

STARKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2021

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in Regular Session at 9:30 AM, in person at the Starke County Annex Building, Knox, Indiana, with Charles Chesak, Bryan Cavender, and Mark Gourley 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 9:30 AM.

EMS MONTHLY REPORT

Travis Clary, Starke County EMS Director and Nancy Coad EMS Clerk came before the Board of Commissioners to present their monthly report. Commissioner Chesak advised the EMS Department has receive \$369.29 Attorney Johnathan O'Hara and \$1,486.50 from Small Claims. Nancy advised that they are down in collections for the month of August. Medicare had a glitch in their system and they did not pay then the \$39,000 owed until the 1st week in September. With that amount they really are up in collection for the month of August by \$1,805.00. Director Clary advised that in operations they have had no changes in their operational status. They continue to operate 4 ALS ambulances out of 3 stations throughout our county. In personnel he does still have one full time Paramedic position open, and another full time Paramedic just turned in her resignation to pursue an opportunity in travel nursing. He advised he has also turned in his resignation as full –time EMS Director last week. It has been a great 5 ½ years of directorship. Director Clary stated he appreciates all of their support in this position, and he is happy to have achieved what we achieved under his direction. His final day will be November 1st 2021. He would be more than happy to assist in the hiring of his replacement and he would like to remain on service as a full time paramedic with their approval.

Director Clary advised that they have held their monthly audit and review with the local hospitals. They have a PHTLS class coming up at Knox Fire Department. They have had Samaritan Fight coming in for a collaboration training tomorrow night with all of the local fire departments. They will be going over safety and LZ's. Samaritan will be able to answer any other questions they may have while they are there. We have also been invited to Cadaver lab at Memorial in South Bend next Friday. We typically have a few of our paramedics participate in this free training. It is a great opportunity for us to practice some unique skills that they do not usually use on a daily basis. Director Clary advised that they had an injury free month in the month of August and are doing well up to this point in September. Director Clary advised the following in ambulance maintenance:

3308 (2021 Ford Gas Engine) Is out of service and has been for approximately 2 weeks. The truck lost all brakes, and power steering. It was luckily sitting idle at the time. It was towed to Knox Ford. They have found that it was the hydro-boost pump/lines. The parts are on backorder. When he last checked with them they had received some of the parts, but not all of them. The parts/labor is 100% covered under warranty.

4230 (2019 Ford Gas) will be receiving a full service oil change at Knox Ford today.

0514 (2015 Diesel) Was out of service for door repairs. The locking mechanisms had failed on the rear doors once again. It is now back in service.

0086 (2009 Ford 6.0 Diesel) is having some charging issues with the ambulance. We hope to have those resolved soon.

0085 (2013 Diesel) Had two front tires replaced.

0084 (2012 Chevy Diesel) Had a busted valve stem on the inside passenger's side dual. The repair was completed on Saturday at Patrick Auto.

4149 (2013 Ford Explorer) No repairs/service needed.

Director Clary advised that they have had no major base maintenance issues for the month and they are currently stable on all personal protective equipment.

SCEDF- RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Lisa Dan, Director of the Starke County Economic Development Foundation came before the Board of Commissioners for an update regarding the Rural Economic Development Model and some other things. Director Dan advised that their manufactures job fair is coming up on Wednesday October 6th, 2021 from 4:30 to 7 PM. The next day, Thursday, October 7th will be the manufactures day. 7th and 8th grade students from the local school districts will come to learn about the communities and educational needs for jobs as they begin to think about their high school pathways and future careers. Their Annual Perspectives and Achievement Luncheon will be on October 7th as well. The Board is invited. Next, on October 13th they will be having a Q & A session for area residents in regards to a solar project in Railroad Township. She believes it will be held at the Catholic Church in San Pierre at 6 PM. Director Dan advised that Mammoth Solar, which is the Bass Lake project, will be having a ground breaking event on Thursday, October 14th, everyone is invited to this event and this event will be held at the melody drive-in. Construction is expected to begin in January of 2022 with completion in spring of 2023. Commissioner Gourley asked what the projected timelines is for the county to begin seeing the projected revenues as agreed upon in the MOU's with the Starke County Council.

