



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

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE LAPORTE COUNTY COUNCIL
APRIL 25, 2016 AT 6:30 P.M.**

(Please Turn Off All Cell Phones)

The Regular Meeting of the La Porte County Council was held on April 25, 2016 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 Terry Garner called the Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Garner asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and except for 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, Santana, Garner, Kirkham, Novak, Yagelski and Councilwoman Sosinski. A quorum was noted.

APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 25, 2016 AGENDA

Councilwoman Sosinski made a Motion to remove the External Wage Salary additional appropriation from the Agenda and present it at the Council's May Meeting. The Motion was seconded by Councilman Bernacchi. The Motion carried 7-0.

APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 21, 2016 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

A Motion was made by Councilman Novak and seconded by Councilman Bernacchi to approve the March 21, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes. Motion carries 7-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Earl Cunningham, 6311 W. Shiva Drive, La Porte, IN 46350

Mr. Cunningham thanked President Garner for giving him the opportunity to speak and clear up some misinformation that were said by Attorney Friedman.

Mr. Cunningham was disappointed in the seven Council Members that when Attorney Friedman read from a State Board of Accounts Audit they did not relate date-wise to what he was speaking about. Since that time, Mr. Cunningham hoped Council Members had the opportunity to review the information and recognize it had nothing to do with Hinchman's administration, but rather the prior one. Because the way that report was prepared Mr. Mrozinski was also criticized, which would be like predicting the future.

What bothered Mr. Cunningham the most, was Attorney Friedman stating he did not know what he was talking about. Mr. Cunningham states he was talking about contributions sent to Winston/Terrell of Indianapolis and their donations back to local candidates.

Mr. Cunningham continued on stating the Swanson Center sends money to Winston/Terrell to donate to hand-selected local democratic candidates. He asks the Council to call Mr. Bohacek or Ms. Huston to see if they got any money from Winston/Terrell. Mr. Winston was the President of the Indiana Democratic Party in 1999 and Mr. Terrell was the Political Director and at that time Mr. Friedman was the Attorney for the Indiana Democratic Party. So this relationship went back quite a way. Money is sent to Winston/Terrell and they figure out who to send money to. It's apparent that someone in La Porte County is advising them on who to give money to. Mr. Cunningham asks both Councilwoman Sosinski and Councilman Yagelski if they ever received donations from Winston/Terrell. Both of them state they did not. A lot of Democrats did not get a dime from them, but the people who make other decisions are getting a big chunk of money. This information can be verified at the Clerk's Office. Is sending money to Indianapolis and redirecting to local officials legal and appropriate?

Mr. Cunningham reiterates that he did send a letter to the Courthouse in regard to the Mary Ray case. He states that he does not know if Mary Ray took the money, but there are a lot of innocent people who are on death row that get released every day. This may also be true on theft charges.

Lastly, he gives all Council Members a copy of Attorney Friedman's billings. This one in particular is dated March 2, 2016 and the first word is 'multiple' emails regarding County Home issues. The Council controls the purse strings of the County. How do you pay someone who does not itemize their bills? You would not pay your grocery bill if all of the items are lumped together. Attorney Biege itemizes his bill, Mr. Friedman should do the same.

Councilman Santana asks Mr. Cunningham if the financial report does indeed state that monies were received from downstate.

Mr. Cunningham went to the Clerk's office and pulled records. \$1,000 or \$500 donation from Mr. Winston, \$1,000 or \$500 from Mr. Terrell, and then another \$1,000 or \$500 from the Firm.

President Garner has a letter that he received. He states he will not read the letter, but just made a statement in regards to it.

He tried to be a decent person in allowing people to speak, but was asked to keep it to Council Agenda items. That was done as a courtesy to the Commissioners and their Attorney. The Council then allowed Attorney Friedman to speak and did not interrupt him. This needs to stop and anything that is requested by the Commissioners should be addressed at their Meeting not at the Council's. The seven Council Members get along very well and want to keep it that way. The Council is here to conduct County business and will keep things civil by limiting comments related to the Council Agenda items only.

Hearing or seeing no other Public Comment, President Garner closes Public Comment.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Maintenance Director Cooley updates the Council on various projects that are ongoing. He will be coming back to the Council in a month with other projects that will need to be completed, including roof repairs.

Auditor Winski informs the Council that on June 18, 2016 the County Council Conference will be held in Indianapolis. More information will be forthcoming.

