

LAPORTE COUNTY COUNCIL
BUDGET HEARINGS
August 21, 2008

The LaPorte County Council met in budget hearing on August 21, 2008, at 8:00 a.m. in the Assembly Room, main floor, LaPorte County Government Complex, LaPorte, Indiana. Council President Mark Yagelski called the budget hearing to order. Council Members present were Jerry Cooley, Rich Mrozinski, Earl Cunningham, Terry Garner, Mark Ludlow and John Jones and Mark Yagelski. Also present were Auditor Teresa Shuter and Chief Deputy Auditor, Rita Layton.

Recorder (104/324)

Barbara Dean, Recorder, affirmed that there are only 100 accounts in the County General 104 budget as she funds the rest of her office through the 324 Fund (Recorder's Perpetuation Fund.) She reported that the Chief Deputy has left her position and she hasn't replaced her which has been a little stressful. Mrs. Dean stated that business is down right now. There was discussion about combining positions and possibly bringing in former employees or a high school senior when business is up instead of filling the position.

Mr. Ludlow asked about the \$30,000.00 in the 324 budget for Extra Hire. Mrs. Dean responded that she put it in for next year because she is trying to help out the new Recorder coming in; the amount requested is the same as she had last year. Mr. Ludlow made a motion to approve the 324 budget as presented. Mr. Cunningham seconded. There was discussion regarding submission of the 324 budget. Mrs. Shuter commented that the Recorder actually doesn't have to submit the 324 budget by statute and the only thing she has included is the \$30,000.00 for Extra Hire which she has done for years. The motion carried 7 – 0 by voice vote.

Surveyor, Drainage Board, Weights & Measures (106/136/138)

Diane Allen, Deputy, reported that there will be a new County Surveyor so the salary went up and she took out Professional Services; everything else remains the same. Mr. Jones made a motion to approve the 200 and 300 accounts in the **106 budget** as presented. Mr. Cunningham seconded. The motion carried 7 – 0 by voice vote.

Mrs. Allen commented that there are no changes except for salaries in the 136 budget. Mr. Ludlow made a motion to approve the 200 and 300 accounts in the **136 budget** as presented. Mr. Garner seconded. The motion carried 7 – 0 by voice vote.

There were no changes except for salaries in the 138 budget. Mr. Mrozinski made a motion to approve the 200 and 300 accounts as presented. Mr. Garner seconded and the motion carried by voice vote 7 – 0.

Building Maintenance (142)

There was discussion with Al Ott, Stationary Engineer, regarding maintenance issues at the jail. Mr. Yagelski stated that a workshop is planned before the September meeting of the Council to discuss these issues further.

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Mr. Ott commented that they are asking for about the same thing as last year but the budget last year was cut by \$207,000.00. Mr. Ott stated that he is coming before the Council at the next meeting for \$88,000.00 for some of these accounts. Mr. Yagelski commented that the cuts were made because some of the money was being spent without Council approval.

Mr. Ludlow stated that he realizes that Mr. Ott is “stuck between a rock and a hard place” and he doesn’t mind Mr. Ott coming back because it helps him as a Councilman know where the expenditures are going. Mr. Ludlow commented that maybe some items need to come out of this budget and put in the individual budgets so that more attention is paid to expenses.

Mr. Cooley asked where the money for remodeling the Hiler Building is coming from. Mr. Ott responded that the request for appropriation is coming before the Council at their next meeting. Mr. Jones stated that maintenance has done a good job; imagine what the cost would have been if one of the architects was brought in and a construction company would have done the job.

Mr. Mrozinski asked if it has been decided what is going downstairs in the Hiler Building. Mr. Ott responded that the only spot left open is where Leadership was; he thinks that the Surveyor is going in this space. Mr. Mrozinski commented that before the project was even started, he had asked about the Veterans Service Officer and had asked that he put in a more accessible space. Commissioner Huston responded that she thought she and Mr. Mrozinski had talked about it and it was decided to move the Veterans Office to the front of the Courthouse. Mr. Mrozinski stated that Mrs. Huston thought it would be a good idea to put the Veterans Office where the Surveyor is in the Courthouse but he thought it would be better idea to put the office in the Hiler Building.

Mr. Cooley asked if everybody is done moving. Mr. Ott responded that Commissioner Hager had asked him about getting Leadership done to move the Surveyor’s Office out of the Courthouse so that the space could be used for absentee voting since it is inconvenient out in the hallway.

