

**Monday, May 5, 2014**

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Board of Commissioners and meet in regular session at 9:00AM in the Annex Building Meeting Room, Knox, Indiana with Jennifer Davis and Kathy Norem present and the following proceedings were held to wit:

President Jennifer Davis called the meeting to order at 9:07AM, following the meeting of the Starke County Building Corporation.

Commissioner Danford was absent from the meeting.

#### **REPORT OF STARKE COUNTY COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS**

Starke County Community Corrections Director Robert Hinojosa and President of the Community Corrections Board, Todd Willis, appeared before the Board and presented a proclamation naming this week as Correction Employees' Week. Director Hinojosa recognized the correctional employees in attendance at the meeting: Randy Brown, Shawn Matross, Scott Dickson, and Denise Thomas. President Davis read aloud the proclamation and thanked SCCC employee Jordan McIntire for writing their newsletter, and to Kim Kennedy for keeping the Board of Commissioners informed.

Director Hinojosa then presented their office lease. He advised since it is still unknown if the County will be relocating the SCCC Offices he is proposing only renewing the lease for a period of one year instead of the normal three years. He advised he had supplied a copy of the lease for County Attorney, Marty Lucas' review. Attorney Lucas advised he had reviewed the lease and approved it. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the lease, seconded by President Davis. The motion passed with two ayes.

#### **EMS MONTHLY REPORT**

EMS Director Paul Mathewson and EMS Clerk MaryLynn Ritchie appeared before the Board to present their monthly report. Clerk Ritchie advised there was a total of 171 runs in the month of April. Their Department had collected \$66.00 from the County Clerk, Small Claims Court, and a total of \$727.20 from Collections Attorney O'Hara. She advised, with Auditor Chaffins' assistance, she had completed the 2013 Medicaid reimbursement report and has submitted it. She noted they are still waiting to hear as to when they will be receiving the reimbursement for the years 2011 and 2012. Auditor Chaffins advised when the reimbursement is received she will establish a specific revenue account in the County General Fund to keep the reimbursement separate from the normal 2014 EMS revenue.

Director Mathewson advised he would like to discuss an issue that was first brought up last December, the proposed growth of the paramedic program. He presented to the Board a report listing statistics as to why the additional paramedic would be based out of the North Judson EMS Base. He stated the additional paramedic is needed since Alliance is no longer handling the transfers in and out of IU-Starke and therefore their number of transfers will be increasing. Craig Felte, of IU-Starke, was present at the meeting and advised they will indeed be utilizing the county's EMS as their first call. Director Mathewson advised because of this there is a great chance the only paramedic could be involved in the ALS transfers and not be available for the other ALS calls that may happen at the same time. Commissioner Norem stated she felt that the numbers he presented to them are a little fuzzy and would like to see a report listing the projected revenue and the associated expenditures. She advised, even though she felt it was a good way to spend the taxpayers' dollars, they need to be very descriptive of the costs. She reminded them when the paramedic program was first initiated they had projected the large increase in revenue due to calls being billed as ALS instead of BLS but the revenue increase has never happened. Clerk Ritchie presented a report showing the revenue, but Commissioner Norem advised she would prefer any reports are submitted to the Board prior to the meeting to allow them plenty of time to review and study the reports prior to the meeting. She noted since the paramedic program revenue was not as projected, since she is not getting a good sense of what the proposed projections will be, and since the county is spending more on the EMS program than they had planned on, she stated they would be remiss in the Board's obligation and responsibilities if they don't study the projected financials associated with this proposal. Director Mathewson pointed out the additional paramedic's costs would be incorporated into their existing 2014 budget without asking for any additional appropriations. He advised they are utilizing more part time help and working on reducing overtime hours. He noted Commissioner Danford had approved the part time workers. Commissioner Norem stated she believed the County Council needs to approve the number of the mixture of workers. Council President, Dave Pearman, who was in attendance, advised the proposed paramedic expansion has the Council's approval and stated he felt they should utilize more part time help in their department and possibly in all of the county's departments. Clerk Ritchie stated the Medicaid reimbursements will increase the total amount of revenue received for the years 2011, 2012 and 2013. Auditor Chaffins inquired, since the majority of EMS calls are either Medicaid or Medicare calls, what would be the revenue difference between what the County receives on those calls between the BLS and ALS designated billings. Clerk Ritchie advised for an ALS billing the County receives \$60.00 to \$70.00 more in revenue over the BLS billing for the same call. Commissioner Norem stated they have not presented a clear picture of the finances related to this proposal, and stated they saw a larger increase in expenditures but not a corresponding increase in revenue with the paramedic program. Director Mathewson stressed they will be utilizing their existing budget and their goal is to implement the additional paramedic by June 1<sup>st</sup>. He had wanted to present it to this Board for their information. Commissioner Norem restated her position she is not comfortable with the proposed financial records. President Davis advised they would like to see better financial information on their proposal and she would like it placed on the agenda for their next meeting. She also advised them to submit the report to the Board prior to the meeting for their review.

