

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

**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE LAPORTE COUNTY COUNCIL  
JUNE 24, 2019 AT 6:30 P.M.**

*(Please Turn Off All Cell Phones)*

The Regular Meeting of the La Porte County Council was held on June 24, 2019 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 Mollenhauer, Novak, Rosenbaum, Santana, Sullivan, and Yagelski. A quorum was noted.

**APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 24, 2019 AGENDA**

A motion to approve the agenda with the removal of #3 under New Business was made by Councilman Yagelski and seconded by Councilman Sullivan. Motion carried 6-0.

**APPROVAL OF THE MAY 28, 2019 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

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

**DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

*Robert Young, Superintendent, La Porte County Highway Department*

Mr. Young explained that Rieth Riley Construction Company used the incorrect oil (Class B instead of Class C) for the project on Joliet Road. That problem was fixed but approximately 4 ½ lane miles were affected. Therefore, the County will receive a \$6,000.00 refund on that, and an additional refund due to the amount of square yardage being less than was in the bid. He added that through discussions with the Commissioners and Attorney Shaw Friedman, Mr. Young had negotiations with Rieth Riley and the following offers were made by them: 1) the shoulder project on Joliet Road, which was previously the

responsibility of the County, will instead be completed by Rieth Riley at no cost to the County; the only stipulation is that they will be using the grindings from the Severs Road project; 2) Rieth Riley has an 800-ton stockpile of Limestone at the body shop on Joliet Road which they are going to give to the Highway Department; the department will have to transport it from Joliet Road to their own stockpile; and 3) Rieth Riley is going to pave the Midway at the Fairgrounds as a public donation, which would have otherwise cost approximately \$100,000.00.

Mr. Young stated that the hiring of a replacement equipment operator is on tonight's agenda, but he also had an employee unexpectedly quit last week. He added that as of the morning, the dayshift bridge tender also quit. He said that it takes anywhere from ½ day to a day to train a new bridge tender. Therefore, he is asking for a replacement equipment operator for each Hanna and La Porte, and a replacement bridge tender. A motion of approval for all three positions, with notice to HR to fill the bridge tender position as soon as possible, was made by Councilman Yagelski and seconded by Councilman Santana. Mr. Young said he applied for a grant because the deadline was approaching and is unsure how much will be approved. He added that he would come back before the Council to discuss it when he has a precise dollar amount; he should receive notification next month. He then briefly discussed the Class B versus Class C oil asphalt mix.

Motion carried 6-0.

*Lois Sosinski, La Porte County Recorder*

Recorder Sosinski said her office now accepts credit cards. She did research and chose Pay.gov because they are based in Indiana and the system is user friendly. Her office still encourages cash or check, but the fees to use a credit card are not excessive. She explained that the convenience fee is \$1.00 for amounts \$33.00 and under and 3% for an amount over \$33.00. She added that the County does not receive any of the convenience money.

Recorder Sosinski also discussed that there will be an upcoming need for new hard drives/computers; she said speed of access is a problem. Darlene Hale and the software vendor have evaluated them and agreed the hard drives/computers need to be updated. When she has more detailed information, Recorder Sosinski will bring it to the Council.

**LIAISON REPORTS**

Councilman Mollenhauer attended the La Porte County Redevelopment Commission meeting on May 29<sup>th</sup>, and on June 12<sup>th</sup>, he attended the Sheriff's Merit Board meeting. At that meeting, the six Neil Thompson Scholarship recipients were announced and Councilman Mollenhauer congratulated them. On June 12<sup>th</sup>, he attended the Council Finance Committee meeting regarding Criminal Rule 26 taking effect January 1, 2020. He participated in the Fallen Officer Blood Drive on June 14<sup>th</sup> and attended the Special Meeting on June 17<sup>th</sup> to discuss Triangle Transit, the website and Criminal Rule 26. He also attended a Special Council meeting on County Liability Fund requests. On Friday and Saturday, Councilman Rosenbaum and he will be attending the Indiana County Council's Association Conference.

Councilman Yagelski had nothing to report.

