



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

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE LAPORTE COUNTY COUNCIL
OCTOBER 29, 2018 AT 6:30 P.M.**

(Please Turn Off All Cell Phones)

The Regular Meeting of the La Porte County Council was held on October 29, 2018 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 Randy Novak called the Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

ROLL CALL

Auditor Joie Winski took the Roll Call. Council Members present were Kirkham, Mollenhauer, Novak, Santana, Sullivan, and Yagelski. A quorum was noted.

APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 29, 2018 AGENDA

A motion to approve was made by Councilman Sullivan and seconded by Councilman Mollenhauer. Councilman Yagelski asked that the Fair Board request be removed from the Agenda. President Novak explained that this is being done because it first has to go through the Commissioners. Motion carried 6-0.

APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 24, 2018 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve was made by Councilman Kirkham and seconded by Councilman Sullivan. Motion carried 6-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Michael Rosenbaum, 1515 Indiana Avenue, La Porte, IN 46350

Mr. Rosenbaum asked for confirmation of information regarding the Franklin Street Bridge. Councilman Yagelski said that he will be making a presentation on this issue during County Council Comments.

Hearing or seeing no Public Comment, President Novak closed Public Comment.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Bob Cutler, La Porte County Coroner

Mr. Cutler stated that Elkhart County has now joined La Porte, Kosciusko and St. Joseph Counties in the Coroners' Northern Indiana Alliance for mutual aid. Aid includes equipment, personnel, time, and ideas. He also thanked the Council for the new van and said it is parked outside for anyone who would like to see it after the meeting. Councilman Yagelski asked about the opioid epidemic and if there are any real ideas for addressing it. Mr. Cutler spoke about the DARE program and how it has been completely reworked. The program now targets a younger audience and addresses drugs, bullying, cigarettes and other issues. He added that the La Porte Hospital Foundation has backed the La Porte and Michigan City Police Departments as far as getting into the schools and providing workbooks for the 9-week program. Councilman Yagelski asked Auditor Winski to investigate available money from the Smoking Cessation program.

Hearing or seeing no additional Department Heads, President Novak closed Department Head Reports.

LIAISON REPORTS

Councilmen Kirkham, Sullivan and Santana had nothing to report.

Councilman Mollenhauer attended the Narcan training at the Frontline Foundation on Tuesday, September 25th. It was put on by Anne Klute from the Health Department and was very beneficial. On September 26th, he attended a meeting regarding employee health insurance. He added that there will be a presentation on this later in the meeting. He also attended the following: the Regional Development Committee meeting (RDC) on September 26th, the County Commissioners' meeting on October 3rd, a meeting with Building Maintenance on October 15th, a meeting with Security on October 22nd, and a meeting with Tony Mancuso and Julie Davies from the Health Department on October 24th, who gave him a tour of their offices on the 4th floor.

Councilman Yagelski explained there is a meeting with NICTD, but there will be no rating until after the first of the year due to some extenuating circumstances with other counties. In addition, a final version of the bridge study is complete and all Council members should receive it at the beginning of November.

President Novak attended the Region One luncheon in Merrillville, a Redevelopment Commission meeting, and the Security meeting. He also said that Superior Court #3 is on the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Health Department – Award Presentation

Mr. Mancuso explained that the Governor's Award for Environmental Outreach and Education was awarded to the La Porte County Health Department. Amanda Lahners then addressed the Council and stated she didn't expect that the department would win this award. She said the process was arduous and went on to give a brief presentation regarding the septic systems and how the department created an ordinance to improve/address them. She also explained that she met and spoke with a multitude of people regarding the subject. She said her department prevented 45,000,000 gallons of sewage entering grass surface and groundwater in the State of Indiana.

President Novak thanked Mr. Mancuso and Ms. Lahners, and said change doesn't come easy but La Porte County is better off because of it. He said the Health Department is doing some great

things. Ms. Lahners said the La Porte County ordinance has been nationally recognized and mentioned in a national magazine.

2. Consider Approval of 2019 Budgets for Kankakee and Hanna Townships – Attorney Brad Adamsky

Councilman Santana said this has been going on for a number of years, and because so many firefighters are on the township boards, that it must be approved by the Council. A motion to approve both budgets was made by Councilman Santana and seconded by Councilman Mollenhauer. Councilman Yagelski asked Auditor Winski how much was allowed this year and she responded 3.4 percent. He then asked if they were under that amount and she replied yes. Motion carried 6-0 after Auditor Winski took the vote by calling roll.

3. Consider Approval of Council President’s Authorization to Hire Replacement Positions for Residential Deputy for La Porte County Assessor’s Office, a Field Officer for the La Porte County Community Corrections Department, and a First-Deputy Clerk for the La Porte Superior #3 Clerk’s Office

President Novak said these vacancies are due to retirements and/or employees moving on. A motion to approve was made by Councilman Sullivan and seconded by Councilman Santana. Motion carried 6-0.

