

# MINUTES

## MEETING OF THE LAPORTE COUNTY COUNCIL

APRIL 26, 2021 AT 6:00 P.M.

The meeting of the La Porte County Council was held on April 26, 2021 at 6:00 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 6pm by the Council President, Randy Novak.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Novak asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and to remain standing for a moment of silence for County Historian Fern Eddy Schultz, and for Jim Rice.

### ROLL CALL

Roll call was conducted by Auditor Timothy Stabosz. All Council members were present.

### APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 26, 2021 AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda by Mr. Rosenbaum and a second followed by Mr. Yagelski. All council members voted in favor.

### APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 22, 2021 MEETING MINUTES

Motion to approve the minutes by Mr. Rosenbaum and a second followed by Mr. Yagelski. All council members voted in favor.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

No one from the public spoke.

### DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

*John Boyd, Sheriff of La Porte County:*

Talked about the grant that the Sheriff's Department wrote through the Health Care Foundation of La Porte for a patrol boat for life patrol. He received a call from the Health Care Foundation to receive the grant as a matching grant as opposed to what the Sheriff was told before, upon submission of the grant. Asked permission to pursue the grant with the full knowledge that there is a matching component to it. Would like to trade in the old boat, but cannot do that until there is a new boat in its place and whatever money they receive from the old boat they could put towards the cost of the new one.

Mr. Yagelski made a motion to proceed to the next step of the project and the motion was seconded by Mr. Cunningham. Mr. Rosenbaum made an inquiry of the cost of the new vessel; Sheriff Boyd returned a reply of \$58,000. All council members voted in favor of the motion.

*Lynn Swanson, County Coroner:*

Talked of her Department Head training and talked about her sending two trainees for training and one taking a little bit more time due to retesting.

*Heather Stevens, County Clerk:*

Expressed thanks for the appropriations for the renovations to her and her staff's offices. Reported that the scanning room is complete and that new hires are coming in to do the job on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.

*Joseph Haney, La Porte County Commissioner:*

Gave an update on what happened with flooding issues with Kingsbury Creek. Mr. Cunningham had a question asking if it would be able to come out of the Bridge Fund for the repairs to the creek. Mr. Yagelski asked Commissioner Haney to take a look in to the Trail Creek issue In Michigan City.

## **LIAISON REPORTS**

Mr. Rosenbaum gave an update from his liaison affiliation with the RDC and FMEC, as well as Zoom calls dealing with County business.

Mr. Cunningham pointed out that Mr. Rosenbaum "left one out that was very important," as it pertained to the liaison reports, and went on to mention how himself, Rosenbaum, and Commissioner Haney attended the Bypass meeting held at the Civic Auditorium. He went on to give his reports on both Community Corrections and the Juvenile Services Center.

Mr. Yagelski mentioned that he attended the meeting of the data board.

Mrs. Gramarossa mentioned that she has attended all of the meetings of the departments and commissions that she is a liaison to and indicated that everything is moving along well.

Mr. Mollenhauer mentioned he attended all of the meetings of the departments and commissions that he is a liaison to.

Mr. Novak attended the weekly COVID call that he hosts on Thursdays, as well as the weekly calls on the courthouse in Michigan City and stated, "everything is going good over there." He also attended the Redevelopment Commission meeting and a weekly call with the Health Department.

Mr. Garner stated that he did not have a chance to speak with anyone in regards to the commissions and departments that he is a liaison to.

### CORRESPONDENCE

Auditor Timothy Stabosz stated that there was no correspondence.

### ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

There were none.

