

MONDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2017

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in Regular Session at 6:00PM in the Annex meeting room, Knox, Indiana, with Don Binkley and Kathy Norem present and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner President Don Binkley at 6:08PM. Commissioner Charlie Chesak was absent from the meeting.

RE: HIRING OF EMA DIRECTOR

Commissioner Norem introduced to the audience an applicant for the position of EMA Director. The candidate's name was Jean Nier, and Commissioner Norem stated Ms. Nier has six years of experience in that field and is very knowledgeable in grants. Commissioner Norem stated the Board has been searching for a long time for the replacement of the EMA Director and they would like to offer the position of Full Time Director to Ms. Nier. The pay would begin at \$33,000.00 per year with a \$1,000.00 raise after 90 days and a favorable evaluation, and another \$1,000.00 pay raise after 6 months and a favorable employee evaluation. She noted the vehicle is for use in the County. Jean Nier accepted the position and stated she could begin work on October 17th after providing her two week notice at her current job. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the EMA Director. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes.

RE: OPENING OF BIDS FOR BRIDGES 36 & 58

Superintendent of the Highway Department, Rik Ritzler, appeared before the Board and advised the bids for the replacement of Bridges 36 and 58 will be opened at this time. County Attorney Marty Lucas verified that the bids were all received on time, by 4:00PM, October 2nd, and the Auditor advised they were. Attorney Lucas then proceeded to open the bids and individually advised of the following results:

Bridge 36 (located on CR25N, .1 mile west of CR600E)	
Northern Indiana Construction, Mishawaka, IN	\$ 303,234.10
JCI Bridge Group, LaPorte, IN	\$ 344,408.97
Superior Construction, Portage, IN	\$ 405,296.89
LaPorte Construction Company, LaPorte, IN	\$ 325,479.80
Reith Riley, Gary, IN	\$ 420,480.07

Bridge 58 (located on CR800S .02 mile east of CR200W)	
Northern Indiana Construction, Mishawaka, IN	\$282,648.10
JCI Bridge Group, LaPorte, IN	\$325,693.47
Superior Construction, Portage, IN	\$379,122.73
LaPorte Construction, LaPorte, IN	\$296,809.20
Reith Riley, Gary, IN	\$410,526.83

Superintendent Ritzler advised they would be taking this information to verify they are compliant with the bid request. He advised he would be returning to the meeting later on.

RE: EMS MONTHLY REPORT

EMS Director Travis Clary appeared before the Board to present his monthly departmental report. He advised Clerk MaryLynn Richie would not be present for the meeting as she was attending a State Conference. He presented a report of the number of runs for the month of September and advised they are seeing a major reduction in the number of transfers. He advised the hospital has their own ambulance now, and are running their own transfers. He stated the number of transfers only consisted of 10% of the overall number of runs compared to 22 - 33% as was seen in previous months. Director Clary stated the ambulance was from Porter Regional but he has heard some patients now have a substantial wait for that ambulance to run their transfer. Commissioner Norem stated she would like to have a meeting with the LaPorte Hospital CEO, Ashlie Dickerson, along with a Councilman, and the EMS Director and Clerk, and hopefully meet with the CEO prior to the next meeting.

Director Clary advised Clerk Richie is still working on recertifications. She has taken classes on WPS/Medicare; Ambulance Transport for Hospice Patients; Ambulance Mileage/Billing, and Exploring Ambulance Documentation. He advised those classes are necessary to keep her up to date with Medicare changes.

In regard to Personnel, he advised the Part Time Employees he hired have completed their orientation and are helping to complete the schedule. He stated they are seeing the department's overtime hours decrease.

In regard to Education, Director Clary advised they had their monthly audit and review with Starke Hospital. He stated he was told the audits would be changing with them and were cancelled until further notice. They are in the process of changing EMS Coordinators. The Director stated they had cancelled their Emergency Vehicle Operations Course due to lack of participation.

In regard to Rig Maintenance the Director stated they had performed routine maintenance on their ambulances. He noted they continue to replace tires on the ambulance fleet that were nearing the minimum requirement placed by the State of Indiana EMS Commissioner. He also advised he will be meeting with the Highway Superintendent to acquire a breakdown of their recorded maintenance.

In regard to Base Maintenance, Director Clary advised they had performed routine maintenance at all three bases. He noted he has picked out keyless entry systems for the bases. He advised they will be capable of holding 50 codes in each of them. He stressed the need to keep the bases properly secured.

In regard to Safety, Director Clary advised they had no injuries during the month of September. They have scheduled a training session with Mark of the insurance company with the help of the Safety Commissioner Bill Crase. The training will cover slips, trips, falls, and lifting. He is going to make it mandatory on the full time employees and will be recording it for the part time employees who are unable to attend the meeting.

RE: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH PROCLAMATION

Annette VanSchoyck, of CADA, appeared before the Board and presented them with a Proclamation naming the month of October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Commissioner Norem read the Proclamation aloud to the audience. The Proclamation was signed by the Board of Commissioners. Ms. VanSchoyck invited the Board to attend the 25th Anniversary Celebration for CADA that will be held this month.

RE: SCILL APPROPRIATION REQUEST

Larry Wickert, President of the Starke County Economic Development Foundation, appeared before the Board. He advised of his Request for Appropriation, asking for the second payment of the money to SCILL. He noted they had previously received the first \$40,000.00 and are now asking for the second payment of \$40,000.00. Commissioner Norem advised as they had been audited by Auditor Chaffins and all was in compliance, she is making a motion to approve the appropriation request. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. Commissioner Norem advised they will pass on the recommendation to the County Council. Mr. Wickert advised he will be presenting it to the Council at their next meeting.

