

**MONDAY, JUNE 15, 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 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: TREASURER, KASEY CLARK, REPORT ON TAX BILLINGS VIA E-BILLING**

Treasurer Kasey Clark appeared before the Board to advise she will be setting up to begin a new procedure in her department, that of E-billing, of the tax billings to tax payers. She noted this program will allow tax bills to be emailed to tax payers and will save on the printing and mailing costs. She advised there is a \$300.00, one-time set-up fee and she has that available in her budget. She stated she should be all set up in about a month's time and then she will send a news release out to the local media notifying the taxpayers of the procedure for signing up. She also stated she will post the information on the County's website. She noted the program does not require Commissioner's approval; she was just informing them of this new program in her department.

**RE: SCCC USE OF FORCE POLICY PROPOSAL**

Since Community Corrections Director Hinojosa was not available SCCC Program Coordinator Shawn Matraw appeared before the Board along with SCCC Advisory Board Chairperson, Talia Reed. Coordinator Matraw explained that they were presenting an amended Use of Force Policy which has been expanded to include the use of firearms. He advised the revised policy has been approved by their Advisory Board and has been reviewed by the County Attorney, Marty Lucas. Coordinator Matraw asked the County to amend their County Weapons Policy to include Community Corrections. Commissioner Norem stated she could tell a great deal of thought and effort was put into the creation of this proposed policy but she has a few questions. She inquired as to the line in the policy that states "the officer only if they choose" so does that mean officers will not be required to carry a weapon. Officer Matraw advised the Officers will not be required to carry the weapons, but those that elect to carry them will be receiving the proper training. Commissioner Norem asked them in regard to lethal and deadly weapons, what a stiletto was. Officer Matraw advised a stiletto is a stabbing weapon. Commissioner Norem inquired as to who designates the SCCC employees as special deputies. Officer Matraw advised the County Sheriff will deputize the SCCC Officers. Commissioner Norem noted the policy should state who would be deputizing their officers. Commissioner Binkley asked that they verify there would be no liability on the Sheriff if there were any issues with any of those deputized officers. Commissioner Norem also noted the policy includes the procedure of debriefing and review board in the event of an incident caused by the use of this policy. Commissioner Norem inquired as to the training stated in the policy; required training from an ILEA Certified Firearms Instructor and also an ILTEB Certified Instructor. She asked the Sheriff about those certified instructors and Sheriff Dulin advised he has both an ILEA and an ILTEB Certified Instructors in his Department. The Sheriff noted currently he has the training officer certified every six months but they will soon be going to certifications three times a year. Commissioner Norem inquired as to who would be providing the firearms. Chairperson Reed advised Director Hinojosa stated the employee can supply their own firearm. There was a brief discussion in regard to the need to keep the guns consistent, the same caliper, the firearm will need to be inspected and the officer should not use any exploding ammunition. Officer Matraw advised their policy would mirror the Sheriff's Department's policy as far as certifications and specifications and also the side arm holster specifications. Commissioner Norem noted the portion of the policy, Lethal Force Debriefing and Review Procedure states an officer may be required to undergo an interview with a mental health professional. She stated the "may be required" should be changed to "shall be required" and also changing the officer "may be placed on Administrative Leave" to "shall be placed on Administrative Leave". Commissioner Norem stated it is a well thought out policy. Attorney Lucas stated, in regard to the requested changing of the wording, he would like to see what the standard language is in similar policies. Commissioner Norem advised since their obligation is to protect the public she would not be able to vote yes on the policy without those two changes in wording. Commissioner Norem asked Sheriff Dulin for a copy of the Sheriff's Department policy on this same issue. Commissioner Norem stated the policy was a good policy and her questions were not criticisms, they were just for her information, but still feels if there was a shooting the debriefing portion's wording needs to be amended. Commissioner Binkley stated he agrees with Commissioner Norem that if there is a shooting the officer should be suspended until a proper review and also they should be consistent with the same type of weapon. Commissioner Norem noted she had nothing else to add. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the policy with the approval contingent of both changes in wording. Commissioner Binkley seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes.

## **RE: USE OF COUNTY CREDIT CARD AND DEPARTMENT STORE ACCOUNTS**

Commissioner Norem advised there has been some discussion lately in regard to departments making purchases out of the County and the fact some departments have opened accounts at larger department stores such as Sears, Menards and Lowes. She advised since the County doesn't have an established policy controlling the use of these credit/department store accounts she is requesting Auditor Chaffins create a policy for the use of Credit/Department Store Accounts in order to establish internal controls over that issue and present it at their next meeting. IT Director Joe Short noted the local Sears requires each Department to open its own account at Sears instead of the County as a whole having an account. Commissioner Norem stated she would like to see the Auditor go to Sears and discuss this with Kathy Berndt. Commissioner Binkley made a motion since there is a need to establish controls over the use of credit /department store accounts, proposing a policy be established. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes.

## **RE: IT DIRECTOR, REQUEST TO CHANGE CIRCUIT COURT/CLERK COMPUTER PROGRAM FROM CSI TO ODYSSEY**

IT Director Short appeared before the Board to request their approval of the agreement for Circuit Court and the Clerk's Office use of the Odyssey Program. He advised the Odyssey Program would replace the current CSI Program and there would be no cost for Odyssey. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the implementation of the Odyssey Program, seconded by Commissioner Binkley. The motion passed with all ayes. Director Short advised he will look into the existing CSI contract in regard to terminating it early.

