



**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, August 18, 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 Councilman Mike Mollenhauer. President Mrozinski asked for a moment of silence after the pledge for the passing of 3 individuals: Center Township Volunteer Fireman Marc Christiano, Senior Judge Magistrate/US Army Veteran Tom Pawloski and USAF Veteran Terry Haney, brother of Commissioner Joe Haney.

Chief Deputy Auditor Vaughn Galloway called the roll: Commissioner Mrozinski - Present; Commissioner Haney - Present; Commissioner Matias - Present. Quorum present therefore meeting commenced.

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

Considered approval of August 4, 2021 (error on agenda with date of July 21st) minutes. Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.

Chief Deputy Auditor Vaughn Galloway read the Claims with Payroll ending 8/12/2021 (error on agenda with date 7-30-2021) - \$1,142,911.35 and Operating Expense Claims - \$3,218,473.75. **Commissioner Haney motioned to approve. Commissioner Matias seconded. Motion carried.**

Prior to Public Comment President Rich Mrozinski reminded everyone of the Commission's adopted policy.

Public Comment

Randy Veatch, 4177 W. Schultz Road, La Porte, "In as many mornings, the trucks started pouring in again today. It amazes me that the neighborhood citizens are the only people that recognizes that the only time the area is worked on, or construction is done is when it involves hauling the sand off site. You know like a business in operation. Today's hauling had the trucks fill capacity at a visually lower level than most days. The loads were tarped as well. This is a indication that the trucks are going to get on Interstate 94 heading to Michigan City. Now last week I witnessed many 5th wheeled semi-trucks driving by my house on Schultz Rd, the trucks had a visible load, well over the top, no tarps. I ended up following a truck leaving the sand mining operation south on 400 west, turned West onto Schultz Road, continued down Schultz Road. Next to turn south on 850 West, driving to 200 north /Snyder Road again turning west. Got to the intersection of 200 North and Highway 421 now driving north again on Highway 421. The overloaded truck than pulled into Speedway to fuel up I guess. I hope we all do not need a lawyer to determine that this is a violation of local current trucking codes. The neighborhood overweight signs are still missing. WHY? The removal of the signs is out of line and contrary to law. It should be addressed as so, and the signs should be immediately reinstalled. We have been playing with this sign topic for too long. Again no lawyer is needed here, just an investigation. I feel that we as a neighborhood have been given a six-year run around. We, the citizens, are trying to stop a business operation that has been encased in bureaucratic rules. While we continue down this path, it makes it seem evident that our sitting commissioners, feel that allowing a business to operate in a residential neighborhood is acceptable. This is contrary to the joint zoning ordinance that does not allow this. I believe all of you swore an oath to honor the laws and regulations of La Porte County. I would also like to re-address the process and paperwork we have talked about before in here and it still is getting overlooked. We know that the supplied paperwork from MS4 to the state of Indiana was less than truthful for the sand mine operator to receive the notice of sufficiency from the state. I have mentioned this twice now and I believe it is turning into another bureaucratic finger pointing issue. These people have a supervisor. The procedure is written clearly. Missing homes and the ownership are not an accident. When is the sitting commission going to act on this topic? Again, if we take the bureaucracy out of this, we can get to an easy solution without the needs of lawyers driving up a price and wanting to interject courts. The only thing the courts are needed for is if someone has done something so foul that jail time should be considered. Thank you very much for your time."

ORIGINAL

Earl Cunningham, Councilman, "I'll be very brief this evening to summarize a few things from the last meeting because I was fortunate enough to attend an AIC 3 hour credit class in Ft. Wayne recently presented by attorneys from Ft. Wayne and Indianapolis. Part of their presentation, before any questions were asked, they handed out a copy of their slide presentation and uniquely this one appeared Contracting with the County. Elected official means member of the Board of Commissioners or a member of the County Council. County may contract or renew a contract for the procurement of goods and services or contract for public works with an individual who is a relative of an elected official or business entity that is wholly or partially owned by a relative of an elected official only if the elected official does not violate Indiana Code 35-44-1-1.4 and complies with Indiana Code 36.1, I'm sorry, 36-1-21-5 and this is Indiana Code 36-1-21, if I continue on the next slide says the legislative body must adopt a policy that includes a - at the minimum requirements set forth in 36-1-21 for Contracts with the County: the elected official files with the County a full disclosure which must be in writing, describe the contract or purchase to be made by the County, describe the relationship that the elected official has to the individual or business entity that contracts or purchases. The elected official files with the County a full disclosure which must be affirmed under penalty or perjury, be submitted to and accepted by the County legislative in a public meeting prior to the final action on the contract or purchase and then be filed not later than 15 days after final action on the contract or purchase. This disclosure must be filed with the State Board of Accounts and the Clerk of the Circuit Court of the County. Think we failed in all regards in that respect and I would anticipate in light of what recently has happened that quite possibly that that contract be null and void could result in Mr. Stabosz not making payment. Thank you."

David Ambers, Attorney, "Mr. Friedman and I have talked before about a roadway that was vacated out in Hudson Lake, East Poppy Lane, not the one that's on the agenda, one I had a couple of months ago where I was actually challenging it. The person who filed for that vacation and if you recall you guys vacated the north half of East Poppy Lane in that area, has put up a gate. The gate, and if I could approach I could bring you pictures, clearly is within the unvacated portion of the roadway. I previously asked Mr. Hendricks if the Surveyor's office could go out and locate the non-vacated portion of the road so we know once and for all is this gate wrong side of the fence or not. My clients say it's blocking their access to the rear of the property through the means that they've always used and if - as a point of reference that mini barn that was set there that was admitted the night of the vacation was on the right-of-way is 12 feet wide, well it's a 30 foot right-of-way there, on Beacon it looks like the property starts about 3 feet from the gentleman's garage so you've got at least 10 or so feet of that barn appears to be on the vacated portion but I think the gate is beyond that and on the non-vacated portion so on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. Obanion what I'm asking is can we instruct the County Surveyor to go out and locate the non-vacated portion of that roadway so we know once and for all whose right and whose wrong." **President Mrozinski**, "We certainly can." **Mr. Ambers**, "I appreciate that. Great. Thank you." **President Mrozinski**, "We'll take care of that tomorrow morning."

