

**STARKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2024**

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 Don Binkley, Charles Chesak, and Mark Gourley, present and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order by Commissioner President Don Binkley directly at 5:00 PM.

PROSECUTOR – JOB DESCRIPTION APPROVAL

Leslie Baker, Starke County Prosecutor, came before the Board of Commissioners to request approval for a job description. Prosecutor Baker advised that she had sent the job description to Auditor Oesterreich earlier today. Auditor Oesterreich was not present at the Commissioners Meeting. After some discussion Commissioner Gourley made a motion to approve the job description pending receipt of the physical job description. After there being no second, the motion does not carry. Commissioner Chesak advised that he would rather see the physical job description paperwork in front of him prior to approval. Commissioner Binkley asked Prosecutor Baker to come back to their next meeting with the documents requested.

MAINTENANCE – ANNEX 2 QUOTES

Ricky Green, Starke County Maintenance Director, came before the Board of Commissioners to present Annex 2 Remodeling Engineering Quotes as follows:

CTG Associates \$4,750.00
SRKM Architecture \$7,100.00
Lancer Associates Architecture \$12,000.00
James F. Giannini & Associates \$22,775.00
T2 Design Architecture \$26,250.00

Commissioner Gourley made a motion to approve the quote received from SRKM Architecture in the amount of \$7,100 pending Attorney Schramm's review. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

EMS – MOU TRAUMA SERVICES

Sherrie Shivok from Life & Trauma Survivor Center and Jim Garner, Starke County EMS Director, came before the Board of Commissioners to discuss Trauma Services for EMS Employees. Director Garner explained that they have had a few incidents that have occurred in which his employees needed services. He advised that Mrs. Shivok has taken employees who would not talk to anymore and put them back to work the next day. Commissioner Binkley asked if Director Garner had this money in his budget to pay for these services. Director Garner stated that he did. Commissioner Chesak asked about the cost for the services. Mrs. Shivok advised it is a per hour cost, she will bill for every hour utilized. After further discussion Commissioner Gourley made a motion to approve the Counseling Services Agreement as presented with Life and Trauma Survivor Center. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

SHERIFF – GOLF CART ORDINANCE

Jack Rosa, Starke County Sheriff, came before the Board of Commissioners to further discuss the approval of the updated Golf Cart Ordinance. Commissioner Gourley made a motion to An Ordinance Regulating the Registration and Use of Golf Carts on Certain County Highways. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

PARKS DEPARTMENT – WEBSITE PURCHASE

Tracy Williams, Starke County Parks Superintendent, to discuss the use of the County Credit Card for the purchase of a website. Superintendent Williams stated she would like to buy a real website for the Parks Department. Discussion was held in regards to the current website the parks department has and

how a different website would be different. Commissioner Binkley advised Superintendent Williams to talk to Stanley about what she wants on the website and see if he is able to manage that and then come back to their next meeting and they will discuss it further and have a definite answer.

FAIR BOARD – CARNIVAL FUNDING REQUEST

Seth Johnson from the Starke County Fair Board came before the Board of Commissioners to discuss carnival pricing for the county fair this year. He advised they approached Baja Entertainment and Angela Temple could give them more information on that. Mrs. Temple advised that Baja Entertainment has been in business for 172 years and every year they purchase a new piece of equipment. They do regular maintenance on the equipment and they used to do the Mint Festival. They would like to come back to this area long term. Mr. Johnson advised they have looked at other carnivals but many of them request to only have their food vendors there. With Baja the fair board could keep the local food vendors as well. Mr. Johnson explained that the carnival is based off of a \$50,000 guarantee so it is based off of ticket sales. If we sold \$30,000 in ticket sales then we would only have to come up with \$20,000. He advised they would also like to contract with them for an additional five years. Mr. Johnson advised they would have representatives from Baja at the council meeting in the next two weeks. Commissioner Gourley suggested having them also at their next Board of Commissioners meeting with the contract for the next 5 years. After further discussion Mr. Johnson will be back at the next Board of Commissioners meeting with members from Baja and also a purposed contract for this year if monetary amount is being requested and also a purposed 5-year contract. Mr. Johnson advised that if the carnival sold over \$50,000 the fair board would receive 15% of sales after the \$50,000 amount. This discussion will be tabled until paperwork is presented at their next meeting.

SURF INTERNET

Gene founder of Surf Internet came before the Board of Commissioners to request support. He advised they have spent about \$1.8 million in Knox so far and they are working in North Judson now. He stated that Indiana has this Next Level Connection Grant that is about \$80 million and the State told them what addresses they could bid on January 10, 2024. Those bids are due this Friday. He stated that Starke County ranks #7 in Indiana which is good but if the first few approved counties uses up all the \$80 million then no more grant money will be issued. He thinks they have a good chance here in Starke County to get the grant money. They are suggesting 4,577 households being covered with fiber and the rest they will be able to cover with fixed wireless. This project will cost \$11.7 million. He advised with the money they will be putting in and the money they will receive from the state they are about \$500,000 short. He is looking for a conditional agreement for any bidder \$500,000 for support for services. If someone wins the bid great then the council can approve it and if the council does not want to approve it they can still cancel the contract. After further discussion Commissioner Gourley made a motion to have Attorney Schramm create a letter of support for Surf Broadband, Mercury Broadband, Rochester Telecom, Mainstream Fiber and NextLink Internet including a pledge of no more than \$500,000 of local match. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

AUDITOR BUSINESS

Commissioner Chesak made a motion to approve the vendor claims docket for a total in the amount of \$669,371.98. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Gourley made a motion to approve the payroll claims in the amount of \$335,231.53 including deductions in the amount of \$88,094.88 for pay period ending 01/20/2024 and payroll date of 01/26/2024. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes. Commissioner Chesak made a motion to approve the minutes for January 16th, 2024. Commissioner Gourley seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Gourley made a motion to approve the Agreement for Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Services with Porter-Starke as presented. Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Commissioner Gourley advised that he wanted to bring up that when the Department Heads go off to training and they take their whole office with them he wants ideas on how to try lessen these occurrences and possibly update the travel policy.

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 6:18 PM.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2024

Don Binkley, President

Charles Chesak, Vice-President

Mark Gourley, Member

Sara Dingman, Deputy Auditor