

## LAPORTE COUNTY COUNCIL

### April 23, 2012 MINUTES

The LaPorte County Council Meeting was held on Monday, April 23, 2012 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, Matthew Bernacchi

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Council Attorney Doug Biege

Auditor, Craig Hinchman, called the roll: all members were present

The revised agenda was approved by all members.

The March 19, 2012 Council Minutes were approved by all members

Approval of two appointments to the newly formed ethic committee

Mr. Rob Neary was voted to serve on the committee by all members then the vote was rescinded then tabled due to lack of information. There was confusion on the term and duties and who is able to serve on this committee.

#### Department Head Reports

Mr. Bernacchi stated that this is an election year so he wants all political Agendas or comments to be left at the door. This is not the time or place to campaign.

Recorder Johnny Stimley reported that he going to return to the general Fund \$182,738.00 from his Recorders Record Perpetuation Fund.

He is able to do this because of hard work and savings. There is no need for these funds at this time for special project. By the end of the year there will be approximately \$260,000.00 left in that fund. The Council appreciated his return of this money to the General Fund since that fund is in the red.

Mr. Garner recognized Johnny for four years of good service.

Sheriff Mike Mollenhauer reported the jail population is now down to 390 inmates. capacity is 368. He announced that the 13<sup>th</sup> annual fallen officers memorial service will be held on May 9, 2012 in the county complex assembly room. All are invited to attend. The Orland Park Illinois Police Chief will be the speaker. He also praised and gave credit to all of the officers involved in the recent bank robbery. Do to the take home car program, one off duty Officer was only one minute away. He also praised the 911 Center for a wonderful job.

Mr. Brian McKee from LaPorte Economic Alliance gave the 2011 annual report to all Council members. He stated there is an estimated 37% increase in Jobs in LaPorte County for 2012. He stated that employers are having difficulty in recruiting qualified employees.

Mrs. Sosinski questioned him about the Dunes Plaza project, she is concerned that A long time family business is being pushed out with little warning.

Public Comments

Mr. Jim Kimmel, President of the Officers merit board spoke on the good Job the officers did on the recent bank robbery chase. He also thanked Mr. Terry Garner for attending the last merit board meeting.

Liaison Reports

Mr. Garner reported that Michigan City may drop out of the MS4 program. He met with the Auditor's office and IT Director, Darlene Hale, and reported that the tax situation is running on schedule. He recommends granting the request on tonight's agenda for the 20% matching grant for the fire communications. He also reported attending the Police Merit Board meeting and the Unity breakfast.

Mr. Ford gave a report on the Surveyors Office

Mr. Cunningham met with Prosecuting Attorney Bob Szilagyi and worked out a compromise for his request that is on tonight's agenda.

Mrs. Sosinski Will be attending the Personnel Committee on Tuesday, April 24<sup>th</sup>. She has had several people question her as to why some people don't need to go through the Personnel Committee and some do. She is going to attend the 9-11 meeting on Wednesday, April 25<sup>th</sup>. Recorder, Johnny Stimley already gave a report on her meeting with him.

Mr. Yagelski attended the NITCD meeting regarding the relocation of the tracks.

Mr. Mrozinski reported the KID project is making progress, LaPorte County Home is having boiler problems, and he will be attending the animal control meeting and the economic development meeting. He gave an update on several Veterans programs.

Mr. Bernacchi has been in contact with the offices of the Assessor, Auditor, Treasurer and the DLGF. He is happy to report that the tax situation is moving forward according to schedule.

**APPROPRIATIONS OR TRANSFERS**

**Robert Szilagyi, PROSECUTING ATTORNEY**

Requested funds receipted into the Pre-Trial Diversion Account and The Infraction Deferral Account be transferred as follows:

From 2500-20200-000-0327 into 2501-20200-000-0343 Claims	\$125,048.75
From 2500-20200-000-0327 into 8131-11017-000-0550 PERF	<u>\$ 830.00</u>
	\$125,878.75

A motion was made to approve the request  
All members voted in favor/ Motion approved

Also requested from the General Fund the following salary amounts to Be increased along with the employer benefits

INCREASE –David Bishop’s Salary from \$57,320.00 to \$65,000.00	
1000-10134-000-0108	\$ 7,680.00
INCREASE-David Ambers Salary from \$42,274.00 to \$68,000.00	
1000-10134-000-0108	\$25,726.00
NEW PART TIME DEPUTY PROSECUTOR	
1000-10134-000-0108	\$42,274.00

After some discussion a compromise was proposed.  
 He amended his request to \$5,000.00 from the riverboat Fund (1191) to cover salaries until the end of the year  
 Mrs. Sosinski spoke out and said that this could not be done.  
 The Personnel/HR committee must approve it first.  
 Mr. Szilagyi said he would put his other increases and requests in the budget hearings for next year. He just requests the \$5,000.00 at this time.  
 A motion was made to approve a transfer of \$5,000.00 from the Riverboat fund (1191) into Salaries #10134  
 Mrs. Sosinski Voted against  
 All other members voted in favor  
 Motion approved.

