

STARKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

5-19-25

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Commissioners and meet in regular session in the meeting room of the Starke County Annex #1, Knox, IN at 9:30 AM, with Charles Chesak absent. Todd Leinbach was present via zoom as a councilman. The following proceedings were held to wit:

IN RE: EMS

Nancy Coad submitted the collections from Jonathon O'Hara in the amount of \$422.15 and receipts for the month in the amount of \$111,162.86.

Jim Garner submitted the EMS monthly report for April. See attached.

Jim talked about updating the Grovertown base. They talked about purchasing the Simon Speed Shop (the old Hamlet seed mill) in Hamlet on Short St. The current base needs about \$60,000 in repairs and Jim thinks they would be able to get a good deal on the building in Hamlet. He further stated that within 5 years they may have to remove the current building due to the Highway 30 project.

IN RE: STARKE COUNTY YOUTH CLUB

Mark Vendl came before the board at the request of the council to ask for funds as the council is wanting to donate to this. The club is requesting \$25,000. Don Binkley would like to start with \$10,000 this year and possibly up the amount next year. Don Binkley moved to approve \$10,000 pending council approval seconded by Mike VanDeMark with 2 ayes.

IN RE: HOPE RESTORED RECOVERY HOME COMMUNITY GARDEN

Jesse Keehn with Hope Restored Recovery Home came before the board to request \$5,000 out of Opioid funds in order to make a community garden with a pergola and benches where people can gather. It would be located across from the Hope Restored Recovery Home off of Lane St. and Sycamore, and he feels gardening helps with recovery. The entire Opioid Committee approved this unanimously.

Mike VanDeMark would like to see more information on this. Leslie Baker, Opioid Board Member, gave the commissioners more information and told them that the board was unanimous on approval. She suggested approving up to \$5,000. Don Binkley moved to approve out of the Opioid Restricted Funds seconded by Mike

VanDeMark with 2 ayes. This does not need to go before the Council as Opioid funds are under the Commissioners' purview. Leslie Baker stated that she would send the commissioners more information on this.

IN RE: HIGHWAY REPORT

Rachel Oesterreich submitted the monthly highway report (see attached). She needs fuel upgrade software in the amount of \$3,431 out of Cum. Cap. Don Binkley moved to approve seconded by Mike VanDeMark with 2 ayes. This does not need to go before the council as there are enough appropriated funds still in Cum. Cap.

Rachel also submitted her annual financial report due to the state by June 1st. The commissioners will schedule a special meeting in order to approve this.

Mike VanDeMark reported that Rachel did get the paving schedule for 2025 on our web site, but this does not include Mammoth as it is not finalized. Mike asked Rachel to add it when it is final.

IN RE: TOTAL RESPONSE DISPATCH SOFTWARE CONTRACT

Stacy Noonan with E-911 submitted 3 quotes for the Total Response Dispatch Software. She likes the quote from Caliber for \$57,799 as this is a one-time cost. She said that with APCO they have a lot of hidden costs. The annual fee for Caliber is \$7,904 for each of the 5 year contract. Justin Schramm, County Attorney, read the statute on if Jail Cedit funds can be used and he feels it is a legitimate expense. Don Binkley moved to approve the \$57,799 with Caliber pending Justin Schramm's ok. Motion died for lack of a second. Stacy reported that EMS & fire will be helping customize the software. The commissioners are tabling this until Justin can review the contract.

Todd Leinbach, Council President, asked Justin to make sure this doesn't need council approval as he is worried about the State Board of Accounts.

IN RE: MAMMOTH ROAD AGREEMENT AND GRANT

Chris Kline with Mammoth submitted the memorandum of understanding with the commissioners regarding the grant and the road repairs. Justin Schramm, County Attorney, prepared the memorandum and Mammoth's attorney made some additions.

Mike VanDeMark asked if the public had any comments, and Deb Wappel thanked them for sharing the grant.

Mike VanDeMark and Don Binkley have no problems with the memorandum. It was stated that the bond will be released after the culvert is repaired and the \$200,000 received.

Don Binkley moved to approve pending a clean copy being presented for signatures at the special meeting seconded by Mike VanDeMark with 2 ayes.

IN RE: TRU ROLL

The contract with Tru Roll was tabled until the special meeting as the commissioners and Justin would like to see what this is bringing in financially.

