

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2015**

The Starke County Board of Commissioners meet in an Executive Session, at 5:30PM, in the Starke County Annex Meeting Room, Knox, IN with Commissioners Kathy Norem, Kent Danford & Jennifer Davis, County Attorney, Marty Lucas, and County Auditor, Katherine Chaffins present, and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting was held to discuss a personnel matter pursuant to IC 5-14-1.5-6.1(b)(6)(B).

I can attest the only issue discussed at this meeting was in regard to a personnel matter.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00PM.

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Katherine Chaffins, Auditor &  
Secretary to the Board of Commissioners

## **REGULAR SESSION**

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2015**

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in regular session at 6:05PM in the Annex meeting room, Knox, Indiana, with Kathy Norem, 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.

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

EMS Director Keith Emigh and Clerk MaryLynn Richie appeared before the Board to present the EMS monthly departmental report. Clerk Richie presented the monthly statistical report listing the number and classification of runs, and accounts receivable. She advised a total of \$545.88 had been collected from Small Claims Court, and a total of \$735.35 from Collections Attorney Jonathan O'Hara. Director Emigh advised he has revised the job description for the EMS2 position (Assistant Director) and it has been posted. He noted he added all the regular daily duties to the job description. He also advised he is requesting permission to dissolve the Senior Paramedic position and evolve it's duties into the EMS2 position, and that person will be in charge of all Medics. Commissioner Norem advised he did a nice job on the job description. The Board also made clear that Director Emigh will do the hiring of the EMS2. County Attorney Marty Lucas suggested, since they are changing the employee structure, the Board should vote on its' permission. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the combining of the two positions, Senior Paramedic and Assistant Director (EMS2). Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and it passed with all eyes.

The Board advised Director Emigh they would like to see more verbal reporting on the updates in the EMS Department. Director Emigh advised he is checking with State Officials in regard to a different tagging system in the logging of controlled narcotics. He stated even though they are not experiencing any problems and they do have the correct counts, he has been receiving complaints on the present system. He also noted the County Highway Department has been doing a wonderful job in keeping all three EMS Bases plowed out. He also advised, in regard to the filling of the EMS2 position, he is expecting they will be picking up approximately 40% of his current job duties. Commissioner Binkley stated the EMS vehicle needs to be painted and the light bar changed. Director Emigh inquired as to the status of the Coroner's vehicle as the Coroner has used the spare ambulance three times since the first of the year. The Board advised they are working on his receiving the Durango from the Sheriff's Department. Commissioner Norem stated the listing Director Emigh provided to the Board on his accomplishments since becoming the Director was a nice listing and she wasn't aware of a lot of the duties. She also stated he should check with Highway Department Superintendent Rik Ritzler as to the fabulous monthly report he submits which can be distributed to the media, and posted on the County's website. She asked that Director Emigh provide a written monthly report. She stated she did have one question in regard to his accomplishments and that was in regard to the MOU with seven of the surrounding counties. He advised so far the MOU is just a rough draft he presented to those counties. Commissioner Norem advised though, in that situation, he should present it to the Board for their approval first before entering into agreements with the other counties.

In regard to the Director's evaluation, Commissioner Danford stated Director Emigh is doing a good job, noting the Director does not hesitate to take work shifts and is always available when the Commissioners try to reach him. Commissioner Danford stated he would give the Director an A+ rating. Commissioner Norem advised the Director that Commissioner Danford would write up the evaluation for Director Emigh's employment file. Commissioner Norem stated the Director has been doing a good job and they are pleased with his performance. She noted the Board is in total agreement that the Director received the \$1,000.00 increase in his pay to go into effect in the next pay check on February 6<sup>th</sup>. She did note the Director has a stronger written ability than his verbal ability. Commissioner Binkley inquired about the call on doing transfers when there are extremely cold temperatures. Director Emigh advised when the temperature is below zero the transfers are only on an emergency basis only. Commissioner Norem advised it is the Physician's call if it is an emergency situation and if a transfer is needed.

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

#### **Snow Plowing/Removal**

Superintendent Ritzler advised the department plowed 12 of the 31 days in January, plowing a total of 25,615 miles and using 494 tons of salt and 2032 tons of sand. He advised in January, 2014 they plowed on 30 of the 31 days and used also three times as much salt and sand.