#### **COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT**

Since the Highway Department Superintendent was attending a conference, the Clerk, Marcy Scott, presented their monthly report. She advised the department has begun mowing this week. She advised they plan on completing at least six mowing cycles this summer. She also noted they will be mowing five feet off the edge of the pavement on each road and twenty feet back at all intersections.

She advised they had met with Marshall County to coordinate their paving schedules. Starke County will be making the pug asphalt and Marshall County will be lending to the County their distributor trucks and a two lane chipper box. She stated the department will be making pug in late May and paving with it in July. The chip seal program will begin in August and should be completed by early September. They will also be crack sealing the roads with the primary focus on Toto Road.

Clerk Scott advised the emergency design for the 700E Bridge is progressing well and is hoping to be able to reopen the bridge by mid-July. She also advised Mark Wilson of JPR is currently designing the four scheduled bridge replacements, with two designs to be completed in mid-May. It is expected to begin the first bridge replacement in late July. She also noted they may be recommending that Bridge 70 be eliminated from their bridge inventory. She advised they had officially given notice to Ziker Uniforms to cancel their contract due to their poor service. They are presently working with Aramark to finalize the new uniform contract, hoping to have the contract approved by the end of the week, and to receive new uniforms by mid-June. Clerk Scott advised they held a retirement party for Al Berndt to celebrate his thirty two years of service on the department. She also noted she had some documents from JPR that requires Commissioner Norem's signature.

## **FLOOD PLAIN ORDINANCE**

County Building Commissioner, Terry Stephenson was not present for the meeting. Attorney Lucas advised he had received the proposed Flood Plain Ordinance but it was beyond the scope of what he could do in that time frame. He stated he would prefer to study it in more detail before advising. President Davis stated she would like someone to explain exactly what the changes are to the ordinance. Attorney Lucas stated he would like to see a summary of the proposed changes be compiled and would like to know the reason for making those changes.

## **VENDOR CLAIMS, PAYROLL CLAIM, MINUTES, SRI AGREEMENT**

Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the payroll claim for the pay period ending 4/26/14 with a pay date of 5/2/14, in the total gross amount of \$187,501.25. President Davis seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes. President Davis noted there were not any comments from Deputy Thomas in regard to the vendor claims. Auditor Chaffins advised a claim was pulled prior to placing on the claims docket since it was reimbursement for the sales tax a department head paid in a cell phone contract. She advised the County does not pay any sales tax. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the vendor claims docket in the total gross amount of \$154,478.89. President Davis seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes. President Davis advised they had received an agreement with SRI reducing the cost per tax sale from \$75.00 down to \$70.00 per parcel. Commissioner Norem made a motion to approve the agreement seconded by President Davis. The motion passed with all ayes. President Davis advised she had met with the SBOA Auditors who are currently working in the County. She advised the County currently has two federal grants in regard to the CR300E and the CR300E-SR8 Projects. She also noted she currently serves on the board of KIRPC the agency who administers the grants. The Auditors advised that would be a conflict of interest if she was the one to sign the grant paperwork for the County and she should file an official Conflict of Interest form at the County Clerk's Office. Because of this situation she is recommending Commissioner Norem be in charge of all Federal Grant reporting at this time. President Davis noted any other elected official including members of the County Council should remember if they have a Conflict of Interest with any business involving the County, then they should also file the Conflict of Interest form with the Clerk.

President Davis advised Attorney Lucas, Auditor Chaffins and herself had recently met with Carrie Block of 1<sup>st</sup> Choice Insurance. Ms. Block advised Bliss McKnight is reviewing the County's Employee Handbook. Attorney Lucas advised they had asked him for the Word version of the handbook for possible revisions.