Connie Gramarossa, Councilwoman, "I'm here because I would like to urge the 3 Commissioners to look at '10- Old Business,' section C where you say 'Consider revised job description for part time EEO Recruitment/Compliance Officer.' At our last Commish - at our last Council meeting that was held on July 26th, we did not approve an EEC - EEOC position. It had come to us on several different occasions but we would not approve it. At that meeting, what we did, we had one of... right now we currently have 3 Council people in the audience and one of the 3 had given a motion for us to give Barb Mossman a part-time position. The part-time position was to be used as a clerical position. The - Mr. Friedman had come to us and said that the girls were really back-logged in there, it was very difficult for them two to go ahead and get all paperwork done so we thought by giving them a part-time clerical position it would help them kind of get up on speed with the paperwork. Now we come here and we see that there's a part-time EEOC position and we did not create that so I urge that you take that off the agenda until we can straighten that out. Thank you." **Attorney Friedman**, "Mr. President, if I could, I spoke with Mr. Novak this afternoon because I was trying to clarify, he had called as well, I think the Council gave authority for part-time, it was made clear to us by the Council that you didn't want the investigative done by this person and so that is, that would be assigned to an outside council suggested by Mr. DiMartino - Bob Dignam to do the investigative so maybe that will hopefully clear it up. Any EEO investigations or Whistle Blower would be conducted by an outside counsel. This part-timer though will assist in helping to diversify applicants. As you know, Ms. Gramarossa, there's been a concern about certain under represented communities in our county in the county workforce including persons of color, veterans and the disabled so this individual is strictly part-time, which is what you authorized, to help in getting in applications and what have you so I think it's consistent, Mr. Novak and I spoke, and you'll want to communicate with him but I think it's still consistent with what you all authorized." Councilwoman Gramarossa calls Councilman Cunningham to the podium asking if he made the motion.

Councilman Cunningham, "I would be very reluctant for you to do this evening in the hopes that they don't hire someone for a position that wasn't created. I appreciate what Mr. Friedman says that I think we were all uncomfortable with having internal investigations done but the motion was made based on previous meetings, you came to us and asked for a part-time EEOC Director/Recruiter-type thing and that was turned down then you came back and asked for full-time and that was voted down 6-1 but we listened to your regard that she needed help because they were behind on 'on boarding and off boarding' and the clerical aspect and we were willing to supplement that with part-time wages. Since there is a minority already on the staff I don't understand why we would want to take somebody that we're going to pay \$13-\$15 an hour and give them a title of EEO when we should be freeing up time for our professionals, we have 2 professionals in that office, if they're overwhelmed with the paperwork then we should free them up and allow them - if you think that we can hire somebody that is better qualified to do that type of work than the 2 people we have in the office then we probably ought to reconsider their positions and I am certainly not in a position to do that at this point."

We're asking for someone to work part-time for \$13-\$15 an hour. To me, that was the 6 of us that voted on that I believe all interpreted the motion that it was purely a clerical position at this time." **Attorney Friedman**, "Okay, we'll..." **Councilman Cunningham**, "So, I would ask at this point just continue it until your next meeting so that Ms. Mossman doesn't end up tomorrow offering a job to someone that on Monday night the Council says clearly - we can replay that meeting." **Attorney Friedman**, "I think we're arguing over the same thing, this person's going to help with 'on boarding,' help with reaching out to various entities to assist in recruitment but you would agree with me Mr. Cunningham at the exec session we are not hitting targets that we should be of certain segments including veterans, the disabled and persons of color so all she's going to be doing, he or she, will be assisting the other staff with that, it's part-time so I..." **Councilwoman Gramarossa**, "But they will still have the title of EEO..." **Councilman Cunningham**, "EEO, right?" **Councilwoman Gramarossa**, "...Recruiter/Compliance Officer?" **Attorney Friedman**, "Is it the title that's bothering you? I mean but we..." **Councilman Cunningham**, "I think everybody's, the issue - I've talked to every councilmember now, I don't think anybody on the Council - we hired clerical help." **Councilwoman Gramarossa**, "We hired a clerk." **Councilman Cunningham**, "I mean if she can help in other regards I have no issue with that." **Attorney Friedman**, "That's fine..." **Councilman Cunningham**, "...but I think..." **Attorney Friedman**, "I'll let the Commission speak to that but I think we're arguing over the same thing." **Councilman Cunningham**, "I don't think we're denying they need help in there but it should be that one of the two professionals that I believe are trained should be able to do some of this themselves if they are freed up from paperwork." **Attorney Friedman**, "I know and the problem is, as we've discussed, is there's 850 employees, not only are they doing 'on boarding,' job classifications, interviewing, discipline, various other things so that you all agreed they needed additional help in there and I think that was the point of the part-time position but -" **Councilman Cunningham**, "One of the jobs that they do someone sits there at the door so when you come in to apply, someone has to be there to give them an application, tell them they can sit down here, that \$13 to \$15 an hour person can do that and free one of them up to be out recruiting and meeting with the veterans affairs officers, etcetera, in my opinion, thank you. I mean, you're the Commissioners, you're going to make the final decision but I hope that on Monday night we don't turn around and override, that's my fear at this point, thank you." **Commissioner Haney**, "Thank you Councilman Cunningham and Councilwoman Gramarossa, I was at that Council meeting for the entirety of the meeting and the motion that was made by Mr. Cunningham was for a part-time position for clerical work and stuff like that, he voiced his motion there and I would agree with that, that was what his motion and what his intent was and that's what the Board voted on so I would feel like this Commission should uphold the intent and the verbiage of the position that was created. If there's any consternation on that we could always hold it over to the next meeting." **Attorney Friedman**, "I know, well, and I didn't get any sense in talking to Councilman Novak today that he was concerned. I'll let him address it" **Council President Novak** (via Zoom), "I think the issue is labeling this person an EOC person, we agree - I think everybody agrees with my conversations with Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Friedman today that if this person helps out, I mean this is the way I envision it, everybody in that office needs to be helping bring in more of a diverse working force for the County so I do not - I think that the catch here is the Council does not want to see this position because the Commissioners did come for a part-time or a full-time, that's it's labeled as an EOC person, this person can do anything and free up Monique to do the things, free up Barb to do the things, it's not saying 'this has to be the person that does it.' This person is giving them help for that office as a whole do a better job so I think labeling it what you did, I think is the stigmatism because I just think that's an issue. We gave them a part-time person, I agree that person can have...if that person can have the qualities to help with everything that is absolutely fantastic but that is not the job title for that person specifically." **President Mrozinski**, "Thank you Randy. Thanks for clearing that up. Anybody else for Public Comment? Seeing none, Public Comment is closed."

Department Reports/Department Head Comments

Kaitlyn Simms, Building Maintenance Secretary, requested permission to approach the Council for improvements to asphaltting the walkways and roadways at the fairgrounds. **Commissioner Matias motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.**

Tony Rodriguez, OCED, handed out a department summary of activity for his office. He stated the Healthcare Foundation of La Porte will be hosting Mark O'Neal with Greenstreet on Housing Study and Action Agenda Wrap Up! which includes a light lunch. This will take place on Thursday, August 26th from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at 140 E. Shore Pkwy in La Porte. Unity Foundation will be sponsoring the lunch. Tony reported a critical meeting took place with the Office of Community & Rural Affairs and Director Matt Crouch in regards to Broadband.

