

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE LA PORTE COUNTY COUNCIL
January 23rd, 2023 at 6:00PM

The Regular Meeting of the La Porte County Council was held on January 23rd, 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

The meeting was called to order by Council President Mike Rosenbaum.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Koronka, followed by a moment of silence for the recently deceased Michelle Bealor, an employee of the La Porte County Health Department.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Yagelski, Mr. Rosenbaum, Mr. Novak, Mr. Koronka, and Mr. Mollenhauer were all physically present, while Mr. Kiel appeared electronically via Zoom.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 23RD, 2022 AGENDA

- i. Motion to approve made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Koronka.
- ii. Mr. Cunningham requested that the motion include that going forward from the evening's meeting, any time there is an amendment made to the meeting's agenda, that the date and time of the amendment be noted. He also asked that the "Please Turn Off All Cell Phones" line of the agenda had bolded font on future agendas.
- iii. With the inclusion of Mr. Cunningham's motion, all members voted in favor.

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 28TH, 2022 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

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

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 15TH, 2022 SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Auditor Tim Stabosz informed the Council that the December 15th, 2022 meeting minutes had been amended to fix a typo on page 7: the improper spelling of “forman” was instead amended to read as its proper spelling of “foreman.”

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

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 9TH, 2023 REORGANIZATIONAL MEETING MINUTES

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lisa Pierzakowski – Center Township Trustee

Mrs. Pierzakowski approached the Council to report on the spending of funds utilized by the ARP Rental Assistance Program. She explained that \$37,126.58 of the funding was spent in 2022, and \$2,206 had been spent so far in 2023, leaving the current remainder of funds at \$13,047.03.

Mrs. Pierzakowski also informed the Council that she would be approaching them on behalf of the Center Township Volunteer Fire Department, and would be asking for an additional \$10,000 of additional funds for 2023, which if approved, would allow for a total of \$20,000 of bonus funds that would be used to pay for five new sets of gear, each of which would cost roughly \$4,000. She added that there would be a 6-9 month waiting period to acquire said sets of gear.

Mrs. Pierzakowski voiced her concern over a few of the Council Members’ support regarding the potential annexation of 39 North by the City of La Porte. She stated that she believed the County of La Porte would fiscally suffer from the annexation, as the proposed annexation area contained a large amount of industrialization with the potential for more business to be coming into the area. Mrs. Pierzakowski added that the proposed area of annexation also contained a large amount of land that could be used for housing and subdivisions, as well as a potential senior center. She noted that many property owners purchased the land in La Porte County specifically with the intention of living within the jurisdiction of the County, *not* the jurisdiction of the City of La Porte. She hoped that the County would show more concern over the

annexation, as it could mean a loss in tax dollars, and could delay the rate at which repairs and updates could be made to the annexed areas. Mr. Rosenbaum explained that the County had its own taxes, and even if La Porte City were to annex 39 North, the only tax loss would be a result of tax abatements.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Robert Sabie – EMA Acting Director

Mr. Sabie informed the Council that EMA's Mitigation Grant expired the previous May, and he was in the process of renewing the grant, which was required every 5 years; however, EMA inexplicably fell behind on the grant's renewal and were now trying to catch up with it. He also noted that EMA was working on a County Emergency Plan, which had not been updated for several years. Mr. Sabie additionally noted that a plan to fund and repair several emergency sirens was also in the works.

Mr. Yagelski asked Mr. Sabie if EMA had applied for any grants to assist in the repair of the aforementioned sirens, however Mr. Sabie explained that no grants were currently available for siren repair. Mr. Yagelski noted that two years prior, EMA had been eligible for two grants that would assist with the sirens' repair, however Mr. Sabie noted that said grants had might have only been available before he was appointed as interim director.

Mr. Novak clarified that at the end of 2022, Mr. Sabie had asked to schedule a workshop with the Council to bring them up to date regarding the sirens' repairs, however time had run out to schedule the workshop before the year's end. Mr. Sabie added that he had a discussion with Commissioner Gramarossa regarding having a contractor come out to La Porte County to confirm what repairs needed to be done to the sirens to repair them. He noted that the sirens were produced by American Signal, who contracts with Marquiss Electric for repairs, and as a result, Marquiss Electric would likely be the required contractor that would need to be selected to analyze the status of the county's various sirens. Mr. Novak added that he would like to see the sirens' repair, in addition to ensuring that all of La Porte County had full siren coverage, however Mr. Yagelski voiced frustration in that a discussion had been held at a Council meeting two years prior which dictated that a siren study was to be performed that year. He reiterated that grant funding should be investigated to fund the sirens' repair.