Councilman Rosenbaum attended a NIRPC press release and public comment regarding drafting a public participation plan. He was unable to attend the Parks Department meeting on June 5<sup>th</sup>, but said they obtained another Health Care Foundation grant in the amount of \$77,000.00. He also toured all four of the County parks and said they are assets that make the County more beautiful. He attended the

Commissioners' meeting on June 19<sup>th</sup>, and he visited the County Treasurer's and Recorder's offices; he is visiting as many departments as possible prior to budget hearings in July. He discussed the bridge repairs in La Porte County and had concerns over drainage, but was told by Mitch Bishop that the drainage is there but is difficult to see at this time.

Councilman Sullivan attended the Special Meeting on June 17<sup>th</sup>.

Councilman Santana said EMA is on the agenda. He also commended Bob Young on his department's timely response to issues that arise in the County.

President Novak echoed what Councilman Santana said about Bob Young. He also commended EMS on their Awards' ceremony. He said he had the pleasure of judging the Paladin talent show. He was so impressed with how the performers all thought they were rock stars and the support they gave each other. It was one of the most difficult shows to judge because he felt everyone should win.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **1. Consider Approval to Appoint Stephanie Fenters to the Westville-New Durham Township Public Library Board to Replace Lauren Mullet**

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

##### **2. Consider Approval of Council President's Authorization to Hire a Replacement Position for an Equipment Operator at the County Highway Department, a Replacement Field Officer for La Porte County Community Corrections, and a Replacement Nurse Position for the La Porte County Health Department**

The Highway department replacement was addressed under Department Head Reports. A motion to approve a replacement field officer for the Highway department and a replacement nurse for the Health department was made by Councilman Sullivan and seconded by Councilman Rosenbaum. Motion carried 6-0.

##### **3. Consider Request to Hire Replacement Deputy Clerk Position in the Clerk's Office – Kathy Chroback**

This item was removed at the beginning of the meeting.

##### **4. Consider Request to Establish a Professional Services Account within the Probation User Fee Fund (2102) and Permission to Transfer \$8,000.00 into Said Account from 2102-30059-000-0334 (Motor Vehicles) Account – Steve Eyrick**

Councilman Yagelski noted that this is not really an account but a line item. A motion to approve was made by Councilman Yagelski and seconded by Councilman Rosenbaum. Motion carried 6-0.

**Requesting Permission to Spend from 2102-41007-000-0334 to Purchase One Desktop Computer in the Amount of \$1,027.45**

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

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

**CORRESPONDENCE**

None

**ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**

None

**APPROPRIATIONS, TRANSFERS, REQUESTS**

La Porte County Plan Commission

**Requesting an Additional Appropriation**

**From Riverboat (1191) or Win Tax (4220)**

**For Expenses and Permitting Training**

**\$44,000.00**

Janet Cole distributed information to the Council which included the types of permits and their fees. Building Commissioner Annemarie Polan stated that training is not necessary but the software and website need further development. Councilman Yagelski said after speaking to Mike Ordziejewski from GIS, he feels this could be handled in-house. Therefore, a motion to table was made by Councilman Yagelski and seconded by Councilman Santana. President Novak stated there is no discussion on a motion to table. Motion carried 6-0.

La Porte County EMA

**Requesting an Additional Appropriation**

**From Riverboat (1191) or Win Tax (4220)**

**For Replacement Vehicle**

**Not to Exceed**

**\$27,644.00**

La Porte County EMA Director, Larry Butcher, stated got three different bids and gave them to his liaison and President Novak. Councilman Santana confirmed that and said Mr. Butcher decided to choose the middle of the road vehicle, which is the Chevy Silverado. There was also going to be a trade-in vehicle, but after a discussion with Councilman Yagelski, he now feels that the trade-in should be held back in order to stay in the County's fleet. Councilman Rosenbaum asked about the \$1,500.00 for lights, but Mr. Butcher said he spoke with his liaison and he would be taking that out of his everyday operating budget. President Novak also suggested getting with Bob Young to see if the Highway Department has any leftover Sheriff's equipment. Mr. Butcher said the plan is for him to take the equipment off of the current vehicle. Councilman Rosenbaum expressed concern that if the equipment is removed from a vehicle, there will be holes left. A motion of support for the 2019 Chevy Silverado not to exceed \$25,253 was made by Councilman Sullivan and seconded by Councilman Mollenhauer. Councilman Santana conferred with Council Attorney, Guy DiMartino, about the amount and he stated it is actually just under \$30,000.00. Therefore, the motion was amended by Councilmen Sullivan and Mollenhauer to the higher amount. Motion carried 5-1, with Councilman Rosenbaum voting Nay. Councilman Santana explained that the vehicle can be ordered, but there still has to be a formal approval after the amount is re-advertised. Chief Deputy Auditor Kristie Deckard stated the exact amount is \$29,953.00.