Amanda Lahners, Health Department Director, reported on the recent increase in Covid cases. May was the last month the County saw double digits for positive cases. June and July were lower with single digits and through most of August until last Friday when we saw 43 new positive cases. She urged vaccinations, masks, social distancing and hand washing to help prevent the spread of the virus. Indiana Department of Health reported a 3rd dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine for immunocompromised individuals has been approved. **Ourshotlpc.com** is a website pertaining to everything for our County on the Covid-19 virus from testing sites to questions, maps of locations for vaccines and Health Linc popup clinics. Appointments may be scheduled as well. Currently the County is still in the yellow. **Coronavirus.in.gov** is another site with information on the virus. Booster shots will be coming to our County the end of September and will be available at the sites that offer the regular vaccine. They will be available for individuals that are 8 months out from their 2nd dose of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine. As of right now there is no recommendation for a Booster shot with the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. **Amanda** then requested permission to approach the Council to purchase a mobile vaccinations vehicle from the Covid or ARP funds. **Commissioner Matias** asked how does a person who does not have access to a

computer get information for Covid. **Amanda** replied dial 211. **Commissioner Matias** motioned to approve. **Commissioner Haney** seconded then stated from which ever fund the Council decided to take it from when approved. **Motion carried.**

Commissioner Joe Haney reported on the quarterly health insurance meeting he attended earlier in the day. The no fee/no pay option has been extended for the Telehealth for employees through December 31st. The savings for this has been about \$33,000 for this year. There are a few really good things currently being worked on for the employees.

Joe Golec, VSO, reminded everyone that the La Porte County Stand Down will take place at the fairgrounds on State Road 2 Friday, August 20th from 4-7 p.m. A military form of identification is required such as DD214 or VA health card. **Joe** announced the passing of Veteran Steve Grott and said Steve was active with the Veterans Treatment Court and was good for the Community.

Requests

Considered permission to approach the Council for additional appropriations to pay \$4,261.78 to employee - Darlene hale, IT Director. **Commissioner Matias** motioned to approve. **Commissioner Haney** seconded. **Motion carried.**

Considered permission to approach the Council for additional appropriations of \$40,000 for part time employees - Heather Stevens, Clerk. **Commissioner Matias** motioned to approve. **Commissioner Haney** seconded. **Motion carried.**

Considered permission to approach the Council to combine two 1st Deputy Positions into one with the full salary going to one person - Lynn Swanson, Coroner. **Commissioner Matias** motioned to approve. **Commissioner Haney** seconded. **Motion carried.**

Old Business

Considered 2nd/final reading on Ordinance for proposed 47-unit townhome development north of Briar Leaf Golf Course – Jerry Fedorchak. **Commissioner Haney** motioned to remove from the table. **Commissioner Matias** seconded. **Motion carried.** **Commissioner Matias** moved to pass on 2nd/final reading. **Commissioner Haney** seconded. **Motion carried.** ***Ordinance 2021-11

Considered 2nd/final reading on Ordinance to vacate unimproved roadway E. Poppy Lane in Hudson Township - David Ambers, Attorney. **Commissioner Matias** motioned to pass on 2nd/final reading. **Commissioner Haney** seconded the motion. **Motion carried.** ***Ordinance 2021-12

Considered revised job description for part-time EEO Recruitment/Compliance Officer with investigation of any and all discrimination & whistleblower claims assigned to outside counsel. After hearing comments from Councilmembers Gramarossa and Cunningham, **Attorney Friedman** suggested instead of ‘part-time staff to assist in EEO Recruitment and other functions as assigned within the HR department.’ **President Mrozinski**, “Simply a part-time employee?” **Commissioner Matias** said to simplify it even further, ‘a part-time Human Resources employee position.’ She felt the Councilmembers made good points. **Commissioner Haney** asked Barb Mossman what the title would be for a part-time employee in her office. She replied with Office Assistant. **Commissioner Matias** moved to approve a part-time Human Resources Administrative Assistant. **Commissioner Haney** seconded. **Motion carried.**

Reviewed guidance from Association of Indiana Counties regarding the authority/responsibility of the County Commissioners to propose ARP spending plans to the County Council. **President Mrozinski** suggested a workshop be setup. **Commissioner Matias** said a proposed timeline should be established as well for fundable projects. **Attorney Friedman** noted for the Commissions’ and public’s sake to expect a proposed contract for the Council with Baker Tilly and expanding Karl Cender’s scope so that both will be tasked to help advise both bodies are ARP issues. **President Mrozinski** said he will contact Council President Randy Novak to set up a workshop.

Pending outcome of SBOA written response to County Attorney’s August 2nd legal opinion on Franklin Street bridge restoration/rehab project - authorize WJE and Marquiss to immediately order custom parts to commence work pursuant to either Special Purchases statute or as an Emergency Declaration to protect ‘public health, welfare and safety.’ **Attorney Friedman**, “Mr. President, if I could, because I think we’ll want to reflect with the arrival of Tuesday’s State Board of Accounts opinion letter, neither the Special Purposes law nor the Emergency Declaration is now a viable path, only the far more expensive lengthy sealed bid process can be used and I’ve got a statement I’d like to provide for the record if I could to have as part of the record on this issue since there has been a lot discussed about it.” **Commissioner Matias**, “Before you do that, Mr. Friedman, maybe we could frame the issue because there’s people in the audience that may not have the historical background and people on Zoom that may want to understand so President Mrozinski, you’ve been around the longest of any of us and have had a long history, you and Mark, Councilman Yagelski, probably have the longest and deepest knowledge and history of work with the Bridge. I have a unique position because as former Mayor of Michigan City, I saw it from a different - a public safety perspective so perhaps you could summarize so the public understands how we got here and what our decisions going forward will mean.” **President Mrozinski** said, “The Bridge is almost a hundred years old. It’s only 1 of 2 that we know of called a Bascule Bridge.” He said the bridge is not like the ones in Chicago but a

