

MINUTES

MEETING OF THE LA PORTE COUNTY COUNCIL

September 27th, 2021 at 6:00PM

The meeting of the La Porte County Council was held on September 27th, 2021 at 6:00pm (central time) in the Assembly Room of the La Porte County Government Complex located at 809 State Street, La Porte, Indiana, 46350.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6pm by the Council President, Randy Novak.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Novak led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

All 7 Council members were physically present for the meeting.

APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 27, 2021 AGENDA

Mr. Yagelski requested that Maintenance be moved up to the top of the Appropriations, Transfers and Requests list, per Maintenance's request.

- i. Motion to approve made by Mr. Cunningham and seconded by Mr. Mollenhauer.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 23, 2021 MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Yagelski requested to table the previous month's minutes to ensure additional meeting information, which was lost and recovered due to technical issues, could be added before their approval.

- i. Motion to table the minutes made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Rosenbaum.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Former Councilman Jeff Santana spoke electronically via Zoom, and opened his statement with high-praise comments regarding Marquiss Electric's long-term maintenance of the Franklin St. Bridge. As he continued his statement, he expressed frustration regarding the Council's lack of action to bid out the

Franklin St. Bridge Project, noting that doing so would satisfy not only the State Board of Accounts' (SBOA) strict regulation, but would likely also ensure Marquiss Electric as the sole contractor regardless, as he opined that Marquiss likely would not have been outbid for the project anyway. He took exception to the Council "asking for forgiveness and not permission" when simply opening the project for bids could potentially avoid a legal situation to begin with. Mr. Santana expressed his support in Auditor Tim Stabosz's recommendation to use the special purchase statute to instead prioritize ordering parts for the project in question, and continued to note concern about who would be paying the fines issued should legal action be taken against the Council's decision. Mr. Santana disclosed his concerns that, despite President Novak's statement at the end of the previous County Council meeting regarding the Council not targeting Mr. Stabosz, he felt as though the Auditor had in fact been singled out for his request to abide by to the SBOA's regulations.

PUBLIC COMMENT OPEN FLOOR CLOSED.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

La Porte County EMS, Andrew McGuire (Administrator) and Eric Fenstermaker (Assistant Administrator)

Mr. McGuire approached the Council to describe many of the issues he had been having regarding employee hiring, retention, and morale in the EMS Department. He explained that 14 staff members had left the department to date, which was unheard of for his department. He broke down the exodus of his staff, noting that all but 2 of the aforementioned staff members had left for departments which offered more pay for a smaller workload, and asserted that 4 of the lost staff members had 10 or more years of experience, and one employee which left had 24 years of experience. Mr. McGuire continued that applications and interviews for the now vacant position had been hit-or-miss, with many of the considerable candidates having second thoughts and backing out once the workload and offered pay had been presented to them. Mr. McGuire gave praise to Mr. Fenstermaker's recent research which indicated that La Porte County EMS had been taking 850-900 more emergency calls to-date versus the total amount of calls from 2020. He expressed that La Porte County EMS was not alone in its struggle for employee retention, and many of the surrounding counties had been offering increased wages, sign-on bonuses, and benefits as an effort to lock-in new staff. Mr. McGuire also disclosed that surrounding counties had been utilizing ARP funds as to offer bonuses as a staff incentive. He continued that, with the staffing issues he had been having with his team, management had been needing to fill in the gaps. Mr. McGuire requested that the Council begin discussions to find a solution to help retain the many additional employees he fears will leave his department.

Mr. Fenstermaker elaborated on additional challenges which EMS often faced with staffing. He explained that even though a set number of staff are designated for a shift, sometimes complications such as employee illness, injury, or additional scheduling issues can often cause problems. He continued that in these particular cases, the existing staff often has to work upwards of 48 hour shifts to accommodate the many holes in the schedule, and emphasized the physical toll such shifts take on the existing staff.

Mr. Yagelski advised that ARP funding for bonuses would not help solve the retention issue, as any ARP funds offered would be a one-time offering if applicable and likely would not be a long-term solution. Mr. McGuire agreed with Mr. Yagelski and noted that he would prefer to see salary increases for

longevity. Mr. Yagelski added that the County had one of the highest long-term longevity raises offered in comparison to the surrounding counties, which Mr. McGuire rebutted that the longevity raises for La Porte County capped at 27 years. Mr. McGuire explained that one of his 42 year staff members had not received a longevity raise since their 27th year with the county as a result.