Mr. Wickert then asked about the US 30 Planning Committee, if they could schedule a meeting October 23rd or October 25th. He asked the Board to approve the letter written that will be sent to Committee Members. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the letter that was presented. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. Mr. Wickert then presented a list of Committee Members to the Board and asked if they approved of the members. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve of the Committee Members. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes.

RE: AUDITOR'S BUSINESS: MINUTES, VENDOR CLAIMS DOCKET, PAYROLL CLAIMS DOCKET

Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the Building Corporation Claims Docket in the amount of \$89,079.95. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the Vendor Claims Docket in the amount of \$247,590.65. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes.

Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the Payroll Claims Docket for the pay period ending on September 23rd, with a pay date of September 29th, in the total gross amount of \$231,047.81. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. The minutes of the September 18th meeting could not be passed at this meeting as Commissioner Norem was absent from that meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Darrell Russell and his wife Debbie appeared before the Board to discuss UTVs. Their request is for UTVs to be approved for roadway driving the same as golf carts. Mr. Russell advised he had petitions signed by 463 people in approval of the UTVs and also had a Letter of Support from the Sheriff of Starke County. He advised he would be willing to have the vehicles inspected by the Sheriff's Department. He also advised he was aware they would not be driven on any highways. The Board advised previously when they passed the Golf Cart Ordinance they had thought about the UTVs but were told the DNR controlled the UTVs. Attorney Lucas stated he would look into the situation and advise at the next meeting.

IT Director Mark Gourley advised the VHF Repeater at North Judson was repaired today. He advised 911 had taken the lead on that repair. He also noted the Coroner is hooked up for WIFI at his building and has a County laptop now and has a county user account set up.

RE: COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT

The Highway Superintendent, Rik Ritzler, returned back to the meeting and advised the lowest bidder for Bridge 36 was Northern Indiana Construction in the amount of \$303,234.10 and the lowest bidder for Bridge 58 was Northern Indiana Construction in the amount of \$282,648.10. He noted that the bids will not be awarded yet until they are verified to be in compliance of the County's recent Responsible Bidding Ordinance.

Superintendent Ritzler then presented his monthly departmental report. He reported on September 19th the County was notified by INDOT that they received 3 Community Crossings Grant awards in the total amount of \$570,832.13. He advised 2 of the 3 projects have already been completed and will be using the funds received to reimburse the fund and to pay for the Bridges that were bid out tonight. He also noted the third project, the paving of CR300E, that the Starke County Economic Development Foundation will be providing the matching funds for that project. Supt. Ritzler also advised they will be submitting for additional funds through INDOT. He noted they will be taking projects Oct. 9th through Nov. 22, 2017. He advised some of the potential projects could be: the Bass Lake intersection improvement at CR210 and old SR10 and incorporate a bike trail station that would be coordinated with the existing trail; the CR600E extension from SR8 to CR25N; four hot mix truck route projects, possibly CR1100E, CR700E, Range Road, and CR400S.

Supt. Ritzler stated so far in 2017 they have received in State grant money: \$1,080,000.00 in State funds for Bridge 7; \$570,832.13 in Community Crossings Grants; and \$36,692.29 for Railroad Crossing Markers and Sign Grant.

He advised the current bridge replacement projects are Bridge 36, Bridge 58, Bridge 154 and Bridge 7. He noted that was all the deficient bridges in the County at this time. He stated USI of Indianapolis has been conducting the bridge inspections from 2013-2017. He noted they just submitted a request for proposals for the next round of inspections.

In regard to Culvert Maintenance he advised they had originally identified 59 culverts that could possibly be replaced. He advised they have replaced 40 pipes so far with 3 to go. 16 pipes were deemed to either have more service life left in them or they did not impede drainage. Those 16 pipes will be reassessed next year.

In regard to Roadway Safety he advised they are installing reflective strips on their road signs to increase visibility. He noted the approximate cost is \$25.00 per intersection. He advised that simple measure can reduce the number of traffic accidents as much as 5% to 15% per year.

Supt. Ritzler advised his Office Manager, Rachel Oesterreich, was just awarded the 2017 Most Influential Woman of Northwest Indiana in the category of Economic Development and Government.

In regard to Winter Preparations he advised they recently received their salt prices for this year. The price decreased by almost \$5.00/ton from \$56.18 to \$51.39/ton for untreated bulk road salt. He noted the treated salt price will basically stay the same at \$72.32/ton.

Supt. Ritzler provided a chart of the amount of fuel usage by his department for both diesel fuel and gasoline for the years 2013 to present.

In regard to ADA/Title VI he advised he attended the Annual ADA Coordinator meeting at the AIC Conference. He noted the curb ramp in front of the Annex Building 2 will be completed with the help of the City of Knox. He will be checking with Jeff Houston to see when that will happen. He also noted that the disabled parking places will be marked after the special blue paint has been received. It is on order.

There being no further public comment and no further business, Commissioner Norem made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. The meeting was adjourned at 7:17PM.

OCTOBER 2, 2017

Don Binkley, President

Kathryn Norem, Vice-President

ABSENT

Charles Chesak

Katherine Chaffins, County Auditor
& Secretary to the Board of County Commissioners

EXECUTIVE SESSION
Monday, October 9, 2017

The Starke County Board of Commissioners meet in an Executive Session, at 5:30PM, in the Meeting Room of the Starke County Annex Building with Commissioners Kathy Norem, Charles Chesak, & Don Binkley, County Attorney, Marty Lucas, and County Auditor, Katherine Chaffins present, and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting was held to receive information in regard to a personnel grievance matter, pursuant to I.C. 5-14-1.5-6.1 part (b)(6)(B).

I can attest the only issue discussed at this meeting was in regard to a personnel grievance matter. The meeting was adjourned at 6:13PM.

Katherine Chaffins, Auditor of Starke County &
Secretary to the Board of Commissioners