The line items in the 142 budget were reviewed and adjusted as follows: Office Supplies (20001) was approved at \$500.00, Gas, Fuel & Oil (20025) was approved at \$4,000.00, Janitorial Services (20028) was approved for \$75,000.00, the Building (20027) line item was eliminated and the \$20,000.00 approved was transferred to Major Repairs, it was recommend that the Repair/Building (20029) be renamed Equipment/Tools and approved for \$25,000.00, Repair/Elevator (20031) was approved for \$30,000.00, Repair Air Handlers (20032) was approved at \$6,000.00, Doors & Windows (20033) was approved for \$10,000.00, Trash Removal (20034) was approved at \$18,000.00, Uniforms (20015) was approved at \$5,000.00, Pest Control/Grounds Maintenance (20036) was approved for \$12,000.00, Water Softener Salt (20065) was approved for \$2,000.00, Travel (30003) was approved for \$600.00, Seminars-Manuals (30051) was approved at \$700.00, Snow Removal (30129) was approved at \$12,000.00, Electric (30040) was approved at \$950,000.00 as requested, Water & Sewage (30060) was approved at \$180,000.00, Maintenance Contracts (30007) was approved at \$5,000.00, Radio Repairs (30022) was

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approved at \$500.00, the Major Buildings (30127) line item was eliminated and \$25,000.00 moved to Major Repairs (30130), Wiring (30128) was approved at \$8,000.00, and Energy Johnson Control (30131) was eliminated and \$10,000.00 as approved last year was moved to Major Repairs (30130) making the total amount transferred and approved for Major Repairs (30130) \$55,000.00.

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to approve the amounts as stated and Mr. Ludlow seconded. Mr. Ludlow stated that the key is that Major Repairs is for repairs and not remodeling. Mr. Cunningham suggested that as Mr. Ott goes through the budget they should try to consolidate line items and try to be more accurate to reduce the number of transfers. The motion carried by voice vote 7 – 0.

Mr. Yagelski complimented Kent Carpenter on the work he has done and the communication to the Council regarding the phone system. Mr. Yagelski asked about vehicles. Mr. Ott stated that there are three (3) vehicles and two (2) go home. Mr. Ott reported that they get their fuel from the Sheriff's Department.

Juvenile Service Center (176)

Judge Tom Alevizos introduced Sharron Dombkowski, Administrative Assistant, Nancy Gettinger, Juvenile Services Director, and Erica Stallworth, Assistant Director.

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to approve the 200 and 300 accounts as presented. Judge Alevizos suggested, in order to save some money, cutting the Food (20039) account. Mr. Cunningham revised his motion to include reducing 20039 from \$40,000.00 to \$20,000.00. Mr. Jones seconded and the motion carried 7 – 0 by voice vote.

Judge Alevizos commented that the 100 accounts reflect changes made in operation of the Juvenile Center; he stated that a ton of money was saved in the Extra Hire and Overtime accounts. Judge Alevizos stated that the former Director decided one year out of the goodness of his heart to give the workers every other weekend off and not to have to follow a schedule like the jail does or anyone else; therefore, part-timers were paid out of the Extra Hire account to cover the weekends. Judge Alevizos commented that the Juvenile Center is running on a straight schedule and they hope to eliminate a lot of Extra Hire.

Mrs. Gettinger stated that she is very impressed with the staff at the Center. She commented that the Juvenile Center was built in the 90's and is starting to show it but they are taking a look at those things.

Judge Alevizos reported that Juvenile Services is in the planning process of what is called graduated sanctions which will change exactly how juvenile probationers are dealt with. He also stated that a pilot grant project is being entered into with four (4) other counties called JDAI (Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative). A reduction in juvenile crime has been shown by attacking it earlier and also by decreasing the number in the detention centers where true felons are kept. Judge Alevizos stated that research has shown that some kids put in the detention centers, and they shouldn't be there, only end up getting worse because they have a new peer group and it's the bad kids.