President Novak interjected that E911 Director Barb Huston would be approaching the Council later in the meeting to propose wage increases, and indicated his intention to create a County Council workshop to address the issue.

Mr. Rosenbaum explained that while the Council could only solve one problem at a time, he was acutely sensitive to the severity of Mr. McGuire's particular staffing struggles and felt it needed priority in its resolution. However, Mr. Rosenbaum explained, the request for ARP funds as a bonus would be uncertain and might not be applicable to Mr. McGuire's cause. He reiterated the importance of keeping EMS staffed, noting the essential nature Mr. McGuire's department played in La Porte County. President Novak agreed with Mr. Rosenbaum, but added that much work needed to be done before action could be taken.

Director of Community & Economic Development, Tony Rodriguez

Mr. Rodriguez approached the Council to inform them on the progress of the Broadband Project efforts. He explained that two recently endorsed private entities had intentions to provide fiber optic connectivity to the currently un-served residents of La Porte County and had submitted plans for the project to the Office of Community and Rural Affairs. Mr. Rodriguez explained the process that would take place before the project could get underway, noting that a Letter of Intent was submitted on September 24th, deadlines for Challenges to the Submission would be on November 3rd 2021, expected Challenge Review would take place on November 20th 2021, and submission for Full Application (including the residential addresses to be included in the project) would be taking place on January 6th, 2022. Mr. Rodriguez explained that between the two private entities, upwards of 4,000-4,200 residences had been identified to be applicable to the project. He noted that the FCC had previously claimed that the target areas had been served, however local investigation had shown that this was not true. With such contradictions, he anticipated a lot of back-and-forth correspondence before a solution would be arrived at.

At this time, Mr. Garner inquired about the US Highway 30 project. Mr. Rodriguez proceeded to explain that the South County Community Coalition had made a strong effort to host the entity performing the lobbying and securing of funding for the project, including securing funding for a certain Environmental Impact Study known as a "PEL" (Planning and Environmental Linkages) before the project could begin. He explained that awaiting the bidding on the PEL would take some time and offered to bring a representative from the project or a detailed report to the Council. President Novak expressed surprise that the Council and public had not received updates on this project, which Mr. Rodriguez explained was ultimately the intent, as public hearings for the project would transpire once a contractor was selected to perform the PEL. Mr. Rodriguez explained that the Council would be able to have their say on the project as well, to which Mr. Mollenhauer noted that the Council had previously paid \$12,000 to the South County Community Coalition to ensure a seat at the project's table. Mr. Rodriguez confirmed that the \$12,000 paid by the Council was in fact for this purpose. Mr. Cunningham informed the room that, in paying the \$12,000 for a seat with the coalition, any back-fees which would have been owed during that time had been initially waived, which Mr. Rodriguez confirmed was true.

Mr. Cunningham reeled back to the Broadband Project, and asked Mr. Rodriguez if he knew just how many residences there were in La Porte County at this time. He requested that Mr. Rodriguez reach back out to him once he had a definitive number, as he felt that with only 4,200 houses being included in the project, many residents would still remain un-served and left out of the project, as a result.

La Porte County Coroner, Lynn Swanson

Previously, Ms. Swanson had spoken about two of her staff members who would be leaving for school; since then, however, the staff members had returned to the Coroner Department as employees, bringing Deputy Coroner staff to 6 persons, with 1 Chief Deputy and Ms. Swanson herself. At this time, Ms. Swanson wanted to offer the Council some information on the data regarding the responses she and her team had been providing for year-to-date 2021, versus the same data gathered in 2020:

	2020 (TOTAL)	2021 (YEAR-TO-DATE)
TOTAL DEATHS INVESTIGATED	342	258
TOTAL OVERDOSES INVESTIGATED	42	44
TOTAL SUICIDES INVESTIGATED	19	24
TOTAL INFANT SUFFOCATIONS INVESTIGATED	7	0

Ms. Swanson noted the increase in these numbers, however was unable to offer an explanation for the particular rise in overdoses and suicides at this time. She expressed joy in the sharp decline in the numbers of infant suffocation, which had 7 cases in 2020 and 0 cases as of YTD 2021 thanks to an increase in public service announcements on multiple fronts.