### NEW BUSINESS

1. **Ranger Jeremy Sobecki – Grant being awarded to La Porte Parks Department for Bluhm County Park Improvements**
  - a. Mr. Sobecki went in depth about being awarded the grant and to announce that he will return to the council in the future for an additional appropriation for \$70,000 for paving.
2. **Consider approval of Council President’s authorization to hire a Public Health Clerk Position in the La Porte County Health Department.**
  - a. Motion to approve by Mr. Rosenbaum and seconded by Mr. Mollenhauer with all council members voting in favor.
3. **Permission for Prosecuting Attorney to hire a temporary Process Server for the Child Support IV-D office and to hire an intern to work for the summer in the La Porte office.**
  - a. Prosecutor John Lake went into depth and clarified about the asks stating that there is already money in the budget for both hires. Lake stated that he will not be coming for additional appropriations. Motion to approve by Mr. Mollenhauer and seconded by Mr. Cunningham with all of the council members voting in favor.
4. **La Porte County Auditor requesting consideration for a replacement hire for Tax Sale Clerk/ Grant Administrator.**
  - a. Mr. Rosenbaum mentioned that the Tax Sale Clerk/ Grant Administrator was left off of the agenda having being already approved by the Council President. Auditor Stabosz expressed his embarrassment of the mistake and went on to tell more of the position and of the new hire starting on Monday, May, 2, 2021. Mr. Stabosz asked for approval by the Council. Mr. Yagelski made a motion to approve and seconded by Mr. Cunningham. Attorney Dimartino asked to have the agenda amended to reflect the change. Motion to amend the agenda made by Mr. Rosenbaum and seconded by Mr. Yagelski. All council members voted in favor of the agenda change and the replacement hire.
5. **La Porte County Maintenance – Rolling Prairie EMS & Highway Garage Project**

- a. Larry Levendowski, Director of Facilities, went into depth about the topic of the Highway Project and came before the Council where he stated “we are looking for a motion of support to keep this project moving.” Motion of support was made by Mr. Rosenbaum and seconded by Mr. Mollenhauer. All council members voted in favor except for Mr. Yagelski who voted nay.
6. **La Porte County Clerk requesting a commitment to maintain Electronic Pollbooks.**
- a. Motion to approve out of the gate by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Rosenbaum.
  - b. Mrs. Gramarossa asked for more information.
  - c. All members voted in favor.

**APPROPRIATIONS, TRANSFERS, REQUESTS**

1. **La Porte County Sheriff’s request**
- a. Requesting permission to spend not to exceed \$51,956 from the Firearms Account for less lethal shotguns and molded stocks and forends, patrol rifles, and optic systems.
  - b. Motion to approve permission to spend by Mr. Rosenbaum and seconded by Mrs. Gramarossa. All members voted in favor.
2. **La Porte County Drug Free Partnership request**
- a. Requesting permission to draw upon the Community Drug Free Fund for the amount Accumulated between January 2020 March 2021 for organizations serving La Porte County.
  - b. Mr. Novak mentioned that this is an annual request.
  - c. Motion to approve by Mr. Mollenhauer and seconded by Mr. Rosenbaum. All members voted in favor.
3. **La Porte County Maintenance request**
- a. Requesting a motion of support seeking additional funds in the amount of \$125,000 for upgrades to the Fairgrounds.
  - b. A great amount of discussion was had about the request between the Director of Maintenance, Larry Levendowski, and the Council.
  - c. Motion to approve by Mr. Mollenhauer and seconded by Mr. Yagelski.
  - d. All members voted in favor.
4. **La Porte County Coroner request for furniture**
- a. Requesting permission to spend out of the Coroner Non-Reverting fund, in the amount of \$2,513.91, for office furniture.
  - b. Discussion was had on whether the Coroner looked for the furniture at the Fairgrounds or not. (She assured the Council that she had.)
  - c. Motion to approve by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Rosenbaum.
  - d. All members voted in favor.
5. **La Porte County Coroner request for computers and a printer**
- a. Requesting additional appropriations from CCD (1138) or Riverboat (1191) or General (1000) for computers and a printer, in the amount of \$2884.50.
  - b. Motion to approve to expend from the General Fund by Mrs. Gramarossa and seconded by Mr. Rosenbaum.
  - c. All members voted in favor.

- d. Motion made by Mr. Yagelski to approve the spending on the computers and the printer from the non-reverting fund, and seconded by Mr. Rosenbaum. All members voted in favor.

**6. La Porte County Highway Department request**

- a. Requesting a motion to spend from LIT to purchase a Superior Broom – side cast sweeper, in the amount of \$49,500.
- b. Discussion was had on the request by the Superintendent of the Highway Department, Duane Werner, and the Council.
- c. Motion to approve by Mrs. Gramarossa and seconded by Mr. Rosenbaum.
- d. All members voted in favor.

