

Monday, June 6, 2011

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:

RE: PAYROLL AND VENDOR CLAIMS

Kathy Norem made the motion to approve the payroll claim for the pay period ending May 14th, 2011 in the amount of \$ 164,391.57 and for the pay period ending on May 28th in the amount of \$ 164,045.41, seconded by Jennifer Davis; passing with three ayes.

Dan Bridegroom presented the vendor pay claims for the period of June 6th, 2011. The total amount of the claims: \$ 521,985.97. Commissioner Norem questioned the two \$ 3000.00 claims for postage submitted by the Treasurer, and also a claim to pay the ProForma Co. in the amount of \$ 6667.00, which was also submitted by the Treasurer. The Treasurer was not present at the meeting and at this time in the meeting Commissioner Davis left the meeting to see if the Treasurer could attend the meeting. The claim to ProForma is to pay for the printing of the 2011 tax statements, but the Treasurer only has \$ 1596.44 in that line item and will have to transfer funds from another source within her budget. A discussion followed regarding the postage and the tax statements line item in the Treasurer's budget.

The animal control line item of the Commissioner's budget was then discussed in regards to not having enough in that line item to cover the claims submitted by the Animal Control Officer. Commissioner Davis made a motion to transfer one half of the balance in the travel expense line item, which would be \$ 1200.00 and also the balance of the dues line item which is \$ 746.30 to the animal control line item to cover the new claims. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes.

Commissioner Bridegroom stated he would like to see all department heads include in their own budgets the expense of attending state called meetings and conferences, instead of that expense be taken out of the Commissioners' unappropriated expense.

Commissioner Norem stated she is concerned with the balance in the 911 fund, and a copy of the Budget Status report for that fund be sent to the County Council for review.

Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the vendor claims as presented with the exemption of the two postage claims totaling \$ 6000.00 and the ProForma claim totaling \$ 6667.00, that had all been submitted by the Treasurer's office. Commissioner Davis did not second the motion. She inquired if the Board would consider an approval of a partial amount of the postage claim for the Treasurer. They advised not without documentation showing where the postage was needed. Commissioner Bridegroom restated Commissioner Norem's original motion, Commissioner Norem seconded the motion. The motion passed with two ayes, and one nay. Commissioner Norem made a motion to pay all the other pay claims, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes.

RE: MINUTES

Kathy Norem made the motion to approve a draft of the minutes of the May 16th and May 19th meetings. Jennifer Davis seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with three ayes. The final minutes from May 2nd and May 6th were then signed.

RE: EMS

Mary Lynn Ritchie, EMS Clerk, notified the Board of \$ 283.12 collected from John O'Hara and \$ 144.66 received from the Starke County Clerk for accounts that were in collections. Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve Ms. Ritchie's list of write offs totaling \$ 5131.82. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Norem, and passed with all ayes.

A discussion followed concerning a report she had compiled showing the statistics of the EMS department.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to accept the job description of the EMS Director as written, seconded by Commissioner Norem. The motion passed with all ayes.

They advised to have Dona Hoban post the open position. They also would like to use this standardized format for job descriptions in the future.

RE: COUNTY HIGHWAY

Steve Siddall, County Highway Superintendent, and Ken Minett of Butler, Fairman & Seufert appeared before the Board to report that the borings are in the process of being completed on Bridge 156. Once the geotechnical reports and analysis is submitted to the county (he predicts in about two weeks), then the Commissioners could choose the bridge design. That information needs to be included in the permit to the DNR. Mr. Minett is estimating Aug. 1 as being the date that construction on Bridge 156 could begin. He also advised work on Bridges 9 and 62 will probably be next year. He does believe that the wetlands will be an issue with Bridge 62.

Steve reported the fuel pumps at the county highway garage are not functioning and replacement parts have been ordered. Since the pumps are obsolete, the parts are more difficult to locate. He has also requested the pricing of new replacement pumps from three different companies. He estimates the cost of new pumps could be \$ 6000.00 with the county using the old wiring.