La Porte County Assessor, Mike Schultz

Mr. Schultz approached the Council to offer an update on the South Lake Mall and its ongoing case with the Indiana Supreme Court regarding its property tax assessment case. Mr. Schultz described that the decision came down from the Indiana Supreme Court regarding the South Lake Mall and its 2014 Assessment Appeal. Mr. Schultz condensed the highlights of the case, noting that the original dispute was between two parties: Ross Township and the South Lake Mall. When both parties had presented different appraisals for assessment, the IBTR (Indiana Board of Tax Review) agreed with neither of the appraisals presented by the two parties, and instead offered their own valuation. When the issue made its way to tax court, the court sided with IBTR. However, the Indiana Supreme Court declared that the IBTR did not have the authority to set a value on the assessment, and only an appraisal from one of the original two parties could be considered. Mr. Schultz explained that, since these actions were not those of the La Porte County Government, no legal action was likely to be directed at La Porte County.

La Porte County IT Director, Darlene Hale

Ms. Hale approached the Council to urge consideration for the IT Department in their talks for upcoming potential wage increases.

LIAISON REPORTS

Council Member Gramarossa:

Mrs. Gramarossa explained that the Sewer and Drainage Board's projects were moving along well, noting one residential project having been recently completed. She mentioned meeting with her liaisons at Paladin, whose desire to start a new project would likely land them before the Council in the near future.

Council Member Garner:

Mr. Garner reported that MS4's Rick Brown disclosed on a few of his projects in-the-works, including integrating a bridge at a Trail Creek park, as well as performing dredging at Pine Lake, with funds for such dredging coming out of MS4's perpetuation fund. He noted meeting with the County Clerk Heather Stevens, who showed Mr. Garner the progress being made in the Clerk's Office in addition to the gains made in the department's scanning project. He is currently waiting for more updates from the Purdue Extension.

Council Member Yagelski:

Mr. Yagelski filled the Council in on the progress of the recent 800 North drainage project, describing the improvements made to the land to improve draining, including tree removal, the installation of a temporary driveway, and the establishment of a new culvert, all under the supervision of a surveyor who ensured the quality of the work at the site. He expressed that contention may occur in the area of the work being done, as surrounding homeowners to the project may also desire that these measures be applied to their residences; however Mr. Yagelski affirmed that the County could not serve all who asked for the same services.

Council Member Mollenhauer:

On August 25th, Mr. Mollenhauer attended the La Porte Redevelopment Commission meeting, and attended and spoke at the Annual Farm Bureau Dinner the following day on August 26th. He met with Indiana Environmental Health Association's Vice President Patty Nocek regarding a rat infestation in Rolling Prairie, which was the topic of discussion at the Rolling Prairie Town Community Meeting on September 2nd, which Mr. Mollenhauer also attended. On September 7th, he attended the La Porte County Redevelopment Commission special meeting regarding the 421/I-94 sewer bid project, which was reopened and passed to open for bids on the project. Mr. Mollenhauer attended the 41st Anniversary Memorial Service for fallen La Porte County Sheriff's Deputy Officer Neil Thompson on September 21st. On September 23rd, he met with EMS Administrator Andrew McGuire to discuss the previously mentioned EMS staffing struggles. On September 26th, he attended Pioneer Days at Creek

Ridge County Park. Mr. Mollenhauer took a moment to note that he had been receiving concerns regarding the upcoming Magic of Lights event, primarily disclosing the Pioneer Land's staff concerns with sharing the grounds for their open-house week, which usually occurred during the first week of December. As a result, Pioneer Land's staff had worries that turnout to their open house might not receive as much attendance as it has in the past, should the Magic of Light festival be running simultaneously to their event.

Council Member Cunningham:

While Mr. Cunningham was at the AIC Conference with Mr. Rosenbaum and Mrs. Gramarossa, he had received multiple concerns over a surveillance issue at Community Corrections. Mr. Cunningham praised the resolution of the problem while he was away at the conference. He noted receiving several calls regarding a Covid issue at the Juvenile Services Center, and as to whether staff who were off from Covid would receive pay for their absences, which Mr. Cunningham expressed that the matter would need looking into. He agreed with Mr. Mollenhauer's assessment of the Pioneer Land concerns, and praised La Porte County Parks Superintendent Jeremy Sobecki's efforts on coordinating the Pioneer Days event at Trail Creek County Park.

