



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

LAPORTE COUNTY

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Willie Milsap,
President

Dave Decker,
Vice President

Dr. Vidya Kora,
Member

PLEASE TURN OFF ALL CELL PHONES

MINUTES

LAPORTE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Wednesday July 3, 2013

To be held at 10:00 a.m. in the LaPorte County Complex Meeting Room #3

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**
Commissioner Milsap called the meeting to order.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
Phyllis Marks led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **ROLL CALL**
All Commissioners were present.
4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
Commissioner Kora adds a Resolution regarding the Rainy Day Fund under New Business. Commissioner Kora moves to approve the agenda. Commissioner Decker seconds. Motion carried by voice vote.
5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - A. **June 19, 2013**
Commissioner Kora moves to approve the minutes. Commissioner Decker seconds. Motion carried by voice vote.
6. **CLAIMS**
 - A. **Payroll Ending-06/21/2013- \$982,519.51**
 - B. **Miscellaneous Claims-\$963,398.52**
Commissioner Kora moves to accept all the Claims. Commissioner Decker seconds. Motion carried by voice vote.
7. **DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS**

Robert Young-Hwy Superintendent- Update on Johnson Rd.-Mr. Young indicated that the County Hwy is helping to mill the area and that it will be paved shortly after the milling is complete. Commissioner Kora thanks Mr. Young for his work on the emergency closing.

Tony Mancuso-request permission to continue the room addition on the fourth floor. He distributed plans to the Commission. Commissioner Kora asks if Mr. Mancuso has money in his budget to take care of the remodel. Mr. Mancuso said he does have the money in his budget. Commissioner Kora moves to approve the room addition. Commissioner Decker seconds. Motion carried by voice vote.

Nancy Hawkins-Treasurer- Update on collections. She said she hopes to have the final reconciliation bill in the mail around August 9, 2013 and that will be due in mid-September. She said they are getting caught up thanks to the hard work of the Assessor, the Auditor, Information Technology and the Treasurer's office. She indicated that they all appreciate the tax payers and their patience in trying to get a lot of the problems that this situation caused for them resolved. Commissioner Kora thanks Ms. Hawkins for her diligence in getting the tax situation resolved.

Anne Marie Polan-Building Commissioner- Indicated that in the month of June they issued 111 building permits, and have issued 595 to date this year. She further indicated that her office has fielded approximately 50 complaints from the beginning of the year ranging from animals and zoning issues to people living in RV's and property with scrap, and abandoned homes. Commissioner Kora asked if the permits are at the same number as previous years. She stated the numbers were down only because more roof permits were issued this time last year. Commissioner Milsap asked if the numbers are broken down to a daily number. Ms. Polan said they were not.

Barbara Dean-Recorder- Informed the Commission that in February her office got a new scanner, and it is smaller, faster and quieter enabling an improved work flow. In March they got a new film reader that allows them to correct and enhance the print on any of the documents and provide clearer copies. In April a company scanned 60% of the books in the vault, records going back to 1832, including deeds, plats and road records. She continues to look for a suitable company to do e-recording for her office. In June they received the scanned documents from the vault and they are reviewing them to prepare them for import into the system. The recorder's office document count is up over 9% from last year, the Recorder's Office continues to be self-supporting.

George Watkins-Veteran's Services-Reminding that July 6, 2013 there will be another LaPorte County Veterans Service Medal ceremony with a lapel pin. He indicated he has applications at his office and that it is not too late to fill them out. He further indicated that LaPorte County is starting a Military support network. The meeting is set in the Complex on July 19, 2013 at 2 p.m. Anyone interested in helping and volunteering they are working on a job fair. Fran Tibbot-EMA-Commended Amy Bluhm for her actions during the storms and stated that she is a big asset to her department. Commission Milsap asked if her department is communicating with the residents of Union Mills. She said they are working on getting with the community for a meeting in town hall. Commissioner Kora asked to be notified of that meeting.

