

## **MONDAY, OCTOBER 5, 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 Kathryn Norem 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 Vice-President Kathryn Norem directly at 6:00PM.

### **EMS MONTHLY REPORT**

Travis Clary, Director of EMS came before the Board of Commissioners to present his monthly report. Director Clary handed out the financials and run volume for the month of September. He advised his operations continue to run smoothly. He has hired two more additional part-time paramedics. One was just released from orientation last week. He stated they are working to get a basic Hazmat course together for our crews. We need to continue to be aware of the dangers on a scene, and what to do if a chemical agent is involved etc. They held their monthly audit & review with the Starke Hospital. Dr. Marovich & our EMS coordinator were both present, and as always, we had some good discussions on how we can improve our patient care. He advised they have had an injury free month in September. 0514 our Grovertown ambulance had front-end work completed at Sherwood Tire. It also received an alignment, and two new tires on the front. 0086 our backup unit went to the Ford Garage in Knox. It was originally taken to our county highway department to be looked at, but the repairs could not be completed there. Ford replaced a crankshaft sensor, and corrected the voltage issues we were having with the batteries. 0085 our North Judson ambulance received its regular service from our county highway department. No other major ambulance issues for the month of September.

He states they had no major base maintenance issues to report for the month of September. He advised the new ambulance that was recently purchased with grant funding will be ready for pickup Wednesday morning at Crossroads Ambulance in Middlebury, Indiana. The rig will then be stocked with supplies, and have radios installed this weekend by Signal 10 Equipment/Installation. We hope to have the truck in service next week. The graphics were completed by Crossroads Ambulance. He advised he has completed all the necessary paperwork for this ambulance with the State of Indiana EMS Commissioner. It will be truck number 3308.

### **HIGHWAY MONTHLY REPORT**

Stephen Ritzler, Starke County Highway Superintendent came before the Board of Commissioners to present his monthly report. He advised they have been tracking their funding pretty closely this year and last month was pretty close to last year's amount. He advised that they are closer to the 5% loss rather than the 15% loss that they were initially expecting. The 5% loss is still \$125,000 in MVH and \$10,000 in LRS. They have completed most of their roadwork, 112 miles of roads are completed and have about 13 more to complete. They did a little more chip seal than they thought. This is why they did not crack seal Toto Rd, because they had chip sealed it instead. They are currently working on experimenting with grindings. They did this on 500E and also 700E North of US30. He advised that Bridge 137 and Bridge 7 are INDOT funded and in development. He explained Bridge 59 was an Aluminum Box Culvert that was installed on 700S 15 years ago. He advised that United Consulting started last week for their Bridge structural inspections. He stated that United Consulting praised our bridges in Starke County and said they are in really good shape. The maintenance done to the bridges every year has really been paying off. The bridges should last 75-100 years. Our average age of bridge in Starke County is only 21 years which is very young. Over half of our bridges have been built in the past 10 years.

Superintendent Ritzler advised they have turned in the information on the maps to WTH GIS. They have 91 changes to make with INDOT, this will add 10 miles to their inventory. There was 96 changes just on the map and 17 for the map and INDOT. He advised they do have 3 roads that they need to name. He can use the standard system that they use. The first road is the road going to the old Down and Under. It currently says old US30 but that isn't. Old US30 goes underneath that. It would either need to be named 405 E or they could name it anything else they want. There are also two roads at the Hamlet Industrial Park that need to be named one being the road going back to Norton Packaging. The Starke County Economic Development suggested that they name that road Norton Parkway. Commissioner Norem asked when he would like a decision from the Board of Commissioners. Superintendent Ritzler stated at least by the next meeting. He stated if they named the two roads at the industrial park by conventional names it would be 725 E and 735 E. Councilman Hazelton advised it would be easier if they did the

numbers numerically for the first responders. Commissioner Cavender made the motion to name the roads numerically. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Superintendent Ritzler advised that the Community Crossings second round is coming up. They were awarded the full \$1,000,000 for the 2020 first round of community crossings this year. However, the projects underbid a bit so they are eligible for \$34,000 in grant money for this round. I would recommend applying for a paving project on 600E from CR700N to CR900N. As long as there are no objections he will move forward with this applications. Commissioner Norem agreed this road needs to be done and Commissioner Cavender stated he did not have any objections either. Superintendent Ritzler stated that for the next call for projects INDOT announced a rural Federal grant opportunity Applications will start being accepted on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, with December 11<sup>th</sup> being the deadline. These grants are more restrictive than Community Crossings grants. Only roads that are classified as NHS Major Collectors are eligible for improvement. He gave the Board of Commissioners a list of eligible roads, he advised that Toto Rd from SR 39 to US35 was just chip sealed this year and they would not want to do that because it will last 7 more years. CR300E from SR 9 to CR100S, you can only do these projects once every eight years, so that was done under eight years ago making this road not eligible. He advised there is also CR625E from Toto Rd. to CR210 at Bass Lake, CR500N from US35 to Hamlet Town Limits, CR500N from Hamlet Town Limits to CR750E and CR750E from CR500N to US30. His recommendation would be to do CR500N from US35 to Hamlet Town Limits and CR500N from Hamlet Town Limits to CR750E. He advised the Bass Lake roads are still in pretty good shape. Commissioner Norem asked about CR210 from 625E to SR10 and it being done once. Ritzler advised it was done more than eight years ago.