Council Member Rosenbaum:

Mr. Rosenbaum attended multiple meetings and was unable to go to several more due to scheduling conflicts. He also attended the AIC Conference with Mr. Cunningham and Mrs. Gramarossa, and described the pride he and his fellow Council Members had in representing La Porte County at the event. He informed the Council that the FMEC had been in contact with Pioneer Land staff regarding the constraints with the Magic of Lights schedule, and while a resolution had not yet come, talks between all parties were being had. He continued that the Magic of Lights event would bring in large sums of funding to the County, offering upwards of \$50,000 which could be used for a wide variety of projects. To conclude his liaisons, Mr. Rosenbaum informed the Council that the La Porte County Parks Department had one board member resign, and the Council had been asked to appoint one Democratic candidate to replace the lost member, as the member who had resigned held a Democratic seat.

President Novak:

President Novak gave praise to the election board and the responsible parties for securing a voter van for him at the fairgrounds recently. He and Suzy Carpenter joined Pioneer Land in their last meeting and are working hard to make sure to include them and meet their needs throughout the holiday season. He expressed optimism that everything would be resolved.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS

Second Reading of Ordinance No. 2021-08: An Ordinance Adopting Request to Use Recorder's Perpetuation Fund to Cover Office Expenses and Salaries.

- i. Motion made by Mr. Yagelski to read by title only and seconded by Mr. Cunningham.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

Auditor Tim Stabosz read aloud the ordinance.

- iii. Motion to approve made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mrs. Gramarossa.
- iv. All members voted in favor.

Mr. Rosenbaum took a moment to read aloud Recorder Elzbieta Bilderback's cover letter which was included with the ordinance.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Retroactively approve on the record the emergency appropriation for computer equipment at Community Corrections

IT Director Darlene Hale explained to the Council that a recent surveillance outage at Community Corrections required that the current, long-aged surveillance system being used needed to be replaced. When Mr. Rosenbaum inquired about the age of the system, Community Corrections Director Rochelle Brown answered via Zoom that the current surveillance system had been in place since 2012.

- i. Motion to approve made by Mr. Cunningham and seconded by Mrs. Gramarossa.
- ii. All Members voted in favor.

2. Approval of La Porte County Recycling/Solid Waste 2022 budget

Mr. Yagelski momentarily spoke as a member of the public, expressing disappointment in Solid Waste's inability to recycle certain materials such as styrofoam and plastic bags. Director Clay Turner explained that, even though their current vendor could not recycle these materials, Solid Waste/Recycling did offer special collection for these materials. Mr. Turner urged the public to avoid purchasing products with large amounts of these unrecyclable materials, and to avoid using plastic bags. Mr. Yagelski rebutted that many of the local establishments did not offer alternatives to plastic bags and styrofoam, noting restaurants and food establishments in particular with their limited options in take-out vessels. He continued that the public couldn't do much to counteract using these materials if they were not provided alternatives. He expressed that this was not just an issue in La Porte County, but one all across the state of Indiana, and urged Mr. Turner to reach out to other parties to try and find a solution. Mr. Turner added that he had been coordinating with other, larger entities to try and find a solution, and that he and his time had been trying every day to try and find a solution to this problem. Mr. Turner continued that, with his current vendor, his department was locked into a five-year contract, on which the department was on its third year. He emphasized once more the availability of special collections for styrofoam and plastic bags, and noted Solid Waste's efforts to present public education about recycling and offering reusable canvas bags to use instead of single-use plastic bags. He explained that limitations by the vendor would prevent the recycling of certain materials, and there may be an increase in cost to find a vendor who would be able to process the materials in question. Mr. Yagelski requested that a cost

for such service should be presented so the public would know how much the increase in cost was. In regards to his work as a board member, Mr. Mollenhauer noted the struggles of managing a budget with the price increases which Solid Waste had to contend with, and praised Solid Waste's improvements over the years. Mr. Cunningham added that he had observed local food service businesses increasing their use of cardboard take-out boxes.

At this time, Attorney Guy DiMartino asked Mr. Cunningham if he would reopen his nomination for the IT approval as an emergency declaration, as he wanted to identify if the funds would be coming out of the Emergency Reserve Fund or the CCD Fund. Mr. Cunningham recommended taking funding out of the Emergency Reserve Fund.