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Judge Alevizos stated that the State changes also commit to graduated sanctions. He reported that the Center has never charged the Division of Family & Children's Services for kids in the Center because basically they were coming out of the same pot, the local property taxes. Judge Alevizos commented that when HB 1001 passed he immediately stated that the DCS can't use the Center unless they start to pay for it and an agreement was reached whereas \$130.00 per day will be paid to use the Center. Judge Alevizos stated that about five percent (5%) of the operating budget of the Center will be coming back in terms of payments from the DCS now. Judge Alevizos suggested that this money be kept separately so that it can be tracked.

Going further with HB 1001, Judge Alevizos reported that by becoming an approved Center, and because the State is attempting to get reimbursed by the Federal Government, there is a potential for reimbursement for those duly adjudicated kids as well and we may be able to get thirty to forty percent (30% - 40%) of the Center expenses coming back. Judge Alevizos stated that the Center is cheaper than any alternative. Details regarding HB 1001 are still being worked out.

Mr. Cooley asked if some of the maintenance issues are being resolved. Mrs. Gettinger responded that she is putting together a punch list and will meet with Mr. Ott; there are some plumbing issues that she is getting quotes on. Mr. Cooley stated that if the real costs of the Center are to be tracked, it might be best to put maintenance into the budget. Judge Alevizos commented that it would help to show true costs for reimbursement to the Center by other agencies. Mrs. Gettinger thanked the Auditor's Office for helping her obtain information for reimbursement purposes.

Mr. Yagelski asked if there are any cars used by the Center. Judge Alevizos commented that there is one (1) van and (1) car used to transport kids paid for by a DOC grant that are not in good shape; they may be going back. Mr. Yagelski asked if these vehicles are marked. Mrs. Gettinger responded that they are not marked. Judge Alevizos stated that the 1999 van is basically dead and not used. Judge Alevizos reported that all vehicles remain at the Center and he has no problem with putting identification on the vehicles.

Mrs. Gettinger commented that if the vans aren't identified as Juvenile Center vehicles, marking them might not be a problem but she noted that there were some young folks in the community that, when it was known that one of the vehicles belonged to Juvenile Services, keyed the vehicle. Therefore, the thought was that it may be just as well if the vehicles weren't identified. Mr. Yagelski stated that there is a County emblem which wouldn't be identify the vehicle as belonging to the Center.

Circuit Court (148)

Judge Alevizos reported that Care of Inmates (30074) has been cut in half from \$800,000.00 to \$400,000.00. Judge Alevizos stated that the DCS has warned the Court not to cut all of the money in this account as the Court will now be responsible for some fees that they haven't had before. Judge Alevizos stated that he would hope that the Council would allow the use of some of the \$400,000.00 to help start up some juvenile graduated sanctions programs which are designed to cut long term expenses.

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Mr. Yagelski stated that it is understanding that Judge Alevizos would not be incurring employees with the \$400,000.00. Judge Alevizos responded that there is one place where they might; in order to get the program to work right and save all of this money, he was thinking of putting two (2) COMOT III's in the Juvenile Probation Department, not hiring Probation Officers.

Mr. Yagelski asked if grant money would be used to hire someone. Judge Alevizos responded that they might use grant money to fund positions for the program. Mr. Yagelski reminded Judge Alevizos of what happens when someone is hired with grant money and that money goes away. Judge Alevizos stated that there have been people at the Center before and when the grant money went away, that position went away which he is o.k. with. Judge Alevizos commented that if the program saves a lot of money in the long run, he would imagine that the Council would want to keep those positions because they would generate more savings than the cost.

Mr. Jones made a motion to approve the 200 and 300 accounts in the **148 budget** as submitted. Mr. Cunningham seconded.

Judge Alevizos noted that the Jury Administrator is no longer needed so \$5,280.00 was cut and \$4,000.00 of it moved to Extra Hire. Regarding the CASA Program, Judge Alevizos stated that they get \$60,000.00 from the Circuit Court budget and over the course of the last three (3) or four (4) years they have been getting \$42,000.00 from the Indiana Supreme Court so they really are getting about \$102,000.00 per year to run the volunteer program; due to legislation three (3) or four (4) years ago the amount CASA receives has tripled since they used to get \$10,000.00 to \$15,000.00. Judge Alevizos has asked for the CASA budget but they haven't gotten it yet. Chris Nichols, Paralegal/Bailiff, commented that she thinks there is a match on CASA's end and they are able to get the grant money because of the money the County matches.

