

# ATTN: THIS IS A DRAFT--NOT YET APPROVED BY THE COMMISSIONERS

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2015**

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in regular session at 6:00PM in the Annex Meeting Room, Knox, Indiana, with Kent Danford and Donald Binkley present and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner President Kent Danford. Commissioner Kathy Norem was absent.

## **RE: CADA PROCLAMATION**

Annette Ohman of CADA, the Coalition Against Domestic Abuse, appeared before the Board with a proclamation naming the month of October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Ms. Ohman read the proclamation to the Board. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the proclamation, seconded by Commissioner Danford. The motion passed with all ayes; the proclamation was signed by the Board. Ms. Ohman advised Starke County recently had a domestic violence murder occur in the County.

## **RE: EMS DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT**

EMS Director Keith Emigh, along with EMS Clerk MaryLynn Richie, appeared before the Board to present their monthly departmental report. Clerk Richie advised a total of 177 billed runs were conducted in the month of September, and the YTD revenue has increased by \$67,000.00 over the same time period in 2014. She advised a total of \$178.00 was collected by Small Claims Court and \$846.53 was collected by Collections Attorney Jonathan O'Hara. Director Emigh advised in regard to their Operations Procedure: As of October 1<sup>st</sup> the whole health care industry transitioned from ICD 9 codes to ICD 10 codes for diagnosis and inpatient procedures. Clerk Richie has received several training sessions on the billing changes due to the new procedure and has been working along with the IT Department to update the EMS Software and begin the new codes in the runs billed beginning on October 1<sup>st</sup>. Director Emigh advised the new Departmental SOP's are completed and are being reviewed before presenting to the Staff. He noted he felt it was imperative to compile an undated SOP for the Department due to the number of new employees who aren't familiar with all the policies of the Department.

Personnel: Director Emigh advised he just recently lost another one of his full time paramedics and so he has interviewed 8 applicants to fill that position. He hopes to have the position filled before the end of the first week in October. He noted it is an ongoing process in order to have ALS employees working all bases 24/7.

Education: The Director advised they had offered three trainings to their Staff and any other interested parties and they were: 1. Training on airways and RSI drugs and their usage. 2. Training pertaining to crime scenes and possible child abuse. 3. Training with MedFlight and IDHS mobile simulation lab which allows for training in real life scenarios using a mannequin. Director Emigh noted he has also met with the new State District 2 Coordinator, Ted Bombagetti, in regard to conducting a MCI table top training event. He advised the training will involve key first responders in the county and some from outside of the county.

Rig Maintenance: Director Emigh advised they experienced several mechanical issues with Medic 5, Rig 0086 throughout the month of September which cost a total of \$1,764.10 in parts and labor. He noted Medic 3 and Medic 2 also had some minor repairs which cost an additional \$165.00 in parts and labor for a total repair expense of \$1,929.10 in September alone. He also advised since the diesel fuel pumps are down at the Highway Garage the EMS rigs are now required to purchase their fuel at the BP Stations at an additional cost to the Department as they are paying \$2.699 per gallon of diesel. He also advised he is looking into getting price quotes for the purchase of a replacement ambulance for Medic 5. Freddie Baker, the President of the County Council, was in attendance for the meeting, and advised Auditor Chaffins to put the issue of the purchase of a new ambulance on the agenda for their next County Council meeting. Director Emigh advised he will have the three quotes ready for that meeting.

Director Emigh then requested to know the status of his earlier request for the Board of Commissioners to recommend to the County Council an increase in the Director's pay for the 2016 Budget Year. Following a brief discussion, and advise from the Auditor Chaffins that the final 2016 budget will be adopted at the County Council's October 19<sup>th</sup> meeting, Commissioner Binkley made a motion to allow a \$4,000.00 increase in the EMS Director's pay (currently now

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at \$41,000.00 and the Director had requested an increase to \$50,000.00). Commissioner Danford seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. The Board will recommend to the County Council to increase the Director's Pay to \$45,000.00 in their Department's 2016 budget.

## **RE: COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Since County Highway Superintendent Rik Ritzler was on vacation, Office Manager Rachel Oesterreich presented the departmental monthly report. She advised the department is completing their summer operations and are preparing for the winter operations. She also advised they will be holding several winter safety trainings throughout the month of October. She noted the diesel fuel pump system is down and they have contact 18 different vendors looking for a replacement part, involving the power switch. She advised since the system is obsolete no one has the replacement part and now they will be asking for the additional appropriation in which to purchase a completely new updated fuel system. Attorney Lucas inquired if they contacted the IT Director to look into the situation as they may have more suppliers to provide a power switch. Rachel advised she would contact the IT Department. Rachel advised the Highway Department is able to access diesel fuel from a different pump but it would not be available for other departmental usage since there was no way to track their amount of fuel.

