

**STARKE COUNTY COUNCIL
MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 16, 2023**

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Council at 4:30 PM in the Annex Building Meeting Room, Knox, Indiana, with Dave Pearman, Anthony Black, Kay Gudeman, Todd Leinbach, Howard Bailey, Cassandra Hine, and Norman (Bruce) Bennett present, and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting was called to order by Council President, Dave Pearman at 4:30 PM for the Starke County Council Regular Session.

Councilman Leinbach made a motion to approve the minutes for November 21st, 2022 and December 19th, 2022. Councilwoman Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

2023 REORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD AND APPOINTMENTS

Councilman Black made a nomination for Councilman Pearman to be President of the Council for 2023. Councilman Bennett seconded the nomination. Councilman Bailey made a motion to close the nominations for President. Councilman Leinbach seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Councilman Bennett made a nomination for Councilwoman Gudeman as Vice-President. Councilman Leinbach seconded the nomination. Councilman Leinbach made a motion to close the nominations. Councilman Black seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

SCEDF Board

Councilman Leinbach made a motion to appoint Dave Pearman and Kay Gudeman to the Starke County Economic Development Board. Councilman Bailey seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

SCILL Board

Councilwoman Gudeman made a motion to appoint Bruce Bennett to the SCILL Board. Councilman Bailey seconded the motion. Councilman Pearman made a motion to appoint Brad Hazelton to the SCILL Board. Motion dies for lack of second. The motion to appoint Bruce Bennett to the SCILL Board was approved with all ayes.

KIRPC

Councilwoman Gudeman made a motion to appoint Cassandra Hines to the KIRPC Board. Councilman Bennett seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Planning Commission

Councilman Pearman made a motion to appoint Howard Bailey to the Planning Commission. Councilman Black seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Starke County Public Library Board

Councilman Bennett made a motion to appoint Susan Lucas to the Starke County Public Library Board. Councilman Black seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Alcoholic Beverage Board

Councilman Pearman made a motion to appoint Chad McDonald to the Alcoholic Beverage Board. Councilman Leinbach seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Solid Waste Board

Councilwoman Gudeman made a motion to appoint Todd Leinbach to the Solid Waste Board. Councilman Bennett seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

PTABOA

Councilman Bailey made a motion to appoint Michelle Downs to the PTABOA Board. Councilwoman Hine seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Park Board

Councilman Black made a motion to appoint Rik Ritzler to the Park Board. Councilman Bennett seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Marshall-Starke Development Board

Councilman Bennett made a motion to appoint Anthony Black to the Marshall-Starke Development Board. Councilwoman Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

2023 ENCUMBRANCES

Councilman Leinbach made a motion to approve the following 2023 encumbrances:

1000.20301.000.0019 \$343.32
1000.31001.000.0019 \$245.00
1000.10800.000.0005 \$29,024.59
1000.20400.000.0022 \$583.00
1112.30207.000.0000 \$16,292.74
1224.31100.000.0000 \$11,761.05
1224.30203.000.0000 \$2,564.10
1169.40104.000.0000 \$49,999.99

Councilwoman Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

PLANNING COMMISSION – TILL MONEY/HOME RULE FUND

Mary Beever, Starke County Planning Commission Office Manager came before the Starke County Council for the continued discussion on the Home Rule Fund and to request and increase in till money. Mary explained that she has been getting a lot of individuals paying with large bills and it would be helpful if she had a larger change fund. She currently is allotted \$100.00 and would like an additional increase of \$150.00 totaling \$250.00 for the planning commission till. Councilman Leinbach made the motion to increase the Planning Commission till by \$150.00 equaling a total of \$250.00. Councilman Bailey seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Mary also asked for an update regarding the home rule fund request. She advised that the BZA agreed that the money should be deposited into an account so that the BZA and Planning Commission should share it 50/50. After further discussion, Councilwoman Hine made a motion to table the home rule fund request. Councilman Black seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