Mr. Rosenbaum asked how long it would take to get the information needed to schedule a workshop that would focus on the sirens; however, Mr. Sabie was unsure, and Mr. Rosenbaum asked Mr. Sabie to reach back out to the Council once a date could be confirmed.

Separately, Mr. Sabie informed the Council that EMA had undergone training with additional counties from District 1, which highlighted protocols on what do to during shutdowns because of snowstorms. Additionally, he noted that work was being done on La Porte County's RAVE system (the alert system which notifies participants of local emergencies and shutdowns), including integrating a previously non-utilized automatic system that sends a notification as

soon as the Weather Service issued a watch or warning alert. He added that Smart911 was also a feature that EMA helped manage which county residents could utilize as well.

Finally, Mr. Sabie reported that a trailer park located on State Road 39 and State Road 20 had lost all running water the previous Thursday, and EMA assisted by delivering twenty-five cases of water to ensure that the park's residents had potable water to drink until the running water was restored several days later. As a result of ongoing water issues, Mr. Sabie noted that he had been informed by his state liaison that there was consideration to potentially close down the trailer park due to its inadequacy to supply clean water. Mr. Novak added that the Redevelopment Commission had brief conversations considering requests to expand sewer and water services out to the trailer park's area.

Mr. Mollenhauer endorsed Mr. Sabie's efforts to tie up any of EMA's loose ends, and urged the planning of a workshop. Mr. Rosenbaum asked Mr. Sabie to give reports to the Council earlier in the month, so they may have time to investigate the information given to them with enough time to avoid last-minute readings.

Steve Eyrick – Chief Probation Officer

Mr. Eyrick asked for the creation of an account to accommodate a \$5,000 grant that had been received from the Indiana Office of Court Services. Council Attorney Guy DiMartino asked Mr. Eyrick if Court Services had required the creation of an ordinance to allow for the creation of an account to house the grant, however Mr. Eyrick explained that one would not need to be made, as the grant that Adult Probation had acquired had been part of a pre-existing Department of Correction Grant, and Court Services only required that a separate account be available for the \$5,000 of new grant funds. Mr. Eyrick also clarified that the \$5,000 would be received quarterly, and only one quarter of the \$5,000 would be deposited into the account at this time. Mr. Novak asked Mr. Eyrick to explain what the funding could be directed toward, which Mr. Eyrick confirmed that the \$5,000 was a pre-trial services grant that could be used to pay for training, dues, drug testing, etc.

- i. Motion to authorize the creation of an account to house the newly acquired \$5,000 of grant funding made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Cunningham.

- ii. All members voted in favor.

Mike Callahan – Juvenile Services Center Assistant Director

Mr. Callahan thanked the Council for their ongoing help in securing pay raises for the Juvenile Services Center employees, however added that said employees were becoming frustrated, as no resolution had been made to balance pay differences between employees who had received different job classifications but were doing the same work.

Mr. Callahan informed the Council that the Shelter Care side of the Juvenile Services Center was now receiving \$1,907 per day per juvenile in their care, which had thus far accumulated \$118,238.34, which would be directed into the General Fund. He noted that, if this financial trend continued, the Juvenile Services Center could potentially provide the General Fund with an estimated \$1.3 million throughout the year. Mr. Rosenbaum informed Mr. Callahan that it would be favorable to receive the Juvenile Services Center's earnings in a regular report which would allow the Council to see what monies were coming into the General Fund for each month and quarter, as well as being able to view the cumulative amounts that were building up as the year proceeded.

LIAISON REPORTS

Councilman Cunningham: Mr. Cunningham waived his liaison report.

Councilman Yagelski: Mr. Yagelski waived his liaison report.

Councilman Novak: Mr. Novak informed the Council that he had attended an FMEC Meeting, that he had spoken with Animal Control and the Purdue Extension and would be attending a Redevelopment Commission Meeting the upcoming Wednesday. He also noted that he attended an agenda meeting, and toured the County Complex building with Commissioner Gramarossa. For his final note, Mr. Novak stated that he wanted to create a committee to begin utilizing the results of the recently completed salary study.

Councilman Koronka: Mr. Koronka noted that he had been reaching out to various departments and branches of the county, including touring the Juvenile Services Center with Mike Callahan, the Highway Department with Allen Stevens, as well as touring the Recorder's Office. He additionally did a walkthrough of the County Complex building to review the damage caused by flooding that happened in late December of 2022.