Superintendent Ritzler stated that all bridges are eligible that have elements less than a five. We only have one bridge that qualifies, Bridge #59 over Bogus Run, on CR700S .2 miles E of CR200W. This is an aluminum box culvert that was incorrectly installed in 2005. This highlights the danger of cutting corners on a bridge to save money. Another example of this is Bridge #66 over Smith Ditch on Range Road, just South of CR500S. He would like to apply for two projects being CR500N and Bridge #59. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve CR500N between US35 and CR750E and Bridge #59 over Bogus Run. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Further discussion was held regarding the section of 500N that is considered to be the financial responsibility of the City of Hamlet. Superintendent Ritzler advised he will speak with the City of Hamlet to see if they would be able to pay for their section or even possibly speak with INDOT to make it a corporative agreement between Starke County Government and the City of Hamlet. Superintendent Ritzler advised that two months ago they came before the Board of Commissioners to get Sourcewell approved. He explained it has already provided savings: Verizon GPS \$10,000/yr., AT&T \$100/per month. Commissioner Norem advised that this could be a significant savings for all of the departments and this would need to be looked into for other departments.

Attorney Lucas advised they would need to designate a purchasing agent for other departments as Superintendent Ritzler is only the purchasing agent for the highway department. Commissioner Norem stated that the Auditor could become the purchasing agent but then delegate the responsibilities of savings to the department head who works with that particular vendor. Superintendent Ritzler advised that the weather service they currently use is not on Sourcewell but after speaking with them they may become partnered with Sourcewell so there will be a potential future savings there. Commissioner Norem made a motion for the Sheriff to be the purchasing agent for the Sheriff's Department, the Auditor to be the purchasing agent for all other departments other than the highway, and Health Nurse Lynch to be the purchasing agent for the Health Department. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Superintendent Ritzler advised that October is a big training month for his department as they are getting ready for winter. He advised last month Steve Zachert from Bitco conducted a field inspection of our chip sealing operations. He presented his report to the Board of Commissioners. They have not had a lost day of work due to injury in almost three years. He advised Mr. Zachert had good things to say about their operations and there was only one truck that did not have the back-up lights working properly although they were working that same morning.

Superintendent Ritzler advised that he has continued working with Purdue LTAP on the two intersections of CR700E/200N and CR100E/500S. They had initially stated they could proceed with one intersection but not the other. Ritzler stated that they will be doing something to both intersections. The details about what that is will be discussed next month. He stated they are in contact with Edwin Buswell from KIRPC and are in the first stages of the KIRPC Roadway Safety Planning Grant. He also

advised that they are working with the website developer and Richard from IT to create their new website. They have modeled it after Boone County Highway Department website. Superintendent Ritzler presented the Board of Commissioners with a list of vehicles that will be going to the county auction. Attorney Lucas brought up the discussion regarding driveway permits. Superintendent Ritzler advised in other counties there are discussions and communications with all three departments being Highway, Planning Commission, and Surveyor's Office, regarding Driveway permits. The highway department usually takes the lead in 60% of cases, 30% in Planning Commission, and 10% in Surveyor's Offices. It does not matter who takes the lead in our county he is just would like to be involved with the permits. He advised they can lead the permits as well if needed as they have a permit operation already in place. Attorney Lucas stated that they may want to require a fee for the permits that have a large amount of engineering or use a within their own discretion a fee to a commercial property when there is a larger operation. Ritzler advised it would be important for all three departments to sign off on the permit itself, and that they coordinate and are all on the same page. Commissioner Norem advised that it makes sense to have the highway department oversee this process and she values the cooperation of the Surveyor's Office and the Planning Commission. Commissioner Cavender stated that he does not want to see residential being charged for the permit. Commissioner Norem stated they should still come in and fill out the permit. Superintendent Ritzler stated that there may be a fee if residents do not adhere to the permit. He will submit documentation of permits used by other counties and Attorney Lucas will prepare a permit for Starke County Government. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to have the highway department oversee the driveway permits in collaboration with the Surveyor's Office as well as the Planning Commission. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all eyes.

### **BASS LAKE BEACH REQUEST**

Commissioner Norem advised her recollection is that Rik and some individuals from the Property Owners Association applied for a grant, on behalf of the beach, for glacial stone. Commissioner Norem asked Mr. Anderson what is all required with this. Mr. Anderson advised it requires stone and some fill. He advised they have been working on this for about two years to be able to get the permit for this project. They did receive the permit about three months ago. The permit is good for two years. Mr. Anderson advised this would be an opportune time as the lakes levels are down. He advised there are about a dozen trees over the 19 foot of beach and they have the permission to put in 299 foot of rocks. He explained it as 12 projects of 25 feet, it is the same job as the job when the county put the stone around the pavilion, except they are putting stone around the trees instead. He stated the stone and upland fill would be places around these dead trees along the 299 feet of beach. Commissioner Norem advised that she remembers that the Board of Commissioners did agree to help and participate with this project. Commissioner Norem said it was nice that the Bass Lake Properties Owners wrote the grant for the project. Mr. Anderson advised they did try to get money through a grant but the grant fell through. So all they did was apply for the permit but the Commissioners paid for the mailings for the permit. Commissioner Norem advised this should be under the jurisdiction of the Park Board. Mr. Anderson advised that the Park Board would need the strong support of the Commissioners for this project. Commissioner Norem advised she would strongly support this project.

