

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE LA PORTE COUNTY COUNCIL
January 9th, 2023 at 6:00PM

The 2023 Reorganizational Meeting of the La Porte County Council was held on January 9th, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. (central time) in the Assembly Room of the La Porte County Government Complex, 809 State St., La Porte, IN 46350.

CALL TO ORDER

Fulfilling a customary role until the selection of the Commission President was completed, Auditor Tim Stabosz called the meeting to order.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Yagelski.

ROLL CALL

Chief Deputy Auditor Vaughn Galloway called the roll: Councilman Kiel, Councilman Mollenhauer, Councilman Novak, Councilman Rosenbaum, Councilman Koronka, Councilman Cunningham, and Councilman Yagelski were all physically present for the meeting.

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION OF 2023 LAPORTE COUNTY COUNCIL OFFICERS

Mr. Stabosz opened the floor for nominations for the President of the 2023 La Porte County Council.

- i. Motion to nominate Mr. Rosenbaum for President of the 2023 La Porte County Council made by Mr. Kiel and seconded by Mr. Novak.
- ii. With no other nominations offered by the Council members, nominations for President of the 2023 La Porte County Council were closed.
- iii. Motion to appoint Mr. Rosenbaum for President of the 2023 La Porte County Council made by Mr. Kiel and seconded by Mr. Novak.
- iv. All members voted in favor, officially making Councilman Mike Rosenbaum the President of the La Porte County Council.
- v. Mr. Stabosz relinquished the Chair to the newly appointed Council President.

Mr. Rosenbaum opened the floor for nominations for the Vice President of the 2023 La Porte County Council.

- i. Motion to nominate Mr. Kiel for Vice President of the 2023 La Porte County Council made by Mr. Cunningham and seconded by Mr. Koronka.
- ii. With no other nominations offered by the Council members, Mr. Novak motioned to close nominations for the Vice President of the 2023 La Porte County Council.
- iii. All members voted in favor.
- iv. Motion to appoint Mr. Kiel for the Vice President of the 2023 La Porte County Council made by Mr. Cunningham and seconded by Mr. Koronka.
- v. All members voted in favor, officially making Councilman Kiel the Vice President of the La Porte County Council.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 9, 2023 AGENDA

Mr. Kiel requested to alter the following items in the agenda:

1. Under New Business: add letter item no. 3f: "Appointment to the Parks and Recreation Board"
2. Removal of the Approval of the November 28th, 2022 and December 15th, 2022 Meeting Minutes, which would be moved to the next Council meeting.
 - i. Motion to approve both items made by Mr. Cunningham and seconded by Mr. Koronka.
 - ii. All members voted in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT

As there were no members of the public wanting to speak, public comment was closed.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Appointment of Legal Counsel**
 - i. Motion to reappoint Guy DiMartino as the Council's Legal Counsel made by Mr. Cunningham and seconded by Mr. Mollenhauer.
 - ii. All members voted in favor.
2. **Planning for Year 2023 (approval of Regular Meeting Dates)**

Mr. Rosenbaum read aloud the proposed Regular Meeting Dates:

January 23 rd , 2023	July 24 th , 2023
February 27 th , 2023	August 28 th , 2023
March 27 th , 2023	September 25 th , 2023
April 24 th , 2023	October 23 rd , 2023
May 22 nd , 2023	November 27 th , 2023
June 26 th , 2023	

Mr. Cunningham noted that there could be a potential scheduling conflict with annual AIC Conference. Mr. Rosenbaum confirmed that the annual AIC Conference was generally scheduled in September, and could interfere with the September 25th, 2023 meeting date; however a different date for the September meeting could be looked into at a later time.

i. Motion to approve made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Kiel and Mr. Koronka.

ii. All members voted in favor.

3. County Council Appointments of Citizen Board Members

a. La Porte County Public Library Board of Trustees

i. Motion to nominate Nicole Florek made by Mr. Cunningham and seconded by Mr. Mollenhauer.

ii. Motion to close nominations and appoint Nicole Florek made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Cunningham

iii. All members voted in favor.

b. Michigan City Public Library Board of Trustees

i. Motion to nominate and appoint Don Montgomery made by Mr. Cunningham and seconded by Mr. Yagelski.

ii. Motion to close nominations and appoint Don Montgomery made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Mollenhauer.

iii. All members voted in favor.

c. Alcoholic Beverage Commission

Mr. Rosenbaum explained that, despite the Commissioners having made their appointment for the Alcoholic Beverage Commission, the Council could not vote on item "c" until the cities of La Porte and Michigan City were able to select their own candidates.

d. Board of Zoning Appeals

- i. Motion to nominate Melissa Mischke made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Kiel.
- ii. Motion to close nominations and appoint Melissa Mischke made by Mr. Cunningham and seconded by Mr. Kiel and Mr. Koronka.
- iii. All members voted in favor.

e. PTA/BOA Board (2 appointments)

Mr. Rosenbaum explained that while two appointments were available for the PTA/BOA Board, the Council currently only had one person whom it wanted to appoint. He added that another nomination would be sought to ensure that the remaining appointment would be fulfilled.

County Assessor Mike Schultz approached the podium to inform the Council that roughly one week prior he had dropped off paperwork that indicated a candidate, Tracey Cummins, would be interested in being appointed to the empty seat. Auditor Stabosz noted that the Auditor's office never formally received the request or the papers that Mr. Schultz stated that he dropped off. Mr. Rosenbaum asked Mr. Schultz to provide the paperwork to the Council when he had the availability to do so.