Councilman Mollenhauer: Mr. Mollenhauer also did a walkthrough of the County Complex building to review damage caused from the flooding, and also attended a Solid Waste District Board Meeting and the Commissioners' Reorganizational Meeting. He reported that he spoke with Mr. Rosenbaum regarding addressing the findings of the salary study. Regarding the recent appointment of Council Member liaisons, Mr. Mollenhauer, citing no personal resentment toward Councilman Kiel, noted his disappointment that Mr. Kiel had been appointed liaison of the Sheriff's Office instead of himself. Mr. Mollenhauer added that he had requested the Sheriff's Office liaison, as he was already a liaison for EMS and EMA, and additionally had 47 years of law enforcement experience that would assist him with being a liaison for the office.

Councilman Kiel: Mr. Kiel reported that he had attended a NIRPC meeting, and was currently in Washington D.C. to attend the National Association of Regional Councils' 2023 National Conference of Regions as a representative of NIRPC. Additionally, he had reached out to

multiple department heads, and was looking forward to contacting additional department as well.

Councilman Rosenbaum: Mr. Rosenbaum noted that he had been rolling over the requests and business items from end-of-year 2022 onto the table for 2023. Additionally, he had spoken with all of the Council Members, including Mr. Mollenhauer, regarding the appointment of liaisons. Mr. Rosenbaum stated that he understood Mr. Mollenhauer's concerns with the Sheriff's Office liaison appointment, and it would be put forward to a vote later.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

Ordinance No. 2023-01 – Salary Ordinance

- i. Motion to suspend the rules and read twice during the evening's meeting made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Cunningham.
- ii. All members voted in favor.
- iii. Motion to read by title only made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Koronka.
- iv. All members voted in favor.
- v. Auditor Stabosz read aloud the ordinance: "An Ordinance Adopting County of La Porte, Indiana Salary Schedule and Compensation Policies."
- vi. Motion to approve made by Mr. Koronka and seconded by Mr. Novak.
- vii. All members voted in favor.

Before the second reading, and citing no exception toward the current and recently appointment Commissioners, Mr. Novak asked that Mr. DiMartino be directed to reach out to the Commissioners' attorney to obtain the statute that allows the Commissioners to change the classification – exempt or non-exempt – of employees. Noting his agreement with Mr. Novak, Mr. Yagelski added that the policy seemed to have "flip-flopped" at least three times in the past fifteen years, and according to the record, only the Council had the power to determine an employee's

classification. Mr. Rosenbaum subsequently directed Mr. DiMartino to follow through with Mr. Novak's request.

- viii. Motion to read by title only a second time made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Mollenhauer.
- ix. All members voted in favor.
- x. Auditor Stabosz read aloud the ordinance: "An Ordinance Adopting County of La Porte, Indiana Salary Schedule and Compensation Policies."
- xi. Motion to approve made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Koronka.
- xii. All members voted in favor.

NEW BUSINESS

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

a. La Porte County Parks Department – Maintenance Technician

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

b. Michigan Township Assessor's Office – Deputy Assessor

- i. Motion to approve made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Mollenhauer.

Mr. Yagelski stated that he thought that the Michigan Township Assessor had agreed to move some of its employees to the County Assessor in La Porte to offload some of its duties. Mr. Rosenbaum clarified that in hiring a Deputy Assessor, the Michigan Township Assessor would not exceed the number of employees that the Michigan Township Assessor had at the end of 2022. County Assessor Mike Schultz approached the Council to inform that although he had taken on some of the Michigan Township Assessor's staff members, it had only been for training purposes, and at the time, they had still been under the supervision and payroll of former Michigan Township Assessor Scott Bell. Mr. Schultz reiterated that hiring a Deputy Assessor for the Michigan Township Assessor's office would not exceed the number of employees that the office held in 2022.

- ii. All members voted in favor.

2. La Porte County Public Defender – Requesting to add an account to transfer funds to pay health insurance

Mr. Yagelski noted that we would be motioning to table the item to allow the Council to look into the request to confirm if the account would be utilized to pay for employee wage increases or for health insurance. Mr. Rosenbaum confirmed that concerns over how the account would be utilized stemmed from conversations held in 2022 Budget Meetings.

- i. Motion to table made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Mollenhauer.
- ii. Five members voted in favor (Mr. Yagelski, Mr. Kiel, Mr. Rosenbaum, Mr. Koronka, Mr. Mollenhauer) and two members voted not-in-favor (Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Novak).

