

LAPORTE COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

August 24, 2009

The LaPorte County Council met in regular session on August 24, 2009 in the assembly room of the LaPorte County Council Government Complex, 809 State Street, LaPorte, Indiana 46350.

Meeting was called to order by Council President, Mark Yagelski.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Auditor Craig Hinchman had roll call and the following Council Members were present; Mr. Bernacchi, Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Ford, Mr. Garner, Mr. Mrozinski, Mrs. Sosinski and Mr. Yagelski. Also present were Council Attorney Don Baugher, Auditor Craig Hinchman and Chief Deputy Auditor, Mary Ray. Auditor Hinchman declared a quorum.

The Agenda was approved by all Council Members.

The minutes from the July 27, 2009 meeting were approved by all Council Members.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Commissioner Ken Layton requested the council to re-address the budget to include the rent for the Purdue Extension office. Stated that there was an escape clause in the rental agreement.

Commissioner Barb Huston reported that the cross training in the 911 center was almost complete. She also stated that one employee left and they were already two employees short so overtime will be necessary.

She also gave a report regarding one central copy machine. She said it would not be cost or time effective at this time. Also, a privacy issue could be a problem.

Commissioner Mike Bohacek asked the Council in the future if the Commissioners gave approval for the purchase of a certain item, that the Council should approve that item not just a dollar amount. Also stated that the marking of all eligible County vehicles was almost complete.

Auditor Craig Hinchman reported that to go with an electronic pay stub system it would cost the County a \$1,600.00 set up fee and \$.22 cents per stub and if the W-2's were prepared it would be an additional \$.82 per employee. More information to follow at next meeting.

The 2010 budget was discussed by Auditor Hinchman. Commissioner Layton had some additional comments. It was decided that Cender and Company would be at a special Council meeting called for Wednesday, September 2, 2009. Any questions are to be answered at that time.

Coolspring Township Assessor, Pam Kieft read a letter to the Council regarding their decision to eliminate her salary for 2010 due to her not performing her duties and only receive the mandated \$1,000.00. She will appeal.

Mr. Mrozinski also asked that in the public comment section of the meeting, there would be comments, not arguments with the Council and hold the comments to three minutes.

LIAISON REPORTS

Mrs. Sosinski had no report

Mr. Ford had no report

Mr. Mrozinski met with Congressman Donnelly. He also stated that the health care plan would not affect Veterans.

Mr. Garner had no report

Mr. Bernacchi met with Assessor McDaniel regarding the request for her attorney fees to be paid by the county regarding her action against Auditor Hinchman. He also met with the Park and Recreation Department regarding the water grant.

Mr. Cunningham met with Judge Alevizos and with Juvenile Services regarding updated services.

Mr. Yagelski had no report

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Bill Hanna of LaPorte County United Way , and the president of United Way of St. Joseph County, and the Director of the 211 Center of St. Joseph County, and Vickie Berg of the LaPorte Salvation Army all spoke out in favor or St. Joseph County 211 taking over LaPorte County's 211 calls.

Lynn Waters and Plant Manager, Bill Kouts of Indiana Melting & Mfg. reported that they are restructuring their operation and plan to begin operations soon after Labor Day. There should be approximately 44 employees when in full operation. At that time, they should come back to the Council to request tax abatement.

Mike Kobos condemned Coolspring Twp. Assessor Pam Kieft, stated that she is not doing her job, she is usually un-reachable. He spoke strongly against County Assessor Carol McDaniel, stated she should resign. Wants the Council to vote against paying her Attorney fees, they should not support private causes.

Dennis Metheny, Coolspring Township Trustee spoke personally not as Trustee. He condemned Coolspring Township Assessor Pam Kieft for not doing her job. He also stated that he asked four years ago to remove County Assessor McDaniel from office for not doing her job. He did defend McDaniel in her opinion of Pam Kieft. He requested the Council not to pay for Assessor McDaniel's attorney fees.

APPROPRIATIONS OR TRANSFERS OR REQUESTS

LAPORTE COUNTY ASSESSOR

Requested \$3,578.80 to pay for her Attorney fees

Re: Action against Auditor Craig Hinchman

Reassessment fund (247-30020-000-247)

Motion to table

Roll call vote taken

Mrs. Sosinski, Mr. Mrozinski, Mr. Yagelski voted in favor

Mr. Ford, Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Bernacchi, Mr. Garner voted against.

Motion to table was denied

Motion to deny Attorney fees.

