



**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, July 21, 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 led by Gary Radtke.

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

Considered the agenda. **Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.**

Considered approval of July 7, 2021 minutes. **Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.**

Auditor Tim Stabosz read the Claims with Payroll ending 7/16/2021 - \$1,166,460.46 and Operating Expense Claims - \$3,088,257.20. **Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.**

Public Comment

Randy Veatch, 4177 W. Schultz Road, La Porte, stated he noticed the question he had at the previous meeting about weight limit signs being displayed on the county roads near his home was not on the agenda. According to his records, back on August 3, 2016, Commissioners Kora and Bohacek approved weight limit signs to be installed in his neighborhood with a 12-ton weight limit posted. For a year and a half they were led to believe Sheriff's deputies were not capable of pulling over truck drivers due to the skill level required to determine 'overweight' loads. Randy said he and his neighbors could not understand why the deputies could not run driver's license and registration to determine the weight of a tri-axle truck which weighs over 12,000 pounds empty. He then said on March 6, 2018, a neighbor saw a county employee removing the weight limit sign. The neighbor approached the employee asking if the County Commissioners were responsible for the removal of the sign and the reply was 'yes, they're trying something new.' Randy said he would appreciate a response from Commissioner Haney who was instructed at the last meeting by President Mrozinski to look into the reason why the weight limit signs were removed. During the July 7th meeting, Commissioner Matias asked Randy if the Commission could do anything to help. Randy pointed out the paperwork that was filled out, signed and turned in to the State was less than truthful. He asked the Commission who is the 'go to' person/employee in the county government that will treat his informational request as an interested party. He should not have to hire an attorney to do this for him. He compared this 'go to' person/employee to a 'Whistle Blower' personnel position making sure county employees are not undermining the La Porte County Joint Zoning Ordinance. The Ordinance is written in very precise language. If no 'go to' personnel exists then when will one be hired? Randy stated from what he has seen and heard at the meetings it seems as if politics have played a role and he believes there is no room for it in the Joint Zoning Ordinance, it should be followed as written. **Commissioner Haney** commented on his task. The current Highway Superintendent is not the same individual that was in place when the sign was removed. Information is still being gathered as to why the weight limit sign was taken down. Joe stated yes, it was the prior Commission that ordered the removal of the sign but as to which specific person is still not known. Commissioner Haney also said he had reached out to Randy several times during the timeframes in which he can call him, left messages and exchanged emails as well with this information. There was communication between them on this subject. **Attorney Friedman** said he spoke with

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Attorney Laura Nirenberg who is involved with the overweight truck ordinance along with Deputy Ryan Elcock as to the reposting of weigh limit signs on county roads.

Department Reports/Department Head Comments

Tony Rodriguez, Office of Community & Economic Development, introduced Viviana Plaza who joined his office as the Community Development Specialist. A summary of activity was provided to the Commissioners. Tony reported he attended the Chicago Rail Summit earlier in the day.

Amanda Lahners, Health Department, updated the Commission on vaccination numbers for the County. County has administered over 30,000 vaccines shots. We are at 51.6% vaccinated and ahead of the state average which is at 50%. Vaccine Clinic is still open Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays at the former La Porte Hospital building on Lincolnway in the lobby. Beginning August 1st the days will be cut back to Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Requests

Considered permission to approach the Council not to exceed \$650,000 from ARP funds for Disaster Recovery Site in South Bend - Darlene Hale, IT. This will be set up at Union Station, a big data center, in South Bend. The County will own the hardware and will have a 5 year rental agreement. **Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.**

