

LAPORTE COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING
APRIL 26, 2010

The LaPorte County Council Meeting was held on Monday, April 26, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. in the Assembly Room of the LaPorte County Government Complex, 809 State Street, LaPorte, Indiana 46350.

Meeting was called to order by Council President, Mark Yagelski

Roll Call was taken by Auditor, Craig Hinchman. Those attending were Mr. Bernacchi, Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Garner, Mr. Ford, Mrs. Sosinski, Mr. Mrozinski, and Mr. Yagelski. Also present were Chief Deputy Auditor, Mary Ray and Council Attorney Don Baugher.

The agenda was amended in order to delete the revisiting of assessment bids, and then was approved by all members.

The March 22, 2010 minutes were approved by all members.

ELECTED OFFICIAL/DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Sheriff Mike Mollenhauer reported that the Sheriff's web site is up and running and now has listed the ten most wanted. He further stated that presently there are over 5000 active warrants. The web site will bring more information to the public and should help with capturing offenders.

The Lake patrol has received a grant for \$30,000.00 to help purchase equipment and possibly a used boat from the City of Michigan City.

Sheriff Mollenhauer is supporting the Avon Foundation for domestic violence which is a continuing problem in our County.

He also commended the employees of the Jail on the recent inspection. The Department of Corrections found -0- violations out of the 220 items checked. They were extremely impressed with the cleanliness, professionally run institution and programs for the inmates. The DOC had a few suggestions to share with the Sheriff. It was suggested that "boats" be purchased for the inmates that must sleep on the floor due to lack of bunks. These "boats" hold the mattresses up off the concrete floor.

He was questioned about the overtime in the department and about the ice machine that needs repair.

Sheriff Mollenhauer was please to announce that since Mayor Chroback doesn't seem have funds to pay her police department for security for the 4th of July parade. He, his Chief Deputy and his reserve Officers will donate their time to provide the parade security. The parade will go on.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dennis Metheny inquired on how much the general fund borrowed from the emergency reserve fund and how much was left. He also stated that departments should live within their budgets and not keep asking for more money throughout the year. He also asked, since we have a hiring freeze, why does the county keep hiring people? Also, people appearing before the Board of Zoning Appeals have been treated very rude. He stated that maybe next year different people should be appointed to that board.

Mike Kobos congratulated the Council for mysteriously solving all the County problems right before the election. He also complained about the rude treatment at the Board of Zoning Appeals. He stated that there are several unsafe houses that should be torn down.

Frank Buss said he had heard rumors that the Conservation building at the fairgrounds was going to be taken over by the County for different purposes. He wanted to speak out against this since it is the only way for them to raise money.

LIAISON REPORTS

Mr. Garner met with the Treasurer who stated the need for funds to prepare and send out provisional tax bills. Since this is being done by a private company, she is saving the County over \$9,000.00 each time a bill is sent. He attended a City Council Meeting to hear their issues. The City has spent over \$236,000.00 on interest on loans they have outstanding. He attended a meeting with Commissioner Barb Huston and PNC regarding a building for their extension office. He also stated that the Sheriff's Pension Fund will be approximately 1 million dollars short. A portion of this is due to the low interest rate of return.

Mr. Bernacchi met with County School Superintendent, Norm Kleist, who will be requesting permission to fill a vacancy in his office due to an employee transferring to the Assessor's Office. Mr. Hamilton will be asking for a transfer of funds, not an additional appropriation, to raze some unsafe houses. He also met with the EMS who stated that training in the process of accepting credit card is going well. Should be up and running by July 1st. He also thanked Sheriff Mollenhauer for "saving the fourth of July parade"

Mr. Cunningham reported meetings with the Prosecutor and Community Corrections.

Mrs. Sosinski reported that County Clerk Lynne Spevak is requesting new computers and software to balance her Child Support Account. The account was not balanced during the previous administration.

Mr. Ford had no report.

Mr. Mrozinski reported on Armed Forces Day to be held in Michigan City on May 15th, He also stated that the Veterans Recognition medals were given to forty- nine Veterans.

Mr. Yagelski stated that there will be an executive meeting on Wednesday, April 28th at 5:00 p.m. with a public meeting following at 5:30 p.m. regarding the tax litigation.

APPROPRIATIONS OR TRANSFERS OR REQUESTS

LAPORTE COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

Requested transfer of funds from Pretrial Diversion/Infraction/deferral

Claims account per the following:

From#343-20200-000-343 to #108-10117-000-108 \$1,013.47

From#343-20200-000-343 to #159-10195-000-159 \$2,433.01

Motion to approve the request

All members voted in favor

Motion approved

LAPORTE COUNTY TREASURER

Requested an additional appropriation into

#100-30005-000-103

For the processing and mailing of the

2009 pay 2010 Provisional tax bill

\$19,000.00

Motion to approve the request

All members voted in favor

Motion Approved

CLERK OF LAPORTE CIRCUIT COURT

Requested the transfer of funds from the Child Support IV-D

Account #571-20200-000-571

Into the Horizon Bank Child Support Account to pay for bank fees \$7,200.00

Motion to approve the request

All members voted in favor

Motion approved

To purchase software from NASA Corporation

\$17,500.00

Motion to approve the request

All members voted in favor

Motion approved

Requested the purchase of 14 phones from the IV-D

Child support account #571-20200-000-571

\$2,625.00

Motion to approve the request

All members voted in favor

Motion approved

Requested the purchase of 5 phones from the Clerk's

Perpetuation Fund #341-20200-000-341 \$925.00
Motion to approve the request
All members voted in favor
Motion approved