The motion made by Mr. Jones to approve the 200 and 300 accounts as submitted carried by voice vote 7 – 0. In answer to Mr. Yagelski's question regarding County cars, Judge Alevizos reported that Circuit Court has no cars.

Circuit Court Probation L.P. & M.C. (147/154)

As there are no changes in the 200 and 300 accounts, Mr. Ludlow made a motion to approve the **147 budget** as presented. Mr. Mrozinski seconded. The motion carried by voice vote 7 – 0.

Mr. Ludlow, as there were no changes, made a motion to approve the 200 and 300 accounts in the **154 budget** as presented. Judge Alevizos commented that because of HB 1001 there is a whole lot of work that has to be done. This department basically has to write the life history on each kid before anything major happens with their case; otherwise DCS won't pay anything for reimbursement. Judge Alevizos stated that any delinquency plans have to be done earlier and has to be run through the DCS as they have veto power; additionally that will tie the local Judges hands because unless they do what the DCS wants, the County will have to pay for it.

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Judge Alevizos reported that our Probation Officers already have a caseload considerably higher than the national average; because of saving money in the long run the thought is that it might be good to put one (1) or two (2) COMOT III's in place to gather the information on each kid. Mr. Ludlow suggested that Judge Alevizos present a proposal.

Mr. Cunningham seconded Mr. Ludlow's motion for approval. The motion carried by voice vote 7 – 0.

Mr. Ludlow asked about cars; there are two (2) vans, one in the Michigan City Office and one in the LaPorte Office and they are not taken home. Bill Briggs, Chief Probation Officer, reported that the lease was renewed and the vans replaced in January. Mr. Cunningham asked if the vehicles are marked LaPorte County. Mr. Ludlow commented that with leased vehicles, he isn't sure you would want the stickers on the sides of the cars; he suggested stickers for the windows. Mr. Yagelski stated that if this department was a business he could understand the lease program and writing the vehicles off, but why do we lease. Judge Alevizos responded that they were leased when he got here. Mr. Ludlow stated that if you don't go over on the mileage, it is actually cheaper to lease. Mr. Yagelski asked if a magnetic sign could be used. Mrs. Huston asked if the Council wanted magnetic signs. It was decided to get window emblems.

MS4 (161)

Rick Brown, MS4 Coordinator, reported that he is asking for an approximate 7.2% increase overall; basically the majority of the increase is in Mileage and Telephone; in order to look at the construction projects you need to be in the County driving around. Mr. Brown commented that the State is looking at more education so more brochures, etc. will also be needed. Mr. Brown stated that 88% if the budget is actually reimbursed by the other entities.

Mr. Yagelski if all ninety-two (92) counties have complied regarding MS4 Directors. Mr. Brown answered that those counties with the larger cities have; he stated that his opinion is the reason they have complied is that they have storm water fees and we don't have them here. Mr. Brown commented that his budget is minimal compared to the rest of the State. There was some discussion regarding storm water fees.

Mr. Ludlow made a motion to leave Office Supplies (20001) at \$700.00, to leave Professional Services (30135) at \$5,300.00, to approve \$2,500.00 for Mileage (30018), to approve \$1,200.00 for Telephone (30004), to leave the Postage (30002) at \$800.00 and to leave the Educational Instructional Training (30027) at \$1,800.00 and if there are other things needed, Mr. Brown can come to the Council with a list of those items. Mr. Cunningham seconded. Mr. Brown stated that there is approximately \$1,900.00 in the Non-reverting Fund established for permit fees. The motion carried 7 – 0 by voice vote.

Coroner (107)

John Sullivan, Deputy Coroner, stated that the current Coroner is a doctor and the two (2) candidates running for this position are not; therefore the salary will be less. The 107 budget was reviewed by line item. Mr. Sullivan reported that by the year 2010 the Federal Government is requiring that all two-way radios be narrow band 12.5.

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Mr. Jones made a motion to approve the 107 budget as presented. Mr. Cunningham seconded. The motion failed 0 – 7.

Mr. Ludlow made a motion to zero out Uniforms (20015), to zero out Mileage (30018), to zero out Radio Repairs (30022) to leave \$3,000.00 in Emergency Equipment (30034) and to follow Mr. Jones motion and leave the increases as reflected in red which would mean approving Gas, Fuel & Oil (20025) at \$6,000.00, Toxicology Lab (30031) at \$7,000.00, X-Ray, Lab, Morgue (30032) at \$15,000.00, Autopsy (30033) at \$75,000.00, Dues (30009) at \$300.00 and Equipment Radio (30021) at \$3,000.00 and to approve \$3,000.00 for Emergency Equipment (30034) not reflected in red. Mr. Ludlow amended his motion to include approval of \$250.00 for Uniforms (20015). Mr. Jones seconded and the motion carried by voice vote 7 – 0.