Commissioner Norem advised she would like to see if they can find some matching funds somewhere but is not sure of the financial cost of this project. Superintendent Ritzler advised he needs to see more details about what they want. Commissioner Norem advised Superintendent Ritzler that they could try and come up with something to present the park board next week for approval and so that they have a timeline and a plan for this project. Commissioner Norem advised they would have to pay the highway department to complete the work and ask for some funding somewhere. She had also suggested to get a quote from Jamie Dowd. He had completed work at the Veteran's Memorial for free. Superintendent Ritzler advised he would prefer that. Commissioner Norem then advised to have Superintendent Ritzler get a quote from Jamie Dowd for the work and see what his availability is. Commissioner Norem advised they have sufficient funds that they could pay for this but she would like to see if there is a grant available. They will also need to have a time line and project estimate to present to the Park Board.

### **HEALTH DEPARTMENT RETAIL FOOD INSPECTION CONTRACT AND PART TIME HEALTH NURSE REQUEST**

Health Nurse Frank Lynch came before the Starke County Board of Commissioners to request an increase in the Retail Food Inspection Contract and a position for a part time Health Nurse. Commissioner Norem advised that if sometimes happens to Health Nurse Lynch and he has to be out for a period of time they are going to be in trouble as they currently don't have a part time nurse. She

advised when the COVID vaccines come in that is when they will have a huge need for a part time nurse to help administer the vaccines. Nurse Lynch advised the vaccines will not be readily available until next flu season. He advised that when the vaccines does become available they will be distributing to the hospitals first and then the health departments and doctors' offices. He wanted to give the Board of Commissioners a heads up that he will need help eventually and his Health Board has already approved the request. Commissioner Norem advised that he will need to come up with an acceptable wage for this part time position. Commissioner Norem commended Health Nurse Lynch for all the work he has done and continues to do for our community. She asked Councilman Hazelton what will be needed to get this put into the 2021 salary ordinance. Councilman Hazelton advised they will need a job description and a salary range but it will be up to Frank as to where in the salary range in which they would be paid. Commissioner Norem advised Frank to come up with the job description and the pay range that he will need and then present that at their joint meeting with the Starke County Council. Health Nurse Lynch advised that in 2013 they raised the retail food contract from \$30 to \$32. He is requesting that the retail food contract now be raised to \$35 beginning in 2021. He advised that the Starke County Health Board has approved this request as well. He also advised he does have the money in the budget to raise the cost per inspection. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to increase the rate to \$35 per inspection. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

### **AUDITOR BUSINESS**

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the payroll docket in the amount of \$271,180.96, including deductions in the amount of \$82,287.22 for the pay period ending on 9/06/2020 and pay date of 9/25/2020. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the vendor claims docket for a total in the amount of \$821,719.35. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

### **OTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD**

Commissioner Norem advised that the DLZ Contract modification is the results of the additional \$100,000 that is going into the project to continue out those things that were included. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the Contract modification. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Commissioner Norem then brought up the discussion regarding security's budget. Auditor Oesterreich advised they are going to be short \$28,000 for 2020. The Board of Commissioners do not believe that security can be adequately handled if they were to reduce the staff so this department will need to be funded. Commissioner Norem advised they can fund this 2020 amount from CEDIT but will need to ask permission from the Starke County Council. She advised that the Board supports this strongly and they certainly hope they will support this. Commissioner Cavender made a motion in support of the funding for the security department. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Norem advised they will have this problem next year as well because the security budget for next year was not approved to support two people at all times.

Commissioner Norem then brought up the discussion regarding warehouse items for the auction. Auditor Oesterreich stated Maintenance Director Coad had questioned whether or not the jury seating was going to be put in the auction. Commissioner Norem stated yes, that goes in the auction. Auditor Oesterreich asked about the attorney seating. Commissioner Norem advised those would be sold as well. Auditor Oesterreich then stated Director Coad wanted to know if he should contact the historical society to see if they may want a portion of the courtroom benches/seating. Both Commissioner Norem and Commissioner Cavender agreed that this would be a good idea. Commissioner Norem advised that she recalls that the Judges original oak desk is located in the warehouse as well. The historical society may want this as well.

Commissioner Norem advised that work has begun again on the Veteran's Monument. The concrete work should be done by the end of the week. She stated the project is still on time and on schedule for November 11 unveiling. There will be tickets for sale for the dinner by the first part of next week.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There being no further public comments and no further business, Commissioner Cavender made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. The meeting was adjourned at 7:09 PM.

**OCTOBER 5, 2020**

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Charlie Chesak, President

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Kathryn Norem, Vice-President

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Bryan Cavender

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