

MONDAY, APRIL 20, 2020

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in Regular Session at 9:00AM via Zoom, Knox, Indiana, with Kathryn Norem (via Zoom), Bryan Cavender (via Zoom and In Office), and Charles Chesak (via Zoom) 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 9:00AM.

COMMUNITY CROSSINGS AGREEMENTS SIGNATURE AUTHORITY

Stephen Ritzler, Superintendent of the Starke County Highway, presented information regarding the Community Crossings Agreements Signature Authority. He advised that they have been awarded 1 million dollars in Community Crossings Grant funds. There are two contracts involved with those grants that INDOT has sent them. He explained that they need to be signed by Commissioner Chesak but the Board of Commissioners are now required to approve that the Commissioner President sign those documents. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the signature of Commissioner Chesak for the Community Crossings Grant fund contracts. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

APPROVAL OF POLLING PLACES AND IN PERSON ABSENTEE VOTING

Commissioner Cavender advised of the polling places requested for the spring, 2020 election:

California: California Township Fire Department
California 1, California 2, North Bend

Washington: Washington Township Community Building
Washington 1, Washington 2

Koontz Lake: Koontz Lake Property Owners Association Building
Oregon 2, Oregon 3

Hamlet: James R Hardesty Community Center
Davis, Oregon 1, Center 6

Knox: Nancy Dembowski Community Center
Center 1, Center 2, Center 3, Center 4, Center 5, Jackson

North Judson: North Judson Wayne Township Fire Station
Wayne 1, Wayne 2, Wayne 3, Wayne 4

Railroad: San Pierre Fire Department
Railroad

In person absentee voting:

Tuesday, May 26th through Friday, May 29st 8AM to 6PM
Saturday May 30th 8AM to 6PM
Monday June 1st 8AM to 12PM (Noon)

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the polling places as presented. Clerk Manuel explained that according to the Secretary of State she wanted all counties to cut down the polling places. She explained this is not vote centers, it would still be considered precinct voting. Attorney Lucas asked Clerk Manuel to provide the Board of Commissioners and Auditor with documentation regarding this request from the Secretary of State. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

AUDITOR'S BUSINESS: MINUTES, VENDOR CLAIMS DOCKET, PAYROLL DOCKET

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the Claims Docket in the total gross amount of \$211,819.16. 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 04/04/2020 with a pay date of 04/09/2020, in the total gross amount of \$254,034.86 and deduction amount of \$75,842.23. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion passed with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2020 Joint Session with Council meeting. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion passed with all ayes.

OTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD

Commissioner Norem advised that the Board of Commissioner's obligation is to follow the orders of Governor Holcomb and extend our orders with no changes through May 1st. Commissioner Norem made a motion to extend the Board of Commissioners order with no changes through May 1st. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Commissioner Chesak then brought forward a request for the approval of the partial park closure. Commissioner Norem asked if this was in regards to the Bass Lake Beach and Bass Lake Campground. Attorney Lucas stated it does cover the Starke County Forest as well, but residents are still allowed to utilize the Starke County Forest as long as they are in groups of 5 or less people. Commissioner Norem advised that the Bass Lake Beach and the Bass Lake Campground would be closed to all activities and residents with the exception that if the campground is the only resident of an individual living at the campground they will be permitted to stay. The Starke County Forest would be open to groups of individuals 5 or less. Commissioner Cavender made a motion on the Partial Park Closure and to extend that closure through May 1st. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Auditor Oesterreich asked if the Board of Commissioners have given any thought to the stimulus payment that the county has received. Commissioner Norem advised she would want to see if there is a way to disseminate that to small businesses in Starke County and in particular the local restaurants. She believes that this is the intention of the stimulus payment is to help folks in our community, not just keep it for ourselves. Attorney Lucas advised that currently there are grants pending with OCRA and the Lilly Foundation, he believes we will be getting something from both of them. However, he said they have not gotten confirmation of either one yet. Commissioner Norem advised she would be in favor of starting some type of food delivery system in place. Commissioner Norem asked Attorney Lucas how this would be handled and who would be making the decisions. Attorney Lucas advised one of the keys things we would need is someone to administer this process. He also stated that one of the ideas the Stellar Committee had was as Commissioner Norem said, supporting the local restaurants and being able to deliver hot meals to residents. Commissioner Norem asked Attorney Lucas if he is suggesting that we would have to hire someone to administer this program or if we could use employees who are already staying at home. Attorney Lucas suggested Mary Perren at the highway. Auditor Oesterreich advised Mary was already working a Monday through Friday shift so it may be better to use the employees who are at home on-call and being paid. Clerk Manuel advised the Clerk's office would be willing to help with deliveries.

Jackie Ryan from The Leader advised that through their poll they completed for the stellar funding they had about 70 people respond in saying they would be willing to help in the COVID-19 response. So they do have a list of people who are willing to help as long as we can give them some direction. Commissioner Norem asked if we would be using existing transportation systems in place for the deliveries, such as the schools and council on aging. She also advised if we are delivering hot meals we would need something to put them in. Health Nurse Lynch asked if we will be collaborating with local restaurants. Commissioner Norem stated yes. After some further discussion regarding the delivery of food, hot meals, and the delivery system Commissioner Norem made a motion to have Clerk Manuel, Marty, Frank, and Rachel get together and come up with a model concept of how this is going to transpire. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Recorder Mandy Thomason asked if there was any chance of allowing the searchers back in the building by appointment only. She advised the real estate market has been deemed essential and we are kind of doing their job. She advised we are public records so they have to. She is wondering if there is any way to get the searchers in the building like one day per week or even for an hour. Commissioner Norem asked how much of their time do they spend on searching records. Recorder Thomason advised both her and her deputy spend about 3-4 hours per day on searching. Auditor Oesterreich advised that if the Board of Commissioners allows this, the searchers will at least have to wear faces masks and/or other

protection as they do travel to other counties and these searchers are not from Starke County. Recorder Thomason expressed that she is concerned that doing this searching is putting a liability on the county if the right documents are not chosen. Clerk Manuel stated they are not allowing any searchers in their office at this time and they will not be doing any searching either as this time. Commissioner Norem advised she would like to discuss this for two days and add this topic to the recessed agenda. Attorney Lucas did note that he does not believe the title searching puts us down for a liability. He believes the person who signs the title search (the searchers) are responsible for the title search. Commissioner Chesak, Commissioner Norem, and Commissioner Cavender all agreed. Commissioner Norem made a motion to consider this topic on Wednesday when the Board of Commissioners reconvene. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Clerk Manuel brought up information regarding the counties firewall system. The Indiana State Election Board is offering free software to all election divisions. This software will also cover the entire county and it is free of charge. Commissioner Norem made a motion to obtain more information regarding this software and then discuss it at their next regularly scheduled meeting. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There being no further public comments and no further business, Commissioner Cavender made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. The meeting was adjourned at 9:49AM.

APRIL 20, 2020

Charlie Chesak, President

Kathryn Norem, Vice-President

Bryan Cavender

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