



**LA PORTE COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**
555 Michigan Avenue, Suite 202
La Porte, IN 46350-3400
Phone: (219) 326-6808 ext. 2229

**Dr. Vidya Kora,
President**

**Sheila Brillson Matias,
Vice President**

**Richard Mrozinski,
Member**

LA PORTE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MINUTES
Wednesday, April 17, 2019 La Porte County Complex Meeting Room #3 at 6:00 p.m.

President Vidya Kora called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chief Deputy Auditor Kristie Deckard called the roll: Commissioner Brillson Matias – Present; Commissioner Mrozinski – Present; Commissioner Kora – Present. Quorum present therefore meeting commenced.

Considered the agenda. Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve the agenda. Commissioner Brillson Matias seconded. Motion carried.

Considered approval of April 3, 2019 minutes. Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Brillson Matias seconded. Motioned carried.

Chief Deputy Auditor Kristie Deckard read the claims with Payroll ending 4/9/2019 - \$1,222,376.49 and miscellaneous claims of \$2,491,541.28. Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Brillson Matias seconded. Motioned carried. President Kora stated repairs of the Franklin Street Bridge were included in the miscellaneous amount.

Public Comments:

Steve Grott – 4304 N 400 E - Rolling Prairie – Questioned as to how Veterans groups were notified for the week of the fair. Charles Martin – American Legion was in attendance with Steve.

Paul Przybylinski – 1716 Washington Street – Michigan City – Read a statement into the record opposing NIPSCO rate case. ***Letter attached to minutes

Department Head Comments:

Kathy Chroback - Clerk of the Circuit Court - Reported on the County Election Board meeting held on Monday, April 15, 2019. Issues pertaining to the Voter Registration office were discussed in an open meeting to the public.

Heather Stevens - Voter Registration - Stated she was informed by HR that she was allowed “comp time” but later was told she was not allowed “comp time.”

Requests: None

Old Business:

Considered recommendation of Class 11/12 bids – Bob Young – Highway Department. Commissioner Sheila Brillson Matias spoke on behalf of Bob Young. **Class 11 – Bituminous Materials:** Two bidders – Bit-Mat Products of Indiana and Asphalt Materials. Lowest bid only accepted therefore bid was awarded to Bit-Mat Products of Indiana. **Class 12 – Hot Asphalt Concrete:** Two bidders – Rieth-Riley Construction Company, Inc. and Walsh & Kelly. Lowest bid only accepted therefore bid was awarded to Rieth-Riley Construction Company, Inc. Commissioner Brillson Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Mrozinski seconded. Motioned carried.

Considered Ordinance to amend zoning map – Pritz family, Petitioner. Attorney James Masters spoke for the Petitioner. President Kora asked what type of homes would be built. Mr. Masters said 3 bedrooms/2 baths at approx. \$180,000 each unit. President Kora stated there is a need for new housing. Commissioner Brillson Matias asked when the retention pond project was completed. Commissioner Mrozinski asked what will keep the run off from the development from going into the wetland. Surveyor Tony Hendricks stated no longer use “curb and gutter” for water run-

ORIGINAL

off to go into a retention pond instead for this low impact development more of a swale with a ribbon curve will be done. There is a 50 foot buffer between the development and the wetland. President Kora opened for Public Comment. After hearing none, Commissioner Brillson Matias motioned to approve on second and final reading. Commissioner Mrozinski seconded. Motioned carried with two yes and one abstain. President Kora abstained from voting. ***Ordinance 2019-9