Considered permission to approach the Council for ARP funds - Barb Huston, E-911. Barb spoke on behalf of essential workers stating she read the 151 page document from the Department of Treasury on consideration for ARP funds. She then read the overview, the Final Rule - Guidance for State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, which was only 35 pages. Both documents describe an eligible worker as 'workers needed to maintain continuity of operations of essential, critical infrastructure sectors including Emergency Response, E-911, Sheriff, EMS, Community Corrections, Juvenile Services, IT, Maintenance, Highway, EMA and Hazmat.' And the essential work as 'work that is not performed while teleworking from a residence and involves regular in-person interactions with patients, public or co-workers.' Barb stated the County would come to a standstill if E-911 employees did not show up for work. No one would be dispatched. If you live in the County where there is a Volunteer Fire Department and your house catches fire, when you make a call to 911 and there is no answer, what do you do next? E-911 does more than just answer phone calls. During the pandemic 166,000 calls were answered with 114,000 being dispatched. The employees in the center are EMD certified in IMS, NCIC, IDACS, they verify warrants, background checks, they run triple I and criminal history for several departments. Imagine if the Sheriff's Department did not come to work. During the pandemic it was challenging for the deputies when the mask mandate was in place. Maintaining 6 foot distances while apprehending individuals. The jail saw challenges as well during COVID. Instead of the inmates doing laundry and cooking the jail staff performed these duties instead adding to their regular work. EMS employees are among the first to enter homes or businesses when an emergency call comes in to the 911 center and often during the pandemic it may or may not have been known if the 'patient' was positive with the virus. The EMS staff came to work regardless and performed their duties. The IT department travels from office to office and comes in to contact with employee's phones, keyboards and office areas not knowing if the virus is present or not. Building Maintenance Department as well goes to every office and clean, disinfect the areas or maintains the buildings during COVID and the staff continued to come to work every day, they could not work from home. Barb stated she did not work for the County last year during the pandemic but being a prior Commissioner and employee she knows a lot of the current employees and feels they should be recognized for coming to work every day during a difficult time and kept the government offices working. She requested a portion of the ARP funds be given to essential employees plus 5%. **Commissioner Matias** said she felt Barb made a very good point, we have dedicated hard working employees that kept the county offices going during a historically dangerous and crisis ridden time. Sheila said she would hope the Council would take a look at this request but possibly a broader approach to include current salaries. She said over the past 3-4 months employees are leaving their county jobs to take higher paying positions elsewhere and many of them are long time employees. Commissioner Matias stated she would like to challenge the financial arm of the county, the Council, to look at Barb's request and salaries in order to preserve the talent we have in this county with our employees. **Barb** did say this request is separate from the salary issue, the ARP funds are not for salaries. **Commissioner Matias motioned to allow Barb to approach the Council for this request but with an addendum that the Council do an inclusive study of current salaries and hourly rates and possibly include ALL essential employees that Barb may not have mentioned on her list. Commissioner Haney asked for clarification of Barb's request. Barb** replied her request is for 'a portion of ARP money to La Porte County essential employees, as much as possible, plus 5%.' **Commissioner Haney** asked if

leave that to be determined by the Council. **Commissioner Matias then said she motioned for the request go to the Council with an addendum of perhaps a committee being formed to look at the overall salaries, she also said she is not sure about the ‘essential versus non-essential’ because we all know how the county government runs. Barb said she did not say any employee was non-essential. Commissioner Matias said she approves Barb’s request to approach the Council as well as having the Council look at salaries especially after a number of employees have left to take higher paying positions elsewhere. Commissioner Haney agreed with Commissioner Matias about the salaries needing to be looked at due to the number of employees that have left their county employment for better paying jobs. Compare salaries to neighboring counties. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.**

Considered permission to approach the Council for unpaid expenses from 2020 Election - Heather Stevens, Clerk. **Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.**

Considered permission to approach the Council to use non-reverting funds - Lynn Swanson, Coroner. **Lynn** stated she needs an assistant in her office. **Commissioner Haney** moved to take the money from the non-reverting funds. **President Mrozinski** said it will be the Council’s decision. **Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.**

Considered permission to travel to Boston for training - Steve Eyrick, Adult Probation. Request is for **8** (probation, drug court and pretrial staff) employees to attend the American Probation and Parole Association annual summer training in Boston, Massachusetts August 21-25, 2021. No additional funds are needed. Cost will be covered through grant monies. **Commissioner Haney said he spoke to Steve about this request so he motioned to approve. Commissioner Matias seconded. Motion carried.**

Considered permission to travel to Austin for training - John Lake, Prosecutor. **Barry McDonnell**, Deputy Prosecutor in charge of the Child Support Enforcement Division, requested permission for **3** employees from this office to attend the National Child Support Enforcement Association Leadership Symposium in Austin, Texas, August 1-4, 2021. This training is greatly needed especially with no training last year due to the pandemic. No additional appropriations are needed. **Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.**