**LAPORTE COUNTY SHERIFF**

Requested funds from either Cty. Cumulative Capital Develop Fund (#1138) or Riverboat Fund (#1191) or Win Tax (#4220) To purchase vehicles Tabled from the February 27, 2012 Council meeting A motion was made to take off the table All members voted in favor Motion approved A very heated discussion followed and tempers flared. A motion was made to just approve \$130,000.00 and let the Sheriff’s department purchase what they decide Mrs. Sosinski, Mr. Mrozinski, Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Garner voted against Mr. Yagelski, Mr. Bernacchi and Mr. Ford voted in favor Motion failed Then another motion was made to approve funding for the Commissioner’s approved bid from Kelley Chevrolet Mrs. Sosinski and Mr. Garner voted in favor Mr. Yagelski, Mr. Bernacchi, Mr. Mrozinski, Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Ford Voted against Motion failed	\$254,742.94
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**Randy Novak, Michigan City Fire Department**

Requested funds from either Riverboat Fund (1191) or Win Tax Fund (4220) to purchase necessary equipment To interface between cad system and Firehouse system. \$27,910.00  
A motion was made to approve the request from the River boat fund (1191)  
All members voted in favor  
Motion approved

**LAPORTE COUNTY PIONEER CEMETERY COMMISSION**

Requested the annual appropriation from either Riverboat Fund (1191) or Win Tax Fund (4220) into our maintenance and Repair fund (2300) \$3,000.00  
A motion was made to approve the request from Riverboat Fund (1191)  
All members voted in favor  
Motion approved

**Tony Mancuso, Administrator LAPORTE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Requested the approval of the appropriation to The IDEM reimbursable Grant Fund (4014) for additional Lake Michigan Beach monitoring \$13,092.75  
A motion was made to approve the request  
All members voted in favor  
Motion approved

**Dave Kaufman, LaPorte County Fire Chief's Association**

Requested funding from either Riverboat Fund (1191) or Win Tax Fund (4220) to meet the requirements for a Federal Fire Act Grant 80/20 match. The total Grant is \$856,080.00  
County's share is--- \$171,216.00  
A motion was made to approve the request from the Riverboat Fund (1191)  
All members voted in favor  
Motion approved

**NEW BUSINESS**

A resolution for a 2% discount regarding paying the reconciled taxes in full rather than taking the 19 month payment plan is tabled until the May 21, 2012 meeting

Treasurer, Nancy Hawkins reported meeting with four credit card companies comparing additional fees to the tax payer when paying their taxes with a credit card. One requirement of the State is that her office will accept electronic checks. This may be a problem since only one company offers this option. She will report at the May 21<sup>st</sup> meeting.

Mr. Mrozinski made a motion for the Council Attorney, Doug Biege to prepare a resolution to cut the 2012 budget by 5% across the board

Mr. Mrozinski and Mr. Cunningham voted in favor

Mr. Yagelski, Mrs. Sosinski, Mr. Bernacchi, Mr. Ford and Mr. Garner voted against Motion failed

### **COMMENTS BY THE COUNCIL**

Mrs. Sosinski said that any changes in the budget should occur in August during the budget hearings.

Mr. Yagelski that he is disappointed with the three groups for economic development. They were to merge into one group for a “dream Team” and this hasn’t happened. He was very disappointed with the arguing between the Council and Sheriff’s department. He stated if the cars are replaced that often we don’t need a repair garage, the cars should still be under warranty.

Mr. Mrozinski encouraged the re-bidding of the police car with a separate bid for patrol cars and separate bid for civil cars.

Mr. Garner met with the Mayor of Michigan City regarding their possible decision to pull out of the MS4 program. He stated that he fully supports the Sheriff’s department.

Mr. Ford supports the new patrol cars but encourages buying local.

Mr. Cunningham states that no new full time employees have been approved. He supports new patrol cars but have used cars for the civil cars. Keep the cars that were to be traded in for the civil cars. He supports single color cars. They can be used without re-painting for the civil use.

Mr. Bernacchi commented that he will vote for new patrol cars but not for new civil cars. He stated that he is unhappy with some of the council comments tonight, He is begging –please have respect for each other and no more arguing.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Adjournment at approximately 8:45 p.m.