



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

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE LA PORTE COUNTY COUNCIL
JULY 25, 2016 AT 6:30 P.M.**

The Regular Meeting of the La Porte County Council was held on July 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

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Council Vice-President Mark Yagelski.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice-President Yagelski 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. All Council Members were present with the exception of President Garner and Councilman Santana.

APPROVAL OF THE JULY 25, 2016 AGENDA

A Motion was made by Councilman Bernacchi and seconded by Councilman Novak to approve the Agenda as presented with the exception of the removal of the La Porte County Fair Board request. Motion carries 5-0.

APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 27, 2016 MEETING MINUTES

A Motion was made by Councilman Novak and seconded by Councilmen Bernacchi and Kirkham to approve the June 27, 2016 Meeting Minutes. Motion carries 5-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dennis Metheny, 6750 W. 450 N., La Porte, IN

Mr. Metheny questioned the County-wide industrial shredder appropriation. Auditor Winski explains that this would be a cost-savings to the County as shredding would be done in-house and no outside vendor would have to be contracted. Mr. Metheny also questioned the Facilities Master Plan.

Seeing or hearing no other Public Comment, Vice-President Yagelski closes Public Comment.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

John Espar spoke to Council Members about the one-year anniversary of the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force and requests a meeting so he can bring the Council up to date on the success and progress the Unit has made.

Vice-President Yagelski will relay this information to President Garner. Attorney Biege would also like to be kept informed to make sure there is no open door violation.

Seeing or hearing no other Department Head Reports, Vice-President Yagelski closes Department Head Reports.

LIAISON REPORTS

Councilman Bernacchi reports that PTABOA still meets every two weeks and continues to go through appeals. They are down to a few hundred appeals and the County is doing the reassessment themselves.

Councilman Novak went and toured the Juvenile Services Center and the doors that are on the Agenda need to be fixed. He also attended the meeting and workshop on the Master Facilities Plan. He also commends everyone involved with the La Porte County Fair for a fantastic fair this year.

Councilman Kirkham attended a NIRPC Meeting where restructuring is underway. He was appointed as a Vice-Chair for the Surface Transportation Committee which deals with roads.

Councilman Sosinski attended the July 6 probation tour with Steve Eyrick and on July 7 followed up with two workshops. Councilwoman Sosinski attended the Fair most every night and believes it was record setting attendance on Friday evening. She also has a La Porte County Redevelopment Commission Meeting on Wednesday.

The Maintenance Department had two re-evaluations come in front of HR and the job evaluation committee. Those and any others will be discussed at Budget Hearings. Councilwoman Sosinski asks HR Director Barb Mossman to come before the Council and explain in more detail the new FLSA law which will take effect in December 2016. Some salary positions will need to be reviewed and she is currently examining them. This will also be reviewed at Budget Hearings.

Councilwoman Sosinski stated there was some concern from Clerk Lynne Spevak about the storage of the voting machines. Auditor Winski states this will be reviewed if the Master Plan is passed.

Vice-President Yagelski discusses his concern regarding the Courthouse Building in La Porte and the bricks.

NEW BUSINESS

Legislative Update – Senator Jim Arnold

The County Council wishes Senator Jim Arnold a happy birthday today.

Senator Arnold gives a presentation to all Council Members in regards to the 2016 Legislative Session that just finished up. He feels appearing before local Councils, Boards and Commissions provides the

constituents information. The 2016 short session ended on March 12 and a lot was accomplished and 216 Bills were signed in front of Governor Pence. Some of the Bills and legislative changes he spoke about were:

House Bill 1001 which is the Road Funding Bill and would like to clear up some misconceptions. There was \$328,000,000 of additional funding passed for bridges and \$463,000,000 was earmarked for cities and towns. La Porte County is 16th in the State in population total miles the rank is 7. In daily vehicle maintenance roads La Porte County is ranked 10th and from 2006 to 2014 INDOT has spent money and maintained roads and bridges in Indiana.

Some facts are that La Porte County ranks 3rd in road funding and stands number 6 in projected funding. For the surrounding counties Porter is 41, Starke is 82, and St. Joseph is 42. La Porte stands to get a huge portion of funding for road maintenance in 2017. Senator Arnold informs the public about roads that were completed in 2016, upcoming projects in 2017, and reiterating that working together across party lines does work.

Senate Bill 67 emptied out the local tax funding and released it back the Counties and Cities. La Porte County received approximately \$2.2 Million and the only stipulation was that 75% must go to road funding. There is also a Community Crossing Grant currently available through INDOT that will match funding.

Under a new law, methamphetamine and/or heroin second time possession will now serve a minimum of 10 years of incarceration. There is also Bill that will now allow you to buy cold medicine over the counter; however the pharmacist will now have the final say and could refuse the request. Senator Arnold also stated that he serves on the opioid addiction panel.

