

**STARKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2022**

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in Regular Session at 9:30 AM, in person at the Starke County Annex Building, Knox, Indiana, with Mark Gourley 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 Mark Gourley directly at 9:30 AM.

EMS MONTHLY REPORT

Nancy Coad, EMS Clerk came before the Board of Commissioners to present the financial report for EMS for February. Commissioner Gourley advised we received \$348.05 from Attorney Johnathan O'Hara from accounts in collections. Director Eric Wood then came before the Board of Commissioners to give his monthly report. He advised they are back to full staff paramedic wise and the medic that was on deployment is back to work as of April 1st. They have a CPR training coming up for San Pierre Fire as well as the Library. Safety wise, no one has been injured and all the vehicles are up and running. There was one minor damage from the 4230 and the Knox Base. The cost was \$225 and it has been fixed. Director Wood then handed out three quotes for ambulances for the Board to review:

Crossroads Ambulance Sales & Service, LLC \$278,166.00
Fire Service, Inc \$218,346.00
Osage Ambulance \$211,377.22

All of which include a power cot as well. Commissioner Gourley asked if they were all Fords. Director Wood agreed and gave a short rundown of the specs he included. Councilman Pearman asked Director Wood to separate the power cot out from the quote tonight, more of an itemized list of pricing. Director Wood advised the new ambulance would not be ready until October or November of 2024. Director Wood also brought up sick time and vacation time for his department that he originally brought up several months ago. He would like a day for a day, meaning if an employee is entitled to a sick day, for his department, a sick day should be a 24 hour shift as they work 24 hour shifts. Auditor Oesterreich agreed that employees should earn "shift hours" vacation time and sick time. However, if his employees take 2 vacation days within a week, which would be 48 hours, we would not be paying out 8 hours of overtime. Commissioner Gourley would like to see a consistent policy over all shifts that are carried out throughout the departments within the county. Auditor Oesterreich will work with Attorney Schramm in getting the handbook updated and presented to the Board of Commissioners.

HIGHWAY MONTHLY REPORT

Superintendent Dan Dipert, appeared via zoom, to provide his monthly report. He advised they have three open spots for the CDL drivers and they currently have 13 full time drivers along with 3 part time CDL drivers, and one part time working on getting a CDL. They are not currently advertising for construction inspector, they ran three ads, 14-days ads with no response. CCMG 2022-1 has been submitted and we are waiting on approval. CCMG 2021-2 all bids have been turned into INDOT on 2/23/2022, Reith Riley was awarded the bid, waiting on INDOT for final sign off. Superintendent Dipert advised he is working on a spec sheet for a new tandem truck, new pricing coming out next week and it will be over a year out on getting the truck. He stated they have gone through 377 tons of salt this year, we had a contract for 1200 tons in 2022. They have 583 tons of salt left on our contract for 2022. He advised he will be contracting for 200 tons for 2023. Superintendent Dipert advised they were awarded the refunding for Bridge #59, so now they have three bridges in the works. They will be putting another RFP out for Bridge #59. They are working on a list of roads for chip sealing, he knows they talked about 600 N by OD schools and he got a quote for a mile of that road would be \$433,000 to have done.

He advised they recommended that the road be grinded up and 12 inches of base be added to the road. He advised he just got back from Road School and has been appointed to the Northwest Board of IACHES. He advised he has employees and an Etnyer Training today which is for the distributor truck. Commissioner Gourley stated he has a Road Use Agreement in front of him for the Dunn's Bridge Project and asked Superintendent Dipert if he is in agreement to this Road Usage Agreement. Superintendent Dipert advised it is satisfactory to him. Councilman Pearman advised that had been working with Dan and all the concerns that he had, everything had been resolved. Commissioner

Gourley asked what the status was regarding the intersection at Koontz Lake that was discussed at their last meeting. Superintendent Dipert is working with the Surveyor and will be putting in a 4-way stop when the locate has been finished. A discussion was then held about the purchase of a road reconditioner or road grinder and options to rent or borrow from another unit.