rare bridge, parts have to be special made and not just ordered and takes a longer time. Parts are not cheap. Bridge can break whenever it wants. Marquiss Electric have been working on this bridge for the past 41 years. No one knows the workings of the bridge like they do. Estimates have come in at 26 million dollars to repair the bridge however Marquiss' offer was 5 million dollars, one million dollars a year over 5 years. After an inspection was done last fall it was determined that special parts needed to be made and could take a minimum of 4 months. These repairs could be done over the winter months while the bridge is closed and could cost 1.5 million dollars. The United States Coast Guard has authority on that bridge and water traffic has priority which means the bridge could be 'locked' open and not allowed to be used as a thoroughfare to Lake Michigan. A workshop was held that President Mrozinski and Councilman Mark Yagelski attended and it was determined that a complete rebuild of the bridge was out of the question due to the cost and time it would take to do it. Shelby County, for example, rebuilt a bridge and it took 8 years and many millions of dollars. This bridge on Franklin Street is a historic bridge. As discussions continued to have Marquiss Electric order the special parts for the repairs everyone agreed it was the best route to go to have a dependable working bridge. Both Commission and Council attorneys agreed this was the way to go. State Board of Accounts received 2 inquiries from Commissioner Haney and Auditor Stabosz then after that SBOA said maybe the job should be 'bid out' now. Being the Chief Executive Officer of the County he appointed one Commissioner - Commissioner Haney, one Councilmember - Councilman Cunningham and County Auditor Tim Stabosz to set up and complete the bid process that is now being required by the State Board of Accounts. **Attorney Friedman** stated for the record, "Mr. President, Longtime public servants like our former County Auditor, Ms. Winski, will tell you that on any given transaction, the State Board of Accounts will generally defer to the County Attorney's opinion - that is unless an elected official raises objections. Not every transaction lends itself to competitive, sealed bidding and that's why the Special Purchases statute exists. I wrote a detailed legal opinion on why this unique, one-of-a-kind bridge, where every single part has to be specially cast, did not lend itself to sealed bidding so that taxpayers could save millions by sole-sourcing this to the same team that has worked decades on this bridge. Instead, Auditor Stabosz and Commissioner Haney not only communicated objections to the State Board of Accounts and insisted on sealed bidding, they insist my legal opinion is somehow sleazy and unethical. Mr. Haney went on Facebook July 23, 2021 and stated, 'this is clear evidence the county attorney inappropriately and unethically influencing elected officials - in this case a \$1.5 million no-bid contract.' Of course the SBOA relented to the pressure and says, of course, do competitive sealed bids. Alright Mr. Haney, Mr. Stabosz, it's all yours. The 2018 Lochner study, which is right here (places hand on a large binder), says rehab/restoration will cost taxpayers \$26 million versus the heavily discounted \$5 million, 7-year plan which Commissioner Mrozinski, Mr. Yagelski and I negotiated with Marquiss & WJE and the Marquiss representative is here. So sir, you got it. You explain to the taxpayers why they're better off paying \$15-20 million more for this project and I ask you, respectfully, stop taking potshots from the sidelines. Put your jerseys on, get on the field. You've just been asked now by the Commission President to figure this out, go hire the engineers to scope this out for bids and you try to attract teams who can submit competitive bids. Unless I'm directed by a majority of this board - I am done with this bridge. There is nothing more legally I can do to assist. I have given my best advice only to have Mr. Haney and Mr. Stabosz, **again**, question my ethics and integrity and I'll pass out (a handout) - I'd like to have, Mr. President, the letter from State Board of Accounts, my correspondence to the State Board, the statute pertaining to the Special Purchases, the guide to Public Purchasing which is provided to Indiana Association of Cities and Towns which specifically lists Special Purchase statute as allowable and it says interestingly enough 'allows for purchase without RFP and certain circumstances usually after consultation and perhaps an opinion from the County or City attorney.' So, it's all there, I'd like it made part of the record if I could." **President Mrozinski** thanked Attorney Friedman then asked if Marquiss Electric would like to add anything to the conversation. Andy Skwiat and Bruce Zimmerman from Marquiss Electric approached the podium. **Andy** introduced Bruce to the Commission as dedicating 25 years to the bridge including evenings, weekends, holidays and special family events. Andy thanked the Commission for allowing them to present their bid. "We appreciate the timely notification that we were not to proceed before anything was ordered so we're thankful for that and everyone else that is on our team was thankful for that, if anyone has any questions we would be happy to answer those but other than that I just wanted to come and say thank you for the opportunity." **Commissioner Haney**, "Thank you Mr. Skwiat, I actually do have a question, I've wanted to try and make this as clear as possible and I want to make sure if you haven't seen all of our meetings, this is not about Marquiss Electric, WJE or any of that, this is about the process. I do have one quick question that goes to kind of the heart and I'm glad you're here so we can put this to rest right now, we submit this out to bid, is there any reason why your bid would come back different than what you've already sent? Is there - would there be some sort of increase that the County Attorney alleges that - it almost seems like the County Attorney is trying to threatening us with 'well, if this goes out to bid they're, you know, somehow Marquiss is going to jack up the price' and I don't get that impression of you, you seem like a good business man. I don't get that, you seem like an honest, genuine man and I don't want there to be anything put out to the public sphere that somehow they're trying to impugn your business by suggesting that because there's a bid process that's going to happen that somehow you're going to inflate them, I don't think you would." **Andy**, "No, I did watch the meetings and I appreciate your comments, they were all stated very well and in fact we did talk about the bridge once and you know, it was very pleasurable and there's no problem, you know what I mean, so I think the - from what we've seen, so actually Marquiss Electric, my father who is retired and he's back there (points to the back left of the room) with my mother, were hired by the County, we actually have the letter still because it meant a lot to us, in October of 1981 to start maintaining the bridge so this October will be 40 years. Bruce has done it for 25 and from our experience, I'm not an attorney, I'm not a Commissioner, I'm not an Engineer, I'm just talking here in laymen's terms I guess, you know, to you. From what we've seen in our 40 years the **process** is what is going to create the cost so just - can we have a couple of minutes, can we talk? Is there a time limit here? Is there...?" **President Mrozinski**, "No, go ahead." **Andy**, "Okay, with the bridge there is multiple...there's electrical problems,