4. Consideration of \$5,000.00 Increase to Grant Paid Salary for Senior Adult Protective Services Program Supervisor – Prosecuting Attorney’s Office

Prosecutor John Espar explained that the request is for \$58,300.00 for a position that is fully reimbursed by the State of Indiana but the County advances the funds prior to reimbursement. Therefore he is asking for this adjustment, retroactive 60 days. He added that the request is being made to give the employee some measure of parity to her counterparts in other counties. Councilman Yagelski asked if this is an ongoing grant or a one-time event, and Prosecutor Espar said it is ongoing. A motion to approve the \$5,000.00 increase was made by Councilman Yagelski and seconded by Councilman Santana. Motion carried 6-0. Prosecutor Espar gave additional documents to the Council and Auditor Winski.

5. Consider Approval of the 2019 Health Insurance Premiums – Barb Mossman

Ms. Mossman said General Insurance Services did their due diligence in searching out different providers. This year, the County will be using United Healthcare versus Anthem since their increase was less. She said the Commissioners asked that the 2018 insurance premium continue through 2019. Councilman Yagelski asked for the breakdown and Ms. Mossman said employees would be paying approximately 13.3 in 2019, but are currently paying approximately 15 percent. She added that the Commissioners recommended that the percentage remain the same, but Councilman Yagelski questioned from where the additional funding would come. Councilman Santana also wondered where the additional funds are to be found. Ms. Mossman said the 9.7 percent increase is \$142,520.47. Auditor Winski said there is 4.1 million in the Employee Health Insurance fund, which is funded every year. She anticipates that money will be rolled over at the end of the year. At the beginning of last year, the fund began with \$8,696,972.74, which was appropriated from the Commissioner’s budget. She continued that the cost of plan is \$8,779,604.16; whatever money is left at the end of the year will be rolled over and the additional will be appropriated from the Commissioners’ budget, including the increase. She added that the Employee Health Insurance fund starts with an appropriation of \$5,000,000.00. Ms. Mossman said the employees’ contribution will be \$8,779,604.16 if the premium amount stays the same.

Mr. Craig Menne from General Insurance Services addressed the Council. He explained that there are challenges of a partially self-funded health plan. He stated that there is a lag in claims and variability between projected/actual/expected number and a worst case scenario. In addition, part of the change from Anthem to United Health care is to improve benefits and control costs. He then gave additional details of the plan.

Councilman Yagelski is still concerned as to where the additional funding from the increase will be found. President Novak said Michigan City is making the same change. Councilman Yagelski said the insurance increases yearly and it makes it difficult to address raises for the employees. Councilman Santana asked if can be tabled but Ms. Mossman said Open Enrollment is already scheduled for November 12th. She added that the \$142,000.00 increase will affect both the employee and the County. Councilman Yagelski expressed frustration that the information is not made available sooner to be able to make a more informed decision. Councilman Santana agreed and said it may affect employee raises. Ms. Mossman said the information was available on Wednesday and she forwarded it via email. A motion to approve was made by Councilman Kirkham and seconded by Councilman Mollenhauer. President Novak clarified that the County/employee split would be approximately 87 percent/13 percent. Councilman Mollenhauer said he feels that the motion needs to be passed for the benefit of the employees. Motion carried 4-2, with Councilmen Santana and Yagelski voting Nay.

6. Consider Motion of Support for Additional Appropriation (to be requested at the November 26, 2018 Meeting) for Overtime for County Buildings Security

A motion to support was made by Councilman Santana and seconded by Councilman Yagelski. Motion carried 6-0.

President Novak acknowledged the students in the audience.

OLD BUSINESS

A motion to un-table the Library request was made by Councilman Yagelski and seconded by Councilman Sullivan. Motion carried 6-0. Councilman Yagelski asked for a reading of the letter from the Library Board. Auditor Winski read the letter which formally withdrew the Library's request.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

Public Hearing on Confirmatory Resolution for Tax Abatement for Northpoint Development, LLC

Mr. Matt Reardon from Economic Development said this is a \$24,000,000 investment from Northpoint into the County, the facility is located at 6500 S Hwy 421, and approximately 125 jobs are expected to be generated. He continued with additional details of the five-year tax abatement. Angela Harshbarger from Northpoint Development said the opportunity is appreciated and she is excited about moving forward. Seeing or hearing no additional public, President Novak closed the Public Hearing.

Resolution No. 2018-10 Real Property Confirmatory Resolution for Northpoint Development, LLC

A motion to approve was made by Councilman Santana and seconded by Councilman Kirkham. Motion carried 6-0.

APPROPRIATIONS, TRANSFERS, REQUESTS

La Porte County Assessor

**Requesting Permission to Spend
From the Sales Disclosure Fund (1131)
For a Laptop Computer**

\$1,293.99

Councilman Yagelski said this was approved by Darlene Hale, so a motion to approve was made by Councilman Yagelski and seconded by Councilman Sullivan. Motion carried 6-0.

La Porte County Coroner

**Requesting Permission to Transfer
From 30034 Emergency Equipment
To 41004 Office Equipment
For Purchase of New Scanner**

\$369.00

A motion to approve was made by Councilman Kirkham and seconded by Councilman Sullivan. Councilman Yagelski confirmed that Darlene Hale also approved this request. Motion carried 6-0.