- i. Motion to approve as such made by Mr. Cunningham and seconded by Mrs. Gramarossa.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

3. Discussion on Refinancing 2014 Lease/Purchase Agreement for the La Porte County Courthouse HVAC

Mr. DiMartino explained that the Commissioners had secured three vendors to look into the refinancing of the 2014 lease purchase agreement regarding the HVAC at the La Porte County Courthouse. He explained that this would come before the Council the following month, and as such, Andy Mouser from Baker Tilly was present via Zoom to answer any preliminary questions on the subject.

Mr. Mouser explained that this would be a refinancing of the 2014 PNC equipment lease for the HVAC equipment at the Courthouse in La Porte County. The outstanding payments on the 2014 lease had a \$5.5 million outstanding principal at 3.252% interest, with annual payments of about \$678,000. Mr. Mouser recommended issuing bonds payable from the economic development component of local income tax, which would ultimately result in interest rate savings. Mr. Mouser's hopes were to cut annual payments by \$20,000-\$25,000 over the remaining ten years, with hopeful savings reaching \$200,000 in the long-term, and intentions to reduce interest to 1.5%. While no formal action was to be taken immediately, Mr. Mouser noted that Baker Tilly would be present for the next Council Meeting for formal approvals, in addition to being present at upcoming future Commission Meetings, with action to be taken at the end of this year or early the following year.

President Novak asked if there was a call-date on the current lease, preventing the County from paying off the lease until a certain date. Mr. Mouser explained that there was a rolling-pay premium that ran throughout the term of the lease, which would require the existing principal to be paid off. Mr. Novak asked that, since the Council would be paying the premium to go through with the refinance, if it would be advisable to simply pay off the \$5.5 million and be clean of the issue. Auditor Stabosz recommended refinancing regardless to knock down the interest rate to a lower one, given the considerably low rates that were being presented to them. Mr. Mouser added to Mr. Stabosz's comment, agreeing that current interest rates, including the 1.5% offered, were as low as he had seen them in some time. President Novak inquired if the timeframe of the lease would remain the same, which Mr. Mouser confirmed that the lease's timeframe would in fact remain the same, and annual costs would turn out cheaper. Mr. Stabosz noted that a benefit to paying off the \$5.5 million would be that the County would be receiving \$20 million in ARP funds, should the Council feel confident that they would still have the funding for various initiatives. At the same time, he countered that refinancing at such a low interest rate could be useful in creating a financial reserve. President Novak asked if refinancing would eliminate the 3% premium on a future bond. Mr. Mouser explained that the process could be an open-market bond issue,

which may typically have an 8-10 year call before the bond could be fully paid off, however with only ten years being left on the original lease, banks may take interest and offer a shorter call instead. Mr. Mouser noted that while that particular topic had not yet been discussed, the potential to be able to pay off the bond in 3 to 5 years with a bank could be a potential possibility. Mr. Stabosz inquired if the placement of a call would allow for a lower interest rate, which Mr. Mouser confirmed was correct. Mr. Stabosz reiterated the importance of maintaining a long-call, upwards of 10 years, to assure protection from investors and to lock-in a low interest rate. Mr. Mouser agreed, and added that an 8-10 year call would in fact yield the lowest interest rates.

4. Consider approval of Council President's authorization to hire replacement positions for:

- a. La Porte County Treasurer's Office – Clerk and Bookkeeper positions
- b. La Porte County Circuit Court – JDAI Coordinator/Administrator
- c. La Porte County Highway Department – Operator position
- d. La Porte County Auditor – Tax Sale/Grant Administrator, Accounts Payable Clerk, and Assessor Roll Book Clerk positions
 - i. Motion to approve all items "a" through "d" made by Mr. Rosenbaum and seconded by Mr. Mollenhauer.
 - ii. All members voted in favor.

5. La Porte County E911 – Shift Differential pay and Longevity Pay

La Porte E911 Director Barb Huston approached the Council with the request to update long-term longevity pay from 10 years being vested at 27 years, to instead change the longevity to 15 years vested at 42 years. She offered the Council packets with her findings and noted that she would bring further discussion about her request at the pay raise workshop on October 7th.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

APPROPRIATIONS, TRANSFERS, AND REQUESTS

La Porte County Maintenance

Requesting Additional Appropriation from Emergency Reserve (1186) or General (1000) or Riverboat (1191) for:

Emergency repair to jail roof top HVAC. \$35,000

Director of Facilities Larry Levandowski explained that a lower bid from D.A. Dodd for \$24,942 had come in for the roof top HVAC repair following the initial estimate of \$35,000 from another contractor, and as such, he was requesting a lower appropriation of \$24,942. Mr. Mollenhauer recommended using funds from Emergency Reserve, however Attorney Guy DiMartino noted that for funds to be used from the account, there needed to be a finding that it would be directed toward an emergency. Mr. Levandowski explained the nature of the emergency with the HVAC unit on the jail rooftop, and iterated that since

the unit was currently working on a back-up, if the back-up were to subsequently fail, there would be no HVAC or additional failsafe available whatsoever at the facility. Mrs. Gramarossa inquired how the Council was to determine what was or was not an emergency, which Mr. DiMartino clarified that the Council needed to take a vote with a super majority.

