

**STARKE COUNTY COUNCIL
MINUTES
TUESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2022**

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Council at 5:00 PM in the Annex Building Meeting Room, Knox, Indiana, with Dave Pearman, Brad Hazelton, Kay Gudeman, Howard Bailey, Don Binkley, Don White, Todd Leinbach present, and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting was called to order by Council President, Dave Pearman at 5:00 PM for the Starke County Council Regular Session.

AUDITOR BUSINESS

Councilman Hazelton made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 20th, 2021 minutes. Councilman Binkley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

REORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD

Councilman Binkley made a motion to retain Dave Pearman as President and Brad Hazelton as Vice-President. Councilman White seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Economic Development Board

Councilman Pearman made a motion to retain Brad Hazelton and Kay Gudeman on the Economic Development Board. Councilman Binkley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

SCILL

Councilman Pearman made a motion to appoint Brad Hazelton to the SCILL board. Councilman Binkley seconded the motion and motion was approved with all ayes.

K.I.R.P.C.

Councilman Binkley made a motion to retain Todd Leinbach on the KIRPC Board. Councilman Hazelton seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Planning Commission

Councilman Hazelton made a motion to retain Howard Bailey on the Planning Commission. Councilwomen Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

North Judson Wayne Township Library Board

Councilman Pearman made a motion to appoint Nathan Origer to the North Judson Wayne Township Library Board. Councilman Hazelton seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Alcoholic Beverage Board

Councilman Hazelton made a motion to table the Alcoholic Beverage Board appointment. Councilman Leinbach seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Solid Waste Board

Councilman Hazelton made a motion to retain Todd Leinbach on the Solid Waste Board. Councilman Binkley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Marshall-Starke Development Board

Councilman Hazelton made a motion to retain Dave Pearman on the Marshall-Starke Development Board. Councilwoman Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

ENCUMBRANCES

Councilman Hazelton made a motion to approve the following encumbrances: Fund 1169 a total of \$5075.49, fund 1000 a total of \$482.84, fund 1169 for a total of \$125,500.00, and fund 1188 a total of \$12,934.12. Councilman Binkley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT DRIVER RAISE

Dan Dipert, Superintendent of the Starke County Highway Department came before the Starke County Council to request a driver pay raise in the amount of \$2.00. He explained that a CDL driver has a specific skill set that is currently in very high demand. At the moment they are 5 drivers short, with another one quitting on 1/24/22. Since joining the Starke County Highway Department, I would consider these drivers as first responders since they go out in all climate weather to clear the roads. The purpose of the \$2 raise is to help stabilize our current work force; plus be able to attract new employees by advertising a pay scale from \$19.19 to \$21.22 for full time CDL drivers. The winter part time drivers would have a range from \$8.00 to \$19.50. All drivers will get a \$1 raise immediately, the other dollar raise will come through job evaluation based upon performance, attendance, job knowledge, safety, and other skills. I have currently reached out to LaPorte, Pulaski, and Marshall Counties to get copies of their evaluation. I plan on having all evaluation done by May 1st, 2022. New hires will be evaluated 6 months and again at one year of service, then yearly after that. All senior drivers will be done on a yearly basis. Due to the lack of being fully staffed, I have \$129K left over from last year driver payroll budget. I believe I can pay for this raise without raising my budget. After some discussion Councilman Hazelton made a motion to approve the pay increase for CDL drivers. Councilman Binkley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

SCEDF/SCILL Contract

Councilman Pearman explained what was changed in the contract is that there is \$40,000 that will be appropriated in the contract for the use of Economic Development. It could be requested by the foundation but also by another group for an economic development project. Councilman Binkley made a motion to approve the Contract for Support of the Starke County Economic Development Foundation for Economic Development Programs and Services and Contract for SCILL Center Training Programs. Councilman White seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Lisa Dan, Director of the Starke County Economic Development Foundation advised she has been looking into the finances of the Lead Track. She has reached out to Tranco who does the maintenance every year on the tracks. She handed out a copy of their purposed scope of work for the next three years. This scope of work comes out to about \$300,000. In 2019 they lowered the per car rail rate from \$51 to \$10 but then she bills Knox Fertilizer and Reagent for actual cost of the utility bills and inspections. She would like to talk to the two companies about raising the per rail car rate for the maintenance and replacement. She will be talking to JW Hicks about getting on rail. Councilman Bailey asked how it dropped from \$51 to \$10. Director Dan advised it was a decision made by the Board of Commissioners at that time. Councilman Leinbach suggested looking into Rail Works. Councilman Pearman suggested putting out an RFP because of the cost of this project.