IN RE: VENDOR CLAIMS, PAYROLL CLAIMS AND 5-5-25 MEETING MINUTES

Don Binkley moved to approve the vendor claims, seconded by Mike VanDeMark with 2 ayes. Mike stated that the claims were excessive due to large highway projects.

Don Binkley moved to approve the payroll claims, seconded by Mike VanDeMark with 2 ayes.

Don Binkley moved to approve the 5-5-25 meeting minutes seconded by Mike VanDeMark with 2 ayes.

IN RE: PLANNING COMMISSION AND BZA APPOINTMENTS

Mike VanDeMark moved to table the appointments until all 3 commissioners are present seconded by Don Binkley with 2 ayes.

IN RE: NORTH WEST HEALTH LEASE AGREEMENT

Justin Schramm, County Attorney, stated that it is in North West's court at this time.

IN RE: CONGRESSIONAL SCHOOL FUND REPORT

The commissioners tabled signing the report until Justin Schramm, County Attorney, can look into this.

IN RE: KOONTZ LAKE EASEMENT RESEARCH AND SURVEYS

Don Binkley moved to approve the \$3,500 for the Koontz Lake and Bass Lake Easement research to be done on what areas would need to be surveyed.

Some taxpayers at Koontz Lake that want an easement vacated submitted some surveys to the commissioners during this portion of the meeting. Justin Schramm, County Attorney, informed them that they need a petition and then a public hearing. He informed them that the information to do this is in title 36 of the Indiana Code. They asked who they could contact and they were told to send the petition to the Auditor and she would submit it to Justin.

Back to the Scope of Services for the Koontz Lake and Bass Lake easements, it was reported that the easements need to be identified before they are surveyed and that is what the \$3,500 is for. Don Binkley reported that he tried to get additional quotes but no one else responded. Mike VanDeMark moved to approve Don Binkley's above motion regarding the \$3,500 with 2 ayes.

IN RE: WABASH VALLEY POWER

The commissioners would like to see the agreement before they decide as to whether the lost crops money should go through them or straight to the farmer.

IN RE: GOVERNMENT TEXT ALERTS

Victoria Chessor, EMA Director, came before the commissioners to report that she got the text alerts cost down from \$6,500 to \$4,500 with a one time \$500 installation fee. Don Binkley moved to approve seconded by Mike VanDeMark with 2 ayes. The commissioners requested that she bring this to the council tonight as they had questions on how it actually works.

IN RE: BASS LAKE SIREN CALIFORNIA TWP.

Victoria Chessor, EMA Director, reported that the Siren has been approved and they are getting the paperwork done. This is only California Twp. as one township can't expend funds for another township. If it doesn't reach North Bend Twp., they will have to have something done themselves.

IN RE: EMPLOYEE COMPUTERS

Don Binkley asked Mike VanDeMark if he spoke with Charlie Chesak about allowing Roberta Lee to access a county employee's computer. Mike said he had not been contacted. Supposedly Charlie told her it was ok. Roberta stated that she didn't ask to go through anyone's computer, she just wanted someone to find a specific email, which was done.

IN RE: EXECUTIVE SESSION

Don Binkley stated that there needs to be an executive session regarding personnel and requested that it be set up.

IN RE: WALKING TRAIL

Larry Wickert stated that the walking trail had some areas that needed to be repaired. The highway has some ground up asphalt that could be used. Rachel Oesterreich, Highway Superintendent, said they had enough to give them but that they would need commissioner approval. Larry stated that they would haul it themselves and they are a 501C group.

Don Binkley moved to donate enough for all repairs (approximately 3 highway truck loads) to be loaded by the highway and hauled by the trail committee. Motion died for lack of a second. Justin Schramm, County Attorney, would like paperwork on this before the commissioners decide.

IN RE: WARNING SIRENS

Cathy Laiter asked why are the townships required to pay for their own sirens? She stated that LaPorte County pays for all sirens.

In Starke County each township is responsible for their siren. Victoria Chessor told Cathy that there is criteria for that.

There being no other business to come before the board, Don Binkley moved to adjourn seconded by Mike VanDeMark with 2 ayes.

ABSENT
Charles Chesak, President

Mike VanDeMark, Vice President

Don Binkley, Member

Michaelene J. Houston, Auditor and Secretary
Secretary to the County Commissioners