

**STARKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2023**

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 Don Binkley, 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.

PURDUE EXTENSION – YEAR END REPORT

Julie Wickert from Starke County Purdue Extension came before the Board of Commissioners to present her year-end report. She provided the Board a copy of their year-end report which includes a program report of all of their programs they offered this year. She thanked the Board of Commissioners for all their support with the 4-H services. A copy of this report can be picked up in the Auditor's Office.

1ST SOURCE INSURANCE – HEALTH INSURANCE REVIEW

Debbie Rykovich and Holly Horan from 1st Source Insurance came before the Board of Commissioners to present the yearly health insurance review. Following up with the previous discussion at the Board of Commissioners November 1st Meeting, Debbie advised she stated that initially Anthem came back with a 24.74% increase (from 2023) total cost \$2,143,280.64. 1st Source Insurance went to market and they received a quote from United Healthcare 10.91% increase for a total of \$1,905,731.28 and then PHP came in at 2.39% increase at \$1,759,297.12. So, they went back to Anthem and Anthem lowered their quote to 5.00% increase at \$1,804,063.68. Debbie also advised that she went back to Anthem and they will not offer any new plans other than the plans presented with the 5% increase. Commissioner Gourley asked if this was because we were not switching as a new customer as we did last year. Debbie agreed and explained the process when you are new customers verses existing customers. After further discussion Commissioner Binkley made a motion to go with the 5.00% increase as provided by Anthem in the amount of \$1,804,063.68. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

EMS – STRUCTURE OF OPERATIONS/VEHICLE REQUEST

Jim Garner, Starke County Ems Director, came before the Board of Commissioner to formally request the purchase of a 2019 Chevy Tahoe from Chicago motors. The need for a second Chase/Directors car which after looking he has found this vehicle. It is a 2019 Chevy Tahoe with 69k miles for \$28,000, the funds available within my budget. He advised he would like to utilize the current ALS- Non-transport vehicle we have which it is approved for already. It is to maximize our response times for Paramedic's arrival on scenes for ALS calls. Over the last few months he has utilized this as an effective tool and have the crew's assistance in regards as to how to use this system. The current chase car will be housed at medic 3 base with a 24-hour fulltime paramedic with a part time paramedic on medic 3 (Knox Base). He feel this addition to our service will advance Starke County EmMS to the next level of quality care to our residents. A non-transporting EMS vehicle can help emergency organizations use their resources more efficiently, assessing an incident's severity (especially where there is reason to suspect the injury or illness is not serious) and either treating the patient at the scene and then releasing them or calling in additional help if required. This saves resources on several levels, as most non-transporting vehicles cost much less than full-size ambulances, and because they may be staffed by a single person (ambulances require a minimum of two crew members).

Director Garner advised with the needs growing for quality Advanced Life support and the current shortage within the EMS paramedic community this will give Starke County EMS a better response time, more coverage in limited areas, freeing up a paramedic during emergency transfers, the possibility reducing our current budget. Director Garner advised this would will greatly benefit the entire county due to multiple non-transporting vehicles may enable the EMS system to increase the number of units it has available to respond without the greater costs (money and personnel) associated with full-sized ambulances. Indiana currently has 4500 paramedics certified as only a little over 1600 are actively in the field over the entire state. Plans are to staff outlying bases (m1, m5 with basic Emts, M3 with paramedic and emt, transfer with driver and emt all upgradable by chase to paramedic). Commissioner Binkley asked if this additional vehicle would cause him to go over his budget in coming years. Director Garner

advised it would not, he has already looked into those figures. Commissioner Gourley asked if this will give him the ability to turn any call in the county into an ALS call at any point. Director Garner advised absolutely. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to purchase the 2019 Chevy Tahoe with 69k miles for \$28,000 from Chicago Motors. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

