



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

LA PORTE COUNTY

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Richard Mrozinski,
President

Michael Gonder,
Vice President

Dr. Vidya Kora,
Member

MINUTES

LA PORTE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Wednesday, December 6, 2017 at the La Porte County Complex Meeting Room #3 at 10:00 a.m.

CALL TO ORDER

President Mrozinski called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Mrozinski asked Mike Seitz to lead the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence in honor of those who lost their lives on Pearl Harbor Day which led to WWII.

ROLL CALL

Secretary Diane Gonzales called the roll: Commissioner Gonder - Present; Commissioner Kora - Present; Commissioner Mrozinski - Present. Quorum present therefore meeting commenced.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Kora motioned to approve the agenda with the addition of under New Business of a donation to the USS Indiana. Commissioner Gonder seconded. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 15, 2017 MINUTES

Commissioner Gonder motioned to approve the minutes from the November 15th meeting. Commissioner Kora seconded. Motion carried.

CLAIMS

Secretary Gonzales stated there were five Wednesdays in the month of November therefore two payrolls were read. Payroll ending 11-17-2017 - \$1,122,909.17 and then 12-1-2017 - \$1,135,025.23. Miscellaneous -\$1,632,227.40. Commissioner Kora motioned to approve the claims as read. Commissioner Gonder seconded. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mike Seitz - Economic Development - Updated the Commissioners with information on this year's activities done by himself and Mary Jane Thomas from January to December. Projects that were submitted throughout the year. President Mrozinski praised both Mike and Mary Jane as well as Mitch Bishop, County Planner, for the great job they've been doing.

DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS

Jay Sullivan - County Engineer - Accompanied by **Steve Eyrick** - Adult Probation and **Rich Gramarossa** - Stationary Engineer - Floor Plan handed out for Commissioners' information. Adult Probation is currently in three different locations in the County Complex building. The Floor Plans show all offices together in one place. Rich Gramarossa requested permission to start demolition on current rooms to begin this process moving forward - granted.

ORIGINAL

Jay continued updating the Commissioners with a report on the Franklin Street Bridge. Piping is in, contractor doing cleanup work now. Wiring will be next. Bridge 18 inspection update. Rolling Prairie LUST - phone calls are made once a week. Waiting on approval from the state. Jay stated he will check with Weaver Consultants who submitted the paperwork for the county. Final tracings are in for the 400 N. and Johnson Road Project, possibly April 2018 will be the beginning of this project. Jay also reported INDOT notified him of the 35 Bridge will have repair work done on it. Parking area underneath will be closed. Won't take place until 2018. Two bids have come in for the Community Crossings Grant on paving Johnson Rd. President Mrozinski praised Jay as well for a job well done.

George Watkins - Veterans Service Officer - Reminded everyone of Pearl Harbor Day, please fly flags at half-staff from sunrise to sunset. Also reminded all about the Portage WorkOne Job Fair on December 7th. Scams have been reported by veterans - be aware! If you need a printed ID card go to www.vets.gov.

Bob Cutler - County Coroner - Announced a Drug-Free Partnership meeting will be taking place in Michigan City at the Nipsco building today. Andrew McGuire, EMS, will be speaking as well as Bob on the drug issue in our county. He also requested permission to send a deputy coroner to Indianapolis for drug training, the amount will not exceed \$620 from the Commissioners' Educational Instructional Training account. Commissioner Kora motioned to approve after it was confirmed money is available in this account. Commissioner Gonder seconded. Motion carried.

Andrew McGuire - EMS Director - Requested signatures on a software license agreement, Interact Public Safety Systems. Attorney Biege stated he did not believe approval was needed just a notification was given.

Larry Butcher - EMA Director - Announced RAVE notification will now replace the phone tree that has been used previously to notify employees of inclement weather or emergencies. Not all employees have signed up.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

REQUESTS

Howard Conley - Springfield Township Trustee - Requested assistance with gaining an emergency gate to I-94 at 350 W. and 1000 N. during an emergency for the Springfield Township Volunteer Fire Department. Howard asked for a letter of support from the Commissioners to the Federal Government. Commissioner Kora asked Attorney Biege to verify where the letter of support needs to go then made a motion to send the letter on behalf of the Commissioners for support which will be signed by the President. Commissioner Gonder seconded. Motion carried.