Mr. Yagelski asked about vehicles. Mr. Sullivan answered that the Coroner has one (1) 1996 Chevy Suburban. Mr. Yagelski asked if Mr. Sullivan is driving this vehicle home. Mr. Sullivan responded that he does ninety-five percent (95%) of the removals and when there is an accident or autopsy he leaves here and goes to St. Anthony's or St. Joe; when he is at work at the LaPorte Fire Department the vehicle is in LaPorte and on those days the deputies who live in LaPorte come to get the vehicle at the fire station. Mr. Cunningham stated that the vehicle should be parked at the Courthouse and Mr. Sullivan can drive his own vehicle home. When asked if the vehicle was marked, Mr. Sullivan responded that it is not marked as it could draw attention to crime scenes but he would be o.k. with putting on a County emblem.

Mrs. Layton, for clarification, asked on the first motion if all of the members said "Nay." The answer was "Yes."

Human Resources (162)

Joyce Leon, Director, informed the Council that the amount she submitted for Dues (30009) should be \$215.00 and not \$125.00. Mrs. Leon stated that the County has a policy that says we have an EAP (Employee Assistance Program) and we actually don't; she would like to have \$19,830.00 for Professional Services added to her budget; she reported that we have sent employees through this program this year and the Department Heads had to find money to pay for it. Mrs. Leon commented that she doesn't know who is supposed to pay for it but they come to her to be referred. Mr. Jones questioned if the employee's own personal insurance or the County medical insurance should cover this service; the EAP is a program of referral so they can get the professional services that are appropriate. Mr. Jones stated that he knows that the City of Michigan City's insurance covers this item but the City still pays a contract fee and they bid out for this service, for example, to Swanson Center or Madison Center. Mrs. Leon commented that she went through LaPorte Hospital. Mrs. Leon stated that EAP isn't just mental health counseling but financial counseling, divorce and marital problems or anything that affects the employee in a mental state.

Also added to the budget was \$6,975.00 for Drug Testing (31001) and \$1,500.00 for Advertising (30138).

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Mr. Jones made a motion to approve, except for salaries, the 162 budget as submitted. Mr. Ludlow asked about the line item for Literature & Pamphlets and the line item for Books. Mrs. Leon stated that the Literature & Pamphlets (22051) is for training the County employees. Mr. Ludlow asked what the training would be for. Mrs. Leon responded that she will probably provide training on sexual harassment and diversity, etc. Mrs. Leon commented that Books (30140) is for professional development books, employment law, etc.

Mr. Yagelski asked if Mrs. Leon is projecting that she is going to get a copy machine. Mrs. Leon responded that she has a copy machine. Mr. Yagelski asked when this was approved by the Council. Mrs. Leon answered that she didn't buy it but got it when all of the changes regarding the Assessors were made; there was an extra copy machine and Carol McDaniel let her have it. Mr. Yagelski stated that he cannot vote for this budget since it was agreed that copy machines were going to be eliminated; it is supposed to be streamline government across the street. Mr. Yagelski suggested that Mrs. Leon use the copy machine down the hall. Mrs. Leon responded that she does a lot of copying and the copy machine is connected to her fax machine.

Mrs. Leon stated that she wants everyone to understand that everything that comes out of her department is of a confidential nature and she would like that taken into consideration. Mr. Cunningham asked if Mr. Hager or Mrs. Huston have any objections to this copy machine. Mr. Hager commented that he and Mrs. Huston were just discussing it.

Regarding the "Hiler Building" Mrs. Huston stated that since the conversation this morning with Mr. Mrozinski about the Veterans Office, and John Sullivan has said that he will need an office when he is elected since he doesn't have room at his house; she and Mr. Hager were just discussing where to put all of this. She commented that the discussion was to move the Veterans Service Officer and the Coroner into where the Surveyor would have gone and then a room could be made in there for the copy machines.