Considered La Porte County Historical Society Board of Directors’ recommendation for Danielle Adams as Assistant Museum Director - Bruce Johnson, Board President. **Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.**

Old Business

Considered 2nd/final reading on Ordinance to vacate undeveloped roadway on E. Belmont Drive in New Carlisle - Andrew Voeltz, Attorney. **Commissioner Haney motioned to remove from the Table. Commissioner Matias seconded. Motion carried. Mike Polan**, Building Commissioner, asked for any comments first from representing attorneys. **Andrew Voeltz**, said on behalf of his clients on 2 petitions to vacate which were properly filed and approved through the Plan Commission. He said regardless of the change in statute on the state level both of these vacates were already moving through to the Commissioners on 2nd/final reading when they were tabled. **Commissioner Haney** said he spoke to Plan Commission’s attorney, Doug Biege, and the discrepancy to change the ruling on how vacates are approved or by which entity, our local Joint Zoning Ordinance has not changed to match the State’s so the Commissioners still have the final say in approving the vacates that come through from the Plan Commission. **Mike Polan** concurred with Attorney Voeltz and Commissioner Haney that until our JZO adopts a different rule on the final entity approving vacates, the Commissioners have the final say now. **Commissioner Matias motioned to approve on 2nd/final reading. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried. ***Ordinance 2021-9**

Considered 2nd/final reading on Ordinance to vacate undeveloped roadway on E. Saugana Trail/E. Miami Trail in Rolling Prairie - Andrew Voeltz, Attorney. **Commissioner Haney motioned to remove from the Table. Commissioner Matias seconded. Motion carried. Commissioner Haney motioned to approve on 2nd/final reading. Commissioner Matias seconded. Motion carried. ***Ordinance 2021-10**

Considered 2nd/final reading on Ordinance for proposed 47-unit townhome development north of Briar Leaf Golf Course - Chris Willoughby, Attorney. **Attorney Friedman** stated a request came in from Attorney Chris Willoughby to extend

this request a month. **Commissioner Matias moved to table this item. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.**

Considered 1st reading on Ordinance to vacate unimproved roadway E. Poppy Lane in Hudson Township - David Ambers, Attorney (Tabled at last meeting). **Commissioner Matias moved to remove from the table. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried. Mike Polan**, Building Commissioner, stated this is in the same group as the previous 2 vacates that were approved in the Plan Commission. Attorney David Ambers was not present. **Commissioner Matias motioned to move this item back on the table. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried. Item Tabled.**

Considered new vehicles not to exceed \$150,000/Roof repair at the Museum not to exceed \$150,000 - Larry Levendowski, Director of Facilities. **Larry** reported after receiving approval from the Council not to exceed \$150,000 for 2 trucks and an SUV they have received a price of \$111,174 from Bosak. **Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried. Considered** roof repair at the museum. Larry stated the low price that came back for the roof repair on the County Museum is \$148,700 and includes work around the chimney, cupola, handrail on the front of the building and to fix 6 out of 19 skylights. Larry met with Dr. Kesling and there are a few other repairs that Doc Kesling would like to see done at the museum. Larry will speak to the Council about the extra repairs. **Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.**