3. La Porte County Sheriff

a. Approval of the Sheriff's Office pension restatement

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

b. Approval of the Sheriff's Office commissary resolution

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

Mr. DiMartino explained that the Sheriff's commissary resolution would need to be given a proper resolution number and receive a reading. He noted that he would prepare the resolution for the next month's Council meeting, and for the time being, the Sheriff's request would be approved until the following month when the resolution was properly prepared and numbered, and could be read aloud. Mr. Rosenbaum clarified with Mr. DiMartino that the Council's vote would not need to be altered, amended, or redacted, which Mr. DiMartino affirmed.

c. Requesting to transfer \$5,369.08 from Evidence Acquisition Account to Forensic Scanner Lease Fund

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

Sheriff Ron Heeg requested that his appropriation request be expedited while he was present at the podium, which Mr. Rosenbaum noted that the Council would allow it.

d. Requesting Additional Appropriation from Riverboat (1191) or ARP (8950/8951) or General (1000) for or LIT (1112) or CCD (1138) for:
Replacement Vehicle \$12,612.97

- i. Motion to approve out of LIT (1112) made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Novak.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

4. La Porte County Community Corrections

a. Requesting permission to transfer \$786.82 from 1000.10201.000.0179 (Field Officer) to 1000.200025.000.0179 (Gas, Fuel Oil)

- i. Motion to approve made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Mollenhauer.

Mr. Rosenbaum explained that the transfer was to ensure that an account with a negative balance was properly zeroed out for the end of 2022.

- ii. All members voted in favor.

b. Requesting permission to transfer \$42.95 from 1000.10201.000.0179 (Field Officer) to 1000.30004.000.0179 (Telephone)

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

- ii. All members voted in favor.

Community Corrections Director Mericka Beaty also requested that her appropriation request be expedited while she was present at the podium, which the Council permitted.

La Porte County Community Corrections

c. Requesting Additional Appropriation from Riverboat (1191) or ARP (8950/8951) or General (1000) for or LIT (1112) or CCD (1138) for:

- a. To correct negative balance \$214,446.68

Mr. Novak explained that the appropriation was similar to the action that was taken at the end of 2022, however this particular request was an appropriation and not a transfer, which Mr. DiMartino clarified that he had reached out to the Auditor, who was in turn advised by the State Board of Accounts to process the request as an appropriation to ensure that the balancing of the account was done correctly.

- i. Motion to approve made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Yagelski.

Mr. Yagelski asked Mrs. Beaty if she had already begun the grant application process for 2023. Mrs. Beaty clarified that generally, Community Corrections' grant application process begins in February and concludes in March, while Mr. Novak also noted that grant application had already finished for 2023, as the application process for 2023 took place in February of 2022, and likewise, Mrs. Beaty would be applying for 2024's grants beginning in February of 2023. Mr. DiMartino added that the negative funds accumulated by Community Corrections were a result of spending which exceeded the monies being brought in by the grant, and while he was unsure if the grant money for 2024 would be captured, Community Corrections would have to make sure that they spent the money within the amount that was allotted by the DOC under the grant if it were secured. Mrs. Beaty also explained that in the past, Community Corrections' Project Income participant fees were set up so that they would take over when grant funds ran out; however, in recent years, the fees were not being assessed properly or collected, but now the fees were being properly assessed and excess money was available in Community Corrections' Project Income.

- ii. All members voted in favor.

- b. Overtime Budget \$20,000

Mrs. Beaty explained that if she were not permitted to pay out overtime, Community Corrections would be in the same position as it was in 2022, where employees received more compensatory time than they would utilize before the end of the year, which she clarified was a result of being understaffed by three employees. Mr. Rosenbaum added that if overtime were not given, then the amount of comp time would far exceed what would have been expected of a typical County employee due to the nature of Community Corrections' employee shortage. Mrs. Beaty additionally noted that, with the current comp time structure and the 24-7

nature of Community Corrections' employee schedule, that when one employee would take time off to try to spend their comp time, the employee giving them shift coverage would end up accumulating additional comp time themselves. She added that she would like to give her employees the option to choose between overtime and comp time, as she had reached out to another department that adopted this practice, and it seemed to work out well for their staff.

- i. Motion to approve out of LIT (1112) made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Cunningham.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

5. La Porte County Surveyor

Requesting to spend money from the Survey Corner Perpetuation Fund Account
1202.20200.000.0271

Mr. Rosenbaum read aloud a statement that was included with the Surveyor's request: "This is a non-reverting fund that has been in place since 1965. Any unused funds will remain in the account. Total request is in an amount not-to-exceed \$39,895."

