

MONDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2019

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in Regular Session at 6:30PM due to the lateness in the joint Starke County Council Meeting, in the Annex meeting room, Knox, Indiana, with Charles Chesak, 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 President Charlie Chesak at 6:30PM.

HWY-BRIDGE 158 BID OPENING

Stephen Ritzler, Superintendent of the Starke County Highway Department came before the Board of Commissioners for the Bridge 158 Bid Opening. Attorney Lucas verified with Auditor Oesterreich that all bids were received by the deadline. Auditor Oesterreich stated yes all three bids were received by the deadline. Attorney Lucas then read off the bids as follows:

Superior Construction Company \$759,999.00
La Porte Construction Company \$560,861.20
Ellis Construction Company \$474,141.92

Superintendent Ritzler advised he recommends to not look any further into the bidding documents as those numbers have exceeded what he has estimated. He stated he will be checking with the consultant that did the design and the firm to see why the bids were over what was estimated. Commissioner Norem made a motion to reject all bids received. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion passed with all ayes.

COURT SERVICES – JOB DESCRIPTION

Shawn Matraw, Director of Starke County Court Services came before the Board of Commissioners to request a change in job description. He explained he is requesting a revision to the Office Manager Position job description. He stated before the merge between Community Corrections and Probation the office manager was to report to the Director of Community Corrections. During the merge they have temporarily changed the individual the office manager was to report to as the Director of Court Services had more employees to supervise. However, the original job description stated that position was to report to the Director. Director Matraw would like to change it back to the original job description were everything contained within says to report to the Director. He believes it would be best that the individual in the office manager position reports directly to the Director as it had been prior to the merge. Commissioner Cavender asked if the salary would remain the same. Director Matraw stated there will be no change in pay status or the structure just whom they report too. Commissioner Norem stated in this particular case it is changing to avoid conflict with the nepotism policy which is significant and it is an important policy. She also stated she believes that in this case Director Matraw is the department head and the current individual the office manager would report to is not the department head. She advised she does not have a problem with this change. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to change the reporting aspect of the job description. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion passed with all ayes.

MOU & NEW AMBULANCE PURCHASE

Travis Clary, Director of Starke County EMS came before the Board of Commissioners to give them an update on the MOU. He stated changes have been made to their MOU that reflect the Starke County Sheriff's Department MOU. He advised that today was the first day of the mobile response team and they did have 1 overdose to respond too today. They have already been through two weeks of training along with the Starke County Sheriff's Department. Commissioner Norem advised that the point of this program is to deal with the opioid crisis here in Starke County starting right at the beginning when the overdose occurs. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve both the Starke County Sheriff's and Starke County EMS's agreement since they mirror each other. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion passed with all ayes. Director Clary then advised he has been speaking with Commissioner Chesak about the ambulances he has been researching to purchase. He stated he has found one that is red in color from Plainfield, IN. The truck only has 70,000 miles, Chevy 6.6, and \$40,000. The only downfall with this vehicle is it will not be ready for another 45-60 days and Plainfield is currently using this as a back-up until they get their new vehicle in. He stated he wasn't sure if they

wanted to wait another 45-60 days, they are doing okay right now with their current primary care unit but it is aging. Director Clary then presented another option, a four wheel drive, a little bit longer body, truck style chase, \$50,000, and it is a Ford 6.7 diesel engine.

He stated both of these vehicles are from Plainfield Fire Department. The nice thing about both of these vehicles is that it is right here in Indiana and they do not have to go out of state to get the vehicle. Commissioner Norem asked how many miles was on the second vehicle. Director Clary stated it had 133,000 miles. He also advised the third option they have would be a gasoline ambulance for \$35,000, but they wanted to stay away from the gas option for the transfer side of things because you will lose fuel mileage. Commissioner Cavender stated that 45-60 days will be going by real quick. Commissioner Chesak asked if Director Clary asked about the warranty and if it would transfer with our purchase. Director Clary stated the power train warranty should transfer up until the 100,000 miles, but he will have to check for sure. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve this purchase and have Director Clary inquire about whether or not Plainfield Fire could switch vehicles so that we could get the vehicle sooner but if not then we would get the vehicle in 45-60 days. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion passed with all ayes.

HWY-ROAD CONVERSION POLICY

Stephen Ritzler, Superintendent of the Starke County Highway Department came before the Board of Commissioners to present a Starke County Gravel Road Conversion Request Policy. Superintendent Ritzler stated before they get to the request he wanted to advised that the Engineer's Estimate for Bridge #158 replacement was 342,780, making all the bids received high. He will be checking numbers and let them know why that turned out that way. Moving on to the road conversion policy, he advised he spoke at the last meeting about how road selection takes place for paved roads but there is nothing in place for gravel roads.