In regard to the creation of new positions in their proposed 2016 budget she inquired, since the Superintendent was on vacation, if the issue could be tabled until the next Commissioner meeting. Auditor Chaffins advised the budget adoption will take place at the County Council's October 19<sup>th</sup> meeting and this was the last regularly scheduled meeting of this Board. There was a brief discussion of the Board in regard to the creation of so many levels of management within the Highway Department when there is already a Foreman position and the creation of Bridge Program Director which would be an addition to the salary of the Superintendent. Councilman Baker noted he had been receiving feedback from the public in regard to the Council agreeing to the substantial raise for the County Superintendent and he stated he felt the original increase in the highway department's budget for the position of Superintendent from \$42,500.00 to \$50,000.00 was enough of a raise for the Superintendent. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to deny the request to establish any new positions in the Highway Department including those of crew leader, senior crew leader and the Bridge Program Manager position as proposed in the Cumulative Bridge Fund. Commissioner Danford seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes.

Auditor Chaffins inquired as to the status of the Superintendent's proposal to purchase a new loader for the department. Office Manager Oesterreich inquired if the Board received a copy of the purchase contract. Attorney Lucas noted he has not seen the Superintendent present three price quotes on this purchase, as is required for any purchase \$50,000.00 to \$150,000.00 in price.

Office Manager Oesterreich presented the request for additional appropriations they will be presenting to the County Council and then on to the DLGF for official State approval. She requested the Board make a favorable recommendation to the Council on this request. The request for additional appropriations was for the amount of \$32,292.98 and the corresponding listing of additional revenues received by the Highway Department was provided which included such items as revenue from the county auction, utility permits, shop labor, the sale of scrap, Election Board paving, and insurance reimbursements. The purpose of the request for the additional appropriations is to purchase a new fuel system, new garage door, security upgrades, and Breakroom and Kitchen upgrades. Commissioner Danford made a motion to approve the request for the additional appropriations. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes.

## **RE: STARKE COUNTY COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS LEASE RENEWAL**

SCCC Director, Robert Hinojosa, appeared before the Board to request renewal of their lease with Kurtis & Christos LLC, for their office space at 1909 S. Heaton St. in Knox. He advised the lease agreement allows for a 60 day escape clause which is a good thing with their possible move into the renovated Old County Jail Building sometime in 2016. Director Hinojosa also noted there would not be an increase in the cost of the rental expense and the SCCC has the funds for their lease expense. Attorney Lucas advised it was a well written lease and

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recommends it to the Board for their approval. Commissioner Danford made a motion to approve the lease agreement for the SCCC, seconded by Commissioner Binkley. The motion passed with all ayes.

## **RE: AUDITOR'S BUSINESS: MINUTES, PAYROLL CLAIM, VENDOR CLAIMS**

Commissioner Danford advised the draft of the minutes of the September 21, September 23, and October 1<sup>st</sup> meetings will need to be tabled for now until Commissioner Norem is present. Commissioner Danford advised there was a letter to the Health Insurance Company, Anthem, which requested information of the history of the insurance claims for this year's coverage. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the signing of the insurance letter. Commissioner Danford seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. The letter was signed by Commissioner Danford. The proposed 2016 Holiday Calendar was tabled until their next meeting. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the payroll claims docket for the pay period ending on September 26<sup>th</sup> with a pay date of October 2, 2015 in the total gross amount of \$204,976.39. Commissioner Danford seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the vendor claims docket in the total gross amount of \$249,464.59. Commissioner Danford seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. Commissioner Danford made a motion to approve the Building Corporation's Claims Docket in the total gross amount of \$94,118.24. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. Auditor Chaffins advised all the jail invoices in that claims docket were being paid out of the Jail CREDIT Fund. Auditor Chaffins advised she had presented the Board with current financial reports on the Listing of Fund Balances, and the Status of Misc. Estimated Revenues received YTD.

## **IN OTHER BUSINESS**

Commissioner Danford advised he had received a Resolution Establishing the Intent to Conduct a Commissioners' Sale to Sell Tax Sale Certificates for Properties that are Severely Delinquent in Payment of Property Taxes. Auditor Chaffins and Attorney Lucas advised the resolution was in regard to properties that did not sell at the recent September 28<sup>th</sup> tax sale. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the proposed resolution, seconded by Commissioner Danford. The motion passed with all ayes and Resolution 75-100515 was signed by the Board and attested by the Auditor.

The Board tabled the appointments to the County's EDC Board.

Commissioner Danford advised they had recently interviewed applicants for the position of EMA Director which had been vacant since the resignation of former Director Ted Bombagetti. Commissioner Danford made a motion to make an offer of employment to Jacob Lippner as the next EMA Director. Mr. Lippner was present at the meeting and accepted their offer of employment. He advised he would like to give his present employer a two week notice and could begin his employment with the County on October 19<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Bombagetti was also in attendance for the meeting and advised, in the meantime, he would still be available to assist the County in the event of an emergency situation.