- i. Motion to approve made by Mr. Mollenhauer and seconded by Mr. Novak, who agreed to second as long as a correction was made to the request.

Mr. Yagelski indicated that the correction that needed to be made was the exclusion of Copier Costs and Maintenance fees, as all departments were to reach out to the Commissioners for any copier costs and maintenance fees requests, and also because the County only had one contractor who worked with copiers. Mr. Yagelski clarified that the motion would stand, however the Surveyor would need to alter the request to ensure that copier costs and maintenance fees were removed from the request before the contract was permitted to be paid.

- ii. All members voted in favor.

6. La Porte County Prosecutor

Requesting permission to transfer \$1,666.44 from Claims to Group Health Insurance Account

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

7. Discussion on Liaison Assignments for 2023

a. Appointment of Liaison for Sheriff, Jail and Garage

- i. Motion made by Mr. Cunningham to appoint Councilman Mollenhauer as an additional liaison to the Sheriff, Jail & Garage alongside the previously appointed Councilman Kiel.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

b. Appointment of Liaison for FMEC

- i. Motion made by Mr. Novak to appoint Councilman Rosenbaum as an additional liaison to the FMEC alongside the previously appointed Councilman Novak.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

With the liaison assignments being updated, Mr. Rosenbaum read aloud a list of the currently appointed liaisons:

- Animal Shelter & Advisory Committee: Mr. Novak
- Assessor: Mr. Rosenbaum
- Auditor: Mr. Cunningham
- Building Maintenance & Security: Mr. Yagelski and Mr. Koronka
- Circuit/Superior/Juvenile Courts: Mr. Cunningham
- Clerk & Election Board: Mr. Koronka
- Commissioners: Mr. Novak and Mr. Rosenbaum
- Community Corrections & Juvenile Services Center: Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Rosenbaum
- Coroner: Mr. Koronka
- Data Board, IT, and GIS: Mr. Yagelski
- Drainage Board: Mr. Koronka
- E-911 Advisory Board: Mr. Novak
- EDC Alliance/GLEDC: Mr. Rosenbaum and Mr. Novak
- EMA & HAZMAT: Mr. Mollenhauer
- EMS: Mr. Mollenhauer
- Agenda Review Committee (formerly Finance): Mr. Novak, Mr. Kiel, and Mr. Rosenbaum
- FMEC: Mr. Novak and Mr. Rosenbaum
- IV-D: Mr. Cunningham
- Health Department: Mr. Mollenhauer and Mr. Rosenbaum
- Highway & Bridge: Mr. Yagelski and Mr. Rosenbaum
- Human Resources: Mr. Mollenhauer and Mr. Kiel
- Insurance Committee: Mr. Mollenhauer, Mr. Kiel, and Mr. Rosenbaum

- LADS: Mr. Cunningham
- NIRPC: Mr. Kiel
- Paladin: Mr. Koronka
- Parks & Recreation: Mr. Cunningham
- Personnel Committee: Mr. Mollenhauer and Mr. Rosenbaum
- Planning & Zoning: Mr. Cunningham
- Prosecutor & Welfare: Mr. Cunningham
- Public Defender: Mr. Cunningham
- Purdue Extension Office & County Agent: Mr. Novak and Mr. Koronka
- Recorder: Mr. Kiel
- Redevelopment Commission: Mr. Novak, Mr. Kiel, and Mr. Rosenbaum
- Regional Sewer Board: Mr. Koronka
- Sheriff, Jail & Garage: Mr. Kiel and Mr. Mollenhauer
- Soil & Water: Mr. Mollenhauer
- Solid Waste: Mr. Mollenhauer
- Surveyor: Mr. Mollenhauer
- Treasurer: Mr. Kiel
- Veterans' Office: Mr. Yagelski
- Voter Registration: Mr. Koronka
- Weights & Measures: Mr. Kiel

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Rosenbaum noted that although there had been an item listed under Old Business, it had already received a motion of support, however did not have an advertisement to pay for it, so therefore the item would be moved to the following month so it could be advertised with a request to pay for it. He added that although Public Safety LIT had been passed the previous year, it would take time for its funds to accumulate, and the County had only just received its first check recently, which came out to just under \$700,000. He clarified that the Council would need to prioritize which items could be paid for with Public Safety LIT while it had limited funding in its earlier stages.

