

*LaPorte County Auditor
Joie Winski
555 Michigan Avenue, Suite 205
LaPorte, IN 46350-3490*

**MINUTES
ADOPTION OF THE 2016 BUDGET
OCTOBER 26, 2015 AT 6:00 P.M.**

(Please Turn Off All Cell Phones)

The Regular Meeting of the La Porte County Council was held on October 26, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. (local time) in the Assembly Room of the La Porte County Government Complex located at 809 State Street, La Porte, Indiana, 46350.

CALL TO ORDER

La Porte County Council President Mark Yagelski called the Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Yagelski asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Yagelski asked that everyone, except emergency personnel, to please turn off their cell phones at this time.

ROLL CALL

Auditor Winski took the Roll Call. Council Members present were Councilmen Bernacchi, Garner, Kirkham, Novak, Santana and Yagelski and Councilwoman Sosinski. A quorum was noted.

CHANGES OR RECOMMENDATIONS TO 2016 BUDGET

Councilwoman Sosinski asked what the last date is for salaries. Auditor Winski replied December 31, 2015. She also said settlement is anticipated to be the first week in December. Councilwoman Sosinski asked if a Meeting would be necessary in December. President Yagelski said there is not typically a Regular Meeting in December. However, a Special Meeting was set for December 14, 2015 at 5:30 p.m. to finalize the Budget with any salary changes.

Auditor Winski said the regular budget has to be voted upon tonight. President Yagelski asked for the County's share from the Tax Sale. Auditor Winski said approximately \$5,000,000.00 to \$6,000,000.00. She continued that the County is in a much better financial situation than last year. Councilman Kirkham asked if any of the Tax Sale money is available now. Auditor Winski said some is available from delinquent taxes paid before the Tax Sale.

Councilwoman Sosinski said there will be a 6% increase on insurance premiums. There are additional options becoming available to the employees.

Barb Mossman, Director of Human Resources, explained the new insurance option for employees. Vital Smart Shopper allows employees to go online to shop for services in-network. If a less expensive alternative is chosen, the employee will get a cash reimbursement for utilizing the service, anywhere from \$25.00 to \$200.00. There is a small cost to the County, but there should eventually be a significant cost savings to the County.

Councilwoman Sosinski added that the cost to the County on the 6% increase will be approximately \$460,000.00.

Auditor Winski said the Council members were given the balances in the funds, but in the Emergency Reserve Fund there is an additional \$1,547,165.20 so the increase of \$460,000.00 could be addressed at the beginning of the year.

Councilwoman Sosinski expressed concern that the fund will eventually be depleted and how it will be addressed at a later date. Auditor Winski said, instead of increasing the General Fund for that amount, it would be more prudent to take it from another account at the beginning of the year.

Councilwoman Sosinski asked if it would be a problem to continuously take the money out of the fund, but Auditor Winski explained that the DLGF will ask that when the fund balances get too high, why the money isn't being spent.

President Yagelski asked what percent the County is over budget versus last year. Auditor Winski said \$1.7 million dollars was cut out of the General Fund during the budget hearings. Deputy Chief Auditor Andrea Smith replied that the budget for the General Fund is \$39,000,000.00, which is approximately the same as last year.

Councilman Santana asked when the excess money in the Emergency Reserve Fund is moved. Auditor Winski said it isn't moved until the Council approves moving it. Councilwoman Sosinski asked how the amount went over the \$10,000,000.00. Auditor Winski explained that half of the Riverboat allocation was put in and it exceeded the \$10,000,000.00.

ADOPTION OF THE 2016 BUDGET

1. *La Porte County (Ordinance No. 2015-10)*
A Motion was made by Councilman Santana and seconded by Councilwoman Sosinski to adopt the 2016 La Porte County Budget as read. Motion carried 7-0.
2. *La Porte County Solid Waste (Ordinance No. 2015-10A)*
A Motion was made by Councilman Novak and seconded by Councilman Bernacchi to adopt the 2016 La Porte County Solid Waste Budget. Motion carried 7-0.
3. *All Non-Binding Units*
President Yagelski said that at the last County Council Meeting it was recommended that the County sticks with the state allowed percentage of increase of the budgets, which is 2.6%. That would mean those that went over would be denied at this time; however the Council has no authority over them. A Motion was made by Councilman Bernacchi and seconded by Councilman Novak to recommend adoption all non-binding units under 2.6%. Motion carried 7-0.

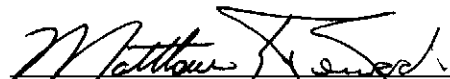
COMMENTS

President Yagelski thanked Auditor Winski's staff for getting the information available for this year. Councilman Santana added that the binders made the budgets organized and easy to understand. Auditor Winski asked that the binders be returned to the Auditor's Office for use in future years.

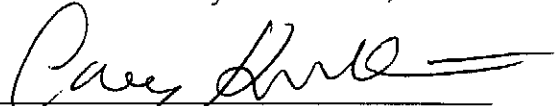
ADJOURNMENT

A Motion was made by Councilwoman Sosinski and seconded by Councilman Santana to adjourn the Meeting. Motion passed 7-0.

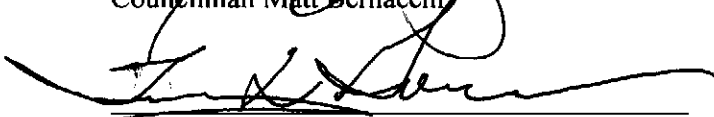
EXAMINED & APPROVED BY THE LA PORTE COUNTY COUNCIL this 23rd Day of November, 2015.



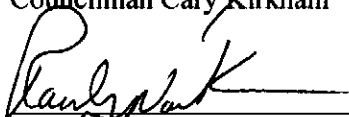
Councilman Matt Bernacchi



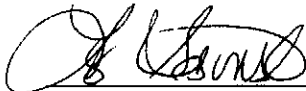
Councilman Cary Kirkham



Councilman Terry Garner



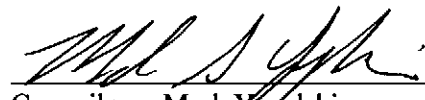
Councilman Randy Novak



Councilwoman Lois Sosinski

Absent

Councilman Jeff Santana



Councilman Mark Yagelski

ATTEST: 

Joie Winski, La Porte County Auditor