

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2020

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in Regular Session at 6:00PM, in person at the Starke County Annex Building, Knox, Indiana, with Charles Chesak and Bryan Cavender 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 directly at 6:00PM.

1ST CHOICE INSURANCE – INSURANCE REVIEW

Carrie Block with 1st Choice insurance came before the Board of Commissioners for an insurance review and to present the quotes for the 2020-2021 renewal. She presented the Board of Commissioners with a summary of the services that they have provided besides the insurances policies. We went over the loss control training sessions during the policy term as well as past training sessions. She explained the training sessions had been shortened this year because of the situation that we had with COVID. Within the report she also included information on other services and reviews they have provided the county as well as a summary of the claims for the 2019-2020 policy period. She then explained the quotes for liability, employment practices, automobile, property, crimes, and workman's compensation. The total quote was for \$433,165. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the quote for the renewal of the policy as presented. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with both ayes.

CROSSES ON THE COURTHOUSE LAWN

Jo Fisher came before the Board of Commissioners to request the use of the courthouse lawn for 4 crosses for the month of October. She explained that they put the crosses at the Marshall County courthouse and they have decided to stretch out to Starke County as her son works in Starke County. She stated these crosses represent 4 women who die every day from domestic violence and October is domestic violence awareness month. Commissioner Chesak and Commissioner Cavender both said they would be fine with the placement of the crosses but asked that Auditor Oesterreich check with Judge Hall to make sure he is okay with them as well.

EMS MONTHLY REPORT

Travis Clary, EMS Director and MaryLynn Ritchie, Clerk came before the Board of Commissioners to give their monthly report. Clerk Ritchie provided the collections report for the month. Commissioner Chesak read the total collections from O'Hara and Small Claims is \$569.11. Clerk Ritchie advised that their call volume is still down but they have been keeping up on all the transfers. 41% of their runs have been transfers that came through the hospital. She explained their revenue has gone up from what they have been doing this year even though it is still down from last year at this time. Director Clary stated their operations continue to run smoothly. They are looking into another protocol update. The newest protocol would be for our Paramedics to start using push-dose pressures. They are specifically looking into push-dose epi, which would cut down on our cost of medications as well as provide more efficient patient care. When adding this into our Advanced Life Support protocols we will eliminate the need for Dopamine on our ambulances. We will take the epi 1:10,000 that we currently carry, and use that in place of Dopamine. Director Clary has advised that he has hired one more additional Part-Time Paramedic. She will begin her orientation phase in the middle of this month. They continue to operate fully staffed. He advised they had the TCCC course last month, which was a success. The TCCC class was the military based medic 2-day course. The staff really enjoyed it, and I believe we all learned quite a bit from this course.

Directed Clary explained that tactical medicine, and civilian medicine can be completely different in a hot zone environment such as an active shooter situation etc. They held their monthly audit & review with Starke Hospital. They concentrated on more cardiac cases this month. They have several pediatric courses coming up. Pediatric Education for Prehospital Professional (PEPP) for basic, and advanced providers. He advised they will be working with Laporte Hospital to hopefully get some of our providers certified in Neonatal Resuscitation Program (NRP). He stated he held a CPR class for Golden Living Center here in Knox, We trained with Knox City PD, and Starke County Sheriff's office in a K9 training with Dr. Lisa Booth from Vale Park Animal Hospital. She came to us to update us on the care for our K9 officers if they become sick/injured. We also trained with Knox High School Athletic Trainer

Maggie Long, and the football team. We did a brief refresher with them on the packaging of a football player, and reviewed some of their new football equipment.

Director Clary advised they have had another injury free month. He stated in ambulance maintenance 0514 our Grovertown ambulance received brakes/rotors. It also had to go in for a DEF system issue. They ended up just having to replace a mass air flow sensor, and another sensor that caused the truck to go into the DEF system limp mode. The brake/rotor work was performed at our county highway department. The DEF system issues were resolved at the Chevy Dealer in Plymouth. 0086 received an oil change from our county highway department. He advised that they have no major base maintenance issues to report for the month of August. Director Clary then advised that they did get approval from the Indiana Finance Authority that they can use the CARES money to purchase an ambulance. He is asking for approval from the Board of Commissioners to use the CARES Act funding for the purchase of the ambulance. He advised it would be a 2021 Ford Gas Engine. He advised the last new ambulance they had purchased was also a gas engine and they have had zero problems with it. Councilman Hazelton advised they are really tight with CARES funding. Auditor Oesterreich agreed and also stated that EMS has another grant fund, CARES Provider Relief Fund, they can pay a portion of the new ambulance from. She advised that the CARES Provider Relief Fund has to be spent on the EMS department. She advised there is \$36,000 currently in that fund and we are expected to get more but we do not know how much more we will be receiving. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the purchase of an ambulance in the amount of \$126,439.00. \$36,000 of the costs will be paid for from the CARES Provider Relief Fund. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with both ayes.