Joyce Leon-Human Resources- Presented the Employee of the Month award to James Arnold of the Sheriff's department in recognition of his outstanding performance during an emergency in Hudson Lake where a garbage truck had hit a bridge. Officer Arnold, because of his quick response, was able to stop a train from traveling on those tracks and a sure derailment. Officer Arnold was presented with a certificate as well as a gift card and other goodies.

Earl Cunningham-County Council- Appeared before the Commission to discuss the report from Cender & Co. He indicated that all figures that come from the County Council come directly from the Auditor.

Jim Sosinski-Chief Deputy- Appeared before the Commission to further Commend officer Arnold.

8. **CORRESPONDENCE**

Correspondence received from Elizabeth RE: NIPSCO

Robin Surber-Executive Secretary- Reads correspondence from Elizabeth Gillard, Mrs. Timothy Howard, and William Boklund regarding NIPSCO's response to recent bad storms.

9. **REQUESTS**

A. **John Dudek-E-911-Request for signature on Maintenance Contract for the Battery Backup System.**

John Dudek appeared before the Commission to request signatures. Commissioner Kora moves to approve. Commissioner Decker seconds. Motion carried by voice vote.

B. **Sue Beres-GOTR Fall Race Director-Request for road closures.**

Sue Beres appeared before the Commission to request road closures.

C. **Robert C. Szilagyi-Request for out of state travel to Seattle, Washington.**

Robert Szilagyi appears before the Commission and requests travel. Commissioner Kora moves to approve. Commissioner Decker seconds. Motion carried by voice vote. Mr. Szilagyi further gave the Commission a press release that detailed the expenditure of the Deferral funds.

D. **Jane Bernard-Animal Shelter-Request for signature on copy machine maintenance contract, and Paws & Remember contract.**

Jane Bernard appeared before the Commission to request signatures. Commissioner Kora moves to approve. Commissioner Decker seconds. Motion carried by voice vote. Ms. Bernard also thanked the Commission and the Council for approving the new horse trailer.

10. **OLD BUSINESS**

11. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. **Joyce Leon-Human Resources Director-Policy revisions.**

Joyce Leon appears before the Commission to revise the Disciplinary actions and separations which outlines the progressive discipline, and part time hours. Commissioner Decker moves to approve. Commissioner Kora seconds. Motion carried by voice vote.

C. **Mitchell Bishop-Economic Development-Permission to request funds from the County Council for a replacement lighting grant.**

Mitchell Bishop appears before the Commission to inform them of the replacement lighting grant and requests permission to seek matching funds from the Council. Commissioner

D. **Sheriff Mike Mollenhauer-Consideration of contract permitting Special Detail staffing assignments between LaPorte County Fair and Sheriff's Department.**

Sheriff Mollenhauer appears before the Commission and requests signatures for Special Detail Contract. Attorney Friedman indicates he has worked on the contract and would recommend approval. Commissioner Decker moves to approve. Commissioner Kora seconds. Motion carried by voice vote.

E. **Commissioner Milsap-Consider requesting IURC review of staffing levels at NIPSCO maintenance hubs and review of NIPSCO response times to recent weather outages.**

Commissioner Milsap reiterates that there were many complaints regarding the NIPSCO response time during recent heavy storms and that, as a result of these complaints, he requested that Attorney Friedman file a request with the IURC Commission to investigate NIPSCO's response to the latest emergency outages and to ensure that there is proper staffing at the local maintenance facility and the call center to handle these kinds of emergencies. Commissioner Kora moves to approve. Commissioner Decker seconds. Motion carried by voice vote.

F. **Consider removal of "acting" status from various dept. heads.**

Attorney Friedman indicated to the Commission that it was time to consider the acting status of various department heads that was implemented at the first Commissioner's meeting. Commissioner Decker moves to remove all the acting statuses. Commissioner Kora seconds. Motion carried by voice vote.

G. **Fran Tibbot-EMA-Update on Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.**

Fran Tibbot appears before the Commission to update the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. She distributed a CD of said plan to the Commissioners for their review. She further informed the Commission that they will have a booth at the LaPorte County Fair.

H. Mike Yacullo-Engineer-Permission to request County Council approval to spend \$1.5 Million on rehabilitation of the Franklin St. Lift Bridge in Michigan City out of the Major Bridge Fund.