Considered adopting written determination supporting the county's utilization/purchase of services and equipment recommended by the team of WJE Engineers and Marquiss Electric for \$1.5 million in repairs to Franklin St. Bridge under Special Purchase provisions of IC 5-22-10-1 et seq. **Commissioner Matias** asked for a quick summary from the county attorney for public information so they will know why this is being done. **Attorney Friedman** briefly said the Indiana statute provides a method for the Commission to legally and appropriately move forward with selection as the Commission has done with WJE Engineers and Marquiss Electric for \$1.5 million in repairs that are required for the Franklin Street Bridge. Without doing competitive sealed bid because of various items but in order to do that the Commission needs to make it a matter of public record at a public Commission meeting so that determination is available for public inspection by the State Board of Accounts. The statute provides the Commission with various options: 1) There exists a unique opportunity to obtain supplies or services at a substantial savings under Indiana Code 5-22-10-5 and 2) That the urgency of moving of the repairs soon mandated that using another purchasing method, in this case a sealed bid, could seriously impair the functioning of this agency, the County Commissioners, under Indiana Code 5-22-10-9. Since this is a very specialized and historic bridge, it plays a critical role in economic activity in the city of Michigan City and the tax payers are best served by the proposal that Andy Skwiat and his team along with WJE have come up with, they all have unique and unparalleled expertise with this particular bridge and that should then be noted and made permanently of record so it's available for inspection by the State Board of Accounts. **Commissioner Matias moved to approve adopting written determination supporting the County's utilization/purchase of services and equipment as described under special purchase provisions. She** stated as former Mayor of Michigan City, not only is the bridge an economic engine for Michigan City, but also for the County because it leads us to the Lake Front, to all of the marina activities. It is a public safety issue, it is a DNR issue, it's an Army Corp issue, it's a boating safety issue, and she feels for public safety alone we cannot allow this bridge to stay in a raised position where people are not able to move back and forth across it. Marquiss Electric has a history of working on the Franklin Street Bridge. **Commissioner Haney** asked for clarification from Commissioner Matias, was she sitting under to move forward with Indiana Code 5-22-10-8. **Commissioner Matias** replied item f on the agenda. **Commissioner Haney** verified I.C. 5-22-10-8 Special Purchase as well as I.C. 5-22-10-4 Urgency due to a delay may cause issues; both? **Commissioner Matias** said sure. **Commissioner Haney** said, "The only reason why I asked that is I want to make sure we do this right because as Attorney Friedman pointed out some emails he had, we need to make sure that we're stating for the record so the State Board of Accounts knows exactly what we're doing so refer back to this as their kind of 'goal post' for determining if this falls in line, you know, so we don't get some sort of audit exemption or anything else. I know that we've looked back on this, we've been look - at least - I've been involved in the process since January, we had a workshop January 13th about this, over the next couple of months we went through a number of different things. We had some proposals come back for the bridge, there was the multimillion dollar - 30 some odd million dollar proposal, there's another 20 million dollar proposal. There was a proposal by Marquiss for 5 million, it was basically a million dollars a year for 5 year proposal, of which time was very amenable to and I had hoped that we would have voted on that plan some time over the past several months. I do want to make sure that I'm absolutely clear on that, the company that we're talking about here, Marquiss has been since I've been involved with this, since January, they've been 'Johnny on the spot' with some of the issues that have come up in the County, the work that they did to get the bridge back open, for spr - for the repairs that they made back open for, you