Auditor Chaffins advised she will be attending the SBOA County Auditor's Fall Conference October 20-23<sup>rd</sup> in Columbus, IN. IT Director Brian Pinson requested approval to attend a one day IT Conference in Indianapolis on Tuesday, October 20<sup>th</sup>. He advised there is no cost for the conference, and since he will be staying with a friend of his the night before, the only cost will be for his mileage and meals. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve his conference attendance, seconded by Commissioner Danford. The motion passed with all ayes. Director Pinson advised Bob Smith will be call that day for the IT Department. He also noted he is currently interviewing applicants for the position of IT Assistant. Commissioner Binkley inquired if Director Pinson was aware of the recent issues with 911 calls that come in to dispatch via cellular phones. The Director advised he has been brought up to date on the issue since taking the position of Director. He noted it has been an ongoing issue since they moved into the facility. He advised he had participated in the September 25<sup>th</sup> conference call issue with J & K Communications and also had discussed the issue with Dion of Skillman.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Alan Sahara, land-owner and neighbor to the Starke County Forest, stated he felt since Mr. Wakeland had "lied" when he stated in the recording of the deed creating the Starke County

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Forest that the deed should be voided by the County. He stated he felt Mr. Wakeland was not being honest when he stated the property had not been used as a landfill or a dump and did not contain any hazardous waste. Mr. Sahara had in a bag he brought into the meeting pieces of concrete he picked up on the Forest's property, and stated he felt Mr. Wakeland had "dumped" the chunks of concrete, which he called "external dump material" onto the Forest property. Mr. Sahara stated he thought the Trust creating the Starke County Forest should be "over-turned". Attorney Lucas cautioned Mr. Sahara that his statements could be considered defamatory without any good faith basis for stating them. He advised Mr. Sahara that the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) has authority over issues in regard to hazardous waste and the County Drainage Board has authority over ditch drainage. Mr. Sahara noted the County Surveyor had cleaned out the beaver dam in the Anderson Ditch, which runs through the Forest, but the beavers have rebuilt the dam. He stated he felt the Drainage Board has done nothing to help the drainage of the Anderson Ditch. Mr. Sahara stated he thought the County has control over the Forest and he believes the deed for the Forest should be voided. Attorney Lucas advised that was not a correct statement and he had not presented a valid theory for his proposition; there was no authority for that proposition, and it was not a correct statement of the law.

In a related matter, MJ Bendt distributed brochures of the Guided Tours of the Starke County Forest which will be held on Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, at 9:00, 10:00 and 11:00AM. Councilman Baker advised he has received complaints of several of the walking trails of the Forest which were often closed to the public. The Board advised that would be an issue of the County's Park Board.

County Coroner Danny Hoffer appeared before the Board to address some issues he was encountering. He stating he needed the Board to establish a location in which to house the cooler of the Coroner's department. He advised the hospital had advised they would be providing morgue space for the Coroner's use in the building of the new facility but that would not be available until 2017. He advised that both Marshall County and Jasper County had offered to provide temporary housing if necessary at a rate of \$150.00 for a 24 hour period. He inquired as to the use of the garage area of the old jail building. Maintenance Director Jim Coad who just happened to be in attendance at that point of the meeting was asked for his opinion in regard to establishing that area as secure to only Coroner use. Director Coad stated that portion of the building was going to be vacant until they begin work on the remodeling of the old jail building which isn't scheduled to begin until late spring/early summer of 2016. He stated the locks could be changed on the garage area and keys be given to only the Coroner. It was decided the Coroner should move the cooler into the old jail garage until the remodeling begins. Commissioner Danford advised he would contact the Highway Department to have them make signs noting there was no access to the garage. The Coroner was to work with the Maintenance Director is moving the cooler into the garage. Auditor Chaffins asked to verify that any Deputy Coroners hired would need to be process through the normal employment process including drug testing. Commissioner Binkley made a motion verifying Deputy Coroners would be included in the normal employment process, seconded by Commissioner Danford. The motion passed with all ayes.

Commissioner Binkley noted the Merit Board has a need to hire an attorney on retainer to provide legal guidance to the Merit Board. Commissioner Binkley made a motion the Board of Commissioners make a recommendation to the County Council to provide funding for the Merit Board to have an attorney on retainer. Commissioner Danford seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. The Merit Board will present their request to the County Council at their next meeting on October 19<sup>th</sup>.

There being no further public comment and no further business, Commissioner Binkley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Danford seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. The meeting adjourned at 7:38PM.

**OCTOBER 5, 2015**

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Kent Danford, President

ABSENT \_\_\_\_\_  
Kathryn Norem

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THE COMMISSIONERS**

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Donald Binkley

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Katherine Chaffins, County Auditor  
& Secretary to the Board of County Commissioners

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