

STARKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
MONDAY, JULY 17, 2023

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 Don Binkley, 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.

RESOLUTION STELLAR PROJECTS – PUBLIC HEARING

Shawn Cain from KIRPC came before the Board of Commissioners for a Public Hearing for the Resolution approving Changes to the Stellar Projects. The public hearing was opened by Commissioner Vice-President Mark Gourley at 9:36 AM. Shawn explained they are taking comment on the following changes:

Bass Lake- Removal of the planned restroom building, bench area, and bike loop from the original approved scope/budget; and

Bass Lake – Removal of the roadway/approach reconstruction, sidewalks, and parking, and associated construction; and

Koontz Lake – Removal of the planned project in its entirety

After hearing no public comment Commissioner President Charlie Chesak closed the public hearing at 9:36 AM. Commissioner Gourley made a motion to approve the Resolution Approving Starke County Changes to Stellar Project. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

PLANNING COMMISSION – VACATION FOR MATKER/WOODLAND

Mary Beaver, Planning Commission Administrator, came before the Board of Commissioner to request a Vacation for Matker/Woodland. She advised there is a piece of property at the end of Locust Ave that sold as a whole and the deeds were very messy. Someone vacated the end of Woodland Ave without legally vacating it. The individuals have been paying taxes on the portion that they are requesting to be vacated. Bob Aloï advised showed the Board of Commissioners a graph of the parcel and what piece is actually being vacated. After further discussion Commissioner Gourley made a motion to approve the Partial Vacation of Woodland Avenue as described. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

HIGHWAY MONTHLY REPORT

Dan Dipert, Starke County Highway Superintendent, came before the Board of Commissioners to present his monthly report. He advised that they are currently fully staffed. The Community Crossing call-outs are open right now until July 28th, they can apply for about \$324,000. The current CCMG should start in August that is for chip sealing 43 miles with that money. He just had a meeting regarding the international trucks. They ordered two trucks last year and they are on a lease agreement. They have been paying on the lease and they should have gotten the trucks already but now they will not be delivered until the 1st quarter of next year. He advised the price for the trucks have also gone up by \$11,000. After further discussion it was decided that Attorney Schramm will review the contract to see if there is a clause in the contract about the increase in pricing. Superintendent Dipert advised that Bridge #7 is still under construction but it on schedule. The gravel roads are being graded as needed. They are currently chip sealing and have completed 5.5 miles of chip sealing. He has 3 drivers that have applied for a Class A Permit. Those drivers will have to sit in on some classes but Marshall County and White County do have someone who can train in CDL A Training. The ride time can be done in our county.

Superintendent Dipert advised that Mammoth has 27% of the panels delivered and 14% has been installed. All of the underground wire has been installed as well. He stated for the Next Era project the road construction of 11.4 miles have been completed. They laid down 6 inches of stone and rolled it and the sprayed it with calcium chloride. They then came back and rolled the roadways again as well as sprayed a second time with calcium chloride. Commissioner Chesak asked if Next Era will be grading the roadways as needed as the project continues. Superintendent Dipert stated yes Next Era is

responsible for grading the roads and also spraying the calcium chloride. Public Discussion was heard regarding the roadways and how broken down they are from the solar projects. Commissioner Chesak asked Superintendent Dipert to check into the area that the public comment is speaking of. Superintendent Dipert advised that Hoosier Solar is supposed to have a meeting this week, Thursday Evening at the Hamlet Fire Department.

EMS MONTHLY REPORT

Jim Garner, Starke County EMS Director came before the Board of Commissioners to give his monthly report. He provided the financial report to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Chesak advised they had received two checks from Jonathan O'Hara, one being \$620.95 and the second one being \$4,770.02. He advised that they have identified some issues they are having with Accumed and the billing practices and he is actively working to correct those issues. Director Garner gave his monthly operation report as follow:

Operations: Currently we are operating 3 out of 4 ambulances (see ambulance maintenance) at ALS level, when ALS Staffing permits. Minimum of 1 ALS staff member at all times scheduled at Medic 3, Knox base, 36% of June Staffing is 2 ALS staffed ambulances. 6% is fully staffed ALS ambulances 58 % is minimum staffing of 1 paramedic at Knox base, I am operating ALS Non-transport vehicle on a 24-hour basis as needed to supplement staffing. State EMS recert was completed, approved and once again posted in EMS office with new expiration date of July 01, 2025. Medicaid payment certificate was submitted as it was expiring on July 1, 2023 as well, current expiration date is also July 01,2025was. Have met with NW Starke with plans to resume transfers upon increase in staff.

Personnel: We have at this time no full-time openings for EMT's (12 on schedule) with 2 part time applications, 1 applicant received application, 3 current full-time paramedics as well as 5 paramedic full-time openings and 1 Full-time paramedic opening has been filled, 3 part-time Paramedics now on board, 1full time Paramedic in the final stage of hiring process. We have removed 1 EMR driver and replaced with another due to the fact he did not meet the qualifications.