House Bill 1395 was passed regarding the removal of ISTEP testing from schools.

Since 2017 is a Budget Year, there are 13 Summer Study Committees and there are 3 Specialized Committees. They are: Redistricting, ISTEP Replacement, and Roads for a Stronger and Safer Indiana Committees.

Senator Arnold is thankful to all his constituents for allowing him to serve and Council Members thank Senator Arnold for his service and the legislative updates presented.

County Appointment to Michigan City Economic Development Corporation

Mayor Meer of Michigan City sent correspondence to all Council Members asking for an appointment to the Michigan City Economic Development Corporation. There are two individuals that are interested in the position. Mayor Meer would ask the Council to appoint Mr. Jay Niec who is an engineer with SEH. The other individual who is interested is Mr. John Sheets who is a local business owner.

Councilwoman Sosinski says they are both great candidates, but will be supporting Mr. Sheets this evening. Councilwoman Sosinski makes and Motion to nominate Mr. Sheets which is seconded by Councilman Kirkham.

Vice-President Yagelski asks if there is a Motion to nominate Mr. Niec. Hearing or seeing none, the nomination dies due to lack of a Motion.

Motion carries 5-0 in favor of Mr. Sheets.

Job Reclassifications

This was touched on in Liaison Reports by Councilwoman Sosinski. These reclassification will be entertained at Budget Hearings.

OLD BUSINESS

Councilwoman Sosinski makes a Motion to take off the table the Waggoner, Irwin and Scheele study for consulting services. The Motion is seconded by Councilman Bernacchi.

Councilwoman Sosinski makes a Motion to approve this study from the Riverboat Fund in the amount of \$18,620 which includes all County employees which is seconded by Councilman Bernacchi. Motion carries 5-0.

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

Rainy Day Fund Resolution No. 2016-7

Motion made Councilman Bernacchi and seconded by Councilman Novak to read by title only. Motion carries 5-0. Attorney Biege states that language was changed to comply with the road funding requirements. Nomenclature changes only.

Auditor Winski reads by title only. *An Ordinance Amending the La Porte County Emergency Reserve Fund to the Rainy Day Fund.* A Motion was made by Councilman Novak and seconded by Councilmen Kirkham and Bernacchi. Motion carries 5-0.

APPROPRIATIONS, TRANSFERS, REQUESTS

La Porte County Fair Board

Request for Forgiveness of Loan
for Sewer Installation at County Fairgrounds \$250,000.00
(Removed)

La Porte County Juvenile Services Center

Requesting an Additional Appropriation
From Riverboat (1191) or Win Tax (4220)
for 2 Entry Doors \$22,490.00

A Motion was made by Councilman Bernacchi and seconded by Councilman Kirkham to approve from the Riverboat Fund. Motion carries 4-1, with Vice-President Yagelski voting no.

Vice-President Yagelski asks Judge Alevizos if there are monies to transfer between accounts instead of asking for an Additional Appropriation since the population has been low. Judge Alevizos states at the beginning of the year there were only 3 to 4 juveniles now there are more and the program is down five employees currently.

La Porte County

Requesting an Additional Appropriation
From Riverboat (1191) or Win Tax (4220)
for County-Wide Industrial Shredder

Not to Exceed
\$25,000.00

A Motion is made by Councilwoman Sosinski and seconded by Councilman Novak to approve the request from Riverboat in the amount of \$14,619.99. Motion carries 5-0.

Vice-President Yagelski questions how the County Home employees who were transferred to Maintenance are working out. Director Cooley states the employees are working well, a few have left the County.

La Porte County Commissioners & Council

Requesting an Additional Appropriation
From Riverboat (1191) or Win Tax (4220)
for a Facilities Master Plan (as discussed at Workshop)

Not to Exceed
\$150,000.00

A Motion is made by Councilman Novak and seconded by Councilwoman Sosinski to approve from the Riverboat Fund. Motion carries 5-0.

COUNTY COUNCIL/ATTORNEY COMMENTS

Vice-President Yagelski would like the October Meeting changed as he will be out of town. Councilman Novak commended Sheriff Boyd and his staff for the great job at the Fair this year.

ADJOURNMENT

A Motion to adjourn was made by Councilman Novak and supported by Councilwoman Sosinski. Motion carried 5 – 0. Meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

EXAMINED & APPROVED BY THE LA PORTE COUNTY COUNCIL, this 22nd day of August, 2016.




Councilman Matt Bernacchi



Councilman Cary Kirkham



Councilman Terry Garner



Councilman Randy Novak



Councilwoman Lois Sosinski



Councilman Jeff Santana



Councilman Mark Yagelski

ATTEST: 

Joie Winski, La Porte County Auditor