**7. La Porte County Community Corrections request**

- a. Requesting permission to spend from the Building Fund for electrical, lighting, and drywall suspension drop ceiling in the amount of \$45,000.
- b. Director Rochelle Brown attended via Zoom.
- c. Discussion was had on this topic between Mr. Yagelski and Director Brown about monies that need to be returned to the Riverboat Fund until approval of any more monies to be spent. Mr. Cunningham referred the discussion to the Council Attorney in which Attorney Dimartino concurred and added that there is no issue granting the monies with the understanding that the other monies from 2012 are paid back to the Riverboat Fund.
- d. Mr. Yagelski made a motion that the request be granted contingent on that the previous monies granted are paid back to the Riverboat Fund. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Gramarossa. Auditor Stabosz asked for clarification. All members voted in favor of the request.

**8. La Porte County Community Corrections request**

- a. Requesting to spend \$15,747.01 from the Commissary Fund.
- b. Director Brown discussed the request in depth and that it will be used for the monitoring of employees both in and out of the facility.
- c. Motion made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Cunningham.
- d. All members voted in favor.

**9. La Porte County EMS request**

- a. Requesting additional appropriations from CCD (1138) or Riverboat (1191) or General (1000) for:
  - i. Ambulance \$220,823.54
  - ii. Ambulance loose equipment \$13,890.35
  - iii. Overtime pay \$90,000.00
  - iv. Part time pay \$15,000.00
- b. Motion to approve the first two line items made by Mr. Rosenbaum and seconded by Mr. Yagelski and Mr. Mollenhauer. All members voted in favor.
- c. Reading of the last two line items by President Novak about over time and part time pay.
  - i. Extensive discussion was had from the Director of EMS, Andrew McGuire, where he explained that there were 6 resignations and other things that are recurring to the department.

- ii. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Yagelski with the understanding that the remainder not used is returned to the Riverboat Fund. Motion was seconded by Mrs. Gramarossa. All members voted in favor.

**10. La Porte County Information Technology request**

- a. Requesting additional appropriation in the amount of \$1,805.99 from CCD (1138) or Riverboat (1191) or General (1000) for computer for Human Resources.
- b. Motion of support was given at the last meeting. Mr. Rosenbaum made a motion to approve and was seconded by Mr. Mollenhauer. Mr. Rosenbaum wanted to add that the monies would come out of the General Fund. All members voted in favor.

**COUNCIL AND OR ATTORNEY COMMENTS**

Mr. Cunningham had a question regarding shift differential and asked the President of the Council for a committee on his question. He also thanked Auditor Stabosz for his diligence in his position.

President Novak encouraged everyone to receive the COVID 19 Vaccine.


Mr. Rosenbaum mentioned the American Rescue Plan and urged the council to get a committee together to oversee the monies that will be dispersed to the county. He expressed that he wanted to be a part of the committee. Mr. Cunningham interjected and gave praise to President Novak for all of his hard work and suggested that he should receive extra pay. He then went on record saying that, "I am not voting for anyone getting any bonus money." President Novak received the kind words.

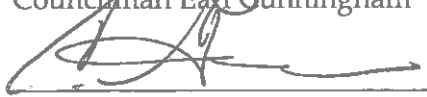
Mr. Mollenhauer expressed the importance of a workshop on the request by Mr. Levendowski to upgrade the La Porte County Fairgrounds and stated, "we just gotta keep it safe."

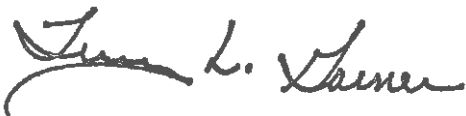
**ADJOURNMENT**


Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Rosenbaum and was seconded by Mr. Yagelski. Motion carried 7-0.

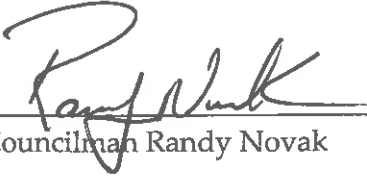
**EXAMINED & APPROVED BY THE LA PORTE COUNTY COUNCIL THIS 26<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF APRIL 2021.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Councilman Earl Cunningham

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Councilwoman Connie Gramarossa

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Councilman Terry Garner

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Councilman Mike Mollenhauer



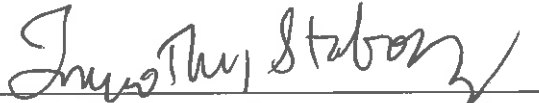
Councilman Randy Novak



Councilman Mike Rosenbaum



Councilman Mark Yagelski

ATTEST:   
Timothy Stabosz, La Porte County Auditor