know, late spring, early summer, when the bridge was supposed to come up, was right on time. I don't believe we've had any issues with any of the work they've performed and I've been perfectly happy with everything that I've seen from them so far this year so I want to make clear that whatever issues and concerns I have here with the process and not with Marquiss, they've done fantastic, as far as I'm concerned not just with the bridge but other issues that have popped up in the county so I want to make sure that we separate the two and the fantastic work that they've done versus kind of the process here. So when I look at 5-22-10-8 for Special Purposes it says things like there's only one source and it would seriously impair the functioning of the using agency. I look at that and I know that, for example, Marquiss, there's an email that got looped in where they talk about over a million, I think it was right at, yeah, over a million dollars is going to be sent out for equipment and stuff like that so when we look at that, two thirds, just over two thirds of the 1.5 million is actually coming from another source so I don't think we can use 5-22-10-8 as Special Purpose as 'quote, unquote' only one source. I do look to the other one for urgency and it reminds me of a quote in the past we used to have, you know, from a number of different folks where, you know, a 'delay on your part does not constitute a urgency on my part.' I think it's critical we get this bridge open, we keep the bridge open and keep it functioning for all the reasons you mentioned Commissioner Matias, it is, you know, a lifeline to, you know, from one side of Michigan City to the other and all the other reasons you listed but when I look at I.C. 5-22-10-4 I wonder why we didn't vote months ago on Marquiss' 5 million dollar plan which I think at the time all of us agreed was a fantastic way to go and we've kind of delayed on bringing this before ourselves for 4 months now so my issue is that I'm concerned about...and again this is in no way a reflection of the company we're talking about here, it's about the process of awarding a 1.5 million dollar, basically 'no bid' contract right here. I know the Council voted on this, voted on 1.5 million but and I was at that 3 hour meeting and I know you (indicated to President Mrozinski) were at the beginning of it but I was at the entire 3 + hour meeting where this came up and it's my recollection, and speaking with a couple of council people, they didn't intend for at least in my estimation and speaking with at least 2 council people, they didn't intend for this to be a 'no bid' award so I am concerned that the delay that created urgency just isn't - won't pass mustard with the State Board of Accounts for I.C. 5-22-10-4 and also I have concerns that if we do this it wasn't the, the Council was in my opinion, trying to help us move forward but at a minimum if there's some way to justify this, which I'm not seeing right now, if there is we should absolutely condition it at a minimum on the Council getting another vote on this, the next meeting is in a couple of days anyway because I don't think it was the Council's intention to not have 1.5 million dollars not go out for bid. I don't know if there's any other kind of thoughts that my fellow Commissioners have but this - I've got concerns over this, I don't think this is going to pass the mustard for the State Board of Accounts." **President Mrozinski** replied it would be up to them and not up to the Commissioners. He explained the million dollars a year for 5 years was the original proposal that was before the inspection was done where they found the drive system and control system are bad, they need to be repaired. It is a big ticket item. By replacing that will give us a whole lot better bridge right now. It will buy us some time and we may not need to spend the million dollars a year for 5 years. The million and half that will go a long way to make the bridge operational. It's critical that we get this done. Rich said he doesn't understand why we would bring in other people who have never worked on the bridge before when Marquiss has worked on it for over 20 years. **President Mrozinski asked for a second.** **Commissioner Haney** asked if this 1.5 million is included in the 5 million dollars. **President Mrozinski** replied yes. Rich said the parts need to be ordered, they are special made and could possibly take 4 months to get them made. When the bridge closes in December it will be at least 3 months to rebuild it. The electrical system in the control panels was going to cost originally about \$800,000 but after Marquiss Electric looked at it they determined an 'adapter' could be used for less money. Marquiss Electric are county tax payers and have an invested interest in the repairs. **Attorney Friedman** attempted to clarify but **Commissioner Haney** wanted to touch on Rich's comment on the electrical panels and the voltage. He said Marquiss would like to convert the voltage from *possibly* 320 to 480 and would not be charging for engineering work so Commissioner Haney stated there is a lot of good in having Marquiss do the job. His issue is with the process of not having the job put out for bid. He thinks highly of Marquiss Electric and his concern is when going through the process of having transparency for the public, to look the tax payers in the eye and say 'we did our due diligence' not just with what would be acceptable with the State Board of Accounts but to the tax payers who he told, "When I told you the days of no bid contracts were over in La Porte County, I meant it." He stressed again he did not want any misconception of what he stated about Marquiss Electric, it is the process he has an issue with, not the company who he said does a fantastic job. He then referred to Attorney Friedman for his clarification. **Attorney Friedman** stated to be clear for the record that the "Special Purpose" statute is specifically there for situations like this...**President Mrozinski** said, "That's what it's there for." **Attorney Friedman** said there is a detailed estimate of cost connected with this that needs to be made part of the record as well. "Supplied equipment - \$665,598; Engineering Services - \$680,921. WJE Engineering is part of this program, they've done bridges throughout the Country so I know we don't want to leave anyone with the impression that the Commission has not done its due diligence, that in fact you're making a detailed recitation of the reasons for this a part of the record." He then suggested the 7 page recitation, detailed

