

STARKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
MONDAY, AUGUST 15, 2022

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in Regular Session at 9:53 AM, due to the lateness of the Executive Session, in person at the Starke County Annex Building, Knox, Indiana, with Charles Chesak, 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 President Charles Chesak directly at 9:53 AM.

EMS MONTHLY REPORT

Nancy Coad, Starke County EMS Clerk came before the Board of Commissioners to present the monthly financial report. Commissioner Chesak advised they had received \$498.87 from Johnathan O'Hara, \$338.79 from Small Claims, and \$381.89 from Small Claims. Eric Wood, Starke County EMS Director, came before the Board of Commissioners to review his monthly report as follows:

Operations: We have promoted Brandy Salita to fill the Captain position. She will be in charge of education as well as helping out with audit/review.

Personnel: We are short 5 Full time Paramedics right now. They just had 1 EMT resign.

Training: Several classes coming up. 5 in county and 1 out of state paid for through a grant.

They just put on 2 classes for JW Hicks, county wide fire department training for EMR, he will be teaching that class through Hamlet Fire. They also have 3 other advance classes coming up.

Safety: The employee who was injured is now back to work so they have no injuries or people out due to injuries at this time.

Vehicles:

3308 (2021 Ford – Gas - North Judson) – New front tires, oil change, and coil pack.

4230 (2019 Ford – Gas – Knox) – New front tires and oil change.

0514 (2015 Chevy – Diesel – Grovertown) – OOS at Pit Stop. New front tires, shocks, power steering hose, and windshield washer reservoir replaced.

0086 (2009 Ford – Diesel – Backup) – No issues.

0085 (2013 Chevy – Diesel – Medic 2) – No issues.

0084 (2012 Chevy – Diesel – Backup) – No issues.

4149 (2013 Ford – Gas) – Oil change.

Base Maintainece: Clothes washer at M3 is leaking water. No information on repairs. North Judson base had an ambulance back into the garage door. Lower panel damaged. Repair was done so the door would be operational. \$1600 for total replacement of damage panels and supplies.

PPE: - No change.

HIGHWAY MONTHLY REPORT

Dan Dipert, Starke County Highway Superintendent, came before the Board of Commissioners to present his monthly report. He advised that they do have 15 full time drivers and they have one open driver position but they also have an employee that may be retiring in October. The grant status for Community Crossings 2022-1, they are waiting for a notice to proceed from INDOT; Community Crossing 2022-2, he has a commitment letter today that he needs signed, our portion of the project is going to be \$83,000, Community Crossings portion of the project will be \$250,000 and they are currently \$63,000 over budget. Commissioner Gourley asked if this was a continuance to what was done last year on 600 E. Superintendent Dipert stated yes this would be on 600 E from Robbins Ditch to HWY 30. Commissioner Gourley made a motion to approve the commitment letter as presented. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. They are still working on getting quotes for tractors and mowing units. He advised he purchased a 2014 international semi, currently getting a wet kit installed. There was a misunderstanding with the purchase of the semi. Superintendent Dipert did email out requests to other vendors for additional quotes but he has not forwarded the quotes for the Board of Commissioners to review. After further discussion Commissioner

Gourley made a motion to retroactively approve the semi purchase made by Superintendent Dipert. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Superintendent Dipert advised starting September 12th he had rented a crack seal machine, they will be going out to all the bridges to crack seal the bridges and then they will do the county roads. He advised he needs a signature for Bridge #7 continuing paperwork. Commissioner Gourley asked what is different about this than what they already signed. Auditor Oesterreich advised that United Consultants will be the Bridge Construction Inspectors on the Bridge #7 project since the county currently does not have a Bridge Construction Inspector, the contract was given to Attorney Schramm to review. Superintendent Dipert advised they are continuing to work on gravel roads. They have done over 15 miles of chip seal. They started a second round of making cold mix for wedges, on August 18th Seal Master is going to give us a ½ mile of fog seal to try out as a sample and he is working with other vendors to see if they will match it.

Superintendent Dipert advised that they don't have anything scheduled with training but he was just speaking with Carrie Block about getting something on the books within the next couple months. He advised that with the Mammoth Solar Project they are out there every week grading and they just put 7 more loads of stone on 400 E of of 700 S. Today they are out working on 800 S on a low spot. With Next Era there was three culverts that needed replaced and the culverts came in last week, they will be replacing them in September. He advised he met with Hoosier Solar August 4th to discuss electric lines in the county right of way. He is not in favor of this he thinks they would be buried outside of their right-of-way. Larry Wickert advised that they are asking for this because up in where the fields are where the panels will be are not contiguous. The cable will need to be ran some place, they can either run it across the property or they can run it down the road, running it down the road is not the preferred method to the solution to the problem. Superintendent Dipert then handed out a project drawing from the Bass Lake Project for Stellar Communities. Commissioner Gourley asked from the point they approved the initial funding for this project when did the Constellation of Starke or anyone come before the Board for the project design approval. Larry Wickert advised the project design was drawn up by the Troyer Group. Commissioner Gourley advised the date on the drawing is January 13th of this year and he has never seen the drawing.