Hearing or seeing no other Department Heads, President Garner closes Department Head Reports.

LIAISON REPORTS

Councilman Bernacchi states that Clay Turner is here regarding an Additional Appropriation.

Councilman Novak attended the Redevelopment Commission Meeting with Council Members Bernacchi and Sosinski. He also attended two Meetings in regards to the Phase 2 Building Project.

Councilman Santana stated Jerry Cooley and EMS are on the Agenda this evening.

Councilman Kirkham stated the Park hired five seasonal workers and replaced 900 trees that were wind-blown. The Park has many other projects to do but is waiting for better weather. The County Home is down to one resident who will be leaving on May 10. There are still two County Home employees who have not been placed in any County position yet.

Councilwoman Sosinski spoke with IT Director Hale in regards to the Probation request. She also met with HR in regards to change in position and job analysis for La Porte County Soil and Water District. There will be several other items that will be brought up at Budget Hearings.

Councilman Yagelski spoke with IT Director Hale regarding the cameras in this room. Cameras will be put up in the Court.

President Garner met with Maintenance Director Cooley and Dr. Kora at the Michigan City Courthouse and the 8th Street location in regards to relocating the Prosecutor's staff from the basement. Both buildings are large enough to make the move work. If the Commissioners decide to go that route, he feels the Council should back them. Auditor Winski is looking for funding in regards to this.

President Garner reiterated that the State Board of Accounts Exit Hearings are confidential. They attend the exit hearing as a courtesy but not much direction is given by the Council. The Council is not as privy to the information as some individuals may believe they are.

NEW BUSINESS

Erika Stallworth – Change in Position/Community Supervisor Hire

Erika Stallworth and Judge Alevizos step before the Council regarding changes in Juvenile Center and restructuring of staff. There are supervisory positions that are not needed which will save over \$1,000 for the County. There is a vacancy due to a transfer and all of the staff there have been repurposed. They would like to post the vacant position and rehire.

Judge Alevizos said there is a restructuring of the juvenile offenders program. The community supervisors are doing more work than they were asked to do. Even though the numbers are down, there are a lot of home visits and they expect the numbers to increase with the summer months coming up. They have switched a lot personnel which should bring additional money into the County. There are two programs in La Porte County that have received DCS reimbursement for the day and evening reporting.

President Garner the system was changing but it appears to be working properly. Judge Alevizos agreed.

A Motion was made by Councilman Novak and seconded by Councilwoman Sosinski to approve. Motion carries 7-0.

Judge Greta Friedman - Superior 4 Change in Classification of Staff Position

Judge Friedman advises the Council that in reviewing the needs of the Court she would like to change the position for Bailiff from PAT IV to COMOT V. That classification worked very well in the past and will save the County approximately \$5,000. She would like to advertise the position and no additional funding will be needed. Councilwoman Sosinski states this job description already exists and it will be a savings for the County.

A Motion was made by Councilman Novak and seconded by Councilman Santana to approve. Motion carries 7-0.

Councilman Yagelski would like an update on the Highway Utility Inspector Position.

Councilwoman Sosinski stated it is not finished yet, as the job description needs to be accurate and in place. This may be brought up at Budget Hearings. The current amount is status quo to the individual currently in the job.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

None.

APPROPRIATIONS, TRANSFERS, REQUESTS

La Porte County EMS
Requesting Permission to Spend
From EMS Donation Account (4103)
for Awards Ceremony \$500.00

A Motion was made to approve by Councilman Santana and seconded by Councilwoman Novak and Councilwoman Sosinski. Motion carries 7-0.

La Porte County Probation
Requesting Permission to Spend
From Probation User Fees (2102)
for Computer \$1,857.00
for Laptop Computer \$1,938.99

A Motion is made by Councilman Yagelski and seconded by Councilwoman Sosinski to approve. Motion carries 7-0.

La Porte County Solid Waste
Requesting an Additional Appropriation
From La Porte County Solid Waste Management
for Supplement Public Access Site on Ziegler Road \$120,000.00

Clay Turner told the Council they have an explanatory letter in their packets and he underestimated the 2015 totals so he used 2016 monies to finish up 2015. There were four cars out there this evening before he came to the Council Meeting. People don't always throw green waste in there. The vendor takes all of the trash off site per the contract and there are less plastic bags out there. Commercial dumpers have also been spotted out on the site. There is a 2007 Ordinance on the books that the County Commissioners passed. There are no poles to place cameras on to monitor the property better. That will be done in the future with the NICTD poles that are out on the fairgrounds. The camera will need to be by the driveway to get a good look at the license plate.