SCEDF – CONTRACT

Lisa Dan, Director of the Starke County Economic Development Foundation came before the Starke County Council to discuss the Contract for Support of Starke County Economic Development Foundation. Director Dan advised that they do not have anything to do with the SCILL contract this year. She provided a draft contract to the Starke County Council and advised that the high-lightened sections are the sections that would be changed. One of those changes include extending it from a one-year contract to a three-year contract and possibly splitting the \$40,000 between both SCILL and the Development Foundation. She would like it changed were they do not have to come in and request that extra money if there is another \$40,000 set aside this year again. Director Dan also advised that regarding the Hamlet Fire Well, she does reach out to Norton monthly to ask them if they are planning on running the fire well themselves or leasing it from the county.

Director Dan advised that Norton is thinking about building their own fire well. She also advised that the SCEDF has an interest that is East of Norton that the county owns and if there is development there they would still need that fire well in place. Councilman Pearman will be speaking with Jim Cooke about the fire well. Director Dan advised the reason for the one year to three-year contract change is that they were told they needed to have a strategic plan in place and those types of goals are three to five year goals. Director Dan then spoke about the hotel meetings she has been having. Councilman Pearman

stated that he believes Wyndham is a better fit for Starke County. Director Dan advised that Cobblestone, the other option, is set up more for rural communities but they are not as well-known as the Wyndham group. She also advised that they are currently looking into investors for the project. She advised they are still looking at lots of different brands for the hotel.

Director Dan stated that there is a new development coming to the Hamlet area. They have sat down with Christina Pitts the Town Clerk of Hamlet to discuss housing. They will be having a groundbreaking ceremony but are unsure of the size of the development and when it will begin still yet. Kurt V. has begun building new duplexes in North Judson. They also met with a commercial broker last week at Chesapeake Run. They are looking to work with developers to develop executive housing around Chesapeake Village. The Wakal's purchased two acres from the development foundation in the North Judson Industrial Park for a small machine shop. A lumber company has also purchased the remaining property at the North Judson Industrial Park. Director Dan advised Solar Mammoth North is well on its way. All of the employees are from adjacent counties. She advised they met with Next Era and NIPSCO right before the holidays regarding their updates. She asked Larry Wickert if there is any updates from Hoosier Solar. Larry advised that they do have all the land required and have obtained the leases needed. He said it will probably not be until Spring of 2023 when they submit their plans.

Director Dan advised that her and Mark are coordinating local stakeholder meetings for the US30 project. She advised that they have to put together a plan from Starke County so they don't get left behind in that. She advised that Governor Holcomb announced another Ready2 grant and this round we need to include any and all Starke County projects that we would like to see move ahead such as the Yellow River Interpretive Center, Trail connection to Wythogan park, Eerie Trail Extensions, Development Kayak Launches on the Yellow River, and any projects at the Bass Lake Beach, and Campground. Director Dan advised they have applied for and received a Closing the Gap Child Care Grant of \$60,000. They are working with two childcare providers. Director Dan advised that for the 2023 Starke Tank event, it will be in Knox this year. Last year they were able to give out \$18,000 in prize money. Every year they try to improve it somehow. The last thing she would like to talk about is broadband. She advised we are currently a broadband ready community and Kankakee Valley REMC has started installing fiber loops which will allow internet service providers to partner with them to be able to install fiber into homes.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilman Bailey made a comment on the Council's Meeting time. He would like to see the meetings a little later because he has heard that we start our meetings too late for public attendance. Councilwoman Gudeman made a motion to make the Council Meetings the 3rd Monday of the month at 5:00 PM. Councilman Bailey seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Public discussion was held regarding the 600 E project between 25 N and SR 8.

With no other business or public comment to come before the Starke County Council, Councilwoman Gudeman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:50 PM. Councilman Leinbach seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

JANUARY 16, 2023 STARKE COUNTY COUNCIL

Dave Pearman, President

Kay Gudeman, Vice-President

Todd Leinbach

Norman (Bruce) Bennett

Howard Bailey

Anthony Black

Cassandra Hine

Rachel Oesterreich, Starke County Auditor