Mr. Cunningham stated that his question is if the Commissioners have an objection to the copy machine at this time. Mrs. Huston responded that the confidentiality aspect concerns her and the HIPPA laws and stipulations are very strict; what had been talked about were faxes coming to the computer to be printed off. Mr. Yagelski stated that the fax machine is acceptable but the copy machine is not. Mr. Jones commented that there have been cases where if this information is in a shared area; this is a violation and LaPorte County could be highly fined. Mr. Ludlow asked if this copy machine is also a fax. Mrs. Leon responded, "Yes."

Mr. Jones suggested that the Commissioners check with the new insurance carrier to see if there is some provision for mental health reimbursement.

Mr. Ludlow asked Mr. Jones if his motion includes the 400 account. Mr. Jones responded that it does in this particular situation. Mr. Jones amended his motion to approve the 200 and 300 accounts in the 162 budget as reviewed with \$215.00 for Dues

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and Mrs. Leon can come back for the 400 accounts. Mr. Cunningham seconded. The motion carried 6 – 1 with Mr. Yagelski voting “Nay.”

Break

Mr. Cooley had not returned.

Soil & Water (158)

Sheila Batchelor, Office Manager, reported that the only items remaining for the 158 budget since MS4 now has their own budget are salaries and rent. Mr. Ludlow made a motion to approve the 300 account as presented and Mr. Jones seconded. The motion carried by voice vote 6 – 0.

Emergency Management (153)

Mr. Mrozinski asked the reason for Office Supplies going from \$1,000.00 to \$3,000.00 as the Council is trying to reduce this line item unless it is something specific. Paul Young, Director, responded that their printer is getting old and needs to be replaced. Mr. Yagelski stated that the printer should come out of a 400 account. Mr. Ludlow suggested cutting Office Supplies (20001) to \$1,000.00.

Mr. Young commented that he can't stabilize the cost of Gas, Fuel & Oil and has requested an increase of \$2,000.00 by requesting \$5,000.00. Mr. Young reported that his department has just one (1) vehicle. Mr. Yagelski asked if the vehicle is marked. Mr. Young responded that there are magnetic placards that go on it. Mr. Cunningham asked Mrs. Huston to get decals to replace the magnetic signs.

Repair/Maintenance is actually for repairing sirens according to Mr. Young; the request is for \$700.00. Mr. Ludlow asked what the difference is between Repair/Maintenance and Repair/Equipment. Mr. Young responded that this should be one account. Mr. Ludlow suggested eliminating Repair/Maintenance (20020) and moving it all to Repair/Equipment (20030) and make it \$8,500.00. Mr. Ludlow suggested \$50.00 for Freight & Express (30001), \$1,000.00 for Travel (30003), \$250.00 for Printing O/T Office Supplies (30005), leaving Dues at \$150.00, \$100.00 for Subscriptions (30017) and \$1,000.00 for Educational Inst. Training (30027).

Mr. Ludlow made a motion to approve the 153 budget at the levels stated. Mr. Cunningham seconded. The motion carried by voice vote 6 – 0.

Emergency Planning (174)

Jeff Hamilton, Coordinator, stated that he put in money for medical exams, which were done this year through an additional appropriation, and are only required every other year. Mr. Ludlow asked about the increase in Extra Hire from \$4,550.00 to \$7,699.00. Mr. Hamilton stated that if he was out of town there was money set aside for a person to cover on call which must be included in the Extra Hire along with money for the part-time Secretary.

Mr. Ludlow made a motion to approve the 200 and 300 accounts in the 174 budget as presented and to zero out \$4,000.00 for Medical Exams (30110). Mr. Garner seconded. The motion carried by voice vote 6 – 0.

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Mr. Hamilton stated that there are three (3) vehicles that the department is responsible for; a 1998 Suburban, a 2002 Ford Excursion and a 1995 Ford F-700 that pulls the trailer. Mr. Yagelski asked if they are marked; Mr. Hamilton responded, "Yes." Mr. Yagelski asked if they are taken home. Mr. Hamilton responded that he is the only one that drives one home and that is the Suburban since it is better on gas mileage. The gas comes from the Sheriff's Department.

Mr. Hamilton distributed the LEPC budget. Mr. Ludlow made a motion to approve the 2009 grant budget for the LEPC. Mr. Cunningham seconded. The motion carried 6 – 0 by voice vote.