there's mechanical problems, there's structural problems, there's aged equipment that could fail at any time and there's program issues that were wrote into the program that we have determined over the years that are...could pose a safety hazard to either the operator or people when the bridge is in operation and there's clearance and tolerance issues so our work, and for the record, again I'm not an engineer but an engineering firm, my understanding is there are about 5 in the country that can actually **stamp** this, that...you know what I mean, have that right to design and stamp this so they estimated for a bridge in better condition in a better climate than the Franklin Street Bridge, this isn't repairs, this isn't like when the brakes burn up, fix the brakes, this is maintenance, electrical maintenance, mechanical maintenance, no repairs, no overhauls. To keep a bridge running that was newer then the Franklin Street Bridge and in better climate then the Franklin Street Bridge, they estimated that should cost in maintenance about \$220,000 a year. So over 5 years that would be 1 million, 1 hundred thousand dollars so I pulled our maintenance invoices and in the last 5 years we have charged the County for maintenance on the Franklin Street Bridge which they say should cost more, \$354,000 so we're \$758,000 under in 5 years, 32 and some percent, so the work we do on the bridge is maintenance, it's to keep the bridge going, it's not to improve it, it's not to replace 30-year-old equipment, it's not to replace 40-year-old equipment, it's to keep **what you have** going so when people say 'oh, the bridge is broke again,' there has never been money really set aside to 'let's do some work on this,' it's always just 'keep it going.' I mean there have been restorations but there's a lot of moving parts, you know what I mean, and the emergency repairs, that wasn't work that I approached the County for, that wasn't work that the County wanted to do, that was work that there's a two-year inspection every year on the bridge, not by our firm, it's by INDOT and like last year that work came up and everybody thought everything was fine, the bridge got inspected and the bridge got a deficiency report and said it couldn't run. I was supposed to actually be leaving ice fishing, I like to fish, and the County called and says 'the bridge can't operate,' you got whatever we had, a couple of months or whatever, 'it's got to get fixed, can you fix it?' So, of course we drop our lives and I cancel my vacation which I'm happy for them - we're just talking you know, and I said 'we'll fix the bridge' so that \$500,000 that was put in the bridge did not go to improving the bridge long term, did not go to replacing equipment, that went for a temporary fix for repair that in 1 year, 2 years, maybe when they do the inspection again it's going to have to be made permanent so all you did for the \$500,000 is buy some time until possibly the next inspection when something else is sited again because there's no repairs so back to what I was saying, there's all these problems so first, you have to - if you go out for the bid process you have to hire someone to first tell you what you have with the bridge so we've worked with engineers during these inspections, they're great firms and one of them was very good, some of the best I've seen but they came out and we were talking about the wiring under the creek, and they said, 'well, you know, the wiring's 300 some feet and you can use this size' and they did some drawings and the first thing we looked at it and we said, 'well, that's not going to work' and they said, 'why is that?' and we said, 'because the wire's actually between 900 and 1,000 feet' and they said, 'what do you mean, we measured the creek and it's under there and it's submarine cable' and we said, 'actually the wire leaves the bridge tower, goes up to Port Authority Department on - by the parking lot, leaves the Port Authority property, goes 53 feet under the creek, comes up on City property which the Park Department has jurisdiction, goes under the road to Naval Armory property, goes across the Naval Armory property into the bridge, under the other side of the bridge and then it terminates so the run that they assumed, people that **should know** because they are the ones doing some of this work, assumed 300 was almost 1,000 so if they would have put that to bid, not only would the bids been tripled because they were a third of the footage, the wire size was too small, so the first thing that needs to happen is the process, someone has to be hired to survey the whole bridge to see - again, I can't speak for the legal process, what the State Board of Accounts says you can and can't do, I can speak to what we've seen by turning wrenches for a lifetime on the bridge. Someone needs to go completely survey that bridge and see what you have then when someone surveys the bridge and puts that on paper and sees what you have then you have to decide 'what do we want to fix?' So, when we were thinking of our repairs, we looked at it 3 ways: do you fix the stuff, the equipment that could fail at any time even though it's working now that has a 4 month or 6 month lead time then if it fails in the summer it would leave the bridge in an **open** position for 6 months, for a year, for 18 months? Do you fix that? Do you fix the equipment that is knowing bad that could fail the next inspection which would put you in a position of spending more money for a temporary repair that wouldn't gain you no ground or do you fix the equipment that's causing problems with the emergency call-outs and in theory, more money you don't need to spend and if we happen to get a non-emergency call-out and it's something that we can't fix then again the bridge is stuck in an open position. So, then once you survey the bridge, once you decide what think you should fix then you're going to have to have someone engineer that and put that on paper, down to every nut and bolt and the type of paint to go out and submit bids for that and then when you submit bids you can't, like we, there's a lot of stuff on the bridge that we want to either not get rid of but work around to make the bridge better and easier but you can't because of the historic nature, it has historic value, so once the engineer gets a plan, they're going to need to consult a historian to determine if they can even **do** their plan because some stuff makes no sense to have on that bridge but you have to have it for the historic value so that's got to be done then you have to, so then you design that and then you say, 'okay, here's what we're going to fix. How long is this going to take? Are we going to leave the bridge open for a year or two years and not have a road and do this work year-round so the boats can get through? Are we going to do this work in the off-season? How much work can we entrust the contractor we're going to hire in this bidding process can get done in a winter? If they can't get it done then what are they going to - what's the back-up plan if...?' We've been down there and literally there's 4 foot of ice in the pits, literally, we're down there with a heater, Bruce is waking up at 1:00 every morning, filling up a heater, we're cutting ice out, 4 foot blocks with a chainsaw to get a torpedo heater down into the pit floor to melt the ice from underneath. What if that happens? Who do - what's the back-up plan in the bid process if the bridge can't open? What if you break a part taking it out? What if you can't get a part? So, how you scope that and who designs that and how they

