

**STARKE COUNTY ARPA MEETING
COMMISSIONERS AND COUNCIL JOINT SESSION
MINUTES
MONDAY, APRIL 18, 2022**

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Council at 3:00 PM in the Annex Building Meeting Room, Knox, Indiana, with Charles Chesak, Mark Gourley, Dave Pearman, Brad Hazelton, Kay Gudeman, Howard Bailey, Todd Leinbach, Don Binkley, Don White present, and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner President Charles Chesak and Council President, Dave Pearman at 3:00 PM for the Starke County Board of Commissioners and Starke County Council Special ARPA Session.

ARPA DISCUSSION

Councilman Pearman held a discussion regarding what other entities are doing with these funds such as revenue loss, trails, enhancing parks. Parks and trails fall under Economic Development and in some way for certain types of projects it could fall under infrastructure. Councilman Pearman explained if we had a few buckets to park these items now, the committee which should be this group, then we can make decisions on what projects can be funded and it can be expended that way. Right now the decision they need to make today it which buckets to put this money in. Councilman Pearman advised that there are some offices that would like to use some of the ARPA money toward documentation and scanning processes. So some of the ARPA money could be allocated toward document restoration as well. A discussion was held regarding putting \$100,000 into document restoration for not only the Recorder but for other departments as well in case they have future requests. Councilman Pearman also suggested having a Community Projects line, not so much for us to fund an entire community project but for us to be able to have matching funds for requested community projects.

Magistrate Cox, in the audience, indicated that the Probation officer Chuck Phillips is there to talk about the Opioid Settlement. He explained they are doing a court recovery program and their thoughts is the usage of some of the opioid money toward that program would be beneficial in trying to reduce recidivism. They are trying to facilitate moving people who are addictive to drugs away from the original court system and using the court system in a type of medical base treatment. They were going to ask for some funding out of the opioid settlement to facilitate that and reduce recidivism and to allow them to hire some type of case manager or a person that can perform evaluations and get people into different treatment programs. Councilman Bailey asked if we know how much per year we are going to be getting form the opioid settlement. Auditor Oesterreich advised she is not sure on what the amount would be per year but we are only going to be receiving the up to \$2 million dollars only if all 92 counties opt into the settlement. Probation Officer Chuck Phillips advised that this year they had started a recovery program, everyone that is in the program has substance abuse as an underlying condition. Through a federal grant they were able to get a case manager and a designated probation officer to work with this cliental. The case manager is working with getting them the appropriate treatment, whether that be short term or long term facility and the probation officer is working on their other needs such as peer association, employment issues and housing. Right now they have 17 people, the first group started in March.

Probation Officer Phillips advised the objective is to not rely so much on outside entities to provide these services because they cannot always meet the needs of the clients that are served. They would like to become an in house program strictly for Starke County that is run by the Starke County system. They are trying to meet this addiction issue head on because they all come to them with so many different needs other than just the substance abuse. Further discussion was held regarding the opioid money in general and how it can be used for overall mental health and wellness within Starke County. Councilman Pearman asked Magistrate Cox is they are looking for a psychologist or why does they need someone additional to the program they already have in place now. Magistrate Cox said it is more about immediacy. People are listed on a waiting list and it takes forever and people reoffend. The idea is to have immediacy to prevent these actions. Commissioner Gourley asked about the TC program at the jail and how that is operating. Probation Officer Phillips advised the last count they were at 32 in the Therapeutic Communities and it is going well but there are not a lot of Starke County residents going

through the program. Councilman Pearman advised they will definitely keep this on the top of the list of the inquiry regarding the opioid settlement money.

Councilman Pearman suggested putting a certain amount in loss revenue, a certain amount in infrastructure, and also a line for community projects. Councilman Binkley agreed. Commissioner Gourley advised he would like to do something with the second floor of the courthouse and their heating/cooling issues. Councilman Pearman also suggested putting the \$100,000 into document restoration. Councilwoman Gudeman suggested adding money into an economic development line as well. Commissioner Gourley held a discussion on the possibilities of broadband infrastructure as well. Councilman Hazelton mentioned the possibilities of a radio tower in infrastructure. Councilman Leinbach suggested putting 3 million in lost revenue. Councilman Hazelton suggested putting 1 million in infrastructure. Councilman Pearman suggest putting \$200,000 in economic development.

Councilman Hazelton made a motion to approve \$3,000,000 in loss revenue, \$100,000 in Community Projects, \$1,000,000 in Infrastructure, \$100,000 in Document Restoration, and \$200,000 in Economic Development. Councilman Bailey seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Gourley made a motion to approve \$3,000,000 in loss revenue, \$100,000 in Community Projects, \$1,000,000 in Infrastructure, \$100,000 in Document Restoration, and \$200,000 in Economic Development. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

OTHER BUSINESS

With no other business or public comment to come before the Starke County Council or the Starke County Board of Commissioners, Commissioner Gourley made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:15 PM. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

MONDAY, APRIL 18, 2022 STARKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Charlie Chesak, President

Mark Gourley, Vice-President

ABSENT
Bryan Cavender, Member

Rachel Oesterreich, Auditor and Secretary to
the Board of Commissioners

MONDAY, APRIL 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