Director Dan advised they have been working on a solar vendor list of contractors. She stated if they know of contractors that they could add to the list they are looking for bulk hay sales and straw. Councilman Leinbach stated they should have Slusser's on the list. Director Dan handed out the annual report for the Starke County Economic Development Foundation. She also stated that Common Kolabs are not coming to the City of Knox but they did sign a lease with Gary Poppins and will be leasing a portion of that building. They will be starting with a crew of five out of North Judson in about of month and then they plan on adding 15 people. Their phase three would be to eventually get to 40 employees. Director Dan would like to sit down and talk about the incentives that the county can offer and possibly put together an incentive package that they could present to prospective companies.

EMT-A POSITON REQUEST

Eric Wood, Director of Starke County EMS came before the Starke County Council to request a pay rate for the newly created EMT-A position. Councilman Pearman asked what the top rate is for the EMT B position. Director Wood advised it is \$14.71. He also advised that an Advanced EMT can start IV's and

administer medicine so if he had a Paramedic that did not show up for a shift an Advanced EMT could fill in for the Paramedic and then an EMT could also work the shift. He presented the council with a job description for this position. Director Wood advised that their current medical director did not allow hiring advanced EMT's but as of April 1st they will have a new medical director that will allow this to happen. Councilman Pearman asked how much Director Wood is looking to start the pay at. Director Wood advised he would like \$17.50 per hour. He then talked about partnering with the Economic Development Foundation and the new training grant that just came out which allow up to \$50,000 per entity or \$5,000 per employee. However, part of the requirements for this grant is that you have to have wage increase for going through the classes. Director Dan clarified that this is through WorkOne and the Next Level Jobs grant money. After further discussion Councilman Hazelton made a motion to approve the pay for an EMT-A position in a range of \$14.71 - \$17.50 and to revisit this in 6 months. Councilman Bailey seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

PROSECUTOR TRANSFER REQUEST

Councilman Hazelton made a motion to approve the following transfer requests:

Addition Appropriation to 1000.10105.000.0032 in the amount of \$679.79, 1000.12500.000.0032 in the amount of \$141.68, 1000.10407.000.0032 in the amount of \$567.00, 1000.10550.000.0032 in the amount of \$19.21 and a reduction in appropriation to 1000.10804.000.0025 in the amount of \$1407.68. Councilman Leinbach seconded the motion and the motion was pass with all ayes.

CUMULATIVE CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

Councilman Pearman advised he had spoken to Commissioner Chesak this morning about this agenda item. He advised that he knows the council has expressed some concern that out of a budget over \$200,000 the Commissioner have spent over \$60,000 so far this year all collectively on items that Councilman Hazelton was looking at through DRMO to get for free. Councilman Hazelton does not know when it changed, when capital items were bought before the council discussed it and the commissioners discussed it and then both boards approved it. He stated they are the fiscal body for the county and it is there responsibility to oversee these purchases because if they run out of money it is their problem to figure out what to do in that case. After further discussion regarding when and how to do the resolution, Attorney Schramm prepared the resolution during the meeting. Councilman Pearman read the resolution as follows:

A Resolution Providing for the Reduction of Appropriated Expenditures from the Starke County Cumulative Capital Development Fund.

WHEREAS, the County Council of Starke County, Indiana (the "Council"), is responsible for the performance of various functions for Starke County, Indiana (the County); and

WHEREAS, the Council has previously appropriated the sum of Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$250,000.00) for expenditures from the County's Cumulative Capital Development Fund, Fund #1138 (the "Fund") for the fiscal year, January 1, 2022, through December 31, 2022; and,

WHEREAS, in the interests of fiscal responsibility, the Council has determined that it is in the best interests of the health, safety, and welfare of the County's citizens, and the health and fiscal vitality of the County, that the appropriated amount for expenditure from the fund for the current fiscal year be reduced to Seventy Thousand (\$70,000.00); and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the County Council of Starke County, Indiana, that this Resolution providing for the Reduction of Appropriated Expenditures from the Starke County Cumulative Capital Development Fund, is hereby adopted as follows:

Section I. – Reduction 1. Reduction in Appropriation Fund. Fund #1138, the County Cumulative Capital Development Fund is hereby reduced by a sum of One Hundred and Eighty Thousand Dollars (\$180,000.00). The new, appropriated amount available for County expenditure shall be Seventy Thousand Dollars (\$70,000.00) for the fiscal year, ending December 31, 2022.

Section II. – Effective Date – The ordinance shall become effective immediately upon its passage by the Starke County Council, and as the date set forth below as January 18th, 2022. Councilman Hazelton made a motion to approve the resolution. Councilwoman Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilman White came before the Starke County Council to express his concerns in the traffic that Range Road has accumulated recently.

With no other business or public comment to come before the Starke County Council, Councilman Leinbach made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:47 PM. Councilwoman Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

JANUARY 18, 2022
STARKE COUNTY COUNCIL

Dave Pearman, President

Brad Hazelton, Vice-President

Kay Gudeman

Don White

Howard Bailey

Don Binkley

Todd Leinbach

Rachel Oesterreich, Starke County Auditor and
Secretary to the Starke County Council