

**Monday, December 5th, 2011**

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in regular session at 9:00am in the Annex meeting room, Knox, Indiana, with Dan Bridegroom, Kathy Norem, and Jennifer Davis present and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting was called to order by President, Dan Bridegroom. He announced Indiana State Representative, Doug Gutwein, was present. He stated Rep. Gutwein will be representing Wayne & Jackson Townships, in Starke County in 2012, and will be addressing the Board later on in the meeting.

**RE: VENDOR CLAIMS & PAY CLAIMS**

Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the vendor claims of December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011, in the amount of \$281,994.83, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes.

Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the payroll for the period ending November 26<sup>th</sup>, in the amount of \$171,181.54, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes.

**RE: EMS**

EMS Director, Paul Mathewson, and EMS Clerk, Mary Lynn Ritchie appeared before the Board to give the monthly EMS Department report. Mary Lynn presented the statement of delinquent accounts in the amount of \$3,149.44. Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the amount, seconded by Commissioner Norem. The motion passed with all ayes.

Clerk Ritchie then advised the Board three checks had been received from the Starke County Clerk's office in the amount of \$125.00, \$1.47, and \$45.00, collected on delinquent accounts. No check was received from Jonathan O'Hara's office last month. She also submitted to the Board, the activity report from November.

Commissioner Bridegroom requested Director Mathewson give Commissioner Davis an update of the progress of the ALS program since Commissioner Davis was absent from the December 1<sup>st</sup> meeting with the hospital representatives in regard to the ALS/BLS transfers. At the end of the update, Director Mathewson advised the ALS state certification application was ready to be submitted, and it doesn't require the Commissioner's signatures, only the signature of the Medical Director. Commissioner Norem made a motion to formally authorize the certification application be submitted to the state, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes.

Director Mathewson advised the Board he has received price quotes on ALS monitoring equipment. Commissioner Norem made a motion to accept the low bid received from J & B Medical Supply Co. in the amount of \$19,200.00. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Davis and passed with all ayes.

Commissioner Norem stated the EMS Department should submit a request to transfer the needed funds from the Commissioner's budget, health insurance line item, to the EMS' budget. The departments are both in the County General Fund, and the approval of the transfer would need to be presented to the County Council at their next meeting.

Director Mathewson then stated he has another price quote to purchase ALS equipment, laryngoscope blades, in the amount of \$500.00, from J & B Medical Supply. Commissioner Norem made a motion to accept the bid from J & B Medical Supply, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes. The exact total amount of the transfer will need to \$19,710.00.

**RE: COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT REPORT**

County Highway Dept. Superintendent, Steve Siddall, appeared before the Board to give his monthly report. He presented the Board with a Priority Schedule for Starke County Bridges. He also presented a listing of pending bridge projects and their anticipated expense. He stated he listed the bridges from worst bridge to the best. Copies of those reports are on file in the County Auditor's Office.

Siddall stated he had, just that morning, mailed out proposals to bid on the engineering of Bridge # 51. He advised he sent the bid proposal out to ten different engineering firms. He stated the bids need to be sent into the County by December 19<sup>th</sup>. He will score the bids received and report back to the Commissioners. He advised he did not have to post the bid notice, since it will not be a federal project. He also added he will be receiving a schedule from B, L, & N.

Siddall then reported a portion of Bridge # 62 has fallen in. He stated they have the necessary permits from the DNR & IDEM to pull the bridge out.

Commissioner Norem inquired if the bridge updates could be listed on the county's website, and Siddall replied it would be no problem, they can do that.

He stated the bidding for Bridges # 62 & 9 will be in late Feb. or early March. The bidding on Bridge # 51 is expected to take place in June, 2012, once an engineering firm is selected.

Commissioner Bridegroom advised the County has received a price quote from the Simplex Co. in regard to updating fire extinguishers at the highway department, and in the county trucks. He advised the total amount of the quote is \$1,016.29.

Siddall then reported Bridge # 156 is near completion, and will be ready for the final inspection that week. Commissioner Davis stated it would be nice to see a ribbon cutting ceremony when the bridge is officially opened. Commissioner Bridegroom stated he would like to see the media cover the official opening.