## **IN OTHER BUSINESS**

President Davis advised she had received information from Knox City Mayor, Rick Chambers, in regard to the vacancies on the CVC Board. She advised he is working on which positions are vacant and what the length of the term is left for each position. President Davis advised they had been contacted by Bernadette Manuel who is interested in serving on the CVC Board. Attorney Lucas advised the Board could appoint Ms. Manuel to the Board, with the caveat the Mayor will notify them of the length of her term. Commissioner Norem made a motion to appoint Bernadette Manuel to the CVC Board. President Davis seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes.

Attorney Lucas advised he had received a question in regard to the County's Dog Ordinance. He advised the ordinance does not state any clear authority as to who is responsible when someone owns or harbors a dangerous dog. He noted the Prosecutor is requiring an ordinance with more teeth in it and the Judge also concurs. Commissioner Norem stated she would like to see both the Judge and the Prosecutor propose an ordinance as to what they want to see done. Attorney Lucas noted there is a state law which clearly states it is a misdemeanor if you are the owner of a dog who bites someone. President Davis advised they are presently also reviewing the City of Knox' dog ordinance. Attorney Lucas stated they need to look at the remedy they are seeking. County Health Nurse, Frank Lynch, stated there are too many holes in what the County presently has in place now. He would like to see something more specific as to what to do with the dog in that type of situation. President Davis advised she will contact the Judge and have him contact Attorney Lucas.

Attorney Lucas advised the County's Nepotism Ordinance predates the state nepotism ordinance, and noted there is a reason for tracking state law. He advised the County's ordinance has added more people than the state requires. Commissioner Norem made a motion to direct Attorney Lucas to provide a nepotism ordinance with revised language for the County's Employee Handbook which will narrow the effect of the ordinance. President Davis seconded the motion and it passed with all ayes.

Ben Osinski, of Osinski Auction, presented the County a check in the amount of \$2,407.50 which was the proceeds from the auction he held when he sold three vehicles of the County, a 2006 Ford Crown Vic, the old DARE trailer, and a 2000 Chevy Blazer. He noted the 10% commission was subtracted from the gross proceeds. Auditor Chaffins advised the check will be receipted into the County General Fund so the proceeds are documented, and then discuss it with the Sheriff about a possible transfer when he is ready to purchase the transport van.

Mary Beaver appeared before the Board. She advised she is a part time employee for the Planning Commission. She noted Terry Stephenson was presently in a meeting, and Deputy Pam Starkey was on vacation. President Davis informed her of what is needed to be submitted by Terry: the summary of changes per state statute and why the necessity for the change to the flood ordinance.

President Davis advised the last report from Weaver & Boos in regard to the monitoring of gas levels at the old County landfill showed higher levels of methane gas. Attorney Lucas noted it could be weather related. She advised she will contact Commissioner Danford as he is the Commissioner in charge of the landfill.

County Veteran Service Officer, Terry Turner, advised the Frank Ono Bridge Dedication is scheduled for Saturday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, at 1:30PM. He advised the Ono Family will be receiving certificates from the State Resolution in regard to the dedication. He also noted INDOT is creating a sign denoting the Frank Ono Bridge.

Councilman Pearman stated he was advised Suzanne Crider may be retiring from the Humane Society and could possibly be interested in the County's Animal Control Officer Position. He also requested, due to the Washington Township Fire Department holding a car show on Saturday, the 3<sup>rd</sup>, if it was alright to close off Division Road in front of the fire station during the car show. Commissioner Norem stated there were no objections to blocking off the road for that event.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

MJ Bendt, correspondent for The Leader, stated Knox Schools had been recognized by US News and World Report as the recipient of a bronze honor based on the school's academics and college readiness of their students.

Mary Peron, of WKVI, advised a radiothon was held as a fund raiser for the Starke County Youth Club and it raised a total of \$42,000.00. Commissioner Norem advised she is scheduled to work the polls on Election Day and she will be donating her pay from that day, and also personally matching that pay as another donation for the Youth Club.

There being no further business, Commissioner Norem made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by President Davis. The motion passed with all ayes and the meeting was adjourned at 10:46AM.

**May 5, 2014**

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Jennifer Davis, President

ABSENT \_\_\_\_\_  
Kent Danford

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Kathy Norem

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