

**STARKE COUNTY COUNCIL  
MINUTES  
MONDAY, JANUARY 16, 2024**

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, Howard Bailey, Todd Leinbach, Norman (Bruce) Bennett, and Cassandra Hine, 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 from November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Councilwoman Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Councilman Leinbach made a motion to approve the minutes from December 18, 2023. Councilwoman Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

**REORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD**

Councilman Bennett made a motion to appoint Councilman Pearman as Council President for 2024. Councilwoman Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Councilwoman Gudeman made a motion to appoint Councilman Leinbach as the Vice-President of the Council for 2024. Councilman Bennett seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Councilman Bennett made a motion to appoint Councilman Pearman and Councilwoman Gudeman to the Economic Development Foundation Board. Councilman Leinbach seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Councilman Pearman made a motion to appoint Councilman Bennett to the SCILL Board. Councilwoman Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Councilwoman Gudeman made a motion to appoint Councilman Black to the KIRPC Board. Councilman Bennett seconded the motion. Councilman Bailey then made a motion to appoint Councilman Bennett to the KIRPC Board in place of Councilman Black. Councilman Black seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Councilman Bennett made a motion to appoint Councilman Bailey to the Planning Commission. Councilman Leinbach seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Councilman Black made a motion to appoint Gwen Rentz to the Alcohol Board. Councilman Pearman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Councilman Bailey made a motion to appoint Councilman Leinbach to the Starke County Solid Waste Board. Councilwoman Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Councilman Bailey made a motion to appoint Michelle Downs to the PTABOA Board. Councilman Leinbach seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Councilman Bennett made a motion to appoint Councilman Black to the Marshall-Starke Development Board. Councilman Bailey seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

**STARKE COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

Jacque Ryan, Director of the Starke County Community Foundation, came before the Starke County Council to discuss updates going on in the Foundation. She advised they are looking at establishing a committee to oversee some wellness funds that have already been established. They would like Council representation on this committee as well. They have an existing wellness fund that will strengthen and improve wellness throughout Starke County. This committee would oversee funds related to community health and wellness and right now as far as make-up of the board they are looking to have an active Starke County Position, Health Nurse, hospital representations, federally qualified health center like Healthlink, mental health and recovery, Commissioner, Council Member, Courts, and representation from the Northern Indiana Community Foundation. Director Ryan stated that they will keep them posted as far as how this committee develops. Further discussion was held regarding the Save the Hospital Fund and how that fund could be used to improve health and wellness within Starke County.

**EMS – PAY RAISE FOR TRAINERS**

Jim Garner, Starke County EMS Director, came before the Starke County Council to ask for a pay raise for the employees who will be trainers. He would like to give two employees, who will be the trainers, a 50 cent an hour raises and this is based off of a 48-hour week. He advised he does have the funding for this as well. Councilman Leinbach made a motion to increase the salary of the two trainers of one

paramedic and one EMT. Councilman Bennett seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Further discussion was held regards to EMS operations and revenue.

**SHERIFF – SALARY MODIFICATION/VEHICLE PURCHASE**

Jack Rosa, Starke County Sheriff and Nate Caudill Warden of the Starke County Sheriff’s Department and April Wilhelm, Matron of the Starke County Sheriff Department came before the Starke County Council to discuss a salary modification and vehicle purchase. Warden Caudill advised that about six months ago they had talked about flip flopping the numbers to enable a pay raise for the cook of the jail without asking for more money in the budget. They would like to take the least senior jail officer and trade that paid with the cook’s pay. Warden Caudill explained that they will make a position of Entry Level Jail Officer at \$17.99 an hour. Then the cook’s position will be at \$21.10 an hour. He explained that the cook’s position works 80 hours every two weeks. After further discussion Councilman Black made a motion to amend the 2024 salary ordinance which reflects a range in the cook’s position of \$37,088 to \$43,888. Councilman Leinbach seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Councilman Bennett made a motion to approve the purchase of two new used patrol cars for the Sheriff’s Department up to \$46,000 to be paid from Jail CEDIT. Councilman Pearman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

**SURVEYOR – TRANSFER REQUEST**

Tom Schouten, Starke County Surveyor, came before the Starke County Council for a transfer request. Councilman Pearman made a motion to approve the following transfer request: an additional appropriation to 1000.10301.000.0006 in the amount of \$100 with a reduction in appropriation in 1000.20400.000.0006 in the amount of \$100. Councilman Black seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Discussion was held regarding the possible creation of a new property tax exemption and also regarding the fair board. With their being no further discussion Councilwoman Gudeman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Bennett seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

**JANUARY 16, 2024  
STARKE COUNTY COUNCIL**

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Dave Pearman, President

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Kay Gudeman, Vice-President

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Todd Leinbach

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Norman (Bruce) Bennett

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Howard Bailey

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Anthony Black

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Cassandra Hine

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Rachel Oesterreich, Starke County Auditor  
Secretary to the Starke County Council