**RE: AGREEMENT WITH SKILLMAN CORP.**

Commissioner Norem advised she had checked the references provided by the Skillman Company, in reference to their becoming the construction/project manager of a possible jail construction project. She stated of all the references, there was not a single time when the work of the Skillman Company was not praised, especially when they have a local county resident, Bob Chorba, overseeing the project. Commissioner Bridegroom stated it speaks very highly of the company when each reference was asked if they would hire that company for any future projects and they all responded they would. Commissioner Davis made a motion to accept the proposal of the Skillman Group as the Oversight Manager of the possible jail project. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes. The Commissioners signed two copies of the agreement. Commissioner Norem stated there will not be any charge from Skillman Co. unless the county does a jail construction project. She also advised Scott Cherry, from Skillman, of the Jail Advisory Committee meeting that will take place the next week.

**RE: STATE REPRESENTATIVE, DOUG GUTWEIN**

State Representative, Doug Gutwein, addressed the Board. He advised he has been in contact with Ice-Miller, and submitted to the Board the Preliminary Draft No. 3610, Prepared by Legislative Services Agency, which would allow the Starke County Council to adopt an ordinance imposing an additional county economic development income tax rate for the purposes of financing, constructing and operating a county jail. Representatives, Dembowski and Dermody will be co-authors of the bill. A copy of

Preliminary Draft No. 3610 is on file in the County Auditor's Office. Representative Gutwein stated he understood the Commissioners and the County Council are both on board with the proposed jail project, but what about the citizens of Starke County. He stated the filing deadline for the proposed legislation is Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>. He advised the County hold public meetings before Feb. to receive input from the public, in order to proceed with the legislation.

#### **RE: SIMPLEX QUOTES**

James Coad, County Annex Custodian, appeared before the Board to present the price quotes he had received from the Simplex Company to bring the county departments up to date with their fire extinguisher equipment. He advised the total amounts for the different departments are as follows: Annex Building \$670.00; Jail \$1316.45 and the Highway Department \$1016.29. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the purchase of the equipment, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes. Commissioner Norem stated the Sheriff has the funding in the jail budget to pay for the equipment but might need to go before the Council to transfer funding within his budget. Commissioner Bridegroom stated the County Highway Department has the money in their budget to pay their expense.

#### **RE: CR250N MOBILE HOME COMPLAINT**

George & Betty Dotlich appeared before the Board to give an update of the situation on CR250N with their complaint of the mobile home that was moved into their neighborhood. The matter was brought before the BZA on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Commissioner Bridegroom stated now the issue has to go back in front of the Planning Commission. Mr. Dotlich stated he is unsure as to if this is a Building Commission or a Planning Commission issue. Bridegroom stated the Planning Commission had adopted the state's building codes for uniformity. Commissioner Norem stated she would like to see the ordinance or the resolution with the parameters of when the Planning Commission was created and what their roles and responsibilities are. She stated this has been a total miscarriage of justice and there is still a question of which Board is responsible. Attorney Lucas stated the issue at hand is does a neighbor have the authority/right to complain of a building code ordinance, instead of it being a zoning code issue. Commissioner Norem stated it had started out as both a building and a zoning ordinance question. Attorney Lucas stated the issue is whether the landowners can question the allowance of the permit, and added the County Commissioners do determine the building ordinances. He also noted there is a state situation, called "the Log Cabin Rule", when no building permit is required if the home owner is doing all the construction work by himself. He added that rule most generally applies to situations in the Amish community. Mr. Dotlich inquired if there is a situation where no building permit is required, how does the county know about it if it doesn't require a permit and also how does the county know to put that building on the county's assessment/tax roles. Commissioner Bridegroom stated they would see Mr. & Mrs. Dotlich at the next Planning Commission meeting. Commissioner Norem added she was sorry for their situation as a neighbor, and is also sorry for the homeowner with the trailer.