Traditionally, most counties do not have a policy in place to upgrades gravel roads. One reason we do not upgrade gravel roads in that long term maintenance on a paved road is much more expensive than a gravel road and you can fix a gravel road in one day whereas, you can't fix a paved road in one day's time. He stated this generally causes problem because many people who live on gravel roads want their road paved. In many counties you pay more taxes on a paved road and one thing they can advise the public is that their taxes may go up if the highway department were to pave their road.

Superintendent Ritzler stated that Boone County in Southern Indiana can up with a method of converting their gravel roads to paved roads in the course of 30 years. Boone County has about the same amount of gravel roads as Starke County and they have the same problems that we do. Therefore, they came up with a way of scoring and rating the roads in a similar way to what we do for the paved roads that is required by the state. According to the purposed road conversion policy if someone wants their gravel road paved they will submit an application. A few factors going into whether or not the application would be approved would include cost of requested conversion, traffic volumes, description of the road termini, connectivity, public support, available right of way/willingness of residents to dedicate right of way, and the roadway's proximity to state roads. One thing that Boone County does that he may not want to do is to have residents of that roadways contribute their own private funds toward the project. All applications received before June 1st are to be considered for the next year not the current year. He is planning on upgrading 3 gravel roads per year. These roads will be double chip-sealed not paved. Commissioner Norem advised she is not a fan of telling residents that not only do they have to pay gas tax and property tax but if they want their road paved they will have to pay for than too. Superintendent Ritzler stated he will be formally putting together a proposal within the next couple of weeks to present to the Board of Commissioners.

AUDITORS BUSINESS

Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the Payroll Claims Docket for the pay period ending on 10/05/19 with a pay date of 10/11/19, in the total gross amount of \$243,471.74 and deductions in the amount of \$74,455.35. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion, the motion passed with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the vendor claims as presented in the amount of \$195,797.65. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and the motion passed with all ayes. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the minutes of the Monday, October 7th, 2019 meeting. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion passed with all ayes. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the minutes of the Monday, September 16th, 2019 joint meeting. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion passed with all ayes. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve Annex Building 2 keys for Jessica Venice. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion passed with all ayes.

OTHER BUISNESS

Recorder Mandy Thomason came before the Board of Commissioners to present an ordinance requiring the Recorder of Starke County, Indiana, to watermark bulk form copies. Attorney Lucas has reviewed the ordinance but had a question regarding the watermark. Commissioner Norem advised of the added section:

“This document is provided for the sole use of (insert bulk user name) and except as provided for in I.C. 36-2-7-10.1(h), shall not be resold pursuant to I.C. 36-2-7-10.1. Official copies may be obtained at the county recorder’s office”. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the ordinance as presented. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion passed with all ayes.

Attorney Lucas advised that we had sent the prior handbook to the insurance company for review and they had sent back a revised version that has become a completely different project. Attorney Lucas stated he has partly went through it and believes there are many positive changes that are suggested, but needs a thorough review because he believes it would implement new practices within our entity. He advised that some practices suggested may be more appropriate for larger communities but not here. Commissioner Norem agreed with Attorney Lucas. She advised that one of the things they did when she was first elected was to go through the current handbook line by line and deciding if all the policies and procedures put in place would work for Starke County Government. She stated if we are going to consider the booklet or suggestions from the insurance company then we need to have another meeting going through each aspect of the proposed new handbook. If it is decided that modification will be made we will need to educate our department heads and staff of these modifications. Commissioner Norem suggests that Auditor Oesterreich, Attorney Lucas, Insurance Company, a few members from the Council, Commissioner Chesak and/or Commissioner Cavender, and a few departments heads to form a committee to review the handbook. Both Commissioner Chesak and Commissioner Cavender agree to create this committee. After further discussion regarding the newly proposed handbook Commissioner Norem made a motion that we put together a committee as described to begin meeting to review the proposed changes line by line, Auditor Oesterreich is to facilitate those meetings. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion passed with all ayes.

Attorney Lucas explained that the, per usage fee, for the Lead Tracks was higher than what was necessary to serve its purpose of maintenance. The organizations that were paying for it asked that it be dropped. They came up with a system of paying a much lower rate per usage but at the end of the year they would be billed for any outstanding maintenance charges. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the Lead Track Contracts as presented. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion passed with all ayes.

Attorney Lucas advised that we are a party of the 2200 government entities involved in opioid litigation. He stated it is in litigation and can’t say much but can say that it seems they are treating everyone involved in a fair manner and is pleased in what he is seeing. He is hopeful we will be able to get some relief in the end from the settlement.

Auditor Oesterreich presented the proposed Annual Employee Recognition Event Resolution to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the resolution as presented. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion passed with all ayes. Commissioner Norem made a motion to close for business on Friday, December, 13, 2019 between 1:00 and 4:00 PM. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion passed with all ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

With there being no public comment Commissioner Norem made a motion to adjourn at 7:24 PM. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion passed with all ayes.

OCTOBER 21, 2019

Charlie Chesak, President

Kathryn Norem, Vice-President

Bryan Cavender

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