design that, in my opinion only, would absolutely affect the pricing.” **Attorney Friedman**, “Can I follow up Mr. Haney’s question to you (directed to Andy)? So this was a one-time only offer based on a limited scope that was negotiated between Mr. Mrozinski, myself and Mr. Yagelski with your firm, isn’t that correct?” **Andy**, “Correct.” **Attorney Friedman**, “You can’t assure anyone as you’re sitting here that your bid in a sealed bid is going to be anywhere close to the 5 million that you have proposed, correct?” **Andy**, “And to be honest that was pre-Covid, I mean our day-to-day prices are 30% higher on parts, you know what I mean, this - the email from JWE that said they don’t think they can get parts in time when we were all waiting, I hadn’t even talked to them in two weeks, I didn’t call them and say, ‘hey,’ I haven’t talked to them and I’m sitting at my computer and it popped up and I thought ‘oh boy,’ you know what I mean? I sent that out to everybody and I apologize if somehow we or the bridge created - it’s - we were just trying to do our job.” **Attorney Friedman**, “Sir, you haven’t created any problem, my question to you though is with this, the unique nature of this, there’s going to need to be an engineering scope similar to what was done in 2018, is that correct?” **Andy**, “You can’t even start without knowing what you got to work on.” **Attorney Friedman**, “So, an engineer’s going to have to come in and redesign a scope, a project, put together a plan, engineering and architectural plans, a closing plan and everything else similar to what was done by Lochner in 2018, is that correct?” **Andy** replied yes, for him to get a bid. **Attorney Friedman**, “Did you even tell me yesterday that you aren’t sure you’re going to submit under this, is that correct?” **Andy**, “Probably would not to answer your (Commissioner Haney) question. Not because there’s no problem, there’s no problem, I’m happy to go ice fishing or happy to do whatever but I don’t want to say anything negative as you have said the...we’ve done the work for a long time and I would like to pick out of 40 years of experience, what gets done for the best nature of the bridge in my heart.” **Attorney Friedman**, “And if you do submit, it would not be at the heavily discounted amount but it would be at the normal market prices, is that correct?” **Andy** replied it would have to be. **President Mrozinski**, Thanked Andy and his dad for the dedication their company has given to the bridge. “Your dad should be very proud, to cancel your vacation to fix the bridge.” **Andy** stated they are not looking for accolades, they are just doing their job. His insurance agent, Charlie Keene, from General Insurance, is in Andy’s office when the bridge breaks asking if Andy has his team of workers to do the repairs because the bridge is a \$64 or \$65 million dollar structure, it’s historic, it weighs 2 million pounds, and the parts are old. Not enough insurance to cover if something were to happen then Marquiss Electric losing everything due to a claim is one side of it but the other side is Bruce and Andy care about the historic bridge, often leaving family gatherings to tend to the bridge for repairs. Since 1981 they have tried their best. **President Mrozinski**, “You’re also tax payers in La Porte County. You do care about - you truly are a friend of the taxpayer and some people will claim to be and actually are not.” **Commissioner Haney**, “I really appreciate your enthusiasm and it was one of the things that I noted when we held a workshop back in January, the middle of January, where you (Andy Skwiat) came and spoke. You presented a 5 million dollar plan and the very next meeting I said we should vote on it and over the course of the next four to five months from late January through February, March, April, May and June, at least once each month, I brought up ‘we should be voting on this plan because we know what comes after November, its December, winter’s coming. Why aren’t we voting on the plan? Why aren’t we voting? Why aren’t we doing this? And then all of a sudden, again it’s a process. Why, why did we burn and waste the end of January, February, March, April, May, June, you know, coming now into July, that’s and that’s not you, that’s nothing to do with you, right? So that’s where this comes from and it’s interesting that Mr. Friedman at the end of some of his meetings, some of his comments and he’s put in his emails as well that if I see something that I don’t think quite, quite might not pass muster, he’s encouraged - you’ve (to Shaw) encouraged me multiple times to reach out to various state agencies and stuff like that so when I saw a ‘ghost written email’ which is what I call - I didn’t say your (Attorney Friedman) opinion was unethical, I said the ghost writing of an email to justify your opinion was unethical in my opinion. That’s what prompted me to reach out to the SBOA because...” **Attorney Friedman**, “And Mr. Haney, question to you though, even if we would have gone because our argument has been over sealed bid versus special purchase. Even had we gone with sealed bid in March, April, June, we’re still in the same issue. What they’ve (Andy Skwiat for Marquiss Electric) said to you is when you go through a competitive sealed bid pro - it’s a whole different process than going through special purchase so let’s not leave the public with the impression that had we started sealed bid in March, April, May, we’d be any different. Our proposal has been use this (hand placed on Lochner study done in 2018) through the Special Purchase’s statute and allow the use of a sole source firm, this firm which you yourself has recognized, is an outstanding firm and there is nothing wrong. I know you don’t want to leave the impression with anyone in the public that our proposal of using Special Purchase statute, which is part of Indiana Law, is somehow inappropriate, illegal or unethical.” **Commissioner Haney**, “The State Board of Accounts twice now have said it’s inappropriate to use that statute for what we’re talking about here right now.” **Attorney Friedman**, “And you know what, attorneys can differ, and I’ll tell you what, this is the first time in my experience and others can speak to it, that I’ve ever had elected officials lobby for an adverse audit opinion from the State Board of Accounts and I’ll let others speak to that.” **Commissioner Haney**, “I’ve done nothing more than advocate for following the State Law and State statute which is what I would continue to do and I would also submit that it’s because of the adverse and audit exemptions position the State Board of Accounts has taken **previously** in regards to your legal advice that compelled me to reach out to the SBOA before, uh, at the beginning of **this** particular incident. It is a repeated...it’s a repeat process now at this point where we have state agencies and legal counsel from down state from different agencies saying that what you’re (Attorney Friedman) saying is incorrect and I would be negligent in my duties if I didn’t follow through with them to make sure that we are following state statute and state law.” **Attorney Friedman**, “Mr. Di Martino specifically asked if every elected official defer communication with State Board of Accounts until we hear back from them.” **President Mrozinski**, “Do we have any more questions for Marquiss Electric?” **Commissioner Haney**, “Mr. Di Martino is not my attorney and for what’s its worth the email came after I had reached out to them (SBOA) and according to this letter here, they’re saying their response is based upon your (Attorney Friedman) email.” **President Mrozinski**, “Do we have any more questions for Marquiss Electric?” **Commissioner Matias**, “So I want to thank Bruce