- i. Motion made by Mr. Mollenhauer to approve using Emergency Reserve (1186) funding for emergency purposes with an appropriation of \$24,942, seconded by Mr. Cunningham.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

La Porte County Maintenance

Requesting Additional Appropriation from Riverboat (1191) or LIT (1112) for:

Fairgrounds improvements. (Not to Exceed) \$150,000

Mr. Levendowski explained that after coordinating with Auditor Tim Stabosz and Attorney Guy DiMartino, he and his maintenance team reevaluated which projects they wanted to work on at the fairgrounds. After extending bids to the community, only two contractors offered bids, one being Milestone who offered to fulfill the projects for \$143,757, and Rieth-Reilly who offered to perform the same projects for \$189,020.

- i. Motion made by Mr. Rosenbaum to approve out of LIT (1112) for \$143,757, seconded by Mr. Mollenhauer.
 - a. Mrs. Gramarossa inquired about the nature of the improvements of the fairgrounds and the loose nature of their advertisement in their initial proposal, and if the appropriations offered would be solely used for paving as advertised or if the funds would be directed to other projects at the fairgrounds. She mentioned holding off on the projects since the end of the year was coming up, which would additionally offer the Council time ask the FMEC any questions about the paving project, since the FMEC would be overseeing the work performed. She requested that a member from the FMEC meet with the Council to describe the work and processes that would be done at the fairgrounds. President Novak explained that the advertisement of the projects seemed loose because of the last-minute nature of the request and continued that many of the details about the fairgrounds projects were disclosed during the last Council meeting during Mrs. Gramarossa's absence. He clarified that the project was pushed through quickly to ensure that it would be finished by the end of the season, and reiterated the conversation between Mr. Levendowski and Mr. Stabosz about the need to bid out the project if it were to exceed \$150,000. When Mrs. Gramarossa inquired about pricing of the project, President Novak noted that part of the project had been postponed until spring to allow for a lower project cost and to avoid a lengthy bidding process which would prolong the process until the end of the season. Mr. Levendowski added that Milestone was able to split the fairgrounds projects into seven different sections, and when Mrs. Gramarossa asked about how the cost for the project was calculated, Mr. Levendowski began to verbally explain the nature of the paving projects that were to be made at the fairgrounds. Facilities Manager Kaitlyn Simms offered Mrs. Gramarossa a packet with the information, and while grateful, Mrs. Gramarossa expressed frustration that she had not received this information sooner when she had asked for it beforehand. President Novak added that, while he would have liked to have had the Highway Department perform the project, Milestone had donated large amounts of

work to the fairgrounds earlier in the season and offered their services in the future to aid in the restoration of the facilities. He continued that the low bid offered by Milestone to perform the projects at hand was a sign of their devotion to the County.

- ii. All members voted in favor.

La Porte County Animal Shelter

Requesting permission to transfer \$16,000 from Spay/Neuter account #1106 to part-time to cover remaining payroll.

- i. Motion to approve made by Mr. Cunningham and seconded by Mr. Rosenbaum and Mr. Garner.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

La Porte County IT

Requesting Additional Appropriation from ARP (8950/8951) or General (1000) for:

Infrastructure Broadband Disaster Recovery in South Bend Union Station. \$658,659.50

- i. Motion made by Mr. Rosenbaum to approve and utilize appropriations from Lost Revenue (8951) and seconded by Mrs. Gramarossa.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

La Porte County Treasurer

Requesting Additional Appropriation from ARP (8950) or Riverboat (1191) for:

Computers, Software, and money counting machines. \$60,000

- i. Motion to approve and utilize appropriations from ARP (8950) made by Mr. Garner and seconded by Mr. Yagelski.
 - a. Initially, Mr. Garner expressed unsurety as to whether the funds could be taken from ARP (8950) or Lost Revenue (8951). With his statement, Ms. Winski asked if the funds would be able to be taken from Lost Revenue, which Mr. Yagelski noted that the request for the funding had not been advertised from such an account. Ms. Winski added that she had not specified a particular account, and that simply the Auditor had specified an account per her request to try and receive ARP funding for her request. With Mr. Yagelski being unsure as to why the funds could not be taken out of ARP (8950) as originally requested, President Novak proposed that the Council revisit the subject at the following Council Meeting and readvertise the request if ARP funding was not applicable in this case, as well as potentially receiving legal advice from Baker Tilly to confirm whether ARP funding would be applicable in this case. At this time, Attorney Guy DiMartino noted that since the funding requested was for in-office hardware, the funding would not meet the letter of the ARP. President Novak responded that the Council could potentially revisit the subject at the following Council Meeting and take funding from Lost Revenue (8951). Commission Attorney Shaw Friedman interjected at

this time to state that, per the legal advice he received, touchless devices which aided in social distancing could be covered under ARP funding rather than Lost Revenue. President Novak proposed that Ms. Winski proceed with the purchasing of the hardware which she requested, and that the subject be revisited at the following Council Meeting to determine specifically which account the funds could be taken from. He noted that Lost Revenue (8951) had more funding to glean from, which Mr. DiMartino agreed with. Mr. DiMartino inquired if the Council had intentions of paying Baker Tilly to deduce which account's funding would be applicable to Ms. Winski's request, to which Mrs. Gramarossa reiterated that simply a motion of support was to be made and the account from which the funds would be directed would be determined in the following month once the eligibility could be investigated further, a statement which was confirmed by President Novak and shortly thereafter backed by Mr. DiMartino.

- ii. All members voted in favor.
 - a. Mr. Rosenbaum commented that even though Shaw Friedman was able to offer legal advice from his own sources, he would prefer that the Council utilize their own sources, including the legal direction offered by Baker Tilly.

La Porte County COVID Committee

Requesting Additional Appropriation from Riverboat (1191) or General (1000) for:

Health Department's COVID vaccine clinic and COVID testing. \$400,000

- i. Motion to approve and utilize appropriation from General (1000) made by Mr. Rosenbaum and seconded by Mr. Cunningham.
 - a. With confusion as to how much in the General Fund (1000) was allotted as Covid Funding, President Novak asked Auditor Stabosz if he could meet with Ms. Winski and procure an up-to-date number that reflected how much funding was left in the Covid Fund.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

Honorable Judge Jeffrey Thorne Superior Court No. 3

Requesting Additional Appropriation from Riverboat (1191) or General (1000) for:

Replace monies in Bailiff's account due to paying sick and vacation time. \$4,300

- i. Motion to approve and utilize appropriations from General (1000) made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Cunningham.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

La Porte County Sheriff

Requesting Additional Appropriations from Riverboat (1191) or General (1000) for:

Compensation of sick time. \$4,500

- i. Motion to approve and utilize appropriation from General (1000) made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Cunningham.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

Fuel Money. \$150,000

- i. Motion to approve and utilize appropriation from Riverboat (1191) made by Mr. Rosenbaum and seconded by Mr. Garner.
 - a. Mr. Cunningham noted his preference to utilize the General (1000) fund to pay for expenses which would be accrued annually.
- ii. All members voted in favor (of Mr. Rosenbaum's motion).

La Porte County Sheriff

Requesting to spend \$14,000 from Misdemeanant Account for license fees for:

Office 365 email account. \$14,000

- i. Motion to approve made by Mr. Rosenbaum and seconded by Mr. Cunningham.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

La Porte County EMS

Requesting Additional Appropriations from Riverboat (1191) or General (1000) for:

Budget Shortages 20021 Other Supplies \$14,000

- i. Motion to approve and utilize appropriation from General (1000) made by Mr. Rosenbaum and seconded by Mr. Mollenhauer.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

Budget Shortages 200256 Gas and Oil \$30,000

- i. Motion to approve and utilize appropriation from General (1000) made by Mr. Rosenbaum and seconded by Mr. Cunningham.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

Budget Shortages 30161 Corporate Compliance \$30,000

- i. Motion to approve and utilize appropriation from General (1000) made by Mr. Rosenbaum and seconded by Mr. Mollenhauer.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

Budget Shortages 10140 Overtime \$90,000

- i. Motion to approve and utilize appropriation from General (1000) made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Cunningham.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

La Porte County Commissioners

Requesting Additional Appropriation from Riverboat (1191) or General (1000) for:

Professional Consulting Services \$30,000

- i. Motion to DENY made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Cunningham.
- ii. Five members voted in favor (Mr. Yagelski, Mrs. Gramarossa, Mr. Garner, Mr. Rosenbaum, Mr. Cunningham) and two members voted not-in-favor (President Novak, Mr. Mollenhauer).