LAPORTE COUNTY SCHOOLS

Requested permission to fill the secretarial vacancy in the LaPorte County Board of Education \$ -0-
After a lengthy discussion motion was made to approve the hiring of a part time employee not to exceed thirty hours per week.
Mr. Bernacchi, Mr. Garner, Mr.Cunningham, Mrs. Sosinski, Mr. Mrozinski, Mr. Yagelski voted in favor
Mr. Ford voted against
Motion approved

LAPORTE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Requested the appropriation to fund 370 (Reimbursable Grant)
For the following:
10130 Extra hire/part time \$4,500.00
11007 OASI \$ 400.00
11009 Medicare \$ 100.00
20200 Claims \$8,293.45
Total \$13,293.45

Motion to approve the request
All members voted in favor
Motion approved

LAPORTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Requested funds for a new sound system for the assembly room Of the LaPorte County Government Complex from #272-20200-143-272
(Mrs. Sosinski stated that she thought all the Meetings should be held in the meeting room of the County Government Complex.)
Motion was made to approve funds not to exceed \$13,200.00 (with out restrictions)
Mrs. Sosinski, Mr. Ford, Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Yagelski, Mr. Garner, Mr. Mrozinski voted in favor
Mr. Bernacchi voted against
Motion approved

Revisited the reassessment bids (247-20200-000-247)
A & S, Associates \$1,640,000.00
Tyler \$1,825,400.00
Taken off the agenda

LAPORTE COUNTY PLAN COMMISSION

Requested transfer from Contractors Registration Fund
(246-02061-000-246)

To Unsafe building Fund (357-20200-000-357)

To raze unsafe houses. After lengthy discussion \$60,000.00

Motion to approve

Mrs. Sosinski and Mr. Yagelski voted against

Mr. Bernacchi, Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Ford,

Mr. Mrozinski, Mr. Garner voted in favor

Motion approved

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

COMMENTS BY THE COUNCIL

Mr. Cunningham stated that it has been 108 days since he requested a detailed disbursement report on the Commissary Fund. He asked the Council to have the Council attorney write a letter from the Council to the Sheriff requesting the same.

Motion to request a detailed disbursement report for the period 7/1/2009 to 12/31/2009

All members voted in favor

Motion approved

Mr. Yagelski met with ALCO Television to try and resolve problems. He stated that Verizon out-sources services and there is a language problem that needs to be resolved. He also wanted to correct a misunderstanding regarding the Auditor's Office in Michigan City. He did not vote to close the office, just not to replace the employee.

Mrs. Sosinski said that it has come to her attention that we may have a problem with not reporting the wages of elected officials to the state for unemployment purposes. Elected officials are exempt when it comes to paying unemployment tax on those wages because they may be out of office in four years. She has gotten two different answers from the unemployment office on whether those wages should be reported. In error, some wages were reported in 2008, but it has now been corrected. It came to her attention since allegedly; there is an elected official that is now collecting unemployment while he is collecting an elected salary. She is asking, if possible, to report all elected official's wages to the state. She stated that she pays her taxes and would appreciate everyone else doing the same. Mr. Cunningham asked to address that issue, He stated that he had

been employed by the Honda dealer and when he was laid off, his boss sent him to the unemployment office to sign up for the benefits. He said he has a report from the state stating he did report his earnings. The issue was raised if he was entitled to the benefits and his employer (Honda) did not object. He stated that he still had benefits from the MC schools in a severance check that was also reported on his claim form. He also stated that when this issue surfaced he was leaving on vacation so he sent Mrs. Sosinski the report from the state. He wanted to deal with it upfront since he was going to be gone. If her allegation was regarding Earl Cunningham, he was more than happy to address this tonight. Mrs. Sosinski stated that regardless what a former employer told him Mr. Cunningham is responsible to report any and all income. She stated that she was not specifically speaking of him, there were several other times in the past that 1099's had not been issued. The issue needed to be addressed. Wages needed to be reported. She stated that we all needed to get with the program and cross our t's and dot our i's.

Mr. Garner inquired on the status of the PTABOA decision pertaining to how many persons are to be appointed.

Bob Bailey requested that they be allowed to use the County Attorney when needed.

Motion was made to Fund the payment of three Board Members and to use the County Attorney

Mrs. Sosinski, Mr. Ford, Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Bernacchi voted against
Mr. Mrozinski, Mr. Yagelski, Mr. Garner voted in favor

Motion failed

Another motion was made to have the Council Attorney write a letter to the Commissioners for their recommendation

All voted in favor

Motion approved

ADJOURNMENT

Approximately 8:15 p.m.