because I live not far from that bridge and there are so many days, nights, weekends, Sunday mornings, when you drive over the bridge and there's Bruce in his truck. It can be a polar vortex blizzard going on and there's Bruce in his truck at that bridge making sure that the safety of the community, not just Michigan City residents but the economic driver of tourism which relies on access to the lake. Our boaters who spend millions, supporting the marina industry in our county, they need access to their toys, to their fishing, their charter boats, etc. so to me Mr. Haney talks about how this is the process well, I think the type of process we had would have been fine except that we raised the red flag to the State Board of Accounts. Your business has been in La Porte County for many, many years employing hundreds of people, hundreds of people have made their living helping your company and our community keep the bridge operable. You guys are model citizens and I'm looking at his lovely wife back there and you all have given back to this community over and over and over again. Not just at the bridge but when we need help at the fairgrounds, when we need help on a project, when we need Christmas lights hung, when we need the clock fixed up in the tower, who shows up? Marquiss Electric because you are community minded, to me, your unique expertise is not only wanted but needed and that Special Purchase statute, former Chief Novak now County Council President testified to this board that the City of Michigan City uses that Special Use statute regularly. Here in La Porte County the E-911 center has Miner Electric as the only firm that is allowed to touch their equipment because it's their equipment, it's their expertise, they've done it for years so we're going to stick with a winning formula and Marquiss Electric is a winning formula and it breaks my heart and it makes me ashamed to be honest that your firm is being dragged into this political b.s. to be honest because it's not fair to you and to the many families that rely on your company to put food on their table, to pay for their kids' college tuition, to pay for the care of their elders, it's just not the way La Porte County works and I'm really dreadfully sorry." **President Mrozinski**, "Thank you guys. Returning to the agenda here, the question would be to authorize WJE (Councilman Cunningham approaches the podium) and Marquiss to immediately order the custom parts or not under the Special Purchase statute or as an Emergency Declaration, that is the question. Do we authorize them to order the parts?" **Attorney Friedman**, "And at this point the motion will need to be, we'll not be able to use either one of those - Special Purchase or Emergency Declaration - based on the State Board of Accounts' opinion, you're going to need to authorize the initiation of a sealed bid process, competitive sealed bid process and I think assigning the 3 individuals you did to that task force was a great idea." **President Mrozinski**, "That is my decision as President..." **Councilman Cunningham**, "Excuse me, can I make a statement that might resolve this issue this evening. I couldn't agree more with what the Mayor, former Mayor, said and I want to thank the family because of what they've done over the last 40-50 years. What we did, whether we want to admit it or not, is we put a brand new Auditor in a trick bag because he's the one that's going to take the blame if the audit comes back negative so I've got a simple solution for that and I think I'm somewhat discouraged that Mr. Friedman is just throwing up his hands and saying 'now we gotta go bid,' I don't think we have to bid. I think everybody in the - the majority of the Council, the majority of the Commission, if we say 'we'll take the heat' instead of Mr. Stabosz, have our two attorneys get together and say that the Council and Commission absolves the Auditor of any wrong doing in this bid or in this contract. It would seem to me that what we're doing is transferring the heat... the State Board of Accounts is basically a 'paper tiger' in the first place. Nobody goes to jail unless you commit a criminal act, this isn't a criminal act, it's going to be something that doesn't fall under State Board of Accounts approval today. It would seem to me that you (Attorney Friedman) and Mr. Di Martino can get together, draw up a resolution that the Council and Commission, the majority of each body, would sign absolving Mr. Stabosz of any wrong doing if the State Board of Accounts writes him up, that's all they're going to do is write him up, isn't that correct Mr. Friedman? **Attorney Friedman**, "So, now you're suggesting for the County to proceed despite the State Board of Accounts' written opinion, is that what you're suggesting?" **Councilman Cunningham**, "I don't think there's anything we can do about that, in my opinion at this - we - part of this is... and you (Attorney Friedman) keep shaking your head, part of it is he (Auditor Stabosz) was the one that Ricci said 'I don't think this qualifies.' He (Auditor Stabosz) asked for an opinion, I don't want to get into all of the politics between you and Mr. Stabosz right now, I'm trying to come up with a solution to the problem. The solution to the problem is **I will take responsibility** and I think at least 3 other Councilmembers will take responsibility to move this project along of absolving him of any wrong doing." **Attorney Friedman**, "The problem is this, the cat's out the bag, whatever Mr. Haney's problems with me, Mr. Stabosz' problems with me, they had no business communicating an adverse position to the State Board of Accounts." **Councilman Cunningham**, "But you say it's adverse but in Mr. Stabosz' opinion it is to protect himself as the Auditor, is that correct (to Chief Deputy Vaughn Galloway)?" **Attorney Friedman**, "My point is Mr. Cunningham, no matter what their issues, they need to keep them internal. We have to present a unified front to the State Board of Accounts..." **Councilman Cunningham**, "So you, what you want is..." **Attorney Friedman**, "...and that is not the way." **Councilman Cunningham**, "...the unified front to do what you say even though it's in violation of the State Board of Accounts." **Attorney Friedman**, "There is no violation, I'll tell you what..." **Councilman Cunningham**, "Obviously the State Board of Accounts, right now, thinks it's in violation." **Attorney Friedman**, "Now because there was pressure put on them to say or do that." **Councilman Cunningham**, "And that's my point so how do we resolve it?" **Attorney Friedman**, "The problem is this, we've got to go now the route of the competitive sealed bid process." **Councilman Cunningham**, "I disagree with you 100%, I'm not an attorney, I've never played one on t.v. but Mr. Di Martino is not here tonight. It would seem to me that - Mr. Mrozinski, you would take responsibility because you know the State Board of Accounts..." **President Mrozinski**, "My quote to Andy Skwiat was I would walk through hell with you to get this thing done and done right, that is my quote and I stand on that. I agree with what you say that we know, we've been there before Earl, we've seen people get written up by the State Board of Accounts, year after year, what does it do? Not a damn thing." **Councilman Cunningham**, "It's a paper tiger that's my whole point. So let's get a majority of the Commission and a majority of the Council to agree to absolve Mr. Stabosz of the wrong doing, if the State Board of Accounts chooses to write him up..." **President Mrozinski**, "I will go back to my original position as President of the Council (meant Commission), I will appoint 1 Commissioner (points to Commissioner Haney), 1 Councilman (points to Earl) and the Auditor to sit down and bring a recommendation."

Councilman Cunningham, “You don’t have an order to – you don’t have the authority to present me to serve on a committee.” **Attorney Friedman**, “Coach, we’ve got some homework for ya (hand on the study done by Lochner), you’ve got the study from 2018.” **Councilman Cunningham**, “I know that’s a 2 million dollar project, you know I’ve seen that book before...” **President Mrozinski**, “Twenty six million.” **Councilman Cunningham**, “No, no, no, the book alone, just the report cost us about 2 million, is that correct Mr. Friedman?” **President Mrozinski**, “We don’t want to go through that again.” **Councilman Cunningham**, “The report itself.” **Attorney Friedman**, “The problem is you’re going to need another scoped engineering report to pull this off.” **Councilman Cunningham**, “We didn’t need that last week, did we?” **Attorney Friedman**, “Not before we had that opinion.” **Earl**, “Okay, and that’s my point...” **Attorney Friedman**, “Mr. Stabosz and Mr. Haney.” **Councilman Cunningham**, “...let’s get together and absolve him of the responsibility. Thank you.”

New Business

Considered renewing lease with Solid Waste - Clay Turner, Director. **President Rich Mrozinski** asked why Solid Waste is the only office paying rent to the County. **Clay Turner**, “I believe 10 years ago when we entered into this lease we’re considered a special district, the County was being very fiscally responsible and was looking for ways to pay for that new building so not having to pay rent for Purdue Extension, not having to pay rent for MS4 and not to having to pay rent for Soil and Water and then if they could collect some dollars from us they’d have enough to pay for that building within the 10 year time frame which I believe was actually a 9 year time frame that the building was paid off. And I believe at this time and I can’t speak for the past Commissioners, but I believe their intention was that they were going to waive our rent or give us very minimal after the building was paid. **President Mrozinski** said he was on the Council when the building was built. **Clay** said \$250,000 has been paid so far. No changes except for hopefully a minimal monthly dollar amount, for example, \$1 a year or \$100 a year. The current lease expires December 31, 2021.