HIGHWAY MONTHLY REPORT

Stephen Ritzler, Starke County Highway Superintendent came before the Starke County Commissioners to give his monthly report. He advised that their MVH and LRS distributions for the month of August matched last year's August distributions, this is good news. For the year they are down just under 7% for MVH and about 5.5% for LRS. This is good news as they expected to be down 5-15% for this year in relations to the COVID pandemic. Superintendent Ritzler advised that their productivity this past month has exceeded their expectations. They have completed 30.76 miles of road improvements since their last meeting. Most of the improvements are chip seals. Last month he had said they were on pace to complete 86 miles for the year if all goes well. They now have completed 87.99 so far, and we could complete as many as 50 miles more this month and early October. They are not on pace for about 138.56 miles of road improvements for the year is all goes well. Last year they completed 88.75 miles of road improvements. As you may remember, they need to complete approximately 50 miles of improvements each year to maintain our PASER rating level (the actual necessary total depends on what type of road improvements are being completed). 138.56 miles should greatly improve our overall PASER rating for the county. Although some of the higher total can be attributed to the availability of grindings from recent INDOT projects, we have been able to complete five different types of road improvements so far and we will be adding crack sealing to that list later this month. This fits perfectly with the "mix of fixes" asset management strategy. Doing the right treatment at the right time is the key to effective roadway management.

Superintendent Ritzler present a chart breaking down what they have done so far, type of improvement, and planned miles in September and October. He advised that when they complete this many miles, they start to see common complaints and concerns about each method.

Hot Mix

1. The road looks rough
2. There is a drop off at my driveway
3. The intersections are rough and don't match the roadways

He explained that they always hear these concerns before the project is over. Many people do not understand that there are three layers or "lifts" to our hot mix asphalt roads: a leveling course, a binder course, and a finishing course. The rough road complete is usually a results of people driving over the leveling or binder courses not realizing that there will be a smooth, finishing course laid on after the first two. For the last two common concerns these are also called in before the contractor applies the shoulder stone and finishes the intersection. Although the paving for these roads is usually completed in less than a week. It can take up to two more weeks to complete the other tasks before a road is inspected for final approval.

Superintendent Ritzler explained the cold mix complaints as follows:

Cold Mix

1. The road is soft and there are divots near my driveway.
2. Why are you chip sealing over the cold mix road less than a year after you pave it?

He advised that cold mix is softer and takes longer to cure than hot mix. Hot mix hardens almost immediately while cold mix roads can take up to a few weeks. Cold mix asphalt is about ¼ the cost of hot mix. The longer curing time is the tradeoff for using the less expensive asphalt. Cold mix roads are also not as smooth as hot mix roads. They chip seal over the cold mix roads as soon as possible because cold mix asphalt is more permeable to water than hot mix asphalt. Even with a chip seal applied a cold mix/chip seal road is less than 1/3 the cost of a hot mix road. He then explain the chip seal complaints as follows:

Chip Seal

1. The chips are damaging my car
2. There is stone in my yard
3. There is oil in my yard
4. Chip sealing sucks why did you gravel my road

Chip sealing is an easy, inexpensive way to prolong the life of roadways (about \$5500 a mile). Unfortunately, it has its drawbacks. Although people often complain about broken windshield and chipped paint, we have not received any sort of claims in the last seven years as a result of chip sealing. He advised that oil and stone can end up in someone's yard and they try to be careful to mitigate this. Chip sealing is not nearly as nice as hot mix but if we try to hot mix every road in the county it would, under the current budget, take 175 years to pave all the roads in the county. It does take a while for a chip seal road to be compacted by traffic, usually about a week or two (although high travel roads like Toto Rd. compact in only a day or two). Superintendent Ritzler then explained the possible crack seal complaints.

