

## **STARKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING 10-20-25**

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 all members present and the following proceedings were held to wit:

### **IN RE: IT DEPT**

Stanley Budd, IT Director, needs funding in the amount of \$6,000, to cover licensing for Microsoft. He recently learned that we don't have enough licenses. He was going to split the cost into two payments, this year and next, but found out it needed to be paid now. The licenses will last approximately 7 years or more. He'll be able to cover the remaining \$2,600 from his budget. He stated that all the county offices use these licenses. Don Binkley moved to approve the \$6,000 out of Cum. Cap. Dev. seconded by Mike VanDeMark with 3 ayes.

Stanley also informed the commissioners that the phone system needs renewed. He would like to go with a 5-year renewal, and at the end of the 5 years, we have to purchase a new phone system as this one will no longer be covered at an expense of approximately \$50,000 for the new system. If we go with a one-year renewal, the new system would have to be purchased in one year. The 5-year renewal will give us an extra 4 years and we are not having any problems with the current phone system. The payment is due at the end of November. Mike VanDeMark would like to see more information. Stanley stated that this was the cheapest. Donny Binkley would like to see more quotes. Mike VanDeMark moved to table until the next meeting seconded by Don Binkley with 3 ayes.

Stanley stated that it was brought up that IT take over all contracted software. Typically, he can administer most software. Mandy Thomason, Recorder, stated that her software company handles hers now. Stanley stated that he would not have authority to change companies. Mandy stated that she has a fund just for the purpose of paying for her software. Stanley is not looking to take this on in his budget, just the administration. Donny Binkley moved to table until the next meeting with a larger time slot and include department heads seconded by Mike VanDeMark with 3 ayes.

**IN RE: EMS MONTHLY REPORTS**

Nancy Coad reported receipts for September in the amount of \$91,234.40 and receipts from O’Hare collections in the amount of \$529.57.

Jim Garner submitted his monthly report (see attached).

Mike VanDeMark would like to see us move forward on another new ambulance.

Jim reported that the North Judson base had an internet issue and they are changing providers.

Jim stated that the Northern Indiana Community Foundations sponsors winter gear for EMS.

Buildings for use by the county for the Grovertown EMS base were discussed. Jim stated that he can’t get anyone to give an estimate to repair the current building.

**IN RE: REASSESSMENT BID APPROVAL**

Michelle Schouten, County Assessor, had received bids for the next 4 years for reassessment. She recommends Accurate Assessments. She explained her reasons (see attached spreadsheet). The big thing is that with Accurate Assessments, they are there full time and he has 2 part time people—one for data entry and one for field work—both from Starke County. She stated that having someone here full time helps us to meet state deadlines for assessed values, TIF and budgets.

Mike VanDeMark asked the Nexus representatives to come up and explain why they didn’t include all the specs. They explained the differences and feel that we only need one person twice a week. They have 20 other counties. If something comes up, the assessor can call. They have no additional fees other than the contract amount. If outside appraisals are needed, that is not covered in the contract. They have 25 years of experience.

Mike asked Vision to come up and asked about the add-ons not included in their bid. She stated that she worked for over 20 years with Indiana tax appeals.

Michelle stated that John, with Accurate Assessments, has had 22 years of experience in our county alone. Michelle further explained that all his resources would be lost if they choose to go with another company.

Mike VanDeMark moved to approve Nexus' 4-year contract seconded by Donny Binkley with 3 ayes.

#### **IN RE: KOCH LEASE AT HAMLET INDUSTRIAL PARK**

Donny Binkley moved to table the lease agreement until we can get an answer regarding the parcel numbers involved seconded by Mike VanDeMark with 3 ayes.

#### **IN RE: TREASURER BANK RECONCILIATION**

Kelly Graham, Treasurer, submitted a report regarding the bank reconciliation (see attached). She is meeting with the council tonight. She stated that there would be a cost of an approximate \$80,000 more with Crowe. She checked with Low and they are going to submit an estimate. Kelly stated that she has to keep pushing Crowe to get answers. She doesn't feel she could do the reconciliation herself as she wouldn't know where to start to fix the previous treasurer's data. Donny Binkley feels we should drop Crowe. Kelly further stated that Crowe charges us for every team meeting. Donny said that the two previous treasurer's both offered to help. Kelly said they would not be able to be bonded.

Justin Schramm asked Carrie Block about the previous treasurer's bond. Carrie stated that Laurie couldn't be bonded and had to have a crime policy that won't cover gross negligence. Carrie will check with Bliss McKnight to verify her statement.

