke County to do the training. Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer for the American Red Cross should call 574-234-0191.

IN RE: PUBLIC COMMENTS

At this point in the meeting, Mr. Bridegroom opened the meeting to the Public. Peg Brettin addressed the Board with a question regarding the 2011 Budget of the Election Board. She stated she believes the approved budget for the election for 2011 is \$ 67,000.00. She is concerned that since the Knox election in May, might be a difficult day, she does not want the number of poll workers reduced, especially the number of sheriffs, judges, and inspectors. Mr. Bridegroom stated he believed the State wants the election costs reduced. Ms. Britton stated the hours have been reduced for absentee voting. The absentee board is on call from April 4 – April 18. On the 18th, the absentee board goes into the office. Mr. Bridegroom inquired if it is a state mandate, or a directive from the state that is requiring the reduction. Ms. Norem stated Marty Lucas will look into the situation. He is a good statesman and will be fair and honest. He goes by the letter of the law. Ultimately, the Commissioners will be viewed as being responsible for the process. Also, they will be holding the absentee voting downstairs, in the Commissioner's Room. Mr. Lucas stated he would like to see the Republican proposal of the 2011 poll workers, to help him identify the issues.

Since there were no additional public comments, that portion of the meeting was closed.

IN RE: TREASURER'S REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FULL TIME DEPUTY

After a long discussion with Treasurer Linda Belork, it was decided to move ahead with the request to make the part time person in the Treasurer's Office, into a full time deputy. Mrs. Belork stated she would need about \$ 8,000.00 in additional funds to employ a person full time for the remainder of the year. The position would be financed through transfers within the approved 2011 budget, without requesting any additional appropriations. The Commissioners agreed to transfer \$ 5,600.00 from their budget, the remainder coming from within the Treasurer's budget. Mrs. Belork advises she can move

\$ 3,000.00 from the Treasurer's budget, line item 003-2000.02, tax statements, toward the salary for an additional full time deputy. The request for the additional full time deputy, is pending council approval. Ms. Norem advised this would need to be advertised for the April 18th Council meeting.

IN RE: ENVIRO-DYNAMICS

Commissioner Norem stated the gas probe expense would also need to be advertised, to come out of Cum. Cap. This is in reference to the letter of engagement from Enviro-Dynamics of Hebron, IN., who would be commissioned to install gas probes and monitor gases, at the Starke County Landfill site. The cost involved totaled \$ 7,054.00. Ms. Norem made a motion to approve the installation of gas probes, seconded by Ms. Davis. The motion passed with all ayes.

IN RE: ROBBINS DITCH PROJECT

Mr. Bridegroom announced the receipt of a contract with Beam, Longest & Neff of Indianapolis, IN for the construction of Bridge No. 156 Replacement over the Robbins Ditch on Range Road. The total cost of the project is \$ 895,000.00, with the county being responsible for the 10% match. The cost would be funded out of the County's Bridge Fund. It is a 2012 project. Ms. Norem made a motion to sign the contract, seconded by Jennifer Davis. The motion passed with all ayes and the paperwork was signed.

IN RE: HIGHWAY SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Dan Bridegroom reported he has the application for a grant proposal that would provide funding from the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) which would pay for the upgrading of signs in the county to meet current standards. The total cost of the program would be \$ 100,000.00, with the total cost to the county being \$10,000.00 in matching funds. The funding would come from the EDIT portion. He advised by 2015, it will be mandatory to be federally certified. Kathy Norem made the motion to agree to the grant proposal, seconded by Ms. Davis. The motion passed with all ayes, and the paperwork was signed.

IN RE: HANDICAP ACCESSIBILITY AT THE COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Also discussed was a letter from Mayor Rick Chambers regarding the improvement of handicap accessibility around town. The Commissions discussed improving the handicap entrance on the west side of the courthouse. The costs of the improvements would be split 50/50 with the city. Kathy Norem made a motion to proceed with acquiring quotes for the improvements, seconded by Jennifer Davis. The motion passed with all ayes.

IN RE: CORRECTION OF MINUTES

Commissioner Davis made the following corrections to the Feb. 21, 2011 minutes: The position left vacant by Dave Singleton will be filled with a full time person, not part time. Soil surveys will be completed by a soil scientist, not the State. Food inspections had been done in the last 18 months, by Frank Lynch or Dave Singleton, even though they were without someone in that position since April of 2009.

IN OTHER BUSINESS:

Kathy Norem stated a policy will need to be drafted in reference to Forensic Fluids performing employee drug testing. Dona Hoban will need to complete the Webinar training that is scheduled for Wed., March 23. Ms. Norem advised a draft could be completed for the April 4th meeting.

Dan Bridegroom advised of a request from the North Judson Police Chief, Doug Vessely, to make the speed limit signs, entering and leaving North Judson, consistent. After a discussion regarding the jurisdiction of the roads surrounding the North Judson area, it was decided a trip be scheduled to go to North Judson, to view the problem areas.

Mr. Bridegroom, stated since the county is in need of animal control, additional funds will be needed to be transferred for animal control, since the funds have almost already been depleted for that line item.

Also additional funds are required to approve the last invoice from the Starke County Humane Society. Ms. Norem advised the item be put on the next meeting's agenda. Also to be discussed is the possibility of dog licenses/taxes being given back to the control of the township trustees.

Also discussed was the possibility of transferring funds from the line item of 025-3000.12, which is the Commissioner's budget, liability insurance account, to the animal control budget.

Kathy Norem stated she received a request from Michaelene Houston to certify her appointment to the Starke County Library Board. The appointment had been approved at an earlier meeting. The certification paper was signed.

Also discussed was the trustee appointment to the Planning Commission. Ms. Norem believed Byron Walters' appointment did not expire until the end of 2012. A question was raised as to if the township trustee board actually appoints someone to the board, or do they recommend someone for the board. Commissioner Norem made a motion to table the situation for now until it can be reviewed; seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes.

Marty Lucas advised a settlement had been reached with Mark Milo regarding the invoice for stone: 25 loads of 10 cubic yards per load, at \$ 15.00 a cubic yard. If there are any unpaid court costs that are due to the county, those should be subtracted from the payment of his invoice.

Also he advised that he is still working on the draft of the travel policy. He is referencing Tippecanoe County's travel policy.

At this time, Commissioner Norem made the motion to recess the meeting until after the executive session that will be on Tuesday, March 22, at 2:30pm. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes.

Dan Bridegroom, President

Kathy Norem, Vice-President

Jennifer Davis, Secretary

Katherine Chaffins, Starke County Auditor
& Secretary to the Board of Commissioners