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

President Danford presented the payroll claim voucher for the pay period ending on June 6<sup>th</sup> with a pay date of June 12<sup>th</sup> in the total gross amount of \$203,635.40. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the presented pay claim with the pay date of June 12th, seconded by Commissioner Binkley. The motion passed with all ayes. Commissioner Norem pointed out on page 9 of the payroll report the County has a Sheriff's Deputy who has been on paid Administrative Leave for nearly fourteen months. She stated the County has gone beyond the bond of good faith and are now dangerously close or even over the line on ghost employment. She suggested both the Sheriff and the Auditor no longer pay that Deputy. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to suspend the Deputy's pay and employment benefits effective at the end of the pay period which ended on June 6<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. Commissioner Norem advised there will not be any more pay for this Deputy without a Court Order. In regard to the vendor claims, President Danford advised a claim submitted by SCCC was cancelled that afternoon which took the total of vendor claims to \$606,626.36. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the vendor claims in the total net amount of \$ 606,626.36. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 1<sup>st</sup> meeting, seconded by Commissioner Norem. The motion passed with all ayes.

## **IN OTHER BUSINESS**

### **APPOINTMENT TO SCCC ADVISORY BOARD**

Commissioner Norem advised there is an opening on the Starke County Community Corrections Board for an ex-offender. She advised the Board had received a letter from Anne Geller stating her interest in serving on the SCCC Advisory Board and that was the only letter of interest they received. Commissioner Norem made a motion to appoint Anne Geller to the SCCC Advisory Board, seconded by Commissioner Binkley. The motion passed with all ayes.

### **HEALTH INSURANCE UPDATE**

Commissioner Norem advised she had attended a meeting that day along with Auditor Chaffins and Deputy Auditor Thomas. She advised the meeting was with representatives of 1<sup>st</sup> Source Insurance and of Anthem who presented the mid-year review. Commissioner Norem stated the County's experience was a good percentage and she noted she made it clear to the Anthem Representatives that the only renewal rate that would be acceptable would be either no increase in cost or a decrease in cost or the County will be shopping around for other rates. She noted Anthem will not know the County's renewal rates until October 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **NEW APPOINTMENT TO THE VETERANS' SERVICE OFFICER POSITION**

President Danford stated after talking to the public and with different Veterans he feels it is time to make a change in the Veterans' Service Officer. The President asked for a motion to appoint Mr. Mark

Gourley and noted that was all he had to say on that. Commissioner Binkley made a motion to appoint Mark Gourley to the position of Veterans' Service Officer, seconded by President Danford. The motion passed with two ayes. (Commissioner Norem abstained.) Commissioner Norem asked that Terry be allowed time to remove his items from the office. She thanked him for his service. Service Officer Turner stated they would need 2-3 days for the turn over and he would be willing to train his replacement. He noted the position had never been a money situation for him. Officer Turner stated his replacement should attend the Service Officer's meeting in Indianapolis next week. President Danford advised them to call the State tomorrow and get it worked out.

#### EMA DIRECTOR REPORT ON SEVERE WEATHER IN THE COUNTY

EMA Director Ted Bombagetti advised he has been speaking to some of the farmers in the County and they are experiencing up to an 80% loss of the crops in their fields and it is now too late in the season for any of the crops to be replanted. He advised he has submitted a formal request with the IDHS and noted he referred to the situation not as a "flood" but as "saturated soil". Commissioner Danford also advised at least 60% of the nitrogen has been lost from the fields and also much of the nutrients in the soil. Director Bombagetti advised the County did have a confirmed tornado in a small area (northwest of North Judson). He advised the storm did extensive damage to one property owner in particular. The Director advised once the owner has exhausted all the help from the insurance company he does have crews he can send in to assist with the cleanup. He noted he has been in contact with the homeowner every other day to check on the progress.

#### UPDATE FROM THE PARK BOARD PRESIDENT

Skyler Ellinger, President of the County's Park Board, gave a brief update on the Park Board. He advised the board had taken a tour of the Bass Lake Beach and Campground in April. He advised the Board had composed a letter to Mr. Callahan listing all the repairs and issues that need to be addressed. He advised Mr. Callahan was notified that the safety items on the list must be completed by the end of thirty days and the other issues must be completed by the end of this year. Commissioner Norem noted the Park board had personally mailed the letter via certified mail and they are entitled to reimbursement of their postage expense. She noted in preparing the 2016 County budgets they will need to include a budget for Park Board expenses. She also asked the Park Budget to submit their minutes to be uploaded to the County's website.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

Councilman Sims inquired as to why the County has been continuing paying a Deputy who is on Administrative Leave and why was it happening. Sheriff Dulin advised the situation was something that was passed on to him from the previous Sheriff's administration. He noted the issue was not presented to the Merit Board right away and now it is causing his department to be short staffed. Commissioner Norem stated this situation should have been handled a long time ago and she asked for the Board to call an Executive Session to discuss ongoing legal issues.

There being no further public comment and no further business, Commissioner Binkley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Norem seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. The meeting adjourned at 7:57PM.

**JUNE 15, 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