Professional Services \$40,000

Liability Claims \$700,000

- i. Motion to approve both Professional Services and Liability Claims and utilize appropriation from General (1000) made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Garner.
- ii. Five members voted in favor (President Novak, Mr. Yagelski, Mrs. Gramarossa, Mr. Garner, Mr. Rosenbaum) and two members voted not-in-favor (Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Mollenhauer).

Indiana Guardianship Services

Requesting Additional Appropriation from Riverboat (1191) or General (1000) for:

To satisfy the VASIA Adult Guardianship Matching Grant.

(Volunteer Advocate for Seniors or Incapacitated Adults) \$37,500

- i. Motion to approve and utilize appropriation from General (1000) made by Mr. Mollenhauer and seconded by Mr. Rosenbaum.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

La Porte County Community Corrections

Requesting Additional Appropriations from Riverboat (1191) or General (1000) for:

Remove 12 existing sinks and replace with 12 new sinks. \$36,000

- i. Motion to approve and utilize appropriation from General (1000) made by Mr. Cunningham and seconded by Mr. Rosenbaum.
- ii. 5 members voted in favor (President Novak, Mr. Garner, Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Rosenbaum, Mr. Mollenhauer) and two members voted not-in favor (Mrs. Gramarossa, Mr. Yagelski).

New Security System with Security Automation Systems \$146,661

- i. Motion to approve and utilize appropriation from Riverboat (1191) made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Mollenhauer.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

La Porte County Weights and Measures

Requesting Additional Appropriation from Riverboat (1191) or General (1000) for:

Part time pay. \$1,736

- i. Motion to approve and utilize appropriation from General (1000) made by Mr. Rosenbaum and seconded by Mr. Cunningham.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

La Porte County Coroner

Requesting Additional Appropriation from Riverboat (1191) or General (1000) for:

Professional Services. \$10,000

- i. Motion to approve and utilize appropriation from General (1000) made by Mr. Rosenbaum and seconded by Mrs. Gramarossa.
- ii. Six members voted in favor (President Novak, Mr. Yagelski, Mrs. Gramarossa, Mr. Garner, Mr. Rosenbaum, Mr. Cunningham) and one member voted not-in-favor (Mr. Mollenhauer).

La Porte County Auditor

Requesting to spend from Dual Homestead Act (7110) for:

Office Supplies \$750

- i. Motion to approve made by Mr. Rosenbaum and seconded by Mr. Cunningham.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

COUNCIL/ATTORNEY COMMENTS

Mr. Rosenbaum expressed his gratitude and anticipation in attending the recently planned Employee Compensation workshop, and noted that compensation inquiries would need to be approached with each individual department instead of on-the-whole. Mr. Cunningham addressed Mr. Santana’s public comment at the beginning of the meeting, and explained that bidding out the Franklin St. Bridge Project would have prolonged its start beyond the winter season, to a point where repairs could not be performed.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Rosenbaum and seconded by Mr. Yagelski. All members voted in favor.

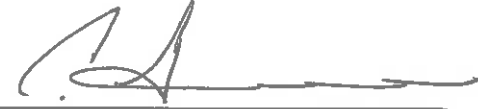
Examined & Approved by The La Porte County Council this 25th day of October 2021.



Councilman Earl Cunningham



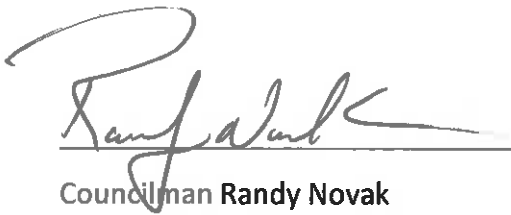
Councilman Terry Garner



Councilwoman Connie Gramarossa



Councilman Mike Mollenhauer



Councilman Randy Novak



Councilman Mike Rosenbaum



Councilman Mark Yagelski

ATTEST: 

Timothy Stabosz, Auditor