He also advised he has already conducted a road assessment with Commissioner Norem regarding roads for chip and seal. He stated he needs to set a time with Commissioners Davis and Bridegroom to do their inspection of the roads in their areas.

He hopes to purchase a new truck this year. His goal had been to replace at least two a year but that hasn't happened in the last 2-1/2 years.

RE: REQUEST TO INCREASE SHERIFF'S FINES & FEES

Sheriff Oscar Cowen and Jail Matron, Dawn Bau appeared before the Board. The Sheriff requested the Board's signatures on a title to a squad car, that had been damaged beyond repair, so that the title could be forwarded on to the insurance company.

The Sheriff submitted a copy of the fines and fees that were collected in the month of April, 2011, which also showed the total of collections year to date. He is requesting an increase in the some of the fines and fees the sheriff's department charges for various services. He requested Marty check into the situation and advise if the increase is possible. A discussion was conducted in reference to the cost of criminal background checks and if there is a possibility if a search could be extended beyond just a local search.

The Sheriff also inquired as to receiving approval to purchase two new squad cars. The balance of the Cumulative Capital Fund was discussed and also what was pending, that needed to be paid out of that Fund. Commissioner Norem made a motion to authorize Sheriff Cowen to proceed with the purchase on one new squad car, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes.

RE: EMA DIRECTOR, TED BOMBAGETTI'S REPORT

Starke County EMA Director, Ted Bombagetti, appeared before the Board and distributed a schedule of meetings for the EMA Board and also the Local Emergency Planning Committee, the LEPC. A schedule of the meetings is on file in the Auditor's office.

Mr. Bombagetti also gave the Board a status report of grants he has submitted and waiting on approval, and also grants that have been awarded. A copy of that report is also on file. He requested the Board's signatures on the 2010 Emergency Management Performance Grant-Salaries Sub-grant Agreement CFDA # 97.042, EDS# C44P-1-381A. The grant was awarded for an amount not to exceed \$ 38,744.77, and is a salary reimbursement grant. The proceeds will be receipted into the county general fund to reduce the county's total payroll expense for the EMA department. Commissioner Norem made a motion to accept the grant agreement, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes and the grant agreement was signed by the Board. A copy of that grant agreement is also on file in the Auditor's office.

RE: CLERK EVELYN SKRONSKI'S REQUEST

Starke County Clerk, Evelyn Skronski, appeared before the Board to request permission to attend the State County Clerk's Conference being held in Michigan City on Tues.-Thurs., June 7-9.

She advised, since this was a state called meeting, the cost of \$ 200.00 would be paid out of the Commissioner's line item, unappropriated expense. A discussion followed as to the belief that the State reimburses the county for the county's expense on county attendees to a state called meeting. The Board granted Mrs. Skronski permission to attend the conference.

RE: LIBERTY NATIONAL

Stephen Rowbury and Lee Rodriguez appeared before the Board and gave a presentation of what services their company could provide to the county. They were requesting permission to speak one on one with the county's employees. The Board advised the gentlemen that they normally do not allow a sales pitch at a Board meeting, and would take their request under consideration.

At this time, a five minute break was taken. The meeting reconvened and the following took place.

IN OTHER BUSINESS:

Pam Starkey, representing the Planning Commission, appeared before the Board and presented the Planning Commission's proposed Starke County Ordinance Regulating Dog Kennels in the County. A discussion of the proposed ordinance included: striking a portion of the zoning requirement in section three, that made a division based on up to 50 dogs, and 51 or more dogs; the requirement that only six dogs were allowed to be outside at one time; if the ordinance also includes cats; and how the ordinance affects existing kennels. The Commissioners asked Ms. Starkey to take the ordinance, along with the comments, back to the Planning Commission, to be discussed at their next meeting. The Planning Commission could bring the revised ordinance proposal back to the next Commissioner's meeting.

Since the Treasurer was not present at the meeting, and she hadn't submitted her monthly 47TR report, Commissioner Davis left the meeting to talk to the Treasurer. Commissioner Davis returned to the meeting with the report from the month of April, that was due on May 16th. The Treasurer did not return to the meeting.

