



**LA PORTE COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

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**Sheila Matias
President**

**Richard Mrozinski
Vice President**

**Joseph Haney
Member**

**La Porte County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, August 3, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. County Complex Room 3 & via Zoom**

President Sheila Matias called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Alan Good and John Dysard.

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

Considered the agenda. **Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Considered approval of July 20, 2022 minutes. **Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve the original minutes submitted in their packets. Commissioner Haney**, requested an incorrect quote be replaced with what he actually said. **President Matias**, after his request to change his quote in the minutes, both Commissioners Matias and Mrozinski listened to the audio and decided the words that Commissioner Haney changed were not correct with what they heard. The audio clip was played during the meeting. **Commissioner Haney**, 'please stop' was said and not 'and you know that' as he had the original minutes corrected to reflect. The original minutes had '...I stopped.' Minutes were held over to the next meeting for correction/approval.

Chief Deputy Auditor Vaughn Galloway read the Claims with Payroll ending 7/29/2022 - \$1,321,682.96 and Operating Expense Claims - \$2,888,774.63. **Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Public Comment

Alan Good, Door Village Harvest Festival, requested the use of cones and road closure signs during their festival scheduled September 10-11, 2022. Handed President Matias a letter with previous items used from the highway department. **Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Sherry Banic, via Zoom, 4551 S. 75 W. La Porte, thanked the Commission for the workshop held on the Meadowview Estates/Nowak Subdivision drainage issue. No resolve though for the residents downstream at Kingsbury Creek area. Sloppy project, no assessment has been done on the houses in Meadowview Estates, as a realtor she has looked into disclaimers on property in the subdivision and there is no information on the flooding issues. Currently the residents are not running their sump pumps. Has the main drain tile been assessed? This project needs to be reassessed and use current data. Why is a private subdivision having work done that will impact residents downstream? Will there be a tax assessment on this project? This is comparing apples to oranges. There are other areas of the county that use sump pumps and have issues with water. Suggested cleaning or digging out the retention pond in the subdivision.

Department Reports/Department Head Comments

Amanda Lahners, Health Department, clinics will be held at the fairgrounds to help children get back on track with their immunizations. July 29-30 was the first one scheduled and 88 children were able to get their shots. We are one of 15 counties to get assistance from the state. Next dates are August 16-17, 10am-6pm. No appointment needed; walk-ins welcomed. Kindergarten through 12th grade, no insurance required. Covid boosters and vaccines will be available as well.

ORIGINAL

Considered permission to approach the Council for funding on lease agreements at Community Corrections. **Merika Beauty**, Interim Director, agreement is with Total Court Services, vendor for the home detention component of Community Corrections specifically GPS, SCRAM and Remote Breath Units. **Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Jay Sullivan, Engineer, met with a few property owners from Meadowview Estates and Kingsbury Creek during the workshop. Reported construction will begin in 4 weeks, the contractor has ordered the pipe for the project. Answered questions from the workshop on the water study that was done. Everything will be done on the west side of the road and the plans will be uploaded to the website to reflect the changes made. **Mike Polan**, Building Commissioner, attended the meeting for a different reason however the individual that he wished to address was not in attendance therefore he would not comment on that specific topic. He did, however, answer questions pertaining to Meadowview Estates. There is a 'per lot' assessment on each lot in Meadowview Estates that is a drainage assessment specific to surface water management. "The retention area there was pumped out, dried completely, to see if that would alleviate the ground pressure, the hydrostatic pressure, from the subterrain water and it did not." Meadowview Estates' residents have been coming to the County for help for at least 13 years now. There are many residents that are affected in the subdivision. Also understands the concerns of the residents downstream near Kingsbury Creek. **Jay Sullivan**, digging lots out and expanding the retention basin was brought up as a possible suggestion to help the residents, this will not help the problem because the retention basin is for surface water and it is the subsurface water that is creating the problem.

Requests

Considered permission to approach the Council to purchase 2 excavators. **Duane Werner**, Highway Department, the two current excavators are 1999 models, becoming undependable and parts are harder to get. **Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Considered permission to pay 19 sick days to Darlene Forker who retired, Heather Stevens, Clerk. **Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Considered permission for travel to Grand Rapids, Michigan, for the NAPSA Conference, **Katherine Schmitt**, APS Director, using funds through a grant therefore no additional money is needed. **Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Considered permission to approach the Council for **annual maintenance contracts** and **furnishings budget** for Rolling Prairie Base, **Andrew McGuire**, EMS, a budget of \$39,500 was put together and he would like to submit to the Council for approval. **Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.** **Andrew** pointed out the annual contracts are for normal equipment used throughout the year in his department.

