

**STARKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**MINUTES**  
**MONDAY, DECEMBER 19, 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 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 9:30 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 EMS received \$270.42 from Attorney Johnathan O'Hara. Nancy also handed out the Accumed Report for last month. Larry Brock, Starke County EMS Director came before the Board of Commissioners to present his monthly report. He advised that looking at their numbers they have not been too bad. He advised that Accumed brought in about \$47,000 for this past month. Commissioner Gourley asked about the drop in collections. Director Brock stated that at this time of the year you would start seeing a small drop in collections due to employees going on vacation and having closed offices due to the holidays. Insurance companies also tend to hold their money and pay later. Director Brock advised they will be doing some transfers at the council meeting tonight but they should be ending the year with a positive number. He stated that his fleet is ready for winter; he does have one truck that will be returned today that had to have a fuel tank put on it. He advised he will have one EMT retiring in January and had one EMT leave to go to Valparaiso. Therefore, he now has one EMT opening and two Paramedic openings but he is able to cover the shifts with his part time staff.

**SCEDF/LOCHMANDY**

Lisa Dan, Director of the Starke County Economic Development Foundation and Abbi Lochmandy came before the Board of Commissioners to discuss Lochmandy Ford's expansion plans. Director Dan advised that Lochmandy has purchased land Southwest of Save a Lot on US 35 for their expansion/relocation. Abbi advised that in 2019 she bought the Ford store here in town and the Chevy store in Breman. They are looking to grow and build a new facility for their dealership. Abbi stated that a large amount of individuals do go outside of Starke County to purchase vehicles but Ford has a market share of new vehicles in Starke County of 19.1% which is about 12% in Indiana in general so the 19.1% is much higher here in Starke County. In addition to being number one for new vehicles, Starke County is number two in used vehicles. She presented information to the Board regarding where Starke County residents are going to purchase their vehicles. She advised one of the biggest challenges she has is the facility they are currently in.

Another potential they have in building this new facility are the vehicles they will be able to service. She plans to design a medium volume facility. It is about creating a destination for people to come purchase and have their vehicles serviced and a top of the line facility for Ford technicians to work in. Abbi advised she would also like to add an electric vehicle-charging network. She would like to include two 24-hours public charging stations. She would like to build a store that is able to service customers for 30 years, something between 17,000 square feet to 20,000 square feet. They are looking to expand their service department greatly from what they are dealing with now; going from a five bay star pattern to a 15 bays. Right now, they have 14 full time employees and would like to add another 10 full time employees when the facility is finished; mostly in the technicians and service department. She just wanted to share the news of expansion and to introduce herself. She also wanted to ask for any potential help the county might be able to give such as tax abatements. Director Dan is also looking into incentives for the Ford expansion as well.

**SHERIFF – BUILDING MAINTENANCE QUOTES**

Pam McDonald, Matron of the Starke County Sheriff's Department came before the Board of Commissioners to present some building maintenance quotes. She advised she had quoted out their camera system and door system but they did not give her what she needed so she does not have an updated quote. She does have an old quote and if they stayed with Stanley they are looking at over \$600,000 to replace all the cameras and doors mechanisms. The cameras are skipping and the door

systems are failing. Matron McDonald then presented information on the Nelson system, which is the servers for dispatch. The system they have now does meet the federal requirements and if they system goes down now it will take up to 6 months for Nelson to be able to repair the system. On the Nelson system, the total of the quote is \$39,887.55 to repair the system. She also presented a quote for the pit which is an area of the jail that separates the debris from going into the city sewer system. They currently have something that separates it but nothing that transfers it from one area to another. She is currently paying DS&S \$150 every three days to come and transfer it from one area to another. The auger itself would be a total of \$85,000 and she is still waiting on a quote to install the auger. Councilman Pearman advised that he would like the alternative to fix things as they break rather than replacing the whole system. He would also like to meet with the contracting agencies that worked with them on building the jail as they represented our best interests and he feels this stuff has not lasted long enough. He would like to hold the managing firm accountable who helped them build the jail.

## **SCILL CENTER**

Jim Hernandez, Starke County SCILL Director came before the Starke County Commissioners to request funding for the SCILL center. He stated he would like to install a security system at SCILL. They do not have the capability at this time to control who comes in and out of their building. He would like to install a system with a camera and a door that you buzz in individuals. He would also like to install a few egress doors. He presented two quotes for the alarm system and two quotes for the egress doors. If he takes the two lower quotes, it would be a total of \$18,052.76. He is requesting \$16,292.74 to be funded by the county. Commissioner Gourley made a motion to approve the request for \$16,292.74 for the installation of the security system. 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 \$263,906.87 including deductions in the amount of \$70,730.58 for pay period ending 12/10/2022 and payroll date of 12/16/2022. 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 \$1,334,927.49. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the minutes from November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Gourley made a motion to approve the minutes from December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to approve the courthouse key request from the security guards. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Commissioner Goulrey made a motion to approve the purposed agreement between Starke County Government and Porter Starke as presented by Probation Officer Abby White. Commissioner Cavender seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Commissioner Cavender made a motion to appoint John Murphy as the Director of Maintenance. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Dan Dipert, Superintendent of the Starke County Highway Department, came before the Starke County Commissioners to present his monthly report. He advised they are currently four drivers short but as of January 2, he has four drivers starting so they will be fully staffed. They are working on installing toolboxes on all of the trucks so that they will have no flying debris inside the trucks. He advised the Community Crossings grant will open on January 3<sup>rd</sup> and they are working on the paperwork to getting that submitted. They signed up with LTAP for drainage training for some time in March. He advised on 800 S the roadway has taken a beating the last month or two and they have been trying to keep up with that. They are also looking for a replacement truck for the one lost in the accident. It will be hard to find a 2019 truck to replace that one. He has found some older trucks but nothing as new as what they had.

Commissioner Gourley asked what the status of Knox City Court is. Attorney Schramm advised they have been working on the inter-local agreement. He said that they just finalized everything about an

hour prior to this morning’s meeting. He stated it would not kick in until January of 2024. He will be sending the agreement out the the Board of Commissioners today.

Larry Wickert came before the Board of Commissioners to ask for their support to provide a Jurisdictional Approval Letter for the Prairie Trails Club. They are seeking funding under the Indiana Trails Program and if the funding is approved, they will be extending the Erie Trail from Main Street in North Judson northwesterly toward English Lake. It is anticipated the trail will run northwest of the North Judson municipal boundaries and parallel to English Lake Road to or near Starke County Road 500 South. The Prairie Trails Club is seeking approval for Jurisdictional Approval. Commissioner Gourley made a motion to approve the request as presented. Commissioner Cavender seconded the approval 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 10:37 AM.

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2022**

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Charlie Chesak, President

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Mark Gourley, Vice-President

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Bryan Cavender, Member

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Rachel Oesterreich, Auditor and Secretary to  
the Board of Commissioners