

EMERGENCY EXECUTIVE SESSION

Thursday, August 11, 2011

The Starke County Board of Commissioners meet in an Emergency Executive Session, at 8:00AM, in the Annex meeting room, Knox, IN with Dan Bridegroom, Kathy Norem, and Jennifer Davis present, and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting was called, pursuant to IC5-14-1.5-6.1 (2b); IC5-14-1.5-6.1 (6a); IC5-14-1.5-6.1 (7); IC5-14-1.5-5 (d) to discuss the county’s personnel.

Also present at the meeting were Starke County Council President, Mark Smith, and Starke County Attorney, Marty Lucas.

I can attest, the only issue discussed at this meeting was the county’s personnel.
The meeting was adjourned at 9:11AM.

Katherine Chaffins, Auditor &
Secretary to the Board of Commissioner

EMERGENCY SPECIAL SESSION

Thursday, August 11, 2011

Pursuant to adjournment, and pursuant to IC 5-14-1.5-5, (d); IC 5-14-1.5-6.1 (2b); IC 5-14-1.5-6.1 (6a); IC 5-14-1.5-6.1 (7) comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in Emergency Special Session at 9:20AM in the Annex meeting room, Knox, Indiana, with Dan Bridegroom, Kathy Norem, and Jennifer Davis present and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting was called to address an emergency matter that threatens the functioning of a governmental entity. President Dan Bridegroom called the meeting to order. President Bridegroom advised: As a result of unresolved issues of the 2009 State Board of Accounts audit of the Starke County’s Treasurer’s office, county officials have instituted additional safe guards on the county’s bank accounts. The safeguards will enhance review procedures that may cause a delay in the processing of checks. The delay will not exceed 48 hours. Commissioner Norem made a motion, as a result of the unresolved issues of the 2009 audit, to terminate the employment of all the employees in the Starke County Treasurer’s office, effective immediately. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes. At this time, Commissioner Bridegroom asked the Sheriff and two Sheriff’s Deputies to accompany him to the Treasurer’s office to immediately escort the employees out of the office. He advised he will ask the Assessor and her employees to leave the office space, and he will explain to the Treasurer’s office of the action. County Attorney, Marty Lucas, advised the Treasurer’s employees should leave with only their personal items.

At this time there was a short break in the meeting. When Commissioner Bridegroom returned to the meeting, Commissioner Norem made a motion to have the County Attorney draft and file a lawsuit on the Starke County Treasurer’s official bond, and seek a temporary restraining order excluding the Treasurer, Linda Belork, from the office. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes. Marty Lucas advised he would prepare the paperwork immediately following the meeting. Commissioner Norem then made a motion to temporarily employ, Deputy Assessor, Michele Snowdon, in the Treasurer’s office. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes.

Commissioner Norem made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:35AM.

August 11, 2011

Dan Bridegroom, President

Kathy Norem, Vice President

Jennifer Davis

Katherine Chaffins, Auditor &
Secretary to the Commissioners

EMERGENCY SPECIAL SESSION

AUGUST 11, 2011

Pursuant to adjournment, and pursuant to IC 5-14-1.5-6.1 (2b); IC 5-14-1.5-6.1 (6a); IC 5-14-1.5-6.1 (7); IC 5-14-1.5-5 (d) comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in an Emergency Special Session, at 2:00PM, in the Annex Building Meeting Room, Knox, IN with Dan Bridegroom, Kathy Norem, and Jennifer Davis present, and the following proceedings were held to wit:

Also in attendance were members of the Starke County Council, President Mark Smith, Marvin McLaughlin, Dave Pearman, Mitch Seamans, Robert Sims, and Tony Radkiewicz.

Commissioner President Dan Bridegroom called the meeting to order. He announced the Emergency Executive Session of the combined Starke County Council and the Starke County Board of Commissioners, which was posted for 1:00PM, had been cancelled. He stated as a result of unresolved issues of the State Board of Accounts 2009 audit of the Starke County Treasurer’s office the following action was taken at the Emergency Special Session, of 9:20AM: The county’s bank accounts had been frozen, but he reassured county employees that the payroll scheduled for Friday, August 12th will be issued, and all direct deposit payroll checks would not be affected. He also stated that a temporary restraining order had been served on the Starke County Treasurer, and also a lawsuit had been filed against the Starke County Treasurer, Linda Belork, and the insurance company that had issued the treasurer’s official bond, the Ohio Casualty Insurance Company. He stated both employees of the Treasurer’s office have been dismissed. Deputy Assessor, Michelle Snowdon has been appointed as the Interim Treasurer, because of her past work experience in the Treasurer’s office, and a replacement for the Deputy Treasurer will be named. Commissioner Norem stated, now that a lawsuit has been filed on the Treasurer’s official bond, according to IC 36-2-10-3, she makes a motion to remove the Treasurer, Linda Belork, from office. Marty Lucas recommended the motion be clarified to state that the Treasurer was found to be delinquent by the Starke County Board of Commissioners, and she was consequently sued on her official bond. Commissioner Norem revised her motion, and it was seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes. Starke County Council President, Mark Smith, advised that measures have been taken to insure the county’s bank accounts are secure. A new signature card has been established, removing the Treasurer from the accounts. Vendor checks will be processed at the bank on a one by one basis. He advised county business will continue uninterrupted and new vendor claims will be processed as normal. Commissioner Davis stated that all county records have been secured and all computer files have been backed up. Commissioner Bridegroom stated the Treasurer’s office is open for business and county business will proceed as normal. Michelle Snowdon will be the Interim Treasurer until the party caucus finds a replacement for the Treasurer. Marty Lucas advised the timeline for the replacement depends on if an appeal is filed by Treasurer Linda Belork. Councilman McLaughlin stated the Treasurer has the right to appeal the executive order and the lawsuit on her official bond, but not the temporary restraining order. She could also waive her right to appeal. Marty Lucas stated a hearing date has been set for August 19th. Janice Janson inquired if the treasurer’s office has been secured. Commissioner Bridegroom advised the door locks had been changed the night before, computer passwords have been changed, and the IT department has severed accessibility of all former Treasurer’s office employees from all county software in that office. Ted Hayes inquired if there will be an investigation of the missing funds. The Commissioners advised the Ohio Insurance Casualty Co., that insured the bond, could possibly send in a team of auditors to investigate. Judy Lenig inquired as to why the other two employees of the Treasurer’s office had been dismissed, since they have only worked in 2011, and not in 2009 and 2010. Commissioner Norem replied there is a conflict since they are both relatives of Linda Belork, the Treasurer, and the Commissioners decided it would be best to establish a clean start. Starke County Councilman, Marvin McLaughlin, stated a lot of the public’s questions will be answered when the State Board of Accounts makes public the 2010 Starke County Treasurer’s audit. Commissioner Norem made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:23PM.

AUGUST 11, 2011

<hr/> <div>Dan Bridegroom, President</div>	<hr/> <div>Kathy Norem, Vice-President</div>
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