La Porte County Superior Court #3

**Requesting an Additional Appropriation
From Riverboat (1191) or Win Tax (4220)
For the Payout of Sick Time for Retired Employee**

\$3,727.00

A motion to approve out of Win Tax (4220) was made by Councilman Santana and seconded by Councilman Sullivan. Councilman Santana said he believes there should be a specific fund for this. Councilman Yagelski said that even if several employees retired at the same time, it would not put an undue burden on the County. President Novak agreed. Auditor Winski said she did not believe the State Board of Accounts would approve a specific fund. Councilman Kirkham said each Department Head should address this at Budget Hearings. Councilman Yagelski said the Council does not cut 100 accounts. Motion carried 5-1, with Councilman Kirkham voting Nay.

La Porte County EMA

**Requesting an Additional Appropriation
From Riverboat (1191) or Win Tax (4220)
For Part-Time Account**

\$5,000.00

A motion to approve was made by Councilman Yagelski and seconded by Councilman Sullivan. Councilman Mollenhauer asked for specifics of the request. Director Larry Butcher said it is for the salaries of three part-time employees. Motion carried 5-1, with Councilman Kirkham voting Nay.

La Porte County Planner

**Requesting an Additional Appropriation
From Riverboat (1191) or Win Tax (4220)
For Match Money for Lincoln Trail Extension**

\$81,282.43

Mr. Mitch Bishop said the overall project will be approximately \$2.5 million and it would connect from Purdue Northwest to the Town of Westville. Projected construction is 2022 which will give Mr. Bishop more time to raise additional funds. He also said the actual amount he is requesting \$75,168.80. A motion

to approve \$75,168.80 out of Win Tax (4220) was made by Councilman Sullivan and seconded by Councilman Santana. Motion carried 6-0.

La Porte County Sheriff

**Requesting an Additional Appropriation
From Riverboat (1191) or Win Tax (4220)
For Gasoline**

\$25,000.00

A motion to approve out of Riverboat (1191) was made by Councilman Yagelski and seconded by Councilman Santana. Motion carried 5-1, with Councilman Kirkham voting Nay.

Fairgrounds Management & Events Corporation

**Requesting an Additional Appropriation
From Riverboat (1191) or Win Tax (4220)
For Fairgrounds Sewer & Water Project**

\$125,000.00

This item was removed from the Agenda earlier in the meeting.

La Porte County Auditor

**Requesting Permission to Spend
From Real Estate Endorsement Fund (1181)
For Server Upgrade for GIS**

\$2,412.00

A motion to approve was made by Councilman Sullivan and seconded by Councilman Santana. Motion carried 6-0.

COUNTY COUNCIL/ATTORNEY COMMENTS

Councilman Kirkham expressed disappointment in the campaigning by both parties. He said he has seen signs on City, County, and State Highway easements. He added said there is an excellent article in the latest VFW magazine on VSOs and Veterans' Courts. He also said in order to save on budgets, it may be necessary to reorganize instead of replace employees. He said he would like to see more about La Porte County in the AIC magazine for positive things in the County. Attorney Friedman said several applications for individuals who want to serve on State boards or commissions have been forwarded to Senator Bohacek who is taking them to the Governor's Office.

Councilman Santana agreed with Councilman Kirkham regarding reorganizing employees versus replacing.

Councilman Mollenhauer thanked the retiring employees for their dedication. He also spoke about the Responsible Bidders Ordinance, how it relates to the Library Board, and how he did not appreciate the tone of their letter.

Councilman Yagelski said he did not mean to say that he believes people should be laid off. He also explained that he believes people need to be trained on how to do their jobs and lack of it puts a tax on the County. He added that not everyone goes to college and there are many jobs in the County that go unfilled because there are not enough qualified applicants.

President Novak agreed it is imperative to train our workforce.

Councilman Santana said there is just over a week until Election Day and he encouraged everyone to vote.

Councilman Kirkham said there is a shortage of poll workers, so if one is 18 and a registered voter, he or she can work at the polls. Councilman Santana added a student will receive Community Service hours and have a day off from school.

Kimberly Goode, a resident of Wanatah asked about available election positions for students under 18. The Council referred her to Lynne Spevak who was in the audience.

A motion to adjourn was made by Councilman Mollenhauer and seconded by Councilman Sullivan. Motion carried 6-0.

EXAMINED & APPROVED BY THE LA PORTE COUNTY COUNCIL this 26th of November, 2018.

ABSENT
Councilman Terry Garner

Cary Kirkham
Councilman Cary Kirkham

Mike Mollenhauer
Councilman Mike Mollenhauer

Randy Novak
Councilman Randy Novak

Jeff Santana
Councilman Jeff Santana

John P. Sullivan
Councilman John Sullivan

Mark Yagelski
Councilman Mark Yagelski

ATTEST: Joie Winski
Joie Winski, La Porte County Auditor