CLERK-VOTE CENTER WORKER PAY

Bernadette Manuel, Starke Circuit Court Clerk came before the Board of Commissioners to ask for an increase in poll worker pay. She advised that since going to vote centers they now have 7 Supervisors, 22 clerks, and 38 Facilitators working the polls. She presented a chart of the pay these workers receive. She would like to increase everyone pay by \$10. She advised we are the lowest paid county in the Northern half of Indiana. Clerk Manuel advised that they would have 157 poll workers if our county did not go to vote centers. After some further discussion Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the \$10 pay increase as presented. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Clerk Manuel advised that she will be coming to the Commissioners and Council in future meetings asking for renovations for her office. She would like to meet with members of the board to discuss these requests. Commissioner Gourley advised that there is a problem keeping the whole building heated at the same time and that should be looked into. Commissioner Gourley advised he would like to discuss the use of ARPA money for this matter. Clerk Manuel also advised she would like to request the part time election position be made into a full time position. She advised as long as she is Clerk the election will go on fine and she will fill that void but the next elected official may not do the same and she would recommend that spot to be full time. Councilman Pearman suggested to look into other counties that have vintage courthouses and see what they have done for the heating and cooling.

ATTORNEY SCHRAMM – SOLAR DISCUSSION

Attorney Schramm advised he has two sets of documents presented; Road Usage Agreement, Economic Development Agreement, and a Decommissioning Agreement for NextEra and then a Decommissioning Agreement and an Economic Development Agreement for Mammoth keeping in mind they did the Road Use Affidavit so there is no Road Use Agreement in that case. In this case they built in the extra section into the Mammoth Economic Development Agreement that talks about the roads. Attorney Schramm recommends approval of both documents for both companies. The Confirmatory Resolution for the Establishment of an Economic Revitalization Area for Mammoth and the Preliminary Resolution for the Establishment of an Economic Revitalization Area for the Next Era Solar Project will go before the Starke County Council tonight. Commissioner Cavender asked about making a Road Use Ordinance. Attorney Schramm advised that would be a good idea and this could be in effect for anyone after Mammoth or NextEra. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the Road Use Agreement, Decommissioning Plan Agreement for both NextEra and Mammoth and and the Economic Development Agreement for NextEra and Mammoth. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Attorney Schramm advised that regarding the Sysco litigation, they did get the order from the Judge to compel discovery as they had not turned over production documents and interrogatories. They did provide some of the documentation to us as per the order but some of the information was lacking. If she does not get the additional information they may have to do another order to compel. He also wanted to mention that he spoke with Michael Reese from the Troyer Group and the company that was awarded the winning bid had misunderstood the nature of the verbal instructions during the pre-bid process. Michael Reese advised strategy and pricing was based on a single bidder being selected for each division, in this case Division 1. In reading the bid instructions Attorney Schramm stated that he can see his point but he basically misunderstood the nature of a single bidder being selected for each division as opposed to an entire division being awarded. So he said they award to the second highest bidder or allow them to revise the bids which can't be done without doing the entire process over again. The approach they are probably going to have to take is awarding it to the second highest bidder which would be an increase in the project cost. The Stellar Communities will be coming to talk to the Board of Commissioners in the future about this.

Commissioner Gourley asked if they could talk about the Opioid Settlement. He advised there was a change just signed by the Governor last week, what wound up in the Budget Act of 2021, which they did not which inspired the Board to opt out. However, it has been changed and instead of getting just the 15% based on population it will be according to a weighted distribution formula. Now an additional 35% will be divided up against the local government units under a similar formula specifically for

certain programs. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to opt back into the Opioid Settlement. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Auditor Oesterreich asked the amount we are receiving for the settlement. Attorney Scram advised from McKesson Corporation Cardinal Health will be \$1,183,426.56 and from Johnson and Johnson it will be \$277,512.40.

OTHER BUSINESS

IT Director Richard Franks came before the Board of Commissioners to discuss the Starke County Government Active Directory Request Forms and The Starke County Government Password Policy he had created. The Active Directory Request Form would be used for new users needing an account or an access card. It would also be used for disabling those items if the employees leaves the employment of Starke County Government. He explained the second item is an actual formal password policy. He is looking for the approval from the Board on both of these items. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve Government Active Directory Request Forms and The Starke County Government Password Policy. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Commissioner Cavender approved the request for Annex II keys for Camryn Kopka, Park Superintendent. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to appoint Carolla Heilstedt to the PTABOA Board. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

AUDITOR BUSINESS

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the vendor claims docket for a total in the amount of \$387,545.44. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the payroll claims in the amount of \$272,536.40 including deductions in the amount of \$79,791.36 for pay period ending 03/05/2022 and payroll date of 03/11/2022. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the minutes for March 7, 2022. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

With there being no further public comments and no further business, Commissioner Gourley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 AM.

MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2022

____ Absent _____
Charlie Chesak, President

Mark Gourley, Vice-President

Bryan Cavender, Member

Rachel Oesterreich, Auditor and Secretary to
the Board of Commissioners