

**STARKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2022**

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in Regular Session at 5:00 PM, 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 5:00 PM.

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS**

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to allow Jo Fisher to place crosses on the Courthouse Lawn in observance of Domestic Violence Awareness month for the month of October. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

**KIRPC – BASS LAKE PROJECT**

Shawn Cain with KIRPC came before the Board of Commissioners to discuss the first pay request for the Stellar Projects. Shawn presented the pay application along with a payment summary to the Board of Commissioners. The total pay application for the first request is \$102,999.87, there is a retainage amount of \$11,444.43. She explained the grant fund and local share breakdowns. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the payment of \$102,999.87 to Brown & Brown General Contractors for pay application one. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Shawn also presented the options they currently have to move forward with the Bass Lake Project. Commissioner Gourley asked why they had not received the change order as previously discusses. Shawn explained that the change order was going to be significant so they wanted to see what direction the Commissioners would want to take before they completed a change order. She explained that the change order to do the asphalt paving it would be \$33,600. She explained their options are to proceed with the work as bid, add the \$33,600 for asphalt paving of the new road connection, or reduce the scope to leave the roads where they are currently and just install the boat trailer parking. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve to reduce the scope to leave the roads where they are currently and just install the boat trailer parking. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

**EMS DEPARTMENT UPDATE**

Larry Brock, Starke County EMS Director came before the Board of Commissioners to provide an update about his department. Director Brock advised that he has found funds that he will be able to transfer to the negative accounts. He has addressed issues with staffing by hiring two more full time EMTs. They are still missing five paramedics within their department. He has inspected the buildings and did advised that they are in need of minor repairs but if they are unable to do those repairs this year within their budget they will be waiting until next year. Director Brock explained that they are having minor problems with the trucks and are seeing a lot of tire issues. He advised that ambulance supplies were in the negative and they will be bringing that back up. He also stated that the biggest thing for the remainder of this year is to be watching the budget to make sure they will not be overspending for the remainder of the year. Director Brock also stated that he did talk to Accumed, who is the billing company, and they have been seeing issues regarding the EMS documentation and it not being good for billing. Accumed has returned several reports to be corrected but those reports were not being turned back in which is causing a delay in their billing. Accumed has agreed to come down and do a class for their employees in regard to better documentation. Director Brock asked if the EMS Department is an advanced EMT provider. Councilman Pearman advised he believed that the idea is that it would be a paramedic staffed rigs but they should have protocols regarding Advanced EMTs. Director Brock advised he will look further into the situation. Commissioner Gourley asked when Director Brock would be looking into addressing the needs of the hospital. Director Brock advised that he had a meeting today with them and they started planning, their next meeting is in two weeks.

**RECORDER THOMASON – CLOSING OFFICE**

Mandy Thomason, Starke County Recorder came before the Board of Commissioners to request she be allowed to close the Starke County Recorder's Office for December 6, 7, and 8 for a Conference she

would like to take all her employees too. Commissioner Cavender is uncomfortable with closing a public office for three days so no motion was made on the issue.

## **AUDITOR BUSINESS**

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the work that needs to be done to the Annex Building by Johnson Controls in the amount of \$3,041.98. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the minutes for September 19, 2022. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the vendor claims docket for a total in the amount of \$278,862.63. 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 \$289,888.08 including deductions in the amount of \$77,503.84 for pay period ending 09/17/2022 and payroll date of 09/23/2022. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve Annex 1 Keys for Thomas Schouten. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve Annex 1 Keys for Larry Brock. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Matt with Core Facilities Inc. came before the Board of Commissioners to report on his assessment of the Annex 1 Building, Annex 2 Building, and Starke County Courthouse Building. He explained that they are sitting in really good shape with the buildings except there are a few projects that are due and even a few that are overdue. Overall he advised we are sitting in very good shape. He explained what his role would be in the entire scope and how the bid review process works when he is involved. Matt stated that he wanted to review a few areas that need to be addressed. The first is the second floor of the courthouse, the right way to mechanically cool the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and get rid of the window units would be to go with ductless mini split heat pumps. Doing this would give central cooling to the second level as well as heating capacities. He advised he would bid the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor as one project; the four restrooms, flooring, ductless installation, and the repainting of the entire floor. By doing this it would provide cost savings.

Matt advised that the second project is that the Annex 1 has major spalling, damaged, and cracked on the exterior concrete. He suggested that those need to be removed and repoured or the elevation needs to be changed because it is a major tripping hazard right now. The third project is that the three roofs of Annex 1, maintenance warehouse, and the Courthouse are due or overdue. There are actually places where the roofs are currently leaking in the attics as well. He advised if they are going to do the roofs he would bundle all three of them for major efficiency all at once. They can then pick and choose which ones they would want to complete first. He advised that the only project would be the courthouse outside condenser, there is two of them, and one has been changed but the other one is past its life cycle. Matt advised he can get them from specs, bids, tours, and to final quotes. It would now be up to the Board of Commissioners to pull the trigger, pending, delays, or addressed this three years down the road. They will have the info and data to make educated decisions regarding these projects. After further discussion including the flat fee structure he uses, Commissioner Cavender made a motion for Matt from Core Facilities Inc to continue with the four quotes for all four projects and come back to the Board of Commissioners with the information. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Eldonna Risner, Bass Lake Resident, came before the Board of Commissioners to discuss the easement at Maple Drive and CR210. She advised "I was here earlier this year in regards to lake access at the end of Maple Street and CR210. This has been in litigation for eight years now. It started with one family in the back filing a lawsuit against us and our neighbors, the McCormick's. They wanted a deed for themselves for this lake frontage. The court ruled against them. They then formed a Home Owners Association with others in the back and are trying to get a deed for the property through the Association. The problem with this lake frontage is no one can establish ownership. That is what we are doing now. We are scheduled for mediation on October 25 at 9:00 AM at the library in Knox. Once we come to an agreement on how the association can use the frontage the county will be asked to sign off of this property to us. Then, we and the McCormicks's will be asked to sign off to their HOA. After this, the

Association will have a deed for this frontage. None of this can happen or go forward unless the county signs off to us. Does the county want this to happen? This will set precedence”.

Eldonna stated “We’ve always thought of this as being county property. It’s at the end of a street and no one has ever paid taxes on this property. If you feel the same as I do, you need to let the lawyers involved know that you have an interest in this property and that you will not sign off. We don’t want to waste time and money on mediation if you have an interest in this property. To us it is so wrong to think that a group of out of state residents can get a deed for a lake frontage without buying or ever paying property tax on this property. Our questions is do you believe this is county property? If so, you need to let the lawyers know now that you have an interest in it. McCormick’s lawyer has tried a couple of times to contact you. They get no courtesy call back. After some discussion Attorney Schramm advised that Starke County Government is a party of the lawsuit and this is not a matter they would want to discuss in a public meeting due to the pending litigation. He advises that his position is that they are going to allow the Court to decide their position of this piece of property.

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to continue the IT Directors leave of absence with pay until October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022 or an earlier date pending an investigation. 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 6:00 PM.

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2022**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
Charlie Chesak, President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Gourley, Vice-President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bryan Cavender, Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rachel Oesterreich, Auditor and Secretary to  
the Board of Commissioners