

Friday, September 6, 2013

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Council and meet in Special session at 5:30PM in the Annex meeting room, Knox Indiana and the following proceedings were held to wit:

Present: Councilmen Dave Pearman, Mitch Semans, Freddie Baker, and Bryan Cavender.

Absent: Councilmen Robert Sims and Marvin McLaughlin.

President Dave Pearman called the meeting to order at 5:40PM. He advised the Board is required to re-adopt the NJ-SP 2014 Budget as an incorrect form was signed at the last meeting. Councilman Semans made a motion to adopt the NJ-SP 2014 budget, seconded by Councilman Cavender. The motion passed with all ayes and the document was signed by the four Councilmen.

At this time, Councilman Radkiewicz arrived to the meeting.

CREATION OF A COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION BOARD

President Pearman advised, in regard to the discussion of the possible creation of a Parks and Recreation Board, it does open the door down the road for a need for some type of funding, being either some type of taxes, grant revenue or other funding. He noted the Council does not need to be in a hurry to decide on the creation of the Board, and could table the issue for now. Councilman Cavender advised even though he personally had originally been against the creation of a Parks & Recreation Board he has been surprised at the support he has received for the creation of such a Board. President Pearman advised the same. Councilman Baker stated the Council could agree to postpone the decision for now since he is still concerned with the funding issue, and also the question of who is the actual owner of some of the park areas in the County, such as who is the actual owner of the Beach at Koontz Lake. Rosemary Rose, who was present at the meeting, advised she would be interested in serving on a Parks & Recreation Board. She advised she used to work at the Bass Lake Beach as a youth and she feels such a Board would make a great liaison between the Beach and the Board of Commissioners. Another County resident present at the meeting, Mark Gourley, also stated he supported the creation of a Parks & Recreation Board. Terry Bowser, a frequent camper at the Bass Lake Campground stated he felt that the creation of that Board was an excellent idea. Richard Callahan, the Leasee of the Bass Lake Beach and Campground from Starke County questioned if the Parks & Recreation Board would be micromanaging the parks in the area and wondered if the County's goal was to take over control of the Beach and Campground. President Pearman stated they wanted the Board to act as the liaison between him and the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Callahan stated he had a twenty year lease with the County for the Beach and Campground. President Pearman advised he thought it was a ten year lease, and Mr. Callahan stated he has a ten year lease with a ten year option. Mr. Callahan stated he would rather deal with a rational board than an irrational council. Dina Ward, a County resident present at the meeting, inquired how the Board would be created and who would be appointing the members to the Board. Councilman Baker read aloud the Ordinance/Indiana Code as to who has the authority to appoint members to the Board. Ms. Ward inquired if the Board positions would be advertised for interested volunteers and President Pearman advised the positions would be advertised. Ms. Rose inquired as to what requirements or criteria would be expected from the Board appointees, and President Pearman noted they would want transparency and diversity, and advised there is still a lot to this Board creation that needs to be researched. Councilman Baker made a motion to table the Board creation discussion for now until they can specify how the Board will be funded, since he is not in favor of any new taxes at this time. Councilman Cavender seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes. President Pearman stated the Council may want to create a committee to look into the creation of a Park & Recreation Board, and will keep the public notified via the media. He noted both Councilman Radkiewicz and County Attorney Marty Lucas have experience working with parks.

President Pearman advised, in regard to the County's 2014 County General Budget that was the product of their Budget Workshop which totaled \$ 6,737,724.00, he felt the budget was too high and would like to have it reviewed before the final adoption. He noted he met with Auditor Chaffins and she suggested the following reductions to the 2014 County General Budget: Reduce 1000.12500.000.0025, FICA by 22,431.00 (the 911 share of social security and medicare) and move it to the 911 Fund, since their revenue will be increasing in 2014. Reduce the health insurance line item of the Commissioner's budget by 100,000.00, from 996,000.00 to 896,000.00; move the worker compensation insurance, liability insurance, Porter/Starke Services, and Marshall/Starke Services to the CAGIT Certified Shares Fund. The total of those transfers is 476,686. After a thorough review of the remaining budget, and comparing the last couple of years' expenditure history, the following additional cuts were made: EMS Dept. reduce the utilities line item from 14,600.00 to 11,000.00; EMS Dept. reduce the ambulance repairs line item from 13,000.00 to 10,000.00; Planning Commission Dept. reduce the education & seminars from 2000.00 to 1000.00; and the Annex Bldg Dept. reduce the utilities from 25,000.00 to 20,000.00. The total of those proposed additional reductions is \$12,600.00; which would reduce the County's 2014 County General budget to 6,126,007.00 which is an .82% increase over 2013's budget. Auditor Chaffins advised as of now the 3% pay increase is still in the 2014 budget. Councilman Semans inquired as to how much could be saved if the pay increase was reduced to 2%. President Pearman advised the Council will look into that if the State does not approve 100% of this proposed budget. Councilman Semans made a motion to accept the proposed changes/reductions to the 2014 County General Budget. Councilman Radkiewicz seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes. President Pearman advised the final adoption of the 2014 County Budgets will take place at their meeting on Monday, September 16th. He noted also being addressed at that meeting is the Non-Binding Reviews of the other County entities. Councilman Semans advised he had reviewed the non-binding reviews that had been emailed out to the Board by the Auditor, and he stated he has some questions for some of the Township Trustees. It was decided to ask the Township Trustees and the two County Libraries to be in attendance for the Non-Binding Reviews on the 16th.

President Pearman noted at the October meeting of the Council he would like to discuss the future Sheriff's pay and he will create a spreadsheet with other County's Sheriff's pay.

With there being no further business, Councilman Semans made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilman Radkiewicz. The motion passed with all ayes, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:15PM.

SEPTEMBER 6, 2013

Dave Pearman, President

Mitch Semans, Vice President

Bryan Cavender

ABSENT
Marvin McLaughlin

Freddie Baker

Tony Radkiewicz

ABSENT
Robert Sims

Katherine Chaffins, Starke Co. Auditor & Board of Commissioners and
County Council Secretary