breakdown, be made part of the motion so that it is part of the record that will be approved tonight. **Commissioner Matias** said while respecting her colleague's concerns and having worked with the State Board of Accounts for many years, the written determination in front of the Commission covers the concerns of the SBOA. If her fellow Commissioners would like to look a tax payer in the eye to be sure to tell them when their child is in trouble at the beach and emergency services needs to get to that location by using the bridge that it better be in working order, it is a public safety concern. All options have been examined. To use a company out of Chicago to repair the bridge makes no sense when we have a local company that has taken care of it, the bridge, for the last several years now. She said the Commission is making a wise move by using a local company that can be on site in a matter of minutes versus a company 2-3 hours away. The parts have to be constructed for this bridge so that may take 4 months. During recent repairs daily reports were provided by Marquiss to the Commissioners which is why this is a wise move to use them. **Auditor Tim Stabosz** said due to his office paying the bill if it passes, the 1.5 million dollars, he had an important question to ask the Commissioners or the County Attorney, "Has this statute, I believe its public law that dates back to at least 1997, has this statute been used before by La Porte County at any point in time in your (addressing Attorney Friedman) history?" **Attorney Friedman**, "I'm not sure about 100 years, what I'm telling you Mr. Stabosz, here..." **Auditor Stabosz**, "I'm sorry, the question was very clear, if you don't know that's okay, I'm sorry, is that the answer or you don't know?" **Attorney Friedman**, "You know what, I've given you (speaking to the Commission) my best legal advice about the statute based on..." **Auditor Stabosz**, "Are you (to Attorney Friedman) answering the question or not?" **Attorney Friedman**, "I don't recall the Special Purpose..." **Auditor Stabosz**, "You don't know? That's okay, that's fine." **Attorney Friedman**, "I gotta tell ya, we do our due diligence, we provide our best advice to the County, we've done that, we have laid a basis that the State Board of Accounts would have if they have any inquiry. The Council approved the appropriation, I think Mr. Novak could address that as well, we've given a basis to move forward." **Auditor Stabosz** to Attorney Friedman, "So we don't know how many times this statute has been used?" **Council President Randy Novak** approached the podium and stated as the Fire Chief in Michigan City they used the statute several times. **Auditor Stabosz**, "It's clear they use it for bona fide emergencies, I've read the statute myself." **President Mrozinski**, "Can I have a second on this?" **Commissioner Haney** had one more question, "I know I saw it in the email list as we went through here, I did have a question here. In our email correspondence here one of which is from Councilman Yagelski. There is an email here that talks about working with the State Board of Accounts, taking a position that if the County Attorney offers an opinion on a potential purchase method they will not take an audit exemption. I'm just curious looking at this email from July 10th at 7:10 p.m. it appears this email actually originated...did you write this email (to Attorney Friedman) for Councilman Yagelski?" **Attorney Friedman**, "No, he asked for information and then I believe he submitted an email to **all** of you indicating that we needed to move forward." **Commissioner Haney**, "Sure, and the reason for my questions is there's two emails here, one 7-13 that's sent out to all of us which starts out with what you emailed him cause there's two emails here, for my fellow Commissioners (he hands paperwork to President Mrozinski) if you don't - aren't familiar with that email exchange, you don't have it here in front of you so you can look at that, the first one here is at 7:10 where there's a email from our attorney to Councilman Yagelski, it says 'suggested reply all' and then there's four paragraphs here and then it's signed 'Mark' so that went out with a 'thank you' where he copied everyone on this but then there is a second email 3 minutes later and it's verbatim what you (Attorney Friedman) emailed him with the exception, you know, obviously you removed the 'thank you' and the header but it's identical to that which leaves me to believe that this (holding a document) was ghost written by you unless I'm mistaken because that's what the email chain shows." **Attorney Friedman**, "I provided him but you will notice there's a 5th paragraph that he **did add** on his own and we'll go ahead and reference that for the record if you'd like. Notice the 5th paragraph Mr. Haney? We're going to go down line and verse. I have suggested various responses to Mr. Yagelski and then, interestingly enough in **his email** he (Councilman Yagelski) says, 'as a final matter, I must take strong exception to your characterizing the attorney's legal opinion as playing fast and loose or claiming this is an 'end-around' proper procedures. You need to be very careful before casting stones on a project and a purchasing procedure when you have absolutely no background or knowledge on either.' That's his (Councilman Yagelski) not mine." **Commissioner Haney** said he was talking about the 4 other paragraphs, not the 5th one. **Commissioner Matias** said this should not be a 'tit-for-tat' between a Commissioner and the County Attorney. This is a public safety issue and a bridge that needs to be repaired. Commissioner Haney would not second the motion so **President Mrozinski stepped down and seconded as Commissioner. Motion carried 2-1. Commissioner Haney - Nay.**

