

**STARKE COUNTY COUNCIL
MINUTES
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 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.

Councilwoman Gudeman made a motion to approve the minutes for January 16th, 2023. Councilman Bennett seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Councilman Leinbach made a motion to suspend the rules and pass the Ordinance Establishing Funds for the Receipt of Penalty Funds from the Starke County Board of Zoning Appeals. Councilman Bailey seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

SHERIFF – OPIOID REQUEST

Chief Deputy Jack Hudgens came before the Starke County Council to request the purchase of flock cameras. He advised that they are stationary cameras, Porter County has over 90 of them, Walkerton PD has 13 of them, and Pulaski County has 4 of them. He advised once activated they take pictures and it is tied into their database for if a vehicle is stolen or if the person has a warrant. You have the ability to search by the make and model of the vehicle or by license plate. They are asking for a total of 11 cameras. One will be mobile and 10 of them will be stationary. The amount requested will be \$59,500 this would cover a two-year period. Councilman Bennett made a motion to approve the request as presented with the funding coming from the opioid funds. Councilwoman Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

PROSECUTOR – SALARY INCREASE

Prosecutor Baker presented a proposal for an increase in salary for one of her employees.

Victim Advocate Salary

Current:

\$33,714.98 per year
Grant = \$26,971.98 (80%)
Match = \$6,743.00 (20%)

Proposed:

\$39,000.00 per year
Grant = \$31,200.00 (80%)
Match = \$7,800.00 (20%)

Match Difference:

\$1,057.00 per year
\$40.65 per pay period

Councilman Pearman advised that they usually do raises during budget workshop time and not throughout the calendar year. After reviewing the document Councilman Pearman asked were, they would be getting the match difference for this increase. Prosecutor Baker advised that they could move it from the Deputy Prosecutor position. As she has that set up right now there will be extra money in that line for the remainder of the year as this position has been filled right now in a part time capacity. It was discussed that this position is on a fiscal year so the increase in the grant and the county's portion will not happen until July of 2023. Councilman Pearman asked what the range is in other counties for a victims advocate position. Prosecutor Baker advised that it has been anywhere from \$35,000 to \$45,000. After further discussion Councilman Bailey made a motion to approve the request beginning July 1,

2023 and will be contingent of the grant. Councilman Bennett seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

PLANNING COMMISSION – SCANNING PROJECT

Mary Beaver, Planning Commission Administrator, came before the Starke County Council to request ARPA money for a scanning project in her department. She advised that it would be for one cabinet and is considered an indexing cabinet. It is a type of a card catalog like you would have at the library. This cabinet is her card catalog for permits that go through the Planning Commission. Mary described how the process works and Councilman Pearman asked if she looks up information on a card and then goes to a different system to pull the permit. She advised they have permits going back to 1955 to current. She advised they did not go on computer until 2012 and in 2015 they switched over to IWorks and IWorks is backed up here as well as in the cloud. Any new permits since 2015 it is much faster to punch in their information and it is 20 times faster. Anything prior to 2015 she relies on the indexing cabinet and if anything were to happen to the cabinet itself, she would lose all of that information because it is not backed up anywhere. After further discussion Councilman Pearman made a motion to approve the project at the cost of \$14,072.68 out of loss revenue ARPA. Councilman Leinbach seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

HIGHWAY – LOCAL ROAD SAFETY PLAN

Dan Dipert, Superintendent of Starke County Highway, came before the Starke County Council to discuss the Local Road Safety Plan and ARPA money. Superintendent Dipert advised that back in November he attended an LTAP presentation on Local Roads Safety Plans. In 2019 LTAP and INDOT got together and started a pilot program regarding the Local Road Safety Plan. He stated that if you have this plan in place there are grants out there available that will pay 90/10. One is a Federal Grant called SST4 and one is through Indiana that is called IHSP. These grants will help pay for a number of different projects. He advised Montgomery County is buying two new brush cutters with this grants and they are about \$150,000 apiece and only have to pay 10% of that purchase. Superintendent Dipert then reviewed different sections of the example Local Road Safety Plan from Boone County. He is planning on having a dollar amount at their next meeting of what it will cost to have this plan put together, he is figuring on around \$35,000 - \$45,000. Councilman Pearman asked Superintendent Dipert to get additional quotes on this plan. Superintendent Dipert advised he is already working on getting an additional quote. After further discussion Superintendent Dipert was asked to come back with quotes for further discussion.

