

**MONDAY, JUNE 15, 2020**

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Council and meet in a joint session with the Starke County Board of Commissioners at 9:00AM in the Annex Building Meeting Room, Knox, Indiana, with Dave Pearman, Brad Hazelton, Howard Bailey, Freddie Baker, Kay Gudeman, Charles Chesak, Kathryn Norem, and Bryan Cavender, present, and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting was called to order by Council President, Dave Pearman at 9:00AM.

### **AUDITOR BUSINESS**

Councilman Bailey made a motion to approve the minutes from March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Councilman Hazelton seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Councilman Gudeman made a motion to approve the minutes from May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Councilman Hazelton seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

### **ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION- NORTH JUDSON WAYNE TOWNSHIP LIBRARY**

Kelsie Purcell came before the Starke County Council to request an additional appropriation for the North Judson Wayne Township Library. Councilman Pearman explained that the North Judson Wayne Township Library had the repair done last year but a poor job was done so they are looking for additional monies for repairs. Kelsie explained that they are going to remove the windows because that is what is causing it and wall in the walls this would eliminate the problem completely. Councilman Pearman stated his concern with this is that they have already paid someone to do this work. Kelsie explained that the company has given them a discount to do this job because they didn't fix it the last time. Councilman Pearman asked if it was a discount on the last job. Kelsie stated yes they gave them a discount on the labor of the last job but they still had to pay for the materials. Attorney Lucas advised he would not be able to give an opinion without studying all the facts of the case. Councilman Pearman advised that instead of striking this matter completely he would like to have more information from them and have Attorney Lucas review the case. He would like to see what the obligation would have been of the vendor. Councilman Sims made a motion to table this matter until they get more information. Councilman Baker seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Kelsie also presented a Declaration of Fiscal Body for approval. Attorney Lucas asked who this was requested by. Kelsie advised that the Department of Local Government & Finance needs this as most of their population resides in Wayne Township and not the city limits of North Judson. Attorney Lucas advised that a record of population should be made for each area. He advised that before it is adopted they should put into record that the population of Wayne Township exceeds the population of North Judson city limits. It was decided that this will be completed at the next meeting as well.

### **PROSECUTOR-DIVERSION OFFICER PAY INCREASE**

Prosecutor Leslie Baker came before the Starke County Council to request a pay increase for the Diversion Officer. She advised she would be using the SIM grant for this increase that they had received. Within this grant funding had went to the re-entry coordinator of the jail and then also for the diversion officer. She advised she has hired someone for that role and they have many years of probation experience. She stated because this is grant funded and she has not spent much of the money allotted for this role she is requesting to alter her rate of pay from \$16.25 per hour to \$25.00 per hour. She wants to make sure we use as much as this grant as possible so that when they reapply for the grant they will not be shorted for some reason because we didn't use the funds. She advised that the money is there, it would not create any additional appropriation. Councilman Pearman asked if the grant money were to run out or something else would happen are we allowed to reduce the pay of an employee. Attorney Lucas advised yes they can as long it is not an elected official. Councilman Bailey asked if we could put in their job description that their pay is based on the amount of grant money received. Commissioner Norem asked Prosecutor Baker if she is understanding this correctly she wants to increase the pay because she has had this grant money since the beginning of the year and she has extra money to pay this individual and then next year you may not have extra funds to continue paying this amount. Prosecutor Baker advised she is not sure yet about next year. She stated it is very possible that if they kept the rate at \$25 per hour they may be able to pay the extra funds out of her diversion fund.

Commissioner Norem advised that she knows the prosecutor has rewritten the diversion program and has a pretty good program going now for putting people into the diversion program. This ultimately saves the tax payer money because inmates do not need to be housed at the jail. Commissioner Norem advised she does not personally have any problem with that. She asked what other counties are paying their diversion officers. Prosecutor Baker advised that we are one of the counties that actually have a position like this. The idea of this position is newer for smaller counties. She stated that the goal of this program is that even though people who are on the diversion program are not on probation, they are looking at it as kind of being on probation. Commissioner Norem asked if this was similar to the salary of a probation officer. Prosecutor Baker agreed. Attorney Lucas stated that Councilman Bailey suggestion of putting this into the job description that the salary of this job position is subject to grant money received would be a good idea. Prosecutor Baker advised she will rewrite the job description and bring it to the next Commissioner Meeting. Commissioner Norem asked what would happen if this position is funded exclusively by grant money and what if the grant money dries up would she get unemployment. Attorney Lucas advised that yes that person would still qualify for unemployment. Councilman Baker made a motion to approve her request with the stipulation that if the grant money diminishes she will have to do something else and that the job description will need to be changed. Councilwoman Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Councilman Bailey made a motion to amend the current salary ordinance for 2020 to increase the diversion officer pay to \$25.00 per hour. Councilwoman Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