Crack Seal

1. What are those black line in the road?
2. Tar from your crack seal is on my tire

Although many people don't understand the procedure, crack sealing is one of the most cost effective roadway preservation treatments in our arsenal (\$1500.00 a mile) Those "black lines" keep water out of cracks on the roadway. When applied properly, crack seal hardens quickly and is not a danger to car tires.

Reshaping and Applying Grindings to a Gravel Road

1. The new pavement you are using looks and rides terribly
2. Chip seal my road
3. Pave my road

Although grindings can look like paved asphalt is is much closer in utility to a gravel road. They are using grindings as a precursor to possibly chip sealing many of our gravel roads. He advised they are currently experimenting with its usage. Superintendent Ritzler advised that additional roadway work planned for this year includes; culvert cleaning, culvert replacements, paser ratings, gravel road ratings, crack seal, CMA paving, chip seal, and grindings. He then presented the Commissioners with a chart of completed roadwork. He also advised that they are completing their last rounds of mowing with their part time staff. He will then have a driver start mowing a last pass of the county in early October. The Town of North Judson has approached us, asking if we will do their mowing for them next year if they reimbursed us. Street Superintendent Joe Leszek is providing him with details on routes and how often that would want the roads mowed. He will then present this to the Commissioners at their next meeting. If you approve he will send Leszek their costs to do the mowing.

Superintendent Ritzler then presented the Board with the tree callout procedures. He advised the bridge conditions are the same, they have three in development. Bridges inspections are beginning with Phase II, United Consultants are completing the bridge inspections. The culverts are the same as last month and they have about 8 more to do this year. He advised his office has been working on updating the county map with Rhonda Milner and WTH/GIS. Mary and I have finished their review of the 377 concerns/questions/anomalies found within their initial look at the 2007 map earlier this year. Their comparison of the 2007 Starke County Map and the 2019 INDOT Road Inventory resulted in 246 action items:

91 INDOT Inventory and/or name changes

96 Map Only Changes

17 INDOT and Map Changes- Frontage Road and Unnamed Road in Hamlet Industrial Park need names

34 Rik needs to checks

8 Coordinate with Knox officials

Commissioner Cavender requested that 300E and Toto Road be upgraded for the truck drivers who are entering into the Knox Industrial Park. Superintendent Ritzler advised that Toto Rd. is a major grant collector and would be eligible for a new grant opportunity that just came out. He advised that the INDOT call for projects start on November 2nd, with December 11th being the deadline. At the next meeting he will present some projects to the Board and see which ones we want to go through with. He stated that last month, the Board approved the use of the Sourcewell collective bid system. It is already providing cost savings for the county. Mary reviewed our existing contracts and found that both our Verizon GPS and our AT&T phone costs can be reduced significantly by using the Sourcewell bids. In the case of the GPS the savings are 50% or about \$10,000 a year. In the case of AT&T the savings are about 25%, or about \$500 per year. They have also saved \$9,000 in our latest truck order. The initial lowest bid was \$162,000. The Sourcewell cost was \$153,000. Just in the past month alone we have saved approximately \$19,500, with \$10,500 of that being annual savings.

Superintendent Ritzler advised they will have the snow plow simulator training at the garage sometime in October as well as LTAP snow plow training at the garage on October 14th. He stated that the decibel monitors for an engine brake ordinance cost about \$200 each, there is some flexibility on sign placement through INDOT. Although INDOT does not endorse such noise ordinances they will cooperate if the community feels it is warranted. If the Commissioners want to go ahead with the ordinance he will work with Marty Lucas and Bill Dulin this month. He asked if the Commissioners would like him to move forward with this. He explained that INDOT is not for these signs but will go according to what the Board of Commissioners want. Commissioner Chesak sees plus and minuses with this and Commissioner Cavender stated that this would be very hard to enforce. Councilman Hazelton advised that if we are not going to enforce this then we may not want to go through the process in getting the signs. He stated you would have to have someone sitting there with the noise meter. Superintendent Ritzler agreed that is what the Sheriff's Department would have to do is sit there with the device and measure the oncoming traffic. Commissioner Chesak advised that one of the biggest deals is the speeding through San Pierre which leads to the use of Jake Brakes. A short discussion was held regarding the location of the speed limit signs. Superintendent Ritzler will check with INDOT regarding placing the speed limit signs a farther back before you enter into the limits of San Pierre.