SCEDF – CONTRACT

Lisa Dan, Director of the Starke County Economic Development Foundation, came before the Starke County Council to request approval in their purposed 2-year contract. Councilman Pearman advised that he spoke to Pam about several items being the hotel project, getting more business to come to Starke County which will bring in more jobs, and also that the Starke County Council, being the fiscal body would like to know where the money goes that the county gives the SCEDF. Councilman Pearman advised that this year at budget season he would like to dive deeper into structuring the SCEDF money for future years. Councilman Bennett stated that he believes it would be beneficial for everyone if they knew “what the vision is”. He would like to sit down and discuss what the council’s vision is and how they are going to get there. Director Dan stated that they could hammer questions like this out during their meetings with Dave, Kay, and Mark. Councilman Pearman stated that would be a good idea, coming up with a strategic plan. He stated that Starke County has a lot of strengths such as farming, recreation, and tourism and further discussion are needed with the SCEDF as far as how we can bring more industry into our county. Director Dan presented the updated contract to the Starke County Council with the two main changes being a two-year agreement and the amount of \$89,480 to be provided by the county each year.

Discussion was held regarding the two-year contract and whether or not they would want to change the wording in the contract to be the second year funding would be contingent upon the improvement of financial transparency as requested by the council. Councilwoman Hine made the motion to approve the wording in the contract to be the second year funding would be contingent upon the improvement of financial transparency as requested by the council. Councilman Leinbach seconded the motion. Attorney Schramm advised that having the contract written the way it reads now if the council were to not fund the second year it would be hard to say the county executive has approved this contract but we are not going to fund it the second year. Councilman Leinbach asked if they could change the wording within

the contract. Councilwoman Hine suggested this as well. Further discussion was held regarding what the wording should say within the contract itself about the funding and the requirements of the funding. Auditor Oesterreich advised them that they would need to have the specific wording they want in the contract by 9:30 AM Monday morning because that is when the Board of Commissioners are meeting to approve the contract that has been put in front of them tonight. Councilman Pearman advised they could approve the contract now as presented and if they are not happy, they can raise that concern at any time. They may be trying to create more now in too short of time period. Councilman Leinbach would like to make a motion to approve the contract as presented but would like to include that they would like include information about financial transparency. Councilwoman Hine suggested sending out an emails regarding the financials quarterly. Auditor Oesterreich verified that they only want to know about the financial transparency regarding the \$89,480 provided by the county. After further discussion Councilman Pearman made a motion to approve the Starke County Economic Development Foundation Contract as presented and will accept Director Dan offer to meet the terms of article number four. Councilman Leinbach seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

SCILL - CONTRACT

Jim Hernandez, Director of the SCILL Center, came before the Starke County Council for approval of their Contract. Director Hernandez advised that they have been working on starting a new CDL program. They have an instructor for this class but he is still working on the Air Brake portion of his instruction and they will be ready to go. Initially they will be starting with five people for the first CDL class. He advised they are also trying to put together an adult diesel mechanic class for adults after hours. After further discussion, Councilman Bennett made a motion to approve the Contract for Support of SCILL Center Training Programs. Councilman Bailey seconded the motion and the motion was approved all ayes.

OTHER BUSINESS

With no other business or public comment to come before the Starke County Council, Councilwoman Gudeman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:24 PM. Councilman Leinbach seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

FEBRUARY 17, 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