La Porte County Commissioners

**Requesting an Additional Appropriation  
From Riverboat (1191) or Win Tax (4220)  
For Legal Fees and Professional Services**

**\$255,000.00**

Councilman Yagelski said the amount has been cut in the budget process and that the amount has gone down from \$35,000.00 yearly to \$1,823.00 per month. He thanked the Commissioners for doing due diligence and being mindful of the amount being spent. A motion to approve out of Riverboat (1191) was made by Councilman Yagelski and seconded by Councilman Santana. Motion carried 6-0.

**Requesting an Additional Appropriation  
From the General Fund (Franchise Fees) (1000)  
For Updating the County Website**

**Not to Exceed  
\$30,000.00**

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

Councilman Santana commented that in 2003, the website was updated and now the newness has worn off, and the expected activity from the departments has not been received. He added that Council and Commissioners cannot make elected officials do things they want them to do. However, the appointed officials should keep them apprised of their contribution, or lack thereof, so steps can be taken by the Council and Commissioners to speak with these individuals and improve communication to the public.

La Porte County Engineer

**Requesting an Additional Appropriation  
From Cumulative Bridge Fund (1135)  
For Repairs to Bridge #34**

**\$568,991.00**

A motion to approve was made by Councilman Sullivan and seconded by Councilman Santana. Councilman Santana asked why the appropriation amount changed from \$636,480.00 in May to the current amount. Jay Sullivan, La Porte County Engineer, replied that the original amount was an estimate for FEMA, but the bids came in under that. He added it is a FEMA disaster aid package so there should be a reimbursement of 75%. President Novak said this is a bridge that had a washout problem last year with the flooding at 800 South and County Line. Motion carried 6-0.

Councilman Rosenbaum asked for the timeline for full repair. Mr. Sullivan replied he is hoping it will be done by the fall.

La Porte County Sheriff

**Requesting Permission to Spend  
From Firearms Fund (1156)  
For Pistols**

**Not to Exceed  
\$600.00**

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

La Porte County Parks Department  
**Requesting Permission to Spend**

**From Parks Non-Reverting Capital Fund (1179)  
For Grant Match at Luhr Park**

**\$24,876.02**

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

Councilman Novak asked Superintendent Jeremy Sobecki how the parks are holding up. He said there is still standing water and mud in some places.

**La Porte County Auditor**

**Requesting Permission to Spend**

**From Dual Homestead Fund (7110)**

**For the Purchase of 2 Scanners and Programming**

**Not to Exceed  
\$10,000.00**

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


**COUNTY COUNCIL/ATTORNEY COMMENTS**

Councilman Rosenbaum said he voted Nay for the Chevy Silverado during the EMA request. He said he did quick research and realized that the value of the trade-in car was approximately double so there will be still be value if it is traded-in at a later date.


**ADJOURNMENT**

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

**EXAMINED & APPROVED BY THE LA PORTE COUNTY COUNCIL this 22<sup>nd</sup> of July 2019.**


  
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Councilman Terry Garner

  
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Councilman Mike Mollenhauer

  
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Councilman Randy Novak

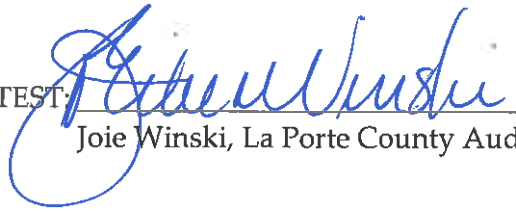
  
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Councilman Mike Rosenbaum

  
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Councilman Jeff Santana

  
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Councilman John Sullivan

  
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Councilman Mark Yagelski

ATTEST:



Joie Winski, La Porte County Auditor