Commissioner Gourley advised they should have known about this design specifically because it involves modification to a county road. Commissioner Chesak stated he does not even remember seeing the original plans. Commissioner Gourley stated that regardless of the original drawings every revision should have come before the Board of Commissioners. Superintendent Dipert advised they looked into this and the architect received the blessing of Mary Perren and Rik Ritzler. Commissioner Gourley advised that was before this last revision. After further discussion Bob from Territorial Engineering will reach out to a few individuals to get someone here at the Board of Commissioners next meeting on September 6th to review the revised project design. After Attorney Schramm reviewed the Bridge #7 documentation Commissioner Gourley made a motion to approve the Consultant Contract with United Consulting. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

LIABILITY/PROPERTY RENEWAL

Carrie Block with 1st Choice Insurance came before the Board of Commissioners to discuss the county's liability renewal. She went over the training sessions they did this year. Those were conducted by herself, Mark Ennis, and an Attorney during those sessions. She advised section one of their binder also contains the loss control items they have had over the past year. She presented the Board with information on the liability, automobile, and workman's compensation claims that have been turned in over the past year, both open and closed claims. Commissioner Gourley asked if there was any correlations between the training in 2020 and 2021 and possibly the cause of an increase in claims. Carrie advised that it could have been because during the COVID time period they did not do as many trainings as they have in past years. She advised that hopefully we can get back on track with the trainings but the Workman's Comp has not been bad. They definitely want to continue with the trainings. She then explained the experience modification factor for the past 5 years. She presented the property liability overview. The property limits have increased by 3% each year to keep up with inflation.

Carrie advised presented the overview of the workman's compensation limits of what the currently have now and what will be renewing. She presented the property proposal renewal showing each location that they have ensured. She also presented the workman's compensation pay schedule. They will have fluctuation here as payrolls go up and down. She then presented the overall total for the liability and property renewal. She has listed all the renewals from 2015 to present. This year the renewal is a total of

\$469,778. Even though there are differences in premium there are always changes in exposure. It is not all rate that causes it to go up, much of it is exposure. She did break down on an explanation of premiums for the Board of Commissioners. She provided the training session that are available through Bliss McKnight. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the renewal with 1st Choice insurance in the amount of \$469,778. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

SHERIFF VEHICLE REQUEST

Sheriff Dulin came before the Board of Commissioners to request a change in their prior approval of the purchase of two Ford vehicles. He advised that they still do not yet have a date on when those Ford's would be manufactured. He stated that they are able to get two 2022 Dodge Durango Pursuit vehicles now for an additional \$403 more per vehicle and he will cover the cost on that if they approve the purchase. Commissioner Chesak asked where these vehicles were located. Sheriff Dulin advised they will be coming from LaPorte. Commissioner Gourley made a motion to approve the purchase the two Dodge Durango Pursuits as presented in lieu of the previously approved explorers. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

PURDUE EXTENSION JOB DESCRIPTION CHANGE

Julia Wickert, Purdue Extension Director, came before the Board of Commissioners to request a Job Description change. She advised it would be for the Part Time position. The current employee will be retiring soon and they want to restructure the job description prior to hiring a new employee to take her place. She presented the Board of Commissioners with the job description and after their review Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the new Job Description for her Part Time position as presented. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

SOLAR ORDINANCE AMENDMENT 1st READING

Commissioner Chesak advised they will now review the amendment to the Solar Ordinance. Commissioner Gourley would like this to be considered the 1st reading rather than suspend the rules and approve all at once because he has not gotten a chance to fully review the amendments made. After some discussion Commissioner Gourley made a motion to approve the 1st reading of the Solar Energy Ordinance with amendments. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

AUDITOR BUSINESS

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the payroll claims in the amount of \$276,493.98 including deductions in the amount of \$74,340.44 for pay period ending 08/06/2022 and payroll date of 08/12/2022. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Gourley made a motion to approve the vendor claims docket for a total in the amount of \$265,207.81. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the minutes for August 1, 2022. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Gourley made a motion to approve the map data application as received from WTH GIS as requested by Corelogic. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Commissioner Gourley made a motion to approve Annex 2 keys for Tracy Williams and Annex 1 keys for Mary Beever. Commissioner Cavender 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 10:55 AM.

MONDAY, AUGUST 15, 2022

Charlie Chesak, President

Mark Gourley, Vice-President

Bryan Cavender, Member

Rachel Oesterreich, Auditor and Secretary to
the Board of Commissioners