HIGHWAY – BRIDGE INSPECTION CONTRACTS/CAMERA PURCHASE

Dan Dipert, Starke County Highway Superintendent, came before the Board of Commissioners to discuss the Bridge Inspection Contracts and also the Camera System Purchase at the Highway Department. Superintendent Dipert presented the Board of Commissioners with the Bridge Inspection Contract which he stated is for 2024-2027 and it is with United Consulting. He advised this project would be an 80/20 project. Commissioner Gourley asked what program this is under and where the money will be coming from. Superintendent advised this is set up through INDOT they require that you do that and it will come out of Cumulative Bridge Fund. Commissioner Gourley asked about the dollar amounts. Superintendent Dipert advised that last year was about \$120,000. Commissioner Gourley asked how many bridges a year are completed. Superintendent Dipert advised that every bridge gets inspected every two years and there are 4 bridges that are inspected yearly. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the Bridge Contract as presented. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Superintendent Dipert advised the NOVA Grant is open for Bridge calls. Last year they put in for Bridge #13 but they did not get it. He would like to try again for this year. Bridge #13 is located on 600 E over the Robbins Ditch. Superintendent Dipert provided an estimate of the total project cost. He stated that this is also an 80/20 grant. It is an 80/20 grant and the total project cost is \$3,025,000. The county's share will be just a little over \$600,000. Superintendent Dipert went over the project costs and advised the Construction Inspection Costs would be \$309,600. Commissioner Binkley inquired about the Construction Inspection Costs and whether or not we could move forward with the States program in trying to get an engineer in the county. He advised he would like to look into that move before we move forward with the approval. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to table the discussion until Superintendent Dipert looks a little further into the possibilities of taking part of the state funding and partnering with another county for hiring an engineer.

Commissioner Binkley asked if Director Budd looked into the financing options. Commissioner Gourley asked if he had information on the financing options. Director Budd advised the financing option came out to be 20% of the contract price. Auditor Oesterreich asked what the annual contract amount. Both Commissioner Gourley and Commissioner Binkley advised Director Budd to return at their next meeting with financing options and a copy of the original quote as well as a plan for how to fund this purchase. Jean advised that the maintenance costs is \$5245.00. Director Budd advised he believes that is the 5-year costs. Commissioner Gourley asked if the \$5245.00 was the total costs spread across 5 years. Jean and Director Budd agreed.

SHERIFF - TIME KEEPING SYSTEM

Jack Rosa, Starke County Sheriff and April Wilhelm, Matron, came before the Board of Commissioners. Matron Wilhelm advised they are looking for a more efficient, compatible, and accountable time keeping system. The one that is currently in place, they have a lot of issues with. They spend a lot of time fixing clock in and clock outs. It is not compatible with the Audits system for payroll. It does not calculate leave times accurately. She said in the long run this will pay for itself. They are currently paying \$2700 for the program but they are spending multiple hours per week in corrections they have to do in the current system. The new program will also integrate with LOW. Matron Wilhelm presented the Board of Commissioners with the proposal from Right Stuff. After further discussion Commissioner Gourley asked if they had spoken to Director Budd because there is a section in the quote regarding onsite and offsite storage options with different pricing for both. Commissioner Binkley asked about the overtime call out feature. Matron Wilhelm advised they do not want that feature and explained why they did not want that feature. The Board of Commissioners asked Director Budd to look into the storage options. Further discussion will be held at their next meeting regarding this system.

CORONER/ARPA FUNDING REQUEST

April Wilhelm, Starke County Coroner, came before the Board of Commissioners to ask for ARPA money. She advised that in her Coroner's budget she is out of autopsy money. She explained that the

cost of autopsy's have gone from \$1800 from 2022 to \$3000 in 2023. She is asking the Board of Commissioners to fund the remained of the autopsies for 2023 out of the ARPA money. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to fund the remainder of autopsys for 2023 out of the ARPA fund. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

AUDITOR BUSINESS

Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the vendor claims docket for a total in the amount of \$636,788.79. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the payroll claims in the amount of \$283,420.28 including deductions in the amount of \$75,310.27 for pay period ending 10/14/2023 and payroll date of 10/20/2023. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the payroll claims in the amount of \$281,931.78 including deductions in the amount of \$74,927.03 for pay period ending 10/28/2023 and payroll date of 11/03/2023. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the minutes for October 16, 2023. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Gourley thanked the City of Knox for providing the Community Center on such a short notice for their last meeting. It worked out very well for the amount of attendance they had.

PUBLIC COMMENT

With there being no further public comments and no further business, Commissioner Binkley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. The meeting was adjourned at 6:02 PM.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2023

Charles Chesak, President

Mark Gourley, Vice-President

Don Binkley, Member

Rachel Oesterreich, Auditor and Secretary to
the Board of Commissioners