#### **RE: SHERIFF OSCAR COWEN**

##### **NEW SQUAD VEHICLE**

Sheriff Oscar Cowen appeared before the Board to present price quotes he received on a new squad car. He advised he had received six bids, and the lowest bid received was from Oliver Ford in Plymouth. He stated he had asked both Best Buy Ford, and Cambe Chevrolet, to submit a price quote, since they are both located in Starke County, but only Best Buy Ford submitted a quote. He advised the lowest price quote was the quote from Oliver Ford, in the amount of \$26,249.00. The vehicle is for a 2011 Ford Crown Vic, which is already equipped with the complete police package, and is already in the two toned brown paint. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the purchase of the 2011 Ford Crown Vic from Oliver Ford, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes. Commissioner Norem then advised the Sheriff he still needs to go in front of the Council to get approval to appropriate the payment for the vehicle out of the Cumulative Cap. Fund. She also advised the Sheriff needs to transfer funding within his jail budget, maintenance expense, to pay for the jail portion of the Simplex invoices.

##### **CATASTROPHIC INMATE MEDICAL COVERAGE**

Sheriff Oscar Cowen, and 1<sup>st</sup> Source Insurance Agent, Bridget Markin, appeared before the Board to present two price quotes for Catastrophic Inmate Medical Coverage. Mrs. Markin stated this type of policy would reduce the county's expense if the situation would occur that one of the county's jail inmates would need serious medical treatment. Currently the county's insurance covers the first \$5,000.00 of expenses, and then the county is responsible for the balance. Commissioner Norem advised currently the inmate's medical coverage is provided by a contract with Health Professionals, and this year the expense has been \$73,000.00 leaving an outstanding budget balance of \$36,000.00. She also added the county is gambling by not having any coverage in the event an inmate would be hospitalized or requiring surgery. Mrs. Markin stated she recommends the Company of CRS who had submitted an annual premium quote of \$16,608.00 for a policy that has a \$10,000.00 deductible per inmate, and based on a jail population of 65. The Sheriff will need to submit monthly reports showing the population of the jail. The price of the insurance will vary if the population changes from the base of 65 inmates. She advised the county will be issued a credit if the population is lower than the 65 base number, or could receive an additional cost if it goes over the 65 base number. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the policy with CRS, for an annual term, with \$10,000.00 deductible per inmate, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes. Mrs. Markin advised there is a seventy two hour waiting period, following the signing of the agreement, before the insurance goes into effect. Commissioner Bridegroom then made a motion to allow Commissioner Norem to sign the monthly reports to CRS, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes.

#### **HOLIDAY PAY**

At this time in the meeting, the entire full time county police department was in attendance: all patrolmen, detectives, jailers, and 911 dispatchers. Commissioner Norem made a motion to allow for the payment of holiday pay for any police officer, jailer, 911 operator, and EMS employee to receive 1 ½ times their regular pay rate if there are required to work on the holiday, together with their regular holiday pay that all full time employees receive when the county recognizes a holiday, thus making the total pay for an employee working a holiday, to be 2 ½ times their regular pay. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes. Commissioner Bridegroom stated the same policy will be enforced for the county highway department and any other county employee that would be called into work a holiday. He advised the county employee's handbook will be changed to reflect this policy, so to address any issues in the future.

#### **RE: UPDATE ON THE CODIFICATION OF COUNTY'S ORDINANCES**

County Deputy Auditor, Suzanne McCarty, appeared before the Board to present an update of the status of the project of the codification of the county's ordinances. She advised she has been in contact with Municipal Code Corp. following her electronic submission of the county's ordinances. She was notified by the company that 121 of the 189 ordinances submitted will be omitted,

leaving 68 ordinances to be codified, and at this point it was going into their legal department. Deputy McCarty also stated the Planning Commission's ordinances are being sent by the Planning Commissioner's Clerk, Pam Starkey.

#### **IN OTHER BUSINESS:**

Commissioner Bridegroom announced at the last meeting the Commissioners had approved the submission of a claim to pay an invoice received from NACO, the National Association of Counties. He stated it was not their intention to join a National Association of Counties; they are only interested in joining the Indiana Association of Counties. Commissioner Norem made a motion to remove the payment approval, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes.

Commissioner Norem read the list of open county board appointments for the year 2012. She stated the deadline for submission of the applications is Tues., December 27<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Davis made a motion to post the list online, at the county's website, and also release the information to the press. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes. There will be an executive session of the Commissioners on Wed., December 28<sup>th</sup>, at 1:30PM, to review and prioritize the applicants.