Roll call vote taken

Mrs. Sosinski, Mr. Ford, Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Bernacchi, Mr. Garner voted

To deny fees

Mr. Mrozinski, Mr. Yagelski voted to approve fees

Motion to deny fees was approved

LAPORTE COUNTY SHERIFF (Tabled from July 27, 2009)

Requested funds from the following:

#272-20200-105-272 (Riverboat Admission)

Or

#216-20200-105-216 (County Cumulative Capital Development)

For video Recording System for LaPorte County Jail

Miner Electronics \$326,297.59

OR

Requested \$273,230.00 for Communication Company of South Bend

Motion to take off table

Voice vote taken

All members voted in favor

Motion approved

After much discussion, Motion to approve \$275,698.00 to Miner Electronics
ONLY when the County has enough money to fund
Voice vote taken
All members voted in favor
Motion approved

LAPORTE CIRCUIT COURT

Tabled from July 27, 2009 Council Meeting
Requested additional appropriation of \$3,101.00 into
#100-10174-000-148 (Payroll)
To clarify misunderstanding of classification
Motion to take off the table
Voice vote taken
All members voted in favor
Motion approved
Motion to approve request
Voice vote taken
All members voted in favor
Motion approved

MICHIGAN TOWNSHIP ASSESSOR

Requested \$4,352.20 as additional appropriation into the
Office equipment fund for new copier/printer/scanner/fax
#100-41004-000-130
From either Riverboat Win Tax Fund (257-20200-130-257)
OR
Riverboat Admissions Tax Fund (272-20200-130-272)
Motion to approve from Riverboat Admissions
Voice vote taken
All members voted in favor
Motion approved

LAPORTE COUNTY PARKS DEPARTMENT

Transfer Land and Water Grant reimbursement
back into the Red Mill Land & Water Grant Fund
#272-20200-155-272 \$5,000.00
Motion to approve
Voice vote taken
All members voted in favor
Motion approved

LAPORTE COUNTY CORONER

Requested \$40,000.00 additional appropriation

To the Autopsy Account #100-30033-000-107

Requested \$5,000.00 additional appropriation

To the Toxicology Account#100-30031-000-107

Motion to approve both appropriations to pay from
Riverboat Admissions

Voice vote taken

All members voted in favor

Motion approved

CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT

Requested \$3,000.00 be allocated to the Clerk's Record

Perpetuation Account #341-20200-000-341

(Document storage Fund)

Motion to approve

Voice vote taken

All members voted in favor

Motion approved

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Requested the purchase of a vehicle for the District. The Solid Waste Dept.

Is selling their "enviromobile" van. Requested to move

Unused rent funds into a capital account to make the purchase.

Motion to move \$2,984.00

From Rent Account (100-30041-000-158)

TO

Vehicle Purchase Capital Account (100-41002-000-158)

To purchase this vehicle.

Voice vote taken

All members voted in favor

Motion approved

SUPERIOR COURT #1

Requested \$9,160.00 transfer from the Supplemental Adult
Probation Services fund (#335-20200-000-335)

To

Vocational Training Fund (#555-301-000-555)

Motion to approve

Voice vote taken

All members voted in favor

Motion approved

NEW BUSINESS

Entrepreneur Center of Michigan City
Requested \$25,000.00 previously approved by LaPorte County
Commissioners. Funds to come from Council's Choice.
Riverboat Win Tax Fund (257-20200-143-257)

OR

Riverboat Admissions Tax Fund (272-20200-143-272)

Motion to approve request

Roll call vote taken

Mr. Mrozinski and Mr. Cunningham voted in favor

Mrs. Sosinski, Mr. Ford, Mr. Yagelski, Mr. Bernacchi, Mr. Garner voted against

Motion denied

REVIEW OF UNIT BUDGETS

Solid Waste District budget was discussed at length.

Motion to approve budget as presented- minus the 5% raise that was

In the budget.

Roll call vote taken

Mrs. Sosinski, Mr. Ford voted against

Mr. Mrozinski, Mr. Yagelski, Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Bernacchi, Mr. Garner

Voted in favor

Motion approved

Commissioner Ken Layton requested that rent money of \$42,000.00 for The Purdue
Extension Office be put back into the Commissioners budget.

Voice vote taken

All members voted in favor

Motion approved

Several budgets were presented to the Council; a special budget meeting was called
For Wednesday, September 2, 2009 to discuss them after time for review.

OLD BUSINESS

211 CENTER (Tabled from July 27, 2009)

Further discussion on the 211 Center. Transferring the service
From the Lake County Service Center to the St. Joseph County
Service Center \$100,000.00

#257-71001-143-257 (Riverboat Win Tax Fund)

Motion to take off table

Voice vote taken

All members voted in favor

Lengthy discussion followed

Motion to approve contingent on Commissioners approval and signed contract.

Roll Call vote taken

Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Garner voted in favor

Mrs. Sosinski, Mr. Ford, Mr. Mrozinski, Mr. Yagelski, Mr. Bernacchi voted against

Motion denied

COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mr. Yagelski made a motion to “formally” close the budget hearings

Voice vote taken

All members voted in favor

Motion approved

IMPORTANT REMINDER

**THE NEW DATE FOR THE SEPTEMBER COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING IS
NOW MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2009.**

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:30 p.m.