Mike VanDeMark suggested hiring a responsible part time person to help with this.

Mike VanDeMark moved to table until the next meeting seconded by Donny Binkley with 3 ayes.

#### **IN RE: HIGHWAY DEPT.**

Rachel Kinney, Highway Superintendent, reported that she has no update on the road at the Hamlet Industrial Park.

She also reported on the 2026-1 CCMG grant (see attached).

Mike VanDeMark stated the complaints with Toto Road east of Highway 35. Rachel stated that over the years, she is wanting to reconstruct Toto Road. Mike VanDeMark wants to make sure she works with the County Surveyor regarding ditches and survey markers.

Rachel stated that the \$40,000 for United Consulting is not part of the grant. Rachel would like the commissioners to call the council stating their support for this project.

Donny Binkley would like to look into hiring a part time engineer.

Rachel requested paying this from her CEDIT roads and bridges. Mike VanDeMark moved to approve subject to council approval seconded by Donny Binkley with 3 ayes.

Donny asked what she plans to do regarding her brush chopper that is currently down. She needs something for next year. She is unable to rework the ones she has.

Mike would like to see us get a 3<sup>rd</sup> Kubota.

Rachel reported that the dump just got mowed for the second time this year.

#### **IN RE: JAIL REQUEST FOR RESTRICTED OPIOID FUNDING**

Nathan Caudill requested funding out of the restricted opioid fund for jail treatment. The state used to do this but has stopped funding. They have someone at the jail 40 hours a week. They would need \$76,000 to fund this. He stated that the Opioid board all approved this out of the restricted fund. Donny Binkley moved to approve subject to council approval seconded by Mike VanDeMark with 3 ayes.

#### **IN RE: JAIL TRANSPORT VAN**

Nathan reported that the council requested another quote for the van and could not get a precise quote from the government site-Source Well. He did get a quote from Dobson's in Winamac. He said he is going back to the council tonight. It will be a 2026 model.

## **IN RE: HAMLET WATER TOWER ANNEXATION**

Dave Kasvormus was a no show.

## **IN RE: ELECTION EQUIPMENT UPGRADE CONTRACT**

Bernadette Manual, County Clerk, requested that the Micro vote contract needs their signature which they approved doing at the last meeting. She stated that the payment plan is in place. Mike VanDeMark moved to sign and include the email received with the contract seconded by Donny Binkley with 3 ayes. The contract is for 4 years at an amount of \$157,235.96 with a yearly payment of \$39,500. The contract will go from 12-31-25 through 1-31-28.

## **IN RE: PARK BOARD**

Tom Bush, Park Board member, stated that the board decided to take a step back and have Amie Flora, Park Board Director, contact all licensed electricians in Starke County for quotes.

## **IN RE: TRUCK FOR COUNTY MAINTENANCE**

Rick Green, Maintenance, reported that single cab trucks are hard to get, but Jim Garner found one. Mike asked if he got a quote from Source Well. Don Binkley moved to table because they want him to check more places seconded by Mike VanDeMark with 3 ayes.

## **IN RE: FIRE ALARM SYSTEM, ELEVATOR AT ANNEX 1 AND KEYS FOR EMPLOYEES**

Rick reported that the fire alarm was checked and that there needs to be repairs on the water.

He also reported that the elevator is down.

He had two requests for keys at Annex 2. One for the Probation Administration assistant who is not a county employee, but would like a key for her office. It was found out that this key opens all the doors and the commissioners only want her to have a key for her office. Rick will work on that.

Mike VanDeMark moved to approve the key for the new court case manager, Tanya Hutch, seconded by Donny Binkley with 3 ayes.

**IN RE: PAYROLL CLAIMS, VENDOR CLAIMS AND 10-6-25 MINUTES**

Mike VanDeMark moved to approve the Vendor claims seconded by Don Binkley with 3 ayes.

Mike VanDeMark moved to approve the payroll claims seconded by Don Binkley with 3 ayes.

Don Binkley moved to approve the 10-6-25 minutes seconded by Mike VanDeMark with 3 ayes.

**IN RE: SIREN IN CALIFORNIA TOWNSHIP**

Jim Garner reported that the siren is working in California Township, but one is still needed for North Bend Township.

**IN RE: DIESEL ENGINE JACK FOR THE SCILL CENTER**

Kelly Shepherd stated that he received \$4,999 from the CTE cooperative but they still need \$4,501 more. He reported that they have over 70 kids in the program, over 50 of which are from Starke County. CTE had a ceiling of \$4,999 and could not give any more. Don Binkley moved to approve \$4,501 out of CEDIT pending council approval seconded by Mike VanDeMark with 3 ayes.