Update from County Attorney Shaw Friedman on La Porte County's Intervention in NIPSCO electric rate case (Cause No. 45159) pending before the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission. A hand out was distributed to the Commissioners as well as a Powerpoint presentation. Evidentiary hearing in this case has been moved to Tuesday, April 30th. None of the issues important to La Porte County have been resolved, however, preparation will continue for the hearings on April 30th. Shaw stated the importance of the county's intervention to both the Commission and the viewing public. "La Porte County has had a high degree of success in past cases dating back to the service centers case in 2002 where we were successful at blocking NIPSCO's arbitrary plan to close down the maintenance hub on State Road 2 which, I'm proud to tell you, is still fully functioning and fully staffed today." The ratepayers in North West Indiana pay some of the highest rates in the state. One slide showed NIPSCO's electric rates were 2nd highest in the state 12 years ago in 2007 with another slide showing continued both in 2013 and even as late as July of 2018. County is currently waiting on a ruling from the IURC on what is known as a Motion to Compel NIPSCO to turn over certain documents to the county. NIPSCO is proposing to de-commission the Michigan City Gen station earlier than 2035 which is now set for 2028. That is a plant assessed at \$100 million dollars with 150 good paying jobs. There are various natural gas lines that run through La Porte County that demonstrate why Kingsbury Industrial Park would be a perfect location for a new natural gas fired electric gen station rather than somewhere outside NIPSCO service territory.

New Business:

Considered Ordinance to vacate Lefeber Farms, LLC – Anthony Novak. President Kora opened the floor for Public Comment on this Ordinance. Hearing none, Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve on first and final reading. Commissioner Brillson Matias seconded. Motioned carried. ***Ordinance 2019-11

Considered proposed agreement between Fair Board (Agriculture Association) and Fairgrounds Management and Events Corporation nonprofit board and County regarding Fairgrounds. FMEC Attorney Doug Biege stated this Corporation was created to generate more interest at the Fairgrounds. Eventually the county will take over maintenance of the grounds. This lease has been constructed to give the Fair Board exclusive control over the fairgrounds during the week of the fair, two weeks prior to the fair week and two weeks after the fair. Commissioner Brillson Matias motioned to take this under advisement for further review and no vote was taken.

Considered Resolution regarding the payment of mileage allowance. Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Brillson Matias seconded. Motioned carried. ***Resolution 2019-10

President Kora adjourn at 7:07 p.m.

EXAMINED AND APPROVED BY THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
COUNTY OF LA PORTE, INDIANA
DATE 5-1-2019

ATTEST: [Signature]
Auditor

LA PORTE COUNTY, INDIANA

ORIGINAL

April 8, 2019

Letter to the Editor
News Dispatch
Herald Argus
April 8, 2019

Dear Editor,

Here we go again. This sounds an awful lot like 2002 when NIPSCO suddenly decided to close five maintenance hubs in Northwest Indiana and both the Steelworkers (of which I'm a member) and LaPorte County had to fight that together and we won in front of the Indiana Supreme Court and those maintenance hubs are open to this day..


Now NIPSCO - after other utilities moved to renewables a decade ago - makes the abrupt decision late last year that they're going to close their entire coal fleet that we ratepayers have spent \$1 billion cleaning up with scrubbers and they're going to shift suddenly all to wind and solar, but they're not going to invest any of it here.

So let me get this straight - we NIPSCO ratepayers who pay the 2nd highest rates in the state will see the Michigan City generating station close losing a couple hundred good paying jobs and millions in tax revenues and the company is doing nothing about siting replacement generation in our county?

Anybody who thinks that the City is going to be able to use that contaminated site on which the gen station sits for under a decade is dreaming. Take a look at NIPSCO's Mitchell coal fired station they took off-line in 2002 in Gary. They only demolished it fourteen years later in 2016 and are still cleaning up the site.

Why not look at tearing down the cooling tower and coal conveyor belts and convert that MC Gen Station to wind or solar rather than buying expensive purchased power from outside NIPSCO's service territory? I understand NIPSCO was also considering building a new natural gas fired generating station in LaPorte County near a major gas pipeline and then abruptly dropped that plan. Why?

Thank you LaPorte County Commissioners for intervening in the rate case and asking these tough questions. We deserve answers.

Sincerely,

Paul Przybylinski
Former City Councilman - 2nd Ward
1716 Washington St.
Michigan City, IN 46360
219/877-5143