A Motion was made by Councilman Yagelski and seconded by Councilman Kirkham to approve. Motion carries 7-0.

La Porte County Sheriff
 Requesting an Additional Appropriation
 From Riverboat (1191) or Win Tax (4220)
 for Overtime \$60,000.00

A Motion was made by Councilman Yagelski and seconded by Councilman Santana to approve. Motion carries 7-0.

La Porte County Building Maintenance
 Requesting an Additional Appropriation
 From Riverboat (1191) or Win Tax (4220)
 for Building Roofing Project (Michigan City Courthouse) \$110,000.00
 for Environmental Safety Products \$23,369.61
 for Courthouse 2nd Floor Remodel \$19,940.62
 for Alarm for County Home \$4,786.99

The monies for the \$110,000 were not encumbered as Mr. Cooley has been through several secretaries.

A Motion was made Councilwoman Sosinski and seconded by Councilman Santana to approve the Michigan City Courthouse Building Roofing Project from Riverboat (1191). Motion carries 7-0.

A Motion was made Councilwoman Sosinski and seconded by Councilman Kirkham approve the Environmental Safety Products from Riverboat (1191). Motion carries 7-0.

A Motion was made Councilman Bernacchi and seconded by Councilman Novak to approve the La Porte Courthouse Building 2nd Floor Remodel Project from Riverboat (1191). Motion carries 7-0.

A Motion was made by Councilman Novak and seconded by Councilman Santana and Councilwoman Sosinski to approve the Alarm for the County Home. Motion carries 7-0.

Auditor Winski said the \$20 a month charge will be transferred to the Maintenance Department from the County Home. The Alarm system will be paid directly from the County Home Budget.

La Porte County
 Requesting an Additional Appropriation
 From Riverboat (1191) or Win Tax (4220)
 for External Wage and Salary Analysis \$25,000.00
Removed by Request.

Maintenance Director Cooley asks what is going to happen with the employees who are still at the County Home, will they work with him. Councilman Yagelski states that any time there is a job opening at the County they need to bid on it.

Councilman Kirkham said an employee stated they went through background check and bid on jobs and nothing is available.

Councilwoman Sosinski says a joint meeting may be necessary with the Commissioners. There are three full-time employees left at the County Home who have not been placed within the County.

Councilman Novak encourages the remaining employees to have a resume on file at Human Resources.

COUNTY COUNCIL/ATTORNEY COMMENTS

Councilman Yagelski is pleased to see the Sheriff's Office cleaning up the roads. He would like to set dates for the 2017 Budget Hearings on August 1, 2 and 3 (if necessary).

President Garner would like to have a Workshop with the Commissioners regarding the County Home and possibly other upcoming projects and priorities.

Councilman Kirkham said there are a lot of signs on right-of-ways and tree lawns. Candidates need to be cognizant of sign placements. He encourages everyone to get out and vote.

Councilman Santana wishes good luck to all candidates and encourages all to get out and vote and voice your opinion. He also explained how to early vote.

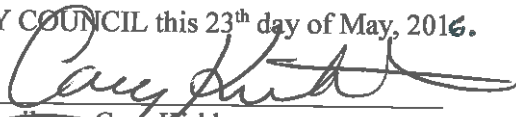
ADJOURNMENT

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

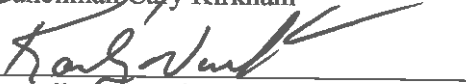
EXAMINED & APPROVED BY THE LA PORTE COUNTY COUNCIL this 23th day of May, 2016.

Absent

Councilman Matt Bernacchi


Councilman Cary Kirkham

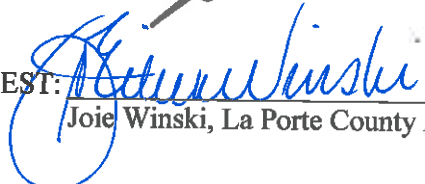

Councilman Jerry Garner


Councilman Randy Novak


Councilwoman Lois Sosinski

Absent
Councilman Jeff Santana


Councilman Mark Yagelski

ATTEST: 
Joie Winski, La Porte County Auditor