There being no further business to come before the board, Don Binkley moved to adjourn seconded by Mike VanDeMark with 3 ayes.



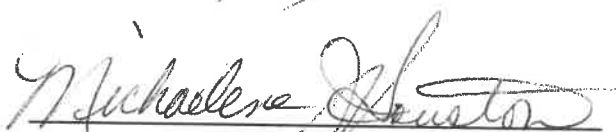
Charles Chesak, President



Mike VanDeMark, Vice President



Don Binkley, Member



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

# Starke County EMS Monthly Report

## October 2025 for September 2025

**Operations:** Currently we are operating our normal 4 out of 6 ambulances at certain intervals 4 (3+ 1 transfer truck) at ALS level, when ALS Staffing permits as well. Minimum of 1 ALS staff member at all times scheduled at Medic 3, Knox base, 87% of August staffing is minimum 2 ALS staffed ambulances. Increase of 10% from last months coverage of 77%, ALS ambulances 100% is minimum staffing of 1 paramedic at Knox base, I am continuing to operate ALS Non-transport vehicle on a 24-hour basis as needed to supplement staffing.

**\*\*Transfers:** 99 total transfers out of 313 calls since last report which is increased due to the increase of Emergency calls. Transfers are currently 32% of our call volume. Which is a increase of 18%

**Personnel:** We have at this time no full-time openings for EMT's or Paramedics with no new part time employees hired, Daily request for applications

**Training:** Now has been reworked into a weekly schedule with the field training officer with skills testing and going very well! The ACR class was impressive with great response and participation.

**Safety:** Last incident 07/23/2025 no reported injuries

### Ambulance Maintenance:

3308-North Judson M1 (2021 Ford Gas Vin:1FXDE4FN2MDC16274 Current mileage: 164578) In service

4725- Grovertown base Medic 5 (2014 F450 Gas Vin: 1FDXE4FS8EDA90672 Current- At North Judson base Current mileage 160144 In service

4926- Knox Base M3 (2024 F350 Gas Vin: 1FDXE4FN1RDD21556 Current Mileage: 37766 In service

0514 Knox Base (2015 Ford Diesel Vin:1GB6G5CL5F1268834 Current mileage:230439 In service

0085 Transfer truck Knox Base M2 (2024 Ford Gas Vin:1FDBR2XG7RKA58259 Current mileage: 20691 In service

New 0084 - (2008 Ford E 450 Vin # 1FXDE45P38DA95523) Current mileage 80996 awaiting shop for possible blown head gasket and radiator for estimate

4149 **Medic 41** Knox base Paramedic chase (2015 Ford Explorer VIN :1FM5K8ARXFGB91482) **Current Mileage:85048** in service

4747 **EMS 1** (2019 Chevrolet Tahoe Vin:1GNSKDEC2KR240900 **Current mileage 94587**) in service will need tires before winter ( on order)

**Base Maintenance:**

\*\*\*\*Medic 1 north judson No known issues

\*\*\*\*Medic 3 garage doors are finished

\*\*\*\*Medic 5 grovertown- **Still** awaiting recommendations.

\*\*\*\* **Update bids**

**Equipment update-**

New Ambulance will be delivered January 2026

Remount Ambulance has been moved from July 2026 to February 2026 due to a opening in their schedule

Lifepak monitors purchase are awaiting council meeting

**Grants/ Funding requests:**

SIA Grant applied for \$15,000.00 for training equipment no results given until end of October.

IDHS MIH ( Mobile Intergrated Health) grant applied for. \$50,000 to help with cost of equipment.

Northern Indiana Community Foundation-\$50,000 for MIH vehicle, equipment and supplies. Update: Decision will be made late December early January 2026

Fall grants are coming available daily.