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EXAMINED AND APPROVED BY THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
COUNTY OF LA PORTE, INDIANA
DATE 8-4-21



ATTEST: _____
Auditor

New Business

Considered permission to use undeveloped roadway to access property on Pinebrook Drive - Michael Pawlik. Mick Pawlik, 2656 N. Tiffany Drive, La Porte. Mick purchased 50 acres and access to it is through or on an unimproved roadway. Mick went to the Building Commissioner (Mike Polan was present at this meeting) and was granted a driveway permit which starts at his property line. A deed document was provided to the Commission as recorded in Plat Book 13, page 41, stating 'together with the right to ingress and egress over 50 foot right of way platted as Pinebrook Street (changed to Drive sometime later) in said subdivision, running from Parcel number 1 to County Road 275 North.' He has a right to use the unimproved roadway but would appreciate permission from the Commissioners to do so.

Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney asked if any Remonstrators were present. There were none so he seconded the motion. Motion carried. Written permission will be provided to Michael 'Mick' Pawlik from this meeting.

Considered Resolution of support to continue publishing notices of legal actions in local newspapers in addition to posting on state court website. **Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried. ***Resolution 2021-12**

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Haney attended the Animal Shelter dedication to former Director Jane Bernard; attended numerous meetings and visited just about every department the last 2 weeks. Housing Study event; County fair saw over 10,000 tickets sold on Wednesday. A meeting was held at the IBEW/NECA Building in Michigan City on the Indiana Plan and hiring practices to be sure we are reaching out to all aspects of the community. Joe attended a Solid Waste budget meeting. He stated he would like to see more hours available to the public at the animal shelter instead of the current Covid hours. A few evening hours should be made available for those that work during the day. He would like to see county emails for elected officials/department heads/advisors moved over to a county system so any county business done from end to end stays on our county servers, this will go a long way for trust and transparency. Joe hopes the Council will take a hard look at salaries across the board of employees to compete with today's wages that are being offered. Transparency, Trust and Truth go hand in hand. He would rather have emails from his fellow colleagues with honest opinions or in their own words versus 'copy/paste.' Albert Einstein, "Whoever is careless with the truth in small matters cannot be trusted with important matters." George Washington's take was that 'Truth will ultimately prevail where there is pains to bring it to light.' James Garfield, 'The truth will set you free but first it will make you miserable.' Mahatma Gandhi, 'Even if you are a minority of one, the truth is the truth.' He said this is what he has tried to stay focused on as we move forward. He tries to be as truthful, transparent and honest as possible without sugar coating or allowing anything to get swept under the rug.

Commissioner Matias asked for the County's Attorney to give a comment in regards to the public access perspective on Zoom meetings. She thought they were allowed until the end of the month or next month. The Board of Commissioners passed a Resolution allowing Zoom meetings and it should cover other Boards and Commission as well. **Attorney Friedman** stated as long as the Public Health Emergency continues under the Governor's orders meetings can continue to be conducted using Zoom or virtual meetings. Once the Public Health Emergency ends or the authority is no longer there then State law says a Resolution needs to be adopted by the Board or Commission allowing meetings to take place by electronic means. Any county board is subject to it as well. **Commissioner Matias** reported that July is Disability Pride Month and she gave a 'shout out' to our local Meijer Store who was named in 2021 as Best Place to Work for Disability Inclusion. She also said a request to fund an EEO/Recruitment officer in the HR department was sent to the Council and one of the tasks for this position would be to recruit county employees from underrepresented groups in the community which includes veterans, community of color and persons with disabilities. Commissioner Matias said she was delighted that all 3 Commissioners were able to attend a meeting along with community members in Michigan City with the Indiana Plan to assist underrepresented groups to have access to Union Apprenticeships. She stated we need to focus on the positive and not the negative of people. Find the good and kindness in people. We're all in this together.

Commissioner Mrozinski stated the Commissioners have been attending meetings as well as the fair. He has met with potential prospects for our County. He has been in his office handling complaints and some from other elected officials.

President Mrozinski adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

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