Old Business

None

New Business

Considered contracts for Bridge #37 - \$90,400 and Bridge #166 - \$289,380, **Jay Sullivan**, Engineer, confirmed that Commissioners, Councilmembers and the County Planner have scored the projects. **Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Considered agreement to allow deputy to adopt retiring K-9. **John Boyd**, Sheriff, Argo, a 9-year-old Belgian Malinois, has been with the department for about 7 years and he is down to 'single purpose.' He is an explosive detection dog but is dual purpose certified in apprehension and tracking. Currently Argo has some limitations that has forced him to be single purpose as an explosive detection dog. His handler, Bobby Greer, is leaving the department and Sheriff Boyd would like to see the two of them stay together for the rest of Argo's life. **Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Haney, there were construction photos shared on social media of a crawl space. After speaking to the Building Department, extra steps will be put in place that will help identify issues early on in the inspection process, better documentation will help, there were no 'green tags' issued for work done below ground. There were other green tags issued for work to continue but there was no final approval on it. A local watch dog helped us to keep things on track. Attended meetings at Solid Waste, MS-ISAC with communications on a fiber cut in Porter County that affected several counties, Community Corrections Board, Meadowview/Nowak workshop, and the Gypsy/Spongy Moth workshop with the Task Force. Working with the state authorities, if our county is sprayed it doesn't stop the moths in neighboring states like Illinois, Michigan and Ohio. Reported that there is a 3-year peak and then drops off for 10 years, our County is in the 3rd year range so both federal and state may not want to spend any funds on what is already happening. Council conducted budget hearings which he took part in, also attended a Park and Rec Board meeting at Luhr Park. Bluhm Park will have an open house for their new playground equipment that was installed. Wanatah will have an electronic and household hazardous waste drop-off Saturday, August 6th at Kankakee Valley REMC on Highway 30. On Saturday, September 17th at the fairgrounds, will be the 7-in-1 household hazardous waste drop-off site. Lakefest took place in La Porte over the weekend, great concerts and fireworks. Hanna Fest will be soon in south county, boat races in Michigan City this weekend with a food court replacing the Taste of Michigan City. At the last meeting there was lively commentary on freedom of speech. Closed his remarks with a quote from Frederick Douglas, "Liberty is meaningless where the right to utter one's thoughts and opinions has ceased to exist. That, of all rights, is the dread of tyrants. It is the right which they first of all strike down. Thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, founded in injustice and wrong, are sure to tremble, if men are allowed to reason. Equally clear is the right to hear. To suppress free speech is a double wrong. It violates the rights of the hearer as well as those of the speaker."

Commissioner Mrozinski, logged 100 hours last month with work done for the County. Invited to the 25th anniversary of the Michigan City Economic Development Corporation at Blue Chip Casino where Sheila Matias was honored with the Distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award along with 5 others. Congratulations to her for that award.

Commissioner Matias, the award was unexpected and didn't know about it until she opened the program for the evening. Other people were honored as well but she appreciated it. The work done is not for recognition but for the community, working with others who have the same focus or visionary to help people and families. Reported on the Gypsy/Spongy Moth workshop, cannot stop the infestation but it was wonderful how the group of citizens who were willing to attend a meeting/discuss what is happening in their neighborhood was able to pull more individuals in to the group who are facing the same issue. Bill Nelson and Diane Warnke stepped up to head the Task Force. Ended with the La Porte County Works! Program, **Haynes International**, located in La Porte at State Road 39, started in 2017, Haynes International is one of the world's largest developers and distributors of high-performance nickel and cobalt-based alloys for use in high temperature and corrosion applications. The company's successful history spans more than a century of products, processes, and most of all, people. Also developed by Haynes is the introduction of many highly regarded nickels and cobalt-based alloys that are used worldwide in the most demanding environments and critical applications for aerospace, power generation, chemical processing, pharmaceuticals and other areas. Haynes International serves a critical function in providing materials for each and every Apollo mission. In 1884 when Elwood Haynes drove his "Pioneer" automobile down Pumpkinvine Pike in Kokomo, Indiana, it set into motion his inventive spirit. He was a tireless inventor who developed the unique metal alloys that led to the foundation of Haynes International in 1912, and their ongoing commitment to alloy excellence which has inspired their tradition of innovation. Haynes International has manufacturing facilities in Kokomo, Indiana; Arcadia, Louisiana; Mountain Home, North Carolina; and La Porte, Indiana. The La Porte facility performs slitting, stretch leveling, blanking and cut to length operations to Haynes International and other customers. They offer a full benefit package, 401K referral and attendance bonus, dental, eye care and shift premium bonus and has openings for machine operators and warehouse staff. Information will be on our website if interested.

President Sheila Matias adjourned at 10:47 a.m.

EXAMINED AND APPROVED BY THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
COUNTY OF LA PORTE, INDIANA
DATE 8-17-2022

Sheila Matias
Paul G. ...

ATTEST: _____
Auditor

LA PORTE COUNTY, INDIANA

ORIGINAL