**Donations:** No new donations acquired

T-shirts are currently available for public purchase

**PPE:** In good standing currently looking into winter protective gear.

**Any Questions?**





Vendor Name	Bid Amount	Additional Charges	Permits Total Count (New Const & Demos)	Overage Rate	Appeals Support	Overage Rate	Appear at Appeals Hearings	Overage Rate	Followed Specs	Project Manager Level III?	# of Counties Manager to Handle	How Often Manager in County
Accurate Assessments Inc	\$ 742,400		\$0 1,000 per year	\$ 0 per	40 days	\$0 per day	5 days	\$0 per day	Yes	John Viveiros YES	1 just ours	Full time
Vision Government Solutions	625,985 +14,000 +32,000 +? Other overages= 671,985 at least	at least \$14,000 for appeal hearings, possibly \$32,000 or more for permits, or more if parcel count changes	400 per year in 2024 had 690, 130 were no insp req so 560 160x\$50X4yrs= \$32,000	Res, Ag & Exempt \$50 per Commercial \$75 per Indust & Utility \$100 per	40 days	\$700 per day	0 days	\$700 per day for at least 5 days annually = \$3,500 for 4 years = \$14,000 at least	Yes	Shane Thornsberry YES	7 incl ours	4 days a month. Otherwise available by email or phone.
Nexus Group	\$ 600,000		TBD Per year	\$ 0 per	TBD	\$ 0 per day	TBD	\$0 per day	NO No contract included	Michael Ryan YES	At least 3 incl ours	Once a week on average.
MAK Valuation Consultants, LLC	\$ 760,000	Cost of county hiring someone for data entry	TBD Per year	Res, Ag & Exempt \$50 per Comm, Indust & Utility \$100 per	15 days	\$500 per day	5 days	\$500 per day	NO No data entry	Robin J Davidson YES	Unknown currently none in Indiana	?

MAK Valuation Consultants LLC doesn't do data entry  
Nexus Group did not include the State Model Contract for us to use for comparison purposes.

Kelly Graham

**From:** Berry, Tim <Tim.Berry@crowe.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 17, 2025 9:58 AM  
**To:** Kelly Graham  
**Subject:** RE: Recon

We already have accumulated expenses of \$20,420.20 as shown in the spreadsheet. Moving forward for months starting with July 2023 the months of April/May and October/November would have an average not to exceed of \$5000/month all other months would be an average not to exceed of \$3,200/month. Pricing is dependent upon the county's ability to timely respond to requests for data and information as requested, and assumes all work will be completed remotely. Let me know if you have any questions.

**From:** Berry, Tim  
**Sent:** Monday, October 6, 2025 9:04 AM  
**To:** 'Kelly Graham' <kgraham@starke.in.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Recon

Kelly – See attached the overview of costs and timeline associated with the work we have completed to date:

While I travelled to Knox on April 25 to obtain all records to begin our work, delays in getting access and actually downloading all data to begin the reconciliation process took over 12.5 hours and was not finalized until July 9<sup>th</sup>. This accounted for expenses of \$2941.45. We started reconciling May of 2023 on 7/10 but midway through realized that the April 2023 bank reconciliation was not correct and that we needed to go back to make corrections to what should have been included in April's statement. May is expected to be the most difficult and time consuming month to reconcile and inconsistencies in how transactions were handled has made this much more difficult. This took from July 10 to August 4 and was discussed in our bi-weekly calls on July 14 & 28 and again in our call August 11. We moved on to June's reconciliation August 6 and were more efficient utilizing 17.75 hours or \$3,993.75. July was started August 23 until we stopped work on September 11.

Obtaining Data	4/7 – 7/9	12.5 hours	\$2941.51
May 2023	7/10 – 8/4	49.5 hours	\$10,635.00
June 2023	8/6 – 8/19	17.75 hours	\$3,993.75
July 2023	8/23 – 9/11	9.5 hours	\$2,850.00

Throughout this process we have held calls every other week starting July 14 to provide updates on our progress as well as ask questions and inform you of delays in getting responses to questions regarding payroll how payroll transactions were handled. In our original proposal we provided an estimate that each month would take between 4-8 hours to complete. With the exception of tax collection months, I believe we can complete those in 10 hours or less, but would expect to realize more time for the months of April/May and October/November. This is largely due to the inconsistencies in how banking transactions were handled in prior years. We look forward to working with you to complete the process, and are open to options that might include shared reconciliation processes with you. We would enjoy to opportunity to discuss further.

Thanks -

**From:** Kelly Graham <kgraham@starke.in.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 1, 2025 3:45 PM  
**To:** Adam, Mark <Mark.Adam@crowe.com>; Berry, Tim <Tim.Berry@crowe.com>; Lehner, Kara <Kara.Lehner@crowe.com>  
**Subject:** Recon

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of Crowe. Do not click links, open attachments or forward unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Afternoon,

I'm just checking in to see if you have my total and estimate ready yet. I would really like to look over it before the commissioners meeting on Monday, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Please let me know the progress.