Rich Gramarossa - Stationary Engineer - Considered contract renewals for the upcoming 2018 year. No changes to be made except with Ryan's for fire alarms, sprinklers, fire extinguishers and fire pumps instead of the previous communications company that provided service. Rich requested renewals pending Attorney Biege's approval. Commissioner Kora motioned to approve the request. Commissioner Gonder seconded. Motion carried. President Mrozinski praised Rich for the great job he has done overseeing 13 buildings for the county.

OLD BUSINESS

Mitch Bishop - County Planner - Two bids were opened for the Community Crossings Grant for Johnson Road pavement project. Seven mile project from Highway 35 to Highway 20 on Johnson Road. Attorney Biege read into the record bid of \$1,094,144.16 from Walsh & Kelly then \$1,139,712.51 from Reith-Riley Construction. Commissioner Kora motioned for both bids to be accepted and reviewed by Bob Young, Highway Department and Mitch Bishop, County Planner then brought back for presentation. Commissioner Gonder seconded. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Matt Deitchley - INDOT Communications Director for Northwest Indiana area - Reported on Highway 20 accidents. Significant traffic has been noticed in recent years. Distracted driving has become a major issue. INDOT has been working with local businesses, citizens, Indiana State Police, La Porte County Sheriff's Department as well as local and state leaders to come up with solutions. Several suggestions to reduce accidents on this stretch of highway have been to add traffic signals and a center turning lane running down the middle of Highway 212 all the way to State Road 2. Studies have shown on this type of highway through a rural area

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accidents increase when more traffic signals are added. This option is not being considered at this time. A center turning lane would be great but the challenge is acquiring the land from all of the homes and businesses for the width to make this happen. The "ballpark" figure if this would be done could be around 50-60 million dollars in cost. The greatest areas of need are being looked at first. Accomplished so far have been in 2016 added signage for "No trucks in the right lane." School signs near Renaissance Academy. In August of 2017 rumble strips were installed. Matt stated Sheriff Boyd has been invaluable in terms of patrols, controlling speed. Resurfacing projects are scheduled for 2018 for Highway 212 to State Road 2. A turn lane will be added at 400 W. in front of Renaissance Academy. In 2019 there will be an interchange at US 20 and State Road 2. Statistically one of the worst intersections in the state in terms of injury accidents. In 2022 a left turn lane will be installed between 325 W. and 300 W. Commissioner Kora thanked Matt for the update he requested. Commissioner Gonder asked about barriers being used if majority of the accidents have been caused by crossing the center line. Matt responded by saying the challenge with barriers are again with width of the road along properties. President Mrozinski asked Sheriff Boyd for his response. **Sheriff Boyd** stated Matt and INDOT have been fantastic. Thanks to Senator Mike Bohacek, State Representatives Ed Soliday and Ryan Dvorak. Also praised the media for getting the word out on the 12 mile stretch - I-94 to State Road 2 - of road that can be very dangerous. Sheriff Boyd stated there is not a design flaw on this part of Highway 20. Majority are out-of-state drivers avoiding construction on I-94 and/or the Toll Road or are just unaware of the roads.

Mitch Bishop - County Planner - Considered Ciorba Group sidewalk project and StructurePoint Bridge 18 construction inspection contracts. Attorney Doug Biege had reviewed both contracts. Commissioner Kora motioned to approve the contracts. Commissioner Gonder seconded. Motion carried.

President Mrozinski considered Second Amendment of Interlocal Cooperation Agreement on the Triangle Transit. Attorney Biege stated agreement is just a continuation from the original agreement and first amendment in January 2015. Commissioner Kora motioned to approve the agreement. Commissioner Gonder seconded. Motion carried. Michigan City, City of La Porte, La Porte County and Purdue University Northwest are on the agreement.

Commissioner Kora made a motion to donate \$1,000 in 2018 from the La Porte County Convention & Visitors' Bureau to honor the USS Indiana which sailed 70 years ago during WWII. The USS Indiana is the 16th Virginia Class nuclear submarine and the fourth US Navy ship to be named USS Indiana. Commissioner Gonder seconded. Motion carried.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

Commissioner Kora wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.


Commissioner Gonder wished Rich safe travels.

President Mrozinski wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Kora motioned to adjourn at 11:13 a.m. Commissioner Gonder seconded. Motion carried.

EXAMINED AND APPROVED BY THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
COUNTY OF LA PORTE, INDIANA
DATE 12-20-17



ATTEST: _____

Auditor

LA PORTE COUNTY, INDIANA

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