- i. Motion to nominate Bob Bailey and Tracey Cummins made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Cunningham.
- ii. Motion to close nominations and appoint Bob Bailey and Tracey Cummings made by Mr. Koronka and seconded by Mr. Novak.
- iii. All members voted in favor.

f. Parks and Recreation Board

- i. Motion to retain Mike King made by Mr. Mollenhauer and seconded by Mr. Yagelski.
- ii. Motion to close nominations and appoint Mike King made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Koronka.
- iii. All members voted in favor.

4. County Council Appointment of its members to Boards and Commissions

a. Animal Control Board

- i. Motion to nominate and retain Mr. Novak made by Mr. Cunningham and seconded by Mr. Kiel.
 - ii. Mr. Rosenbaum closed the nominations and called for a vote.
 - iii. All members voted in favor.
 - b. FMEC
 - i. Motion to nominate and appoint Mr. Novak made by Mr. Mollenhauer and seconded by Mr. Cunningham.
 - ii. Mr. Rosenbaum closed the nominations and called for a vote.
 - iii. All members voted in favor.
 - c. Plan Commission
 - i. Motion to nominate and retain Mr. Cunningham made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Kiel.
 - ii. Mr. Rosenbaum closed nominations and called for a vote.
 - iii. All members voted in favor.
 - d. Redevelopment Commission (3 Appointments)
 - i. Motion to nominate and appoint Mr. Novak, Mr. Rosenbaum, and Mr. Kiel made by Mr. Cunningham and seconded by Mr. Novak.
 - ii. Mr. Rosenbaum closed nominations and called for a vote.
 - iii. All members voted in favor.
- Mr. Rosenbaum explained that the first meeting would be the last Wednesday of the month, although the meetings could be potentially moved to the last Thursday of the month in the near future.
- e. Solid Waste District Board
 - i. Motion to nominate and retain Mr. Mollenhauer made by Mr. Cunningham and seconded by Mr. Novak.
 - ii. Mr. Rosenbaum closed nominations and called for a vote.

iii. All members voted in favor.

5. Mileage rate for 2023: IRS mileage rate for 2023 is 65.5 cents per mile. State of Indiana, as of June 15th, 2022, remains at 46 cents per mile.

Mr. Koronka explained that in previous years, the Council determined the County mileage rate by calculating the average between the national mileage rate and the state mileage rate, and proposed setting the La Porte County mileage rate for 2023 to 58 cents per mile.

i. Motion made by Mr. Koronka to set at 58 cents per mile and seconded by Mr. Cunningham, with the exception that if gas prices were to rise up to \$4-\$5 per gallon, then the County would increase the mileage rate as it had done in the past.

ii. All members voted in favor.

6. Discussion on Liaison Assignments for 2023

Mr. Rosenbaum appointed Mr. Kiel to be the liaison of NIRPC (Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission). He added that the Council had not yet had the chance to review liaison appointments, however the Council would review and vote on the liaison appointments at the following meeting. Mr. Rosenbaum also explained that in 2023, multiple Council members may be appointed to share liaisons, so as to ensure that if one Council member was not available to be reached out to, another Council member would be available to provide information.

7. Consider retroactive approval of December 26th, 2022 Declaration of Emergency Repair by Commission President and Council President

Mr. Rosenbaum explained that on Christmas day, a 2-inch fire suppression pipe had burst in the County Complex building, causing heavy water damage on the third, fourth, and fifth floors, which resulted in the displacement and relocation of all of the affected departments. On that day, emergency action needed to be taken to ensure that the contractor, SERVPRO, could enter the building and prevent further damage from the flooding. Mr. Novak commended Commissioner Connie Gramarossa and her team for their work in addressing the damage in the building.

i. Motion to approve made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Koronka.

ii. All members voted in favor.

8. La Porte Superior Court No. 1 – Requesting to transfer \$2,100 from account 1000.10174.00000.0149 and put into account 1000.30017.00000.0149

Mr. Rosenbaum explained that the transfer was retroactive from the previous year, as to prevent the 1000.10174.00000.0149 account from having a negative total at year end 2022. Mr. Mollenhauer asked what account the funds were coming from, and to which account the funds were going to. Judge Jaime Oss approached the podium to explain that the funds were coming from her Court Reporter Salary, and going to her Dues and Subscriptions account. She added that this was because she did not have a Court Reporter on her staff since October, despite advertising the position's opening in September via the County website and Indeed. She clarified that the funds were needed in Dues and Subscriptions to pay for ZipRecruiter's fees so the position could be advertised on their website.

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

COUNTY COUNCIL/ATTORNEY COMMENTS

Regarding the creation of meeting agendas, Mr. Cunningham explained that he thought it was unfair to schedule last-minute request ahead of requests that had been put on the schedule on time. He noted that prioritizing requests that had been appropriately scheduled to the beginning of meetings would hopefully incentivize departments to schedule their requests onto the agenda properly and on-time.

Mr. Yagelski proposed that Access La Porte County should offer a schedule to its viewers so they could know what the County's agenda for broadcast was. Mr. Novak noted that Access La Porte County was already in the process of creating software that would accommodate this request.

Mr. Rosenbaum asked that department heads make themselves physically present for the Council meetings, so that way the Council could directly ask them questions regarding their requests and appropriations, in addition to cutting down on communication issues associated with appearing electronically via Zoom. He additionally urged department heads to get their requests scheduled onto the agenda on time, and that he wanted to cut down on motions that were proposed during the comment periods to ensure that the Council meetings would proceed in a quick and timely manner.

ADJOURNMENT

- i. Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Kiel.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

Examined & Approved by the La Porte County Council this 23rd day of January, 2023.



Councilman Earl Cunningham



Councilman Adam Koronka



Councilman Justin Kiel



Councilman Mike Mollenhauer



Councilman Randy Novak



Councilman Mike Rosenbaum



Councilman Mark Yagelski

ATTEST: 

Tim Stabosz, Auditor