Thank you,

Kelly Graham

Starke County Treasurer

53 E Mound St

Knox, In 46534

574-772-9111

Email: [kgraham@starke.in.com](mailto:kgraham@starke.in.com)

Bill/Payment website: <http://lowtaxinfo.com/>

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LAND SURVEYING

LAND ACQUISITION

PLANNING

WATER &  
WASTEWATER

SINCE 1965

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B. Keith Bryant, PE  
Michael A. Rowe, PE  
Jon E. Clodfelter, PE  
Paul D. Glotzbach, PE  
Jay N. Ridens, PE  
Jeromy A. Richardson, PE

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Devin L. Stettler, AICP  
Michael S. Oliphant, AICP  
Timothy J. Coomes, PLS  
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Gretchen A. Meyer, PE  
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Kyle D. Kent, PE  
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Mitchell D. Lankford, PE  
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Tony Fadoul, PE  
Scott M. Siple, PE  
Davy O. Hemmings, PE

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(317) 895-2585  
IN 46250  
8440 Allison Pointe Blvd., Suite 200, Indianapolis, IN

October 13, 2025

Rachel Kinney  
Highway Superintendent  
Starke County Highway Department  
3835 E 250 N  
Knox, IN 46534

RE: On-Call Engineering Services  
Starke County, Indiana  
Task Assignment No. 10  
2026-1 CCMG Assistance and Bidding Services

Dear Ms. Kinney:

We are pleased to present our Task Order No. 10, for the referenced project, prepared in accordance with the provisions of our On-Call Professional Services Agreement dated September 6, 2022. This Task Order has been prepared based on the email request received October 8, 2025.

Please execute Task Order No. 10 and return a digital copy of the signed Task Order to our office. We will begin work upon receipt of an executed PDF of Task Order No. 10.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact me any time. My cell phone number is (317) 339-7117.

Sincerely,  
UNITED CONSULTING *Sec*

*Jeromy A. Richardson*  
Jeromy A. Richardson, PE  
Road Department Manager

enclosures

c: File 22-221-10  
Terry Minix, UNITED Business Development

## ***TASK ORDER NO. 10***

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*A. Services by UNITED:*

The assignment includes engineering services to aid with the CLIENT's application for the 2026-1 Community Crossings Matching Grant (CCMG) and to provide design services to implement the awarded funding. The scope of work shall include the following items:

1. CCMG Application Assistance
  - a. UNITED shall prepare construction cost estimates for Toto Road from SR 23 to CR 1150E, utilizing maps and other remote methods to confirm the extent of rehabilitation work anticipated. UNITED will assist with reviewing other application materials, as required.
2. CCMG Design and Plans
  - a. Contract Documents. UNITED shall prepare Contract Documents for the Project including Description of the Project, General Conditions, Special Provisions, Standard Drawings, Bidding Forms, Detailed Quantities, and a Construction Cost Estimate.
  - b. Bidding Services. UNITED shall prepare a Notice to Bidders, advertise the project, provide copies of the Contract Documents to potential bidders, answer questions from potential bidders, review bids received, and provide the CLIENT with a recommendation of award.
  - c. Post-bid Services. UNITED shall attend a Pre-Construction Meeting, respond to Requests for Information (RFI's), and review shop drawings and submittals from the contractor, as required.

**TASK ORDER NO. 10**

*B. Services by CLIENT:*

The CLIENT shall furnish UNITED with the following:

1. Guarantee access to enter upon public and private lands as required for UNITED to perform work under this Task Order.
2. Specifications and standard drawings applicable to the project.
3. Coordinate Right-of-Entry for construction, if required.
4. Coordination with any Utilities in conflict with the project.

*C. Schedule:*

All work by UNITED under this Task Order shall be completed and delivered to the CLIENT for review and approval within the following approximate time periods.

1. UNITED shall provide CCMG Application services in time to allow the CLIENT to submit for the 2026-1 Call for Projects.
2. UNITED shall provide Contract Documents and Bidding Services in time to allow the CLIENT to meet CCMG deadlines for project award.

*D. Compensation:*

1. UNITED shall receive as payment for the work performed under this Task Order on a lump sum basis in accordance with the following schedule:
  - a. CCMG Application Assistance .....\$7,500.00
  - b. CCMG Design and Plans ..... \$32,500.00

[signature page follows]



**TASK ORDER NO. 10**

AGREED TO:

UNITED  
*UNITED CONSULTING*

CLIENT  
*STARKE COUNTY*

BY: Michael Rowe  
Michael A. Rowe, PE  
President

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

BY: Jeromy A. Richardson  
Jeromy A. Richardson, PE  
Vice President

Date: October 15, 2025

Date: \_\_\_\_\_