### **SHERIFF RETIREMENT – COMMITMENT TO 2021 BUDGET**

Councilman Pearman advised they have been trying to put some pre-budget items together and one of the more difficult things has been the Sheriff Retirement program. He advised that for 2021 the county needs to cut 15% out of all budgets, he advised this is from the state. Sheriff Dulin advised that when they do the DOC billing it goes back to the general fund, this is between 100,000 and 140,000 per year. He does not understand why they can't designate that toward their retirement. Auditor Oesterreich advised that this money would still need to get receipted into county general but then the county general budget would have to be increased by that amount for 2021. Councilman Pearman advised they will discuss the retirement fund further at the 2021 budget workshops. A discussion was held regarding the possible loss of revenue the jail would have by the impact of COVID-19. Sheriff Dulin explained that for their TC Fund they have a contract with the State to house 48 inmates. However, they are not taking new inmates from Westville due to the COVID outbreak. They will still be paid for the current TC inmates they have now, which he believes is around 32 or 34. Sheriff Dulin advised that they have not had any positive cases inside the jail with inmate or any employees during this entire time period with the COVID pandemic.

### **ELECTION BOARD – EPOLL BOOKS PURCHASE REQUEST**

Starke Circuit Court Clerk Bernadette Manuel came before the Starke County Council to request the purchase of e-poll books for the Election Department. Clerk Manuel advised that the Starke County Election Board had approved the creation of Vote Centers back in April. By the end of this month she will have the plan sent to the State but in order for us to have vote centers we have to have e-poll books. Councilman Pearman advised that the total amount of \$44,000 and we are able to pay half this year and half next year with no interest. After a discussion regarding the funds available in the cumulative capital development fund, Auditor Oesterreich was asked to submit the paperwork for an additional appropriation for \$130,000. This will come before the Starke County Council at their next meeting. Councilman Hazelton made a motion to pay \$22,055 for payment of the e-poll books. Councilman Bailey seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Clerk Manuel also presented information for pricing on printers for the election polls for their tally tapes. She advised that the current printers are very slow. Councilman Pearman stated he does not believe that having fewer faster printers rather than having one printer per machine, as we have now, will make that much of an impact in time saved. He stated that spending more money at this time and in the crisis we are in would not be wise. Clerk Manuel advised that they have one printer per precinct not one printer per machine. So they currently have 21 printers. Councilman Pearman advised that the math does not support making things better with using 7 printers rather than 21 printers. Clerk Manuel advised that with the savings she has been able to achieve in the spring election, as well as the same savings in the fall, she believes she will not have to ask the council for money and she would be able to make the printer purchase out of her current election budget.

## CF-1 REQUESTS

Councilman Pearman advised that before them are CF-1 forms for the following businesses: American Oak, Gary Poppins, Mae Engineering Inc, and Kemin. He advised that reviewing abatements are somewhat new for the council but they have been talking since last year and decided that these do need review so that we make sure that the companies are meeting our expectations. Assessor Schouten advised that on new abatements the council can also put in stipulations within their abatement request. She also advised she did review these CF-1 form and what they had stated they estimated on SB-1 are correct. Councilman Pearman stated for example under the current number of employees on the SB-1 they had estimated 35 employees and their actual number of employees is 13 and under their salaries the estimated amount on the SB-1 is over half of what is actually being paid. So this is clearly not meetings our expectations. Assessor Schouten advised that if the CF-1 is being denied the council will need to sign the back and mark the reason why it is being denied. That will then go to the property owner telling them that it is denied. Assessor Schouten advised that Mae Engineering had filled out a CF-1 in December but that was too late for 2019 and too early for 2020. They also did not have the SB-1 or actual information filled out on it. Councilman Pearman reviewed the CF-1 forms. He advised that American Oak has always exceeded their numbers. Mae Engineering could be denied for an incomplete application, Kemin Industries has met their expectations, and Gary Poppins should be denied as they have no met their estimated numbers. Councilman Baker made a motion to deny Mae Engineering's CF-1 request as they did not fill out the forms properly. Councilwoman Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Councilman Sims made a motion to deny Gary Poppins CF-1 request due to failure to substantially comply with the representations of employment without explanation. Councilman Baker seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

## PREBUDGET WORKSHOP DISCUSSION

Councilman Pearman explained that he had Auditor Oesterreich print out some pre-budget information for the upcoming budget workshop. Commissioner Norem advised the only department she had seen that has spent over 50% of their budget so far is Purdue Cooperative Extension. It was determined that the Budget Workshops should be set on July 20<sup>th</sup> at 9AM.

## OTHER BUSINESS

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

After having no public comments made Councilman Baker made a motion to adjourn at 10:14AM. Councilwoman Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

## JUNE 15, 2020 STARKE COUNTY COUNCIL

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Dave Pearman, President

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Brad Hazelton, Vice-President

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Kay Gudeman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Don White

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ABSENT

\_\_\_\_\_  
Howard Bailey

\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert Sims

\_\_\_\_\_  
Freddie Baker

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Rachel Oesterreich, Starke County Auditor and  
Secretary to the County Council

**JUNE 15, 2020**  
**STARKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

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Charlie Chesak, President

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Kathryn Norem, Vice-President

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Bryan Cavender

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