Commissioner Matias motioned for Director Turner to speak to his Board and return to the Commission with a very modest rental agreement amount. **Director Turner** stated all 3 Commissioners sit on his Board and if they remember it was during the budget process his Board instructed him to approach the Commissioners asking for forgiveness. He then recommended one of the Commissioners and a Council member getting together and coming up with an amount. Commissioner Haney sits as Solid Waste President and Councilman Mike Mollenhauer was in attendance at this meeting so his name was suggested along with Director Turner to determine an amount for the next lease. **Commissioner Matias motioned to approve the recommendation. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried.**

Attorney Friedman said as a ‘housekeeping’ note for the record could he get authorization to get with Council Attorney DiMartino and discuss the prospect of perhaps the Council on Monday considering use of the special purchase statute and then returning to the Commission with a recommendation. **Commissioner Matias said as in the best interest of the taxpayers in the community she motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney said as an exploratory motion he would seconded. Motion carried.**

Received and considered recommendation from Community Corrections Advisory Board meeting of August 16th regarding employment status of Director Rochelle Brown. **Steve Klosowski**, Advisory Board President, gave condolences to Commissioner Haney in the loss of his brother then stated, “Two nights ago, August 16, 2021, in this very room, we held an Executive Session of the La Porte County Community Corrections Advisory Board followed immediately by a Public Session at 7:00 p.m. We were late starting that since the Executive Session ran long which we expected. We had a total of 17 Board Members present, 4 were absent, 14 appeared in person with only 5 via Zoom. The purpose of the meetings were to discuss the performance of the La Porte County Community Corrections Executive Director Rochelle Brown and possibly raise the question whether to retain or dismiss Ms. Brown, that was also to be discussed. Ms. Brown was present at the meeting and she was accompanied by legal counsel at that time. During the Executive Session, I wanted to give a slight, brief recap of the meeting that night. I first welcomed everyone, all the Board participants, and immediately, basically before I even finished that sentence, a particular Board Member who was on Zoom announced, and I quote ‘Let the lynching begin’ end quote. Unfortunately I took, well, offense to that, it was not my intention for any meeting which I will ever preside to be referred to as a lynching or any meeting I have ever preside in my 38 years of correctional experience to be considered a lynching so I did take offense to that. Many of the comments made were both in support of Ms. Brown and not in support in the next hour and a half. Hurtful statements were made by many in the room and I’m not - I’m ashamed to say that I let myself fall to that rhetoric at times that evening and I want to publicly apologize to anyone in that room or to anyone that witnessed the meeting via Zoom, if I offended anyone with any of the comments that I made. In the public session about 50 people arrived, some were past employees, some were members of the public and some were current employees. It was determined prior to the meeting that we would not have public comment available during that section of the evening because there was just too many people that we expected to visit and we’d still be here probably waiting for those comments to finish. During the public session though a motion was made to hold off on any decision to retain or dismiss Ms. Brown, Ms. Brown for a period of 6 months. Motion carried. A second motion was made to form a sub-committee consisting of a Board Member chosen by Ms. Brown, a Board member chosen by me (Steve) as Advisory Board President plus a third Board member to make a total of 3 on the sub-committee. The goal of the sub-committee is to work with Ms. Brown to help her become a better manager in her position as Executive Director of La Porte County Community Corrections. That motion carried. Also determined at the end of the meeting was that Mr. Friedman and Ms. Bolling-Williams, who represented Ms. Brown, will meet to determine a possible mediator to work between Ms. Brown and the Advisory Board. So that’s basically an overview of what took place 2 days ago. May I answer any questions that you might have?” **President Mrozinski** said he had no questions. **Commissioner Matias** thanked Advisory Board President Steve Klosowski for the

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information then motioned to accept the 6 months retention recommendation with the additional motion that was passed to provide the Director with a small team of support to assist her with any management questions she might have or issues. Attorney Friedman suggested adding a mediator to improve communications between the Director and Board President. Commissioner Haney seconded but also pointed out he was present for the public portion of the meeting and the votes were unanimous by the Board. He also asked if there were any comments about a county vehicle. Commissioner Matias replied it will be addressed by the Advisory Board. Motion carried.

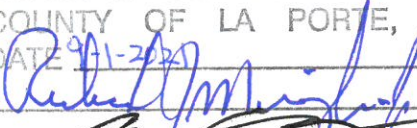
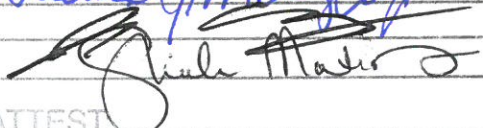
Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Haney reported Health Department Director Amanda Lahners did a great job with the update on the Covid vaccine clinic. First of September the Clinic will be out of the former La Porte Hospital but it could change depending on the Delta variant otherwise vaccinations will be done from the Health Department in the Complex. He covered the employee insurance information under Department Heads. He visited several 'out buildings,' reminded everyone to enjoy the County Parks as well as the County as a whole, we have much to offer. "It's been a couple of bittersweet days for me with the passing of my brother, thank you for acknowledging him earlier, I appreciate that. As we continue to move forward, today's also, I'd be remised if I didn't mention today's my daughter's 17th birthday so a lot going on this weekend and we've pretty much covered everything else here tonight so it's getting late."

Commissioner Matias followed up on the Covid variant and encouraged people to get vaccinated. The Michigan City Health Department office on 8th Street is a Covid testing site and walk-ins are welcome. She then added, "To return to the discussion on Marquiss Electric and the Skwiat family, I am very grateful for the fact that they have hung with the County even with all of this political noise. They have taken the high road and have really been exceptional citizens as people and as a business employs many families, supports many families. Not a lot of companies would be out there on their vacation time or during the coldest days of the winter trying to make sure that the communities' citizens are safe and that emergency vehicles can get around the Lake Front rather than going through that tiny little Canada neighborhood where the detour is, a neighborhood that was not built for any kind of heavy equipment, it's a tiny neighborhood that slows you down for any emergency response time and I just want to say that I appreciate them and I'm sure there's many others that may not be able to say it to you (the Skwiat family/Marquiss Electric), really appreciate the effort - Bruce, I swear that Bridge needs to be named after you some day because you are there a lot, thank you."

Commissioner Mrozinski said he has spent a lot of days answering phone calls and emails. He has spent a lot of time with the Economic Development Office and they have a lot of projects going right now. The office hired a person to do expansion and retention visits to our existing companies. Mike Seitz visited 8 businesses today. Rich also said, "Any time I hear of a veteran who has suffered the weight of going to war and come home with issues and problems, whether they be psychological or physical it pains me as a veteran of the Vietnam War and I had a very short conversation with Commissioner Haney about his brother, he's carried the marks of war." He said after 20 years in Afghanistan we are just walking away as we did in Vietnam. He quoted the Bible, "Let ye among you who are without sin cast the first stone."

President Mrozinski adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

EXAMINED AND APPROVED BY THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
COUNTY OF LA PORTE, INDIANA
DATE 9-11-2021


ATTEST: _____ Auditor
LA PORTE COUNTY, INDIANA

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