



**LA PORTE COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**
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Richard Mrozinski
President

Joseph Haney
Vice President

Sheila Matias
Member

LA PORTE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, May 19, 2021 La Porte County Complex Meeting Room 3 at 6:00 p.m.

President Rich Mrozinski called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance which was led by Ariana Woodson then followed by a moment of silence for the passing of long time employee and Coolspring Township Trustee Jackie Atwater.

Auditor Tim Stabosz called the roll: Commissioner Haney - Present; Commissioner Matias - Present; Commissioner Mrozinski - Present. Quorum present therefore meeting commenced.

Considered the agenda. **Commissioner Haney** motioned to amend item 10 c to read 'Meadowview Estates, not to exceed \$700,000' and add to the agenda request from Director of Facilities Larry Levendowski, to outsource the housekeeping of the Brown Mackie building. **Commissioner Matias** seconded. Motion carried.

Considered approval of May 5, 2021 minutes. **Commissioner Haney** motioned to approve. **Commissioner Matias** seconded. Motion carried.

Auditor Tim Stabosz read the Claims with Payroll ending 5/7/2021 - \$1,134,197.33 and Operating Expense Claims - \$1,013,087.96. **Commissioner Matias** motioned to approve. **Commissioner Haney** seconded. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Lisa Pierzakowski, Center Township Trustee, presented a handout to the Commissioners for a new building. American Rescue Plan distribution money in the amount of \$700,000 was designated to go to Center Township then at the last minute before the bill was signed the Townships were removed. The money then went to the cities and counties. Lisa stated she went to the City of La Porte and then the County and requested \$200,000 from each to build a facility for the homeless. Center Township Board approved it 2-1 for a location on Jefferson Avenue. Handout showed a sketch of the facility with Trustee's office in the front, interview rooms, bathrooms, office and in the middle will be a Resource Center Food Pantry. The far part of the building will be classified as for 'people in need.' Kitchen area will be used for staff and the 'people in need' plus bathrooms/showers for men, bathrooms/showers for women, laundry facility and a Day Room with lockers and computers and then an office for Swanson Center PATH Program. Upstairs will be used for storage such as furniture, appliances and clothing donations.

Mark Parkman, voiced his concerns about Purdue Extension employees, volunteers and community members have tried to get the Purdue Extension Leadership to address concerns about the 4-H Program in our county. Numbers are declining in membership. Volunteers are either quitting or being removed because they speak up about how things are going. Mark was urged to run for 4-H Council President which he did with hopes to make a change. Then on March 15th, Denise Scarborough, a past Extension Board President, Vern Schafer, existing Extension Board President, Eric Pointon, a past Extension Board President and Mark as the 4-H Council President all went to the statehouse in Indianapolis to meet Representative Jim Pressel, Senator Mike Bohacek and 3 top officials from Purdue Extension to discuss La Porte County's Purdue Extension/4-H. Mark was removed as 4-H Council President, Beef Committee Chairman and a Volunteer. President Mrozinski said he will call for a meeting with the Extension and inquire since the county does pay half of the salaries for the employees. Commissioner Haney requested copies of the letters from concerned 4-H members and volunteers that Mark has in his possession.

Dr. Vidya Kora, Democrat County Chair, stated that Jackie Atwater, Coolspring Township Trustee, passed away and a caucus will be held to replace her position next week. He thanked Center Township Trustee Lisa Pierzakowski for assisting the Coolspring Township Trustee's office during this time as interim until the caucus is held. Lisa has gone the extra mile to serve.

ORIGINAL

Department Reports/Department Head Comments

Barb Mossman, HR, announced there are currently both full and part-time positions open at the county. Positions available in Community Corrections, Juvenile Services Center, Parks Department, Building Maintenance, Highway Department, Adult Protective Services and at the Animal Shelter. There will be a 'Ready to Work' job hiring fair through the La Porte Economic Advancement Partnership at the Civic Auditorium in La Porte May 26th at 3:00 p.m. which Barb and her assistant Monique will be attending. Requested permission to close the office early to set up for the job fair. **Barb** then requested permission to attend training at Blue Chip on June 8th. **Commissioner Haney motioned to approve. Commissioner Matias seconded. Motion carried.**

Mike Polan, Building Commissioner, reported he has received several phone calls pertaining to a rodeo event that was on the BZA meeting agenda the night before where it was denied. The rodeo will not happen.

Tony Rodriguez, OCED, reported on 'Welcome Home Task Force' which evolved out of the Vibrant Communities, continues to put volunteer hours in the La Porte County wide housing market analysis; the Broadband Task Force will have crews in the area to produce a video; Mike Seitz has been hired to retain existing businesses in the county; activity in manufacturing has been great and a billboard for KIP can be seen on I-94.

Commissioner Joe Haney said he attended an insurance meeting earlier today and reported Teledoc will be extended through August 31st for employees. Joe also said an audit is being recommended for Stop Loss to ensure we are in compliance.