Superintendent Ritzler then explained that they had two intersections that they had Purdue LTAP do investigations on 1) CR700E/200N – any improvement to decrease accidents, they did not recommend a four way stop. He will talk to LTAP to see where they are coming from in this decision. Both Commissioner Chesak and Commissioner Cavender agreed that this intersection needs a four-way stop. 2) CR100E/500S – requested four way stop – they advised we could put in a four way stop. He also advised the next US30 Coalition meeting is this Friday, September 11.

SOLID WASTE CARES REQUEST

Carrie Trent, with Starke County Environmental Management came before the Board of Commissioners to request CARES funding for a camera system in the amount of \$1,275.95. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve their request in the amount of \$1,275.95. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with both ayes.

RECORDER CARES REQUEST

Mandy Thomason, Starke County Recorder, came before the Board of Commissioners to request CARES funding for a scanning and indexing project. She advised that the original project called for a

100 year scan with a total cost of \$69,181.74. If they did half of the project it would be a 32 year scan with a total cost of \$34,590.00. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to accept half of the proposed project. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with both ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the indexing project as well but it is to be paid from out of the Recorder's Perpetual Fund. Commissioner Chesak second the motion and the motion was approved with both ayes.

AUDITOR BUSINESS

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the vendor claims docket for a total in the amount of \$698,634.40. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the payroll docket in the amount of \$262,243.93, including deductions in the amount of \$79,772.02 for the pay period ending on 8/22/2020 and pay date of 8/28/2020. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the payroll docket in the amount of \$256,359.20, including deductions in the amount of \$77,869.18 for the pay period ending on 9/05/2020 and pay date of 9/11/2020. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the minutes from August 17th, 2020. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

OTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD

Commissioner Chesak brought up the GIS Limited Use Agreement between Starke County, Indiana and Environmental Consulting & Technology, Inc. The original requested agreement states that they would receive these layers at no charge. Attorney Lucas advised that the Board of Commissioners could charge for this service. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to charge a fee of \$750 and approve the contract. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with both ayes.

Commissioner Chesak asked Attorney Lucas to read the Broadband Readiness Statement:

On behalf of the citizens of Starke County Indiana, we're pleased to express our enthusiastic support for bringing the goals of the Broadband Ready Community program to our towns, lake communities and countryside. We've been informed that Starke County is now designated as an official Broadband Ready Community, the first since the transition of this program from IEDC to OCRA. It's cause for celebration, but more than that it's time to plan how we'll go from broadband ready, to broadband enabled.

In our 2019 Stellar Communities bid, we found that people here cherish the simple pleasures of our small town and rural lifestyle but also recognize the urgent need to improve economic, social and educational opportunities. The Broadband Readiness study, funded by a 2018 IEDC grant, showed that some of our more densely populated towns already have good broadband Internet access, but much of our rural area is poorly served.

That's a typical example of a digital divide, and we intend to close it. Broadband access throughout the county is needed to support modern agriculture, rural based small businesses and creatives, and to provide all students, young and old, an equal opportunity to participate in the 21st century information economy. During COVID-19 closures the critical need for broadband access to every home, farm and business came to the fore. For many, broadband availability meant the difference between working or studying at home, or being left behind. We're looking forward to working with the State of Indiana, and public private partners like KVREMC and existing Internet Service Providers to take Internet accessibility throughout Starke County to the next level. Please keep us informed about how best to achieve this important goal.

Auditor Oesterreich explained that we are running out of money in the mobile meal program fund. We have decided to end the program on September 12th. Both the residents and the businesses have been notified. She stated that after they pay out their bills this week they should have about \$25,000 left in the fund. Commissioner Cavender would like to use the remaining money toward individuals who are quarantined and need food to be delivered to their homes.

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to opt out of the payroll tax. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with both ayes.

The Board of Commissioners went over the sealing quotes for Annex 1 & Annex 2 parking lot sealing quotes. One was received from Country Strong for \$2900.00 and the second from Les Jensen in the

amount of \$2465.00. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to accept the quote of Les Jensen in the amount of \$2465.00. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with both ayes.

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the 2021 Holiday Schedule. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with both ayes.

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to donate the extra copies of plat maps to the Starke County historical society. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with both ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There being no further public comments and no further business, Commissioner Cavender made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 PM.

SEPTEMBER 8, 2020

Charlie Chesak, President

Kathryn Norem, Vice-President

Bryan Cavender

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