APPROPRIATIONS, TRANSFERS, AND REQUESTS

La Porte County Council

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

Volunteer Fire Departments in La Porte County \$160,000

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

La Porte County EMS

Requesting Additional Appropriation from Riverboat (1191) or ARP (8950/8951) or General (1000) or LIT (1112) or CCD (1138) for:

Equipment for added Ambulance \$137,884

- i. Motion to approve out of LIT (1112) made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Mollenhauer.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

COUNCIL/ATTORNEY COMMENTS

Mr. Yagelski noted that he would like the Commissioners to investigate or reconsider the County's contract with Comcast, citing difficulties that customers had been having with the company, as well as the company's limited number of service centers available to La Porte County residents.

- i. Motion to request the Commissioners review the contract with Comcast made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Novak.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

Mr. Mollenhauer asked Mr. Stabosz if he was able to complete an application that would allow for additional ARP funding, noting that the application was due at the end of January. Mr. Stabosz affirmed to Mr. Mollenhauer that the application had been completed and turned into the federal government, which confirmed that it received the County's application. Mr. Stabosz noted that if the application was accepted, which he anticipated, the County would be receiving two installments of \$50,000; one installment now, and another at a later date. Mr. Novak asked Mr. Stabosz if the Auditor's Office had received the Opioid Settlement check, which Mr. Stabosz confirmed that they had, in the amount of what he believed to be \$900,000, however was unsure if the settlement funds would need to be directed into their own account. Mr. Novak stated that the Opioid Settlement funds would be put on the next meeting's agenda to address if the monies would need to be housed in their own separate account.

Citing his previous request for the planning of an executive session, Mr. DiMartino inquired with Mr. Yagelski as to whether he was still interested in scheduling an executive session to discuss insurance and employee matters. Mr. Yagelski confirmed that he would still like to plan an executive session on both topics and with the Commissioners being present, even if it were just a small thirty minute session, which could potentially be scheduled immediately preceding the next month's Council meeting.

Mr. Cunningham wanted to clarify that, although Jackie Dermody was originally on the agenda under New Business, she had rescheduled her request to a later date. Additionally, Mr. Cunningham noted that he wanted to go on the record saying that he had never stated that he did not care about 39 North's annexation, and understood what it meant to the residents of the would-be affected area.

Mr. Novak recalled that in 2022, he had asked Mr. DiMartino to prepare a resolution regarding diversifying the County's workforce, and requested that Mr. DiMartino add the resolution onto the next month's County Council Meeting agenda. Regarding tabling the volunteer fire departments' item earlier in the meeting, Mr. Novak clarified that a few minor issues needed to be resolved before the Council could proceed with the item, however he had high intentions of moving forward with it once all preexisting issues had been addressed. On the topic of 39 North's annexation, Mr. Novak stated that since the proposed annexation was voluntary, he had no place to speak on behalf of the residents who lived in the would-be affected area, and that said residents needed to be the ones who made the decision as to whether they wanted annexation or not.

Mr. Stabosz informed the Council that he had sent an email to them with an important spreadsheet which offered a breakdown of how the Public Safety LIT's funding was currently distributed. He noted that of the forecasted \$7.8 million that would be brought in by Public Safety LIT, a forecasted \$3.1 million would be allocated toward pay increases for public safety employees, and additional commitments toward Public Safety LIT had also been listed on the spreadsheet for the Council's convenience.

Mr. Rosenbaum noted that while he did not want to establish a formal committee between the Personnel Committee and Human Resources liaisons at this immediate moment, he wanted to begin to address Human Resources' staffing concerns in the very near future. Mr. Novak inquired if it would be considerable to proceed with the hiring of a Human Resources Director, which Mr. Rosenbaum replied that for the hiring of a Human Resources Director, he would prefer to have an executive session with the Commissioners. Mr. Yagelski stated that the Council had already decided that they would like to proceed with the hiring of a director, to which Mr. Rosenbaum responded that he would reach out to the Commissioners to prompt them to begin the hiring process for the position once more. Mr. Novak asked who would oversee the hiring process for the Human Resources Director, as Human Resources could not hire their own director. He noted that in the past, the Commissioner secretary had overseen this hiring, which Mr. Rosenbaum agreed with, and noted that he would add this recommendation in his correspondence to the Commissioners.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Examined & Approved by the La Porte County Council this 27th day of February, 2023.



Councilman Earl Cunningham

on line 

Councilman Adam Koronka



Councilman Justin Kiel



Councilman Mike Mollenhauer




Councilman Randy Novak



Councilman Mike Rosenbaum



Councilman Mark Yagelski

ATTEST: 

Tim Stabosz, Auditor