Joe Golec, VSO, reminded everyone Memorial Day is coming up and join in prayer/recognition of our fallen heroes. Joe reported on a recent newspaper article on the Trapp brothers, Harold and William, from La Porte and were in the US Navy. Harold was a Navy Fire Controlman 2nd Class and William was an Electrician's Mate 3rd Class, both were aboard the battleship USS Oklahoma when on December 7, 1941, while it was moored at Ford Island in Pearl Harbor it was attacked by Japanese aircraft resulting in 429 crew members dying. The Trapp brothers were reported missing and ultimately declared dead on December 7, 1941, officially listed as 'Missing in Action or Lost at Sea.' An official burial will take place June 15th at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, known as the Punchbowl, in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Requests

Considered permission to pay 60 unused sick days to Catherine Zeman who is retiring from the Clerk's office after 27 years of service - Heather Stevens, Clerk. **Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.**

Considered permission to pay 60 unused sick days to Kristine Harlow who is retiring from the Prosecutor's office after 22 1/2 years of service. **Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.**

Considered permission to pay 4 unused sick days to Jackie Atwater's Estate who is retiring from the Prosecutor's office after 29 years of service. **Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.**

Considered permission to approach the Council to fill a position vacated in the Recorder's office - Ela Bilderback, Recorder. **Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.**

Considered permission for Director of Facilities to outsource the cleaning services at the Brown Mackie building and 8th Street building in Michigan City. President Mrozinski said no additional money is being requested and contracts will be reviewed. Attorney Friedman asked if they were seeking RFPs and the reply was yes. Larry said it has been difficult due to open positions that have not been filled yet in his department. The employees at the brown Mackie and 8th Street buildings will be brought to the La Porte locations. **Commissioner Haney motioned for moving forward with RFPs. Commissioner Matias seconded. Motion carried.**

Old Business

Considered proposals and make selection from architectural/design firms submitting for services to be provided to county in connection with new Rolling Prairie EMS base/Highway Department Garage and Salt Storage building. 3 proposals were: James F. Giannini & Associates @ \$87,500; AME Consulting @ \$90,000 and DLZ @ \$180,000. **Commissioner Matias motioned to approve the contract from James F. Giannini for \$87,500. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.**

Considered opening bids for Cougar Road Turn Lane construction project. Attorney Shaw Friedman opened the timely dated and marked bids. Milestone bid \$332,048.16 and Reith-Riley bid was \$238,632.56. Both bids were given to Engineer Jay Sullivan for review then his recommendation will be given to the Commissioners at the next meeting. **Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.**

Considered making requests to County Council to effect repairs/restoration work at two long - pending stormwater flooding locations: 1. Meadowview Estates, not to exceed \$700,000.00 and 2. McCline/800 North, not to exceed \$120,000.00.

Commissioner Haney motioned to approve. Commissioner Matias seconded. Motion carried.

New Business

Considered revised operations order for county employees and buildings, masking and other Covid related issues. Commissioner Haney motioned to approve. Commissioner Matias seconded. Motion carried. ***Mask advisory only for county buildings

Considered approval of Reliance Standard AD&D life insurance - Barb Mossman, HR. Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.

Considered agreement with The Howard E. Nyhart Company, Inc. for County Auditor - Tim Stabosz, Auditor. Commissioner Haney motioned to approve. Commissioner Matias seconded. Motion carried.

Considered Ordinance to vacate unimproved public way on Pine Lane in New Carlisle - Chuck Watterson, Attorney. Commissioner Matias motioned to approve on 1st reading. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried. ***Ordinance 2021-4

Considered Ordinance for reducing speed limit on 1200 S. between County Line Road and US 30 - Jay Sullivan, Engineer. Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. President Mrozinski stepped down and seconded. Motion carried 2-1. ***Ordinance 2021-5

Considered Ordinance for reducing speed limit on Beverly Way in Galena Subdivision - Jay Sullivan, Engineer. Commissioner Haney motioned to approve. Commissioner Matias seconded. Motion carried. ***Ordinance 2021-6

Considered Resolution permitting County Commission and any county advisory boards or committees to conduct zoom meetings under rules set per Public Law 88-2021. Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. President Mrozinski stepped down and seconded. Motion carried 2-1. ***Resolution 2021-7

Considered First Reading of Updated Responsible Bidders' Ordinance - Marci Kunstek, IN/IL/IA Foundation for Fair Contracting. Commissioner Matias motioned to approve on 1st reading. President Mrozinski stepped down and seconded. Motion carried 2-1. ***Ordinance 2021-7

Considered preliminary resolution to place for sale former Rolling Prairie Highway parcel while reserving easement for 800 MHz tower. Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried. ***Resolution 2021-8

Commissioner Comments

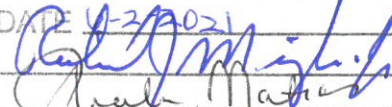

Commissioner Haney wished his wife of 20 years a Happy Anniversary. Joe also reported that the vaccine clinic will be receiving the Pfizer vaccine. The clinic will be moving from the Fairgrounds location to the former La Porte Hospital on Lincolnway. Joe had a tour of the Community Corrections facility. Celebrated Mother's Day, Corrections Officer's week, and currently in EMS week. He visited various EMS bases in Michigan City, La Porte and Wanatah. While in Wanatah he met with Beth Montague who has worked 20 years and Jennifer Sabie who has 15 years. Solid Waste had 1400 visitors. FMEC has a lot of events scheduled. Joe quoted Mahatma Gandhi with 'Your actions express your priorities' and 'Fear of disease killed more men than disease itself.'

Commissioner Matias stated the Commissioners have changed the Mask Mandate to an Advisory. Approximately 40% of the people in La Porte County are vaccinated. Companies and businesses in the county will be able to decide if they want masks to be required for their facilities. Memorial Day is a time to remember those that have given the ultimate sacrifice. Veterans and Law Enforcement

Commissioner Mrozinski said Veteran's Day is to thank a veteran who is alive and Memorial Day is a day to honor those that are no longer with us. Cemeteries in La Porte County will have grave markers and flags honoring the veterans.

President Mrozinski adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

EXAMINED AND APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF LA PORTE, INDIANA

DATE 4-27-2021



ATTEST: _____ Auditor

LA PORTE COUNTY, INDIANA

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