#### Road Improvement Program

The Superintendent advised they have completed their second stage of road assessments and would like to complete the third during February. He noted the third step is working with each Commissioner and getting their opinions on the recommended road repairs. He stated he would like to be able to present the updated list at the Board's March 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

#### Speed Limit Reduction

The Superintendent advised last fall he was contacted by Councilman Dave Pearman in regard to the lowering of the speed limit on SR8 in front of the new jail facility, to see if the County could work with INDOT to get that done. The Superintendent advised INDOT did a quick study based on the County's request and they have agreed to lower the speed limit up to the train tracks coming out of Knox from 55mph to 45mph in order to accommodate the increased traffic count which will be caused by the new jail. He noted the posted limit is now 45mph.

#### Intersection Safety

Superintendent Ritzler advised Purdue University has completed their preliminary study of three county intersections: 350E and 250N; 700E and 200N; 700S and 300E. He advised the 350E/250N intersection does warrant a four way stop because of a lack of sight distance that cannot be remedied by defoliation. The intersection at 700S/300E does not warrant a four way stop at this time and the intersection of 700E/200N even though there has been six reported accidents at the location they are recommending the County asks the property owners for permission to cut back the foliage at the intersection to improve sight distance. If that doesn't work a four way stop may be the next option. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the installation of a four way stop at the intersection of 350E and 250N. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. Superintendent Ritzler asked if from the savings in inspection fees the County has seen by the creation of their own Construction Inspection position if the savings could be added to the number of paving miles for the 2015 road improvement plan.

### **RE: SHERIFF BILL DULIN, REQUEST FOR EQUIPMENT, JAIL STAFFING REPORT**

Sheriff Bill Dulin and Chief Deputy Ken Pfof appeared before the Board. The Sheriff advised an Open House of the new County Jail has been tentatively scheduled for May 22<sup>nd</sup> at the new jail, and June 1<sup>st</sup> is the targeted date for the inmate population of the jail. The Sheriff presented the Board with a list of equipment he is in need of. He advised when the former Sheriff retired vehicles and gave them to the County to be used in other departments the radios and light bars were not removed from the vehicles and now he would like to see his budget be reimbursed for those items. The list included such items as the radios, light bars, equipment console, computer mount, in-car video system, and a new kennel for the police K-9. The equipment listing totaled \$39,260.10.

The next item the Sheriff presented was price quotes for a vehicle to replace the Dodge Durango which will be given to the Coroner. He advised he had contacted Cambe Chevrolet for price quotes but never received a response from them. His noted his bids were for both Fords and Chevys through Best Ford in Knox. He advised he had received quotes on both an AWD Utility Vehicle (an Explorer) and for a squad car. The price of the 2015 Ford Police Interceptor Utility AWD was \$29,750.00 and the quote on the 2015 Ford Police Interceptor Sedan AWD was \$27,735.00. The Sheriff stated he would prefer two Explorers but would be agreeable to one Explorer and one Sedan. He also advised he will need to replace the Department's pickup truck this year because of its high mileage and would like to give the pickup truck to the Sheriff's Posse to use. Commissioner Norem advised she was OK with the one vehicle to replace the Durango at this time but she would like to speak with the Sheriff about the other need for vehicles. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the purchase of the 2015 AWD Utility vehicle in the amount of \$29,750.00 from Best Ford, Knox. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. The Board advised when the Sheriff receives the new vehicle the Durango will go to the Coroner and the light bar will stay with the Durango since the Coroner can run with red and blue lights but both the Durango and the current EMS vehicle need to be painted as a one tone vehicle. President Danford inquired as to the need for an additional kennel; what is wrong with the current one. Sheriff Dulin advised it doesn't fit properly. Commissioner Norem advised the Sheriff the Board will take his requested list of equipment under advisement.

President Danford advised that the Jail Staffing Analysis Report will be tabled for now. Attorney Lucas inquired as how the author of the report was able to jump to a conclusion for the additional staffing when he thought the new jail was designed to make the staff more efficient. Sheriff Dulin advised he could bring in the jail inspector and the author of the report to a meeting if they would be interested.