Mike Yacullo appeared before the Commission to request permission to approach the Council. The estimated cost is a cap of 1.5 Million Dollars and he says the funding is available in the Major Bridge Fund. Commissioner Kora moves to approve. Commissioner Decker seconds. Motion carried by voice vote.

Request Commissioner's signature on the Engineering Design Services contract with H.W. Lochner for the design of the rehabilitation of the Franklin St. Lift Bridge.

Mr. Yacullo then requested this item be tabled.

Request Commissioner's signature on the Sanitary Sewer Maintenance Agreement with Michigan City Sanitary District regarding the sanitary sewer installed at CR 950 W. and CR 400 N.

Mr. Yacullo indicated to the Commission that he submitted the agreement to Attorney Friedman for review and that this is the final draft and the Sanitary Board signed it at their meeting. Attorney Friedman indicates to the Commission that he would recommend approval of the agreement and that it is an excellent example of collaboration between the two entities. Commissioner Kora moves to approve. Commissioner Decker seconds. Motion carried by voice vote.

I. Consider closure of LaPorte County offices on July 5, 2013.

Attorney Friedman indicates that Human Resources has not recommended that the offices be closed, but that department heads can allow employees to take the day off if they have vacation time coming. Commissioner Kora moves to approve. Commissioner Decker seconds. Motion carried by voice vote.

J. Resolution regarding Rainy Day Fund.

Commissioner Kora reads the Resolution regarding the Rainy Day Fund. Commissioner Decker moves to approve. Commissioner Kora seconds. Motion carried by voice vote.

12. PUBLIC COMMENTS

John Mills- Appeared before the Commission to inform the Commission about his brick program for the Save the Barn he requested a booth at the fair. Commissioner Milsap informed Mr. Mills that the Commissioner's cannot grant a booth at the Fair, that he would have to speak with the Fair Board and the Save the Barn Committee.

Nick Meyer-NIPSCO Director of External Communications-Appeared before the Commission to address the complaints in the letters read during the Correspondence portion of the meeting. He informed the Commission that NIPSCO feels the Community deserves a reliable and safe source of energy. He indicated that nearly 1/4 of their customers were without electricity as a result of the storms. He stated they had 3100 individual repairs that needed to be made. He said they had 900 field personnel that were working around the clock. He indicated that customers are able to call the 800 number to report an outage. He agreed that staffing needs to be at an adequate level but indicated that the cost of payroll should be considered so that cost is not passed on to the rate payers if they are not busy due to the lack of a storm. He indicated that NIPSCO is eager to address the concerns of both the Commission and their customers. He then fielded questions and comments from the Commission.

13. COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

Commissioner Decker commends Officer Arnold for his actions, and he also commends NICTD for their fast repair of the tracks in that incident. He said we have outstanding people in this county that do their jobs well and don't look for a pat on the back. He thanked all who work for the county.

Commissioner Kora thanked the Auditor and the Treasurer for keeping them updated on the financial information and for working with Mr. Cender to crunch the numbers. He expressed a desire to find a resolution within the next couple of months. He said it's very important to have accurate numbers. He further indicated that it is important for the county to be financially stable to attract new businesses.

Commissioner Milsap thanked all LaPorte County Emergency Service personnel that were on duty and responded to the storm. He said it is cooperation and dedication that our employees and resident's put together to make things work. He further expressed his pleasure and appreciation to the people doing the fly-over for the parade. He indicated that the U.S. Military have supplied jets for the fly-over for the past 30 years and yesterday he emailed Congresswoman Jackie Walorski asking her to see if there was any way to overturn this decision. He indicated that the fly-over is a wonderful tradition that allowed spectators to salute our men and women of the Military.

14. ADJOURN

Commissioner Decker moves to adjourn. Commissioner Kora seconds and wishes everyone a Happy 4th. Motion carried by voice vote.

EXAMINED AND APPROVED BY THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
COUNTY OF LA PORTE, INDIANA
DATE _____

[Handwritten signatures and names]
Auditor
INDIANA