Information Technology (157)

Darlene Hale, IT Director, commented that Technical & Software Support had decreased by approximately \$23,000.00. \$74,801.00 requested in Professional Services is for the proposed project to run fiber out to the County Highway and the Fairgrounds; the Maintenance Contracts line item is up by about \$10,000.00 but this will only be used if the fiber project is completed. Ms. Hale stated that \$6,600.00 requested in Computer is also only needed if the fiber project is approved. The estimated costs are based upon the County Highway digging all of the required trenches for the fiber.

Mr. Ludlow made a motion to approve the 200 and 300 accounts at the 2008 level except for 30107 Technical & Software Support which should be approved at \$230,442.00. Mr. Garner seconded. The motion carried 7 – 0 by voice vote. Mr. Cooley had returned.

Mr. Yagelski suggested that Ms. Hale come back the first of 2009 regarding the fiber project.

Health Department (219/520)

Mr. Ludlow made a motion to approve the 200, 300 and 400 accounts in the **219 budget** as presented. Mr. Cunningham seconded. The motion carried by voice vote 7 – 0.

Mr. Jones made a motion to approve the **520 budget** as presented and Mr. Mrozinski seconded. The motion carried by voice vote 7 – 0.

Paul Trost, Health Department Administrator, reported that his department has no county vehicles.

Mr. Cooley asked what would happen if the Michigan City offices were closed down and services combined. Mr. Trost stated that the department in Michigan City also has vital records which would have to be brought to La Porte. Mr. Trost commented that he isn't so sure any personnel could be combined. Mr. Trost stated that we would want to make sure that clinics were still provided in Michigan City to be close to the people.

CASA: Chris Nichols, Circuit Court Paralegal/Bailiff, in answer to a previous question regarding CASA money, stated that the Director and the Assistant Director of CASA also run the Harmony House program. She explained that the Court isn't involved in Harmony House. A handout was supplied.

Commissioners, GIS, In-house Printing (143/175/181)

Mr. Mrozinski commented that everyone's Office Supplies seem to be going up. Commissioner Barbara Huston stated that they are trying to make office supplies more centralized and that is why the Commissioners had Kemps come over. She asked if it is possible to eliminate the Office Supplies category from the other budgets and put it all in the Commissioners Budget. There was discussion about the approved purchase list from Kemps. Mr. Ludlow commented that a central purchasing agent would be needed. Mr. Yagelski stated that there is an approved budget and the department cannot go over that amount.

Mr. Ludlow made a motion to approve the **143 budget** as amended; Telephone (30004), Mileage (30018), and Legal Fees (30020), were approved at the 2008 levels instead of at the requested increase, Consultant (32044) and Professional Services (30135) were eliminated and Professional Consulting Service (30065) was increased to \$125,000.00, the Other Charges (31015) request of \$200,000.00 was zeroed out from that line item and approved in the Employees Life Insurance (31024) line item, \$40,000.00 requested for the 4-H Program Development (30045) line item was zeroed out with the request to come before the Council from the Win Tax Fund, Soil & Water Conservation (30073) was approved at the requested increase of \$7,100.00; Mrs. Shuter stated that there is a contract, which the Commissioners should have a copy of, with Soil & Water and they are paid quarterly by purchase order. Mrs. Huston produced a letter from Soil & Water with a breakdown of requested items. Mr. Mrozinski seconded the motion.

Mr. Yagelski asked that mileage paid to Commissioner Bohacek be addressed at a Commissioners Meeting. Mrs. Huston stated that Mr. Bohacek has decided that he wants a car.

Mr. Jones abstained from the vote since it pertains to insurance matters. The motion carried by voice vote 6 – 0.

Budget 175 for G.I.S. will be addressed tomorrow.

Regarding the **181 budget**, \$2,000.00 requested for Purchase Equipment is actually for repairs. Mr. Ludlow made a motion to zero out Purchase Equipment (41006) and to approve the amount, \$2,000.00, in Repairs & Maintenance (30013) and to approve the other items as presented. Mr. Jones seconded. The motion carried 7 – 0 by voice vote.

Public Defender (180)

Dave McCain explained that \$56,000.00 more is requested for Professional Services since by state standards two (2) more public defenders are needed and we either make the adjustment or our reimbursement will be decreased. Mr. Cooley stated that the state keeps mandating more and 78% of the County budget is for justice.