The next issue the Sheriff addressed was in regard to the posting for a Part Time Maintenance Person. He stated he checked with other counties and their pay for a full time maintenance person ranges from \$32,000.00 to \$54,000.00. He stated he thought this position should pay more than the current part time rate of \$11.48 per hour. He noted he felt the pay should range between \$15.00 and \$20.00 per hour since their duties would also include being the grounds keeper. Commissioner Norem advised the County will contract out the grounds maintenance. The Sheriff noted in the jail budget there is an appropriation of \$24,648.00 for the Cook/Custodian. He stated he knows the Council sets the budget but he would like a recommendation from the Commissioners for a request of additional appropriations for the maintenance position. The Board advised the Sheriff to post the position for now and leave the pay rate open as it is the Council who sets the pay scale. The Sheriff then presented a job description to create the position of Detective Sergeant. He advised he would like to have a Detective working the 4PM to Midnight shift. The \$750.00 in additional appropriation could be taken from his overtime budget. He noted the reason for this position is due to there not being a Detective working in the evenings and when a Detective was previously called out at night it was all overtime pay. He stated the position would be filled from within his current staff. Commissioner Norem made a motion to recommend this position to the County Council as they will need to approve it and amend the salary ordinance. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. The Sheriff advised he just wants to run a more efficient department. Council President Freddie Baker, who was present for the Commissioner Meeting, advised the Sheriff was doing a tremendous job and to keep up the good work.

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

Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 19<sup>th</sup> Finance Board meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Binkley and passed with all ayes. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 19<sup>th</sup> Regular Session, seconded by Commissioner Binkley. The motion passed with all ayes. In regard to the vendor claims docket Commissioner Norem advised there were some claims flagged by Deputy Auditor Thomas and they were the claim to JPR for inspection fees; the \$3,000.00 claim to the Knox American Legion and the claim from the 911 Dispatchers for the reimbursements for their work pants. She stated in regard to the JPR Claim even though the County has their own Construction Inspection there are some inspections that he can't perform that are outside his scope of work, and

this was one of them. In regard to the \$3,000.00 claim to the Knox American Legion, she noted the Commissioners had in their budget a total of \$6,000.00 for the three County Legions for it to be distributed evenly to all three. She advised the maximum amount she would like for the Knox Legion to receive was \$2,000.00. She next inquired as to the status of required wear for the 911 Dispatchers. Sheriff Dulin advised he is purchasing uniform shirts for them and they have been asked to purchase khaki pants for which they would be reimbursed. Auditor Chaffins advised that was not an eligible expense for the 911 Fund and the Sheriff's Office designated the claim for payment from the Misdemeanant Fund. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the vendor claims docket, minus the \$1,000.00 to the Legion, for a total amount of \$191,105.63. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. President Danford advised he also has an additional claims docket for invoices approved by the Building Corporation. Commissioner Norem advised the total amount of funding from the Jail Bond Construction Fund has been expended and the remainder of the jail construction expenses will be paid out of the CEDIT Special Legislation Fund, # 1113. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the Vendor Claims Docket for the Jail Construction, in the total net amount of \$81,683.89. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. The vendor claims docket was signed by the Building Corporation at their meeting that morning, and also by the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the payroll claim for the pay period ending on January 17<sup>th</sup>, with a pay date of January 23<sup>rd</sup>, in the total gross amount of \$198,637.49. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. Auditor Chaffins presented a copy of an authorization form in which an employee could sign to authorize the deduction from their paycheck to be issued to the County Treasurer to be applied to their property taxes that will be due in 2015. She advised this procedure is different than when a County employee is delinquent on their County property taxes, and the request to prepay the taxes came from a couple of County employees. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the authorization, seconded by Commissioner Norem. The motion passed with all ayes. Auditor Chaffins advised the County has received their 2015 budget information from the State. The following funds received 100% of their requested budget: County General, Reassessment, Health, Cumulative Bridge & Cumulative Capital Development. The Highway Department's budget was reduced by \$1,500.00 and the Local Road & Street budget was reduced by \$18,000.00. Commissioner Norem commented that was due to the hard work of the Department Heads when submitting their budgets and to the great work of the County Council.

