



# BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

## LAPORTE COUNTY

555 Michigan Avenue, Suite 202

LaPorte, IN 46350-3400

Phone: (219) 326-6808 ext. 2229 – FAX: (219) 326-9103

**Willie Milsap,**  
President

**Dave Decker,**  
Vice President

**Dr. Vidya Kora,**  
Member

**PLEASE TURN OFF ALL CELL PHONES**

### MINUTES

#### LAPORTE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Wednesday July 16, 2014

To be held at 6:00 p.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**  
EMA Director Butcher led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **ROLL CALL**  
All Commissioners are present.
4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**  
Commissioner Kora added Request from LaPorte County Hazmat under new business. Commissioner Kora moved to approve the agenda with the changes. Commissioner Decker seconds. Motion carried by voice vote.
5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
  - A. **July 2, 2014.**  
Commissioner Decker moved to approve. Commissioner Kora seconds. Motion carried by voice vote.
6. **CLAIMS**
  - A. **Payroll Ending 07/04/14-\$989,514.35**
  - B. **Miscellaneous Claims-\$2,328,335.18**  
Commissioner Decker moves to accept the claims as presented. Commissioner Kora seconds. Motion carried by voice vote.
7. **DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS**

**Tim Morgan**-Parks-Appeared before the Commission to update them on the condition of Luhr Park after the storm. He indicated that many trees were downed causing them to close the park for safety purposes. He said he is working with the County's insurance adjuster.

**Barbara Dean**-She apologized for not explaining what e-recording is and what an e-recording vendor does and she went on to explain those two things to the Commissioners.

**Larry Butcher**-EMA-Appeared before the Commission to discuss the issues in Kingsford Heights because of the storm. He indicated that the storm damage was tremendous in Kingsford Heights. He stated there were to F1 tornadoes as determined by the National Weather Service. He also requested signature on the EMPG Salary Reimbursement Grant. Attorney Friedman indicated that he would review the grant and get it on the agenda for the next meeting. He stated that they used the funds from a grant to purchase cameras and tablets to assist them in damage assessment. He stated the funds for the Local Mitigation Grant have been released. He said the siren in Fish Lake is awaiting the electric company to assist in placement and running electric. He said the Michigan City Boat Race is coming up and EMA will be involved in that. He said they will also participate in the St. Anthony Hospital for the annual preparedness month. He said in September there will be a full scale exercise in conjunction with IU Health.
8. **CORRESPONDENCE**  
None
9. **REQUESTS**

**Mike Mollenhauer**-Sheriff-Request for payment of sick days for Jennifer Biggs upon retirement.  
No one from the Sheriff's Department appeared. Commissioner Kora moves to table the request. Commissioner Decker seconds. Motion carried by voice vote.
10. **OLD BUSINESS**

11. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. **Nancy Hawkins-Treasurer-Joie Winski-Auditor-Consideration for Contract with Low & Associates.**

Auditor Winski and Treasurer Hawkins appeared to ask the Commission to consider a contract with Low & Associates. Auditor Winski indicated that the contract is for new tax software. She stated it is sorely needed. She indicated that they are not happy with Manatron and that they are outdated. She indicated that it's less money than our present yearly contract. The other contract, she said, is expired. A representative of Low appeared to explain his business to the Commission. Commissioner Decker moves to approve. Commissioner Kora seconds. Motion carried by voice vote.

B. **Update on county financial situation-Cender & Company.**

Attorney Friedman indicated that he received an email from Mr. Cender late in the afternoon, Mr. Cender requested it be made of record. "Board of Commissioners you have requested that we update the cash flow statements for LaPorte County's property tax funds. We have a substantial portion of those schedules completed, but have been requested by LaPorte County Auditor, Joie Winski, if we could meet with her to go over the information prior to our making a formal report. We are requesting two additional weeks to meet with Ms. Winski, and to finalize our report for your August 6, 2014 meeting. Based on our preliminary analysis, we estimate, subject to finalization of our cash flow statements, the County's general fund will end the year at a break even amount, after proposed transfers are made from certain settlement funds that require being made to general fund prior to December 31, 2014. This initial conclusion is still subject to final property tax collections for 2013 due in August 2014, all 2014 property tax collections unless tax payer refunds on settle appeals between now and the end of the year. LaPorte County received good property tax collections distributions in April 2014 of \$21, 209,419.00 representing 2013 tax distributions, and in June 2014 of \$19,170,197.00 representing the first installment of the 2014 property taxes, which is a 67% collection rate net that the circuit breaker credits for the first half of 2014. We believe this is good news, considering the back log of the past 7 years or more in property tax assessments, billings, and collections, resulting from the property tax assessment litigation and various appeals. With limited funds on hand, the county will need to continue to manage its budget and expenditures wisely. The County also has other fund balances on hand as of June 30, 2014 that can be used to support County operations if required, including CADGIT fund, \$1,167,143.00, CEDIT fund \$3,446,741.00, Riverboat admission funds \$2,309,589.00 and WINTAX fund of \$908,588.00. In the meantime please contact us should you have any questions. I plan to attend your Board of Commissioners meeting on August 6, 2014." Commissioner Kora indicated that he is looking forward to the formal report.

C. **Jeff Hamilton-Hazmat- Request for purchase of trailer-**

Commissioner Kora moves to approve. Commissioner Decker seconds. Motion carried by voice vote.

12. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**John Forney** appeared before the Commission to discuss the potential misuse of a County easement. Commissioner Decker indicated that he should be sure it is an access and then go to the Sheriff to have the vehicles blocking the easement towed.

13. **COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS**

Commissioner Decker stated he just returned from the NACO meeting in New Orleans. He stated there was a lot of discussion over road funds. He stated that good roads are key to Economic Development. He said it was a very good conference.

Commissioner Kora thanked the Treasurer, Assessor, and Auditor for getting the property tax situation under control. He said if we keep saying we are broke it doesn't look good for our county, he said he was very happy with the possibility of breaking even at the end of the year.

Commissioner Milsap thanked the Emergency Service personnel who worked together to take care of the storm damage. He stated the tornado touched down in two spots in our area. He said he was pleased with the zero loss of life and attributed that to our Emergency Service Staff. He went on to thank everyone for attending the Fair.

14. **ADJOURN**

Commissioner Decker moved to adjourn. Commissioner Kora seconds. Motion carried by voice vote.