Mr. Ludlow made a motion to approve the **180 budget** as presented and Mr. Garner seconded. The motion carried by voice vote 6 – 1 with Mr. Cooley voting, "Nay."

Assessor & Reassessment (109/247)

Chief Deputy Assessor, Judy Anderson, was present in Assessor Carol McDaniel's absence. Mr. Jones made a motion to take these budgets off of the table and Mr. Mrozinski seconded. The motion carried 5 – 2 with Mr. Ludlow and Mr. Garner voting, "Nay."

Mr. Jones made a motion to approve the 200 and 300 accounts as presented in the **109 budget** and Mr. Mrozinski seconded. The motion carried 4 – 3 with Mr. Ludlow, Mr. Garner and Mr. Cunningham voting, "Nay."

Ms. Anderson stated that in the 247 budget, the Other Charges (30120) line item includes the AS2 contract for \$12,000.00, the contract with attorney Meighen for \$12,000.00 and the X-Soft contracts for \$16,000.00 for a total of \$40,000.00. Regarding the Postage (30002) line item, postage is paid for from the Commissioners' budget, but a check should be cut from the Reassessment Fund for reimbursement to the General Fund for those items pertaining to reassessment.

Regarding the GIS Application (30162) line item, Ms. Anderson explained that the \$250,000.00 requested is to cover an aerial fly-over. Melissa Mischke, GIS Coordinator, reported that the last fly-over was done in 2005. Mr. Yagelski commented that the State did the last fly-over. Ms. Mischke stated that the County elected to get better quality pictures and that is why the cost was \$157,000.00.

Mr. Yagelski stated that it wasn't in the original plan for the Assessor to have her own website; this was supposed to be done through GIS. Ms. Mischke responded that it was her understanding that Mr. Bohacek had requested the contract from the Nexus Group, or the X-Soft group, and the contract can be cancelled with 30 or 60-day notice.

Mr. Ludlow asked about \$219,000.00 in Professional Services (30135). Ms. Anderson stated that this amount is for the retrending contract with Nexus which was a four-year contract and is up this year. Ms. Anderson commented that Assessor McDaniel will probably put a bid out in October or November for this service. Mr. Garner commented that he is not in favor of putting the dollar amount in the Professional Services line item until the Assessor comes back before the Council.

Mr. Garner made a motion to approve the **247 budget** as submitted with the exception of zeroing out GIS Applications (30162) and Professional Services (30135), zeroing out Other Charges (30120) and to approve \$24,000.00 for Legal Fees (30020) along with approval of \$56,000.00 for Professional Consulting Services (30065). Mr. Jones seconded. The motion carried by voice vote 6 – 1 with Mr. Ludlow voting "Nay."

G.I.S. Budget (175)

Mr. Ludlow made a motion to approve the **175 budget** as presented with the exception of adding \$200.00 to Dues (30009). Mr. Mrozinski seconded. The motion carried by voice vote 7 – 0.

Township Trustee/Assessor Budgets:

Mrs. Shuter commented that there have been conflicting stories regarding payment of Level II Certification. The Attorney General has stated that the counties should maintain payment of Level II Certification but Tim Rushenburg, Attorney for the DLGF, has sent an official opinion that is in direct contradiction to that of the Attorney General. The DLGF has indicated that the assessing duties are over as of July 1 and there is no reason for the county to maintain Level II Certification for appraising and assessing. Mrs. Shuter reported that one of the townships in another county has already filed a class action lawsuit; the Council should decide if the county will continue to pay Level II.

Mr. Garner stated that it is his understanding that Mike Schultz and Pam Kieft will do all of the measuring. Ms. Anderson commented that they are doing that job right now but she doesn't think that this is something that only two people can do for all of the new building permits that are received county-wide. Mr. Yagelski stated that the Council will have to figure this out as it comes on.

Mr. Ludlow made a motion to zero out the Township Trustee/Assessor Budgets and Mr. Cunningham seconded. The motion carried 7 – 0 by voice vote.

Mr. Ludlow made a motion to recess at 2:40 p.m. and Mr. Cunningham seconded. The motion carried 7 – 0 by voice vote.

EXAMINED & APPROVED BY THE
LAPORTE COUNTY COUNCIL

DATE: _____

ATTEST: _____

Auditor

LAPORTE COUNTY, INDIANA