Director Dan advised the North Judson Pitch Competition is progressing and the event will be Saturday October 16th at the North Judson San Pierre High School. They will be giving away two prizes. The first prize will be \$7500 and the 2nd prize will be \$2500. She advised the Hamlet Fire Well signs have been completed and they are put up as well. They still have a \$1400 credit with REMC as well. She advised that the Rural Opportunity Zone initiative is coming to an end and they will be putting together a lot of information to market the area. Director Dan introduced Connie Neininger of CN Consulting who is heading up the Rural Economic Development Model AG Strategy. Connie explained that the Rural Economic Development Model was a process that was developed through the Indiana Economic Development Association and many other entities throughout Indiana. During this process they look at all the assets located in a certain region and those assets are generally agricultural assets. They are first looking at their assets and then they are looking at the communities' policies and procedures, sites that are available, and then they help provide resources for the targets that they will select. Connie presented a graph and PowerPoint to the Board of Commissioners and explained different areas of the region and where they stand against their economic development model. She then explained the Industry Cluster Bubble Chart. They are focusing more on agribusiness, food processing, and technology as this is an emerging field for rural communities, it is a star and deserves some attention. Connie advised that as she begins the process she will be giving future reports to the Board of Commissioners as this is an 18 month long process. Director Dan advised they are putting together a local committee and she is working with Purdue Extension to get a group together.

COMMUNITY SERVICES OF STARKE COUNTY

The new Community Services Director of Starke County, Cynthia, came before the Board of Commissioners originally to discuss funding but she has already met with Dave Pearman and Brad Hazelton of the Starke County Council who advised that there is no additional funding at this time. They did advise her to come back in the spring to request funding. She advised she did want to give them an update of what Community Services is doing right now. She stated she has only been Director since July and she is still learning a lot. One of the things she is hearing is that the North part of the community feel like they are being ignored. She went to a luncheon last week in Koontz Lake and what she found out was that there is a food desert up there. Her goal is to find ways to better serve that area whether it be with the food pantry or whatever. She was also notified that they have a lack of senior activities and transportation issues as well. Cynthia advised that they do have the public transportation for the county and she is hearing that a lot of people believe it is only for the elderly or the sick. This is not the case, they are there for everyone, not just for the elderly and the sick. Their food pantry is open 3 days a week from 10 AM to 2:30 PM and they are still doing the drive through. The Knox Senior Center and North Judson Senior Center are open with limited hours and they are providing meals. They do have limited activities going on. Cynthia advised that they had two vans on order but she was notified that they will not be getting them at all because the dealerships can't get parts for at least two years. She would also like to inquire if the county has any vehicles that they are no longer using that are in decent shape and would like to donate them to us.

JOHN CARR – TRADES COUNCIL DISCUSSION

John Carr came before the Board of Commissioners to discuss the trade's council. He advised he is the President of the Starke/Pulaski Building Trades Council. He wanted to talk to the Board of

Commissioners regarding the solar work that is coming to the area. He indicated that have had conversations with the developer of the solar project and the first phase that is beginning in Starke County was awarded to a company in California, that will be doing the construction. They have had several talk with them and they have indicated they can meet their budget but they are getting concerned with the ground breaking coming up and then construction beginning in order for the local building trades to be involved they need to have a better feel that they will be utilized on this project. They would like the Commissioners support to work for the local trades moving forward. We want to see these jobs going to people in the local community.

AUDITOR BUSINESS

Commissioner Gourley made a motion to approve the vendor claims docket for a total in the amount of \$622,871.32. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the minutes from September 7th, 2021. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

OTHER BUSINESS

PUBLIC COMMENT

With there being no further public comments and no further business, Commissioner Gourley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. The meeting was adjourned at 10:16 AM.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2021

Charlie Chesak, President

Bryan Cavender, Vice-President

Mark Gourley, Member

Sara Dingman, Deputy Auditor