Training: Currently We have implemented bi-monthly Tuesday evening trainings. The first was held 07/11/2023 at Bass lake Fire Dept and was Crime scene operations. Next which will be 07/25/2023 at Bass Lake Fire Dept is "Emilytalk" how to deal with autistic, downs syndrome patients. Still on track for every other Tuesday night trainings which are open to every county employee, Sherriff's and fire departments. Coming in August is a documentation class to be taught by Accumed (our billing company).

Safety: June 2023 to current as of this meeting we are injury free. Last injury reported was on 04/07/2023 who was medically cleared and released back to work 05/30/2023

Ambulance Maintenance:

3308-North Judson M1 (2021 Ford Gas Vin:1FXDE4FN2MDC16274 Current mileage: 94265) Awaiting brake parts on order. Brake service already approved

4230- Knox base M3 (2019 Ford Gas Vin: 1FDXE4FS8KDC09607 Current mileage: 80406) No known issues or no current repairs needed at this time

0514 Grovertown base M5 (2015 Ford Diesel Vin:1GB6G5CL5F1268834 Current mileage:198,034) Still awaiting on Wheel simulators that are on back order, No other issues know and repairs up to date.

*0085 (2013 Diesel Vin:1GB6G5CL4D1146446 Current mileage:194,205) Currently out of service. This unit was sent for evaluation for possible rear end issues. Estimate from Pit Stop \$5010.00 with findings of needing a transmission, glow plug control module. Was recommended to replace all 4 rear dual tires (estimate avail for review) Update, this unit is now out for second opinion and no estimate returned as of 07/14/2023

0084-M2 Back unit/ Medic 2 (2012 Chevy Diesel Vin:1GB6G5CLXC1117256 Current Mileage: 116176)

4149 (2013 Ford Explorer Vin:1FM5K8ARXOG844160 Current Mileage:123987) Explorer is currently in use and stocked as a functioning ALS non-transport vehicle as registered with state EMS and being used as an additional paramedic resource as needed.

Base Maintenance: At this time no known maintenance needed, looking for estimate for 2 outside outlets to be installed at Medic 3 Knox base for Spare ambulance to be plugged in.

Grants: Currently working on a Nipsco Rural grant for Ems training. Community foundation grant for assistance in purchase of equipment. No new development on the Indiana Senate bill 169 which establishes the rural community ambulance grant pilot program and fund. Also, have been in contact

with Indiana Dept of resources for possible donation of equipment. Searching for grants, donations have become part of a daily routine.

PPE: Current standing is good for all personnel protective equipment.

SHERIFF – VEHICLE REQUEST

Jack Rosa, Starke County Sheriff came before the Board of Commissioners to request to purchase two vehicles. Chief Deputy Jack Hudgens advised they would prefer the V6 Durango that are on the lot and ready to purchase at Bosak. Commissioner Chesak asked if they checked the dealership in LaPorte. Chief Deputy Hudgens advised that he did but their Durango’s are about \$45,000. Commissioner Binkley asked if they would still need to gets the additional equipment, such as the lights for the vehicles. Chief Deputy Hudgens advised they will be going through a grant to purchase the additional equipment. After further discussion Commissioner Binkley made a motion to purchase two 2023 Didge Durango Pursuit vehicles from Bosak in Merrillville for the amount of \$38,556.25 each to be paid from the Cumulative Capital Development Fund. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

PARK BOARD - APPOINTMENT

Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the appointment of Tom Busch to the Starke County Park Board. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

AUDITOR BUSINESS

Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the payroll claims in the amount of \$293,939.31 including deductions in the amount of \$78,719.30 for pay period ending 07/08/2023 and payroll date of 07/14/2023. 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 \$176,504.41. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

**OTHER BUSINESS
PUBLIC COMMENT**

An individual who lives at Boa Shores on East Drive came before the Board of Commissioners to discuss the delay in her BZA Concerns. She advised that she is wanting to build a pole barn on one of her properties but she needs to go in front of the BZA for a variance request. She was told there is not a secretary in the office who could handle this and she would have to wait until after September for the BZA to hear her request. Attorney Schramm advised the BZA is not now accepting new requests for variances because the Board does not have an acting secretary. Commissioner Gourley asked what about the nature of that position prevents the Board from taking action within itself. Attorney Schramm advised that he has spoken with the BZA Board regarding that they have a duty when something is submitted to have those hearings. If it comes down to it the Board of Commissioners may have to appoint someone in another office to serve in that position.

With there being no further public comments and no further business, Commissioner Gourley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. The meeting was adjourned at 10:38 AM.

MONDAY, JULY 17, 2023

Charles Chesak, President

Mark Gourley, Vice-President

Don Binkley, Member

Rachel Oesterreich, Auditor and Secretary to
the Board of Commissioners