#### **IN OTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD**

Commissioner Norem advised that Bob Aloï, of Territorial Engineering had completed the elevation of the landfill probe as was requested by the Board at the last meeting. The report he submitted has been sent to Weaver Boos and to IDEM. Commissioner Norem advised the Board, thanks to the Media, had received two requests for appointment to the Convention and Visitor's Commission (CVC) Board. She advised the first request was from Daniel Boyer, the owner and operator of Grand Pause Farm who is a registered Democrat, and from Denise Coultice, an employee of Kankakee Valley REMC, and is also a registered Democrat. Commissioner Norem made a motion to appoint Daniel Boyer to the CVC Board for a term of two years, expiring on 12/31/16. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. Commissioner Norem then made an appointment to name Denise Coultice to the same two year term on the CVC Board. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. Commissioner Norem stated at the last meeting it was discussed that the current members of the CVC Board would have their terms extended until the end of this year, 12/31/15 but a vote of approval was never taken and she believes it should be voted on. Commissioner Norem made a motion to extend the terms of the current members of the CVC Board to expire on 12/31/15. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. Commissioner Norem advised she had met with Sheriff Dulin, Jim Coad, Joe Short, Judge Hall and Chris Smith at the used furniture warehouse and was shown two full rooms of furniture. She advised they were told by the owner that the County could have all the furniture in both rooms for a fee of \$3,500.00. She asked him for an inventory listing of all the furniture there. She noted after the Judge has pulled out what he will need, the Highway Superintendent can pick up what he needs and then it will be open to other Department Heads. She also suggested the County starts planning to hold another auction this year in late summer or early fall after the jail is moved in. President Danford advised Commissioner Binkley he will be in charge of this year's auction.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mary Peren, of WKVI, stated Sheriff Dulin had submitted to the radio station a listing of Starke County's Most Wanted Criminals and it was released on air that morning. She advised thus far the Sheriff's Department had one capture, received five tips and 13,000 hits on that posting on the radio's website. MJ Bendt, of The Leader, inquired as to the status of the appointment to the California Township Advisory Board. As it is the filling of a vacancy due to an elected Advisory Board Member not taking his oath, and after County Attorney Marty Lucas had thoroughly researched the situation, Commissioner Norem advised the appointment is not their duty. She advised the information Attorney Lucas received from the State showed that the Democrat and Republican Election Officials have conflicting opinions, and the opinion the County received from the Democratic Member stated the Board of Commissioners would name the replacement, but it was not a bi-partisan decision of the State Election Committee. She noted the County has not been able to receive clear directions from the State as to how this matter should be handled. Democrat Party Chairman Kenny Wallace inquired as to why the Board can't go ahead and make the decision when the Republican Chairman has already appointed a replacement to the Advisory Board based on the Republican decision from the State. He inquired if the Republican appointment is lawful. Commissioner Norem stated the Board's feeling is that they do not have the authority to make an appointment to a Township Advisory Board and if they did make that appointment they would be wrong in the eyes of one half of the State Election Board and if they don't make the appointment they would be wrong in the other one half of the State Election Board. Chairman Wallace advised he was going to further check into the situation. Commissioner Norem advised him the County is not accepting the Republican choice. Attorney Lucas stated he agrees it does need to be researched further but noted it may require ultimately a Judge's decision since both arguments make good points. He noted he has thoroughly reviewed both sides, and both opinions have merit. The County Clerk, Vickie Cooley, inquired about the used office furniture for her department and was informed once the jail has their first pick her department could look at it. She stated the department needs a lot of office furniture replaced. County Veterans' Service Officer, Terry Turner, advised he was told Judge Hall is looking into the possibility of the creation of a Veterans' Court. He also advised he would like to purchase a portable printer in order to take with him when he home visits veterans and he would have the ability to print out their paperwork. He noted he would be interested in looking at that office furniture also as he would like to rearrange the furniture in his office, and possibility would be interested in locking file cabinets.

There being no further business, Commissioner Norem made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. The meeting was adjourned at 7:40PM.

**February 2, 2015**

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Kent Danford, President

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Kathryn Norem

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Donald Binkley

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