Commissioner Norem reviewed the report and stated the report is not in balance, the numbers do not match on the report, and the report is delinquent.

Jenny Carter, of the Starke County Visitors Association, appeared before the Board with a request for appointments to the Innkeepers Tax Commission. She stated the commission is needing two more Democrats since it currently is composed of 4 Republicans and 3 Democrats.

She stated of the two new appointees, Andrew Bielak would be an innkeeper who could collect the tax. She did not know of any others that could sit on the Commission. Marty Lucas stated, if it is not a conflict of interest, he volunteered to be on the Commission, as a Democrat. He stated it is not a lucrative board. The Commissioners decided to table the request until the next meeting, so that Marty could check into the matter.

Lisa Minix, the Starke County Recorder, appeared before the Board to report that she believes someone is entering her office, after hours, and going through the Recorder's files. She advised papers and items are being moved around and files are left open that were not that way when the office was closed and locked for the day. The Commissioners advised her to lock up any important papers, and would have the IT Director look into the cost on installing a card swipe lock for the entrance door to her office.

Paula Voss, of 6796 W 750N, Winamac, appeared before the Board with a complaint of road conditions, on the county line road, CR 900S, near the Bogus Ditch. She stated she believes a resident in that area, is removing stone from that road and putting the stone on the road in front of his home. The complaint information is on file in the Auditor's office. She stated she was involved in an accident on the county line road recently because of the road conditions on that road. Commissioner Bridegroom stated he will talk to Steve at the county highway, and they will inspect that area.

Debbie Mix, of the Bass Lake Property Owners, appeared before the Board to inquire about a stop sign being placed on CR625E, and North Road, to slow down the traffic going to and from CR210 at Bass Lake. She advised she has a petition and is obtaining signatures requesting the stop sign. Clyde Haniford, of Bass Lake, suggested using the sign from Jerry Taylor, that posts the speed of an approaching vehicle. He stated the use of that sign will usually slow down traffic. She advised she will check into that.

IT Director, Bob Smith, appeared before the Board to turn in his letter of resignation and a job description of his position. He advised his last day will be July 29th. Commissioner Norem thanked him for the fabulous job he has done, and stated that he certainly has big shoes to fill. Commissioner Davis stated the Tech committee could recommend a replacement, and Commissioner Norem stated the tech committee could do a preliminary screening. Commissioner Davis requested an inventory of equipment, and its location be on file. They also asked him to have the position posted.

A written request from Assessor, Rhonda Milner was discussed. She is asking permission to attend the Northwest District Assessor's Meeting at Fowler, on June 22th. Her two deputies would like to attend also, and Shirley Sims is available to work the office that day. Rhonda also requested to attend the Assessor DLGF Summer Conference in Indianapolis, on Aug. 30th, Aug. 31st, Sept. 1st and Sept. 2nd. Both requests were approved.

Commissioner Norem stated she had a recent conversation with Dan Anderson of the North Judson Town Board. He expressed concern about the loss of revenue to North Judson after a piece of property was sold at the county's certificate sale, which had a lien from the North Judson sewer & water department. He inquired if the town could receive something for their loss of revenue. Marty stated why grant a refund to one entity and not others, when it has happened to other entities in the past.

Commissioner Davis announced the Arrow Head Country RC & D meeting that will be held in North Judson on June 22nd. The dinner will be at the North Judson Methodist Church.

The Commissioners requested the posting of the following meetings: An Executive Session, on Thursday, June 16th at 1:00pm, to discuss the confidential SBOA report; followed by a Special Meeting to complete the SBOA corrective plan of action and the SBOA Internal Controls Survey; followed by a Special Meeting to discuss the funding of the class action lawsuit against the county.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Norem. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 12:45pm.

JUNE 6, 2011

Dan Bridegroom, President

Kathy Norem, Vice President

Jennifer Davis

Katherine Chaffins Auditor &
Secretary to the Commissioners