Commissioner Bridegroom stated he had received a call from the Director of the County Humane Society who was inquiring as to why nothing is being done to replace the County's Animal Control Officer. She stated she has been getting complaints that county residents are saying they will not be paying their county dog tax as long as there is not an Animal County Officer in the county. Commissioner Bridegroom stated he is going to be checking with both Marshall and Pulaski Counties to see if Starke County could partner with them. He also would like to receive proposals from the public from anyone interested in filling that position.

Commissioner Bridegroom stated the State of Indiana has passed a bill, 1004, which will allow the counties to use their county highway departments to perform public works for their county, as long as the total cost of the project is less than \$100,000.00. He cited an example of that would be on a ditch drainage issue. The Drainage Board could hire the county highway department employees, the ones qualified to perform the work, and the highway department would keep track of their hours, and then present the Drainage Board a bill for their services. He advised it could save the county a lot of money, and also he stated the Drainage Board does have times when they can't find anyone interested in bidding on a job. He asked Attorney Lucas to look into the legal portion of that issue.

Commissioner Davis stated, in reference to the comment made by State Representative, Doug Gutwein, she would like to propose setting up two public hearings regarding the possible jail project. She recommended having one during the day on Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012, and one that night. She stated Rep. Gutwein urged the Commissioners talk to the public before February. Commissioner Norem stated she would discuss this with the Jail Advisory Committee who will be meeting during the week of Dec. 12<sup>th</sup>. She stated the Committee will be finalizing a RFP at their next meeting. Commissioner Norem stated once the proposal is complete, she suggests road shows during the first week of January, to take the issue to the communities instead of making the communities come to the Commissioner's Meeting Room.

Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the pay of the interim treasurer, to be the same pay amount the regular county treasurer had been receiving. At the Democratic Party Caucus, held on Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>, Kasey Clark was elected as the Interim County Treasurer. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the pay of the Interim County Treasurer at the same level as the County Treasurer, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes.

Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the minutes of the Nov. 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes. The final minutes of Nov. 7 & Nov. 9<sup>th</sup> were then signed.

Attorney Lucas advised the Commissioners of a copy of a letter he received from Attorney Steven Dodge, addressed to Attorney Brian Hurley. The correspondence was in regard to the Planning Commission vs. PNC Bank, 75C01-1107-FL-00021. A copy of the letter is on file in the County Auditor's office.

Commissioner Norem made a motion to sign the paperwork received from the SRI Company, a routine amendment for compliance, seconded by Commissioner Davis. The motion passed with all ayes, and the amendment was signed.

At this point in the meeting, Commissioner Davis left the meeting.

Auditor Chaffins inquired if she needed the Commissioner's approval to purchase an updated computer for her office, to enable Deputy McCarty to work split screen simultaneously, with both Lowe, the county's tax software, and GIS, the mapping company. Chaffins stated she will be requesting a transfer within her department's budget, from the county council at their next meeting, to cover the expense of the computer, \$825.00. The Commissioners advised the Auditor did not need their approval.

IT Director, Joe Short, appeared before the Board and presented them with the price quotes he has received to repair the air conditioning to the server/equipment room. He advised he had received a quote from McGrath's and Jackson's Refrigeration. Commissioner Norem made a motion to accept the price quote from Jackson Refrigeration since they would be providing a larger and better unit. She also stated she liked the itemized, more detailed quote from Jackson's. Commissioner Bridegroom seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes. The total amount of expense, equipment and labor, is \$6016.78. Director Short advised he has the funding left in his 2011 budget to pay for the expense.

Director Short also reminded the Commissioners of a meeting to be held on Thursday, Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> in reference to the GIS/WTH system. He advised the Commissioners he has the funding left his budget to cover that expense also.

Commissioner Norem made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Bridegroom. The motion passed with all ayes, and the meeting was adjourned at 11:58AM.

**December 5, 2011**

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Dan Bridegroom, President

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Kathy Norem, Vice President

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Jennifer Davis

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Katherine Chaffins, Auditor &  
Secretary to the Commissioners

