

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE LA PORTE COUNTY COUNCIL
March 27th, 2023 at 6:00PM

The Regular Meeting of the La Porte County Council was held on March 27th, 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 Cunningham, followed by a moment of silence for the recently deceased Richard Stalbrink Sr., the father of Judge Richard Stalbrink Jr.

ROLL CALL

Auditor Tim Stabosz called the roll: Councilman Cunningham, Councilman Yagelski, Councilman Kiel, Councilman Rosenbaum, Councilman Novak, and Councilman Koronka were all physically present, while Councilman Mollenhauer appeared electronically via Zoom.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 27TH, 2023 AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 27TH, 2023 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Steve Holifield - 6782 E. 100 S., Mill Creek

Regarding the hiring of the County's Human Resources Director, Mr. Holifield stated that he believed the proposed salary of \$90,000-\$120,000 for the position was too high when Porter, Lake, and St. Joseph counties were paying between \$68,000-\$78,000 for their Human Resources Directors. He encouraged outsourcing the Payroll, Human Resources, and IT departments and performing an RFP to see if any savings could be gleaned by doing this.

Don Ensign – Veterans Memorial Parkway Commission Vice President

Mr. Ensign came before the Council as a representative of the Veterans Memorial Parkway Commission to ask for its consideration in making a donation for the building of a memorial in La Crosse. The memorial, which would be built on the Great American Rails Trail, would memorialize soldiers who had fallen during Middle-Eastern wars who were from the Lake, Porter, La Porte, Newton, Jasper, Starke, and Pulaski counties. He also noted that soldiers who had passed on as a result of PTSD were being considered for the memorial as well. He noted that if a donation were made, the funding would be used toward the design, engineering, and possible construction of the memorial.

Paul Kreamer – 3939 S. 75 W., La Porte

Mr. Kreamer explained to the Council that due to ongoing drainage construction near 400 S. and 75 W., half of his property was submerged due to flooding that was caused by the Meadowview Estates drainage construction. He noted that he had tried reaching out to the Highway Department's Engineer Jerry Sullivan, as well as the Drainage Board's Christine Keil, however he wanted to approach the Council to assist with the flooding on his property. Mr. Rosenbaum recommended that Mr. Kreamer speak to the Highway Department Superintendent Allen Stevens, as well as Commissioner Connie Gramarossa, to begin resolving his flooding issues.

Tony Wallace – Hanna Township Trustee

Mr. Wallace informed the Council that he wanted to do a community park project with funds from a grant that was offered through the Healthcare Foundation of La Porte. He noted that he wanted to install a walking fitness trail and a new playground area focused toward children ages five and up, along with a finished parking lot. He explained that although the Healthcare Foundation did not state exactly how much funding they would offer upon matching the grant, the amount would be revealed once Hanna would show some commitment to paying a matching portion of the grant. When Mr. Wallace added that NIRPC funding would not be applicable to matching the grant until 2024, Mr. Novak advised Mr. Wallace to speak to the County Planner, Mitch Bishop, to explore alternative methods for funding.

Rick Kentaft – 324 Bach St., La Porte

Regarding the \$17,000 contract offered to Integra Search LLC for assistance in finding a Human Resources Director for LaPorte County, Mr. Kentaft stated that he felt that the contract should not be approved when the Council and Commission had the ability to hire a Human Resources Director themselves, and noted that he thought the contract would be a waste of taxpayer dollars. He instead recommended making the Interim Human Resources Director the acting Director instead, or appointing a citizen-based hiring committee to overlook and make recommendations for a candidate.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Sean Fitzpatrick - La Porte County Facilities Director

Mr. Fitzpatrick informed the Council that the Facilities Department had fulfilled 569 work orders for the month. He noted that major electrical work had been performed at the jail, with the cause of the damage being a result of water infiltrating a concrete embedded electrical conduit, which had required the removal of 17 wires to allow for its repair. He added that there was also a pump failure at the Annex that had additionally required repair, while a holding tank and boiler at the Juvenile Services Center were slated to be replaced, with parts for their repair arriving the upcoming Thursday. He also noted that the boilers at Community Corrections would need to be replaced soon as well.

Mr. Fitzpatrick noted that various painting was ongoing at the La Porte Courthouse, and additionally voiced concerns over the elevator in the Hiler building, urging that the outdated electrical equipment in the elevator would need to be updated as soon as possible, and that he was in the process of researching what the cost would be to get the elevator up to code and to prevent its failure. Mr. Fitzpatrick noted that the jail's southern elevator created incidents where emergency personnel needed to be contacted to extract the persons riding it, however OTIS was able to make repairs to the elevator to resolve the issue. Mr. Fitzpatrick informed the Council that the La Porte Courthouse's clocktower clock, which was originally created in 1802 [sic], was now listing the correct time and was placed on scheduled maintenance.

Noting that there had been several security incidents regarding inmates tampering with equipment at Community Corrections, Mr. Fitzpatrick informed the Council that he was looking into implementing tamper-resistant measures for various pieces of the department's equipment. Additionally, during the annual fire inspection, it was discovered that the dialer located in the Hiler building was not communicating with 911, and was now in the process of being replaced, while the dialer located in the La Porte Courthouse had a similar issue where the dialer was re-routed before being directly connected to 911.

Erika Stallworth – La Porte County Juvenile Services Center Executive Director

Mrs. Stallworth thanked the Council for their visits to view the Juvenile Services Center. She additionally updated them on the center's intake of funding per diem, which brings in

\$1,907.00 per day per child. To date for the year, the center received \$86,219.25 into the General Fund, while another invoice for \$265,082.73 was being processed at the time, resulting in \$351,301.98 total being accrued between January and February. Mrs. Stallworth additionally requested an update regarding the previously discussed pay difference between the Juvenile Services Center's employees, to which Mr. Rosenbaum noted that she would be provided with a copy of the outside salary study.

Andrew McGuire – EMS Administrator

Mr. McGuire wanted to offer the Council a brief summary of the 2022 Year End Report for EMS, which highlighted the call volumes per ambulance per station, as well as some aspects of EMS's billing department. He explained that there was an increase in call volumes as well as patient transport, with the La Porte Base running 7,044 calls, Michigan City running 7,966 calls, and Wanatah running 941 calls, for a grant total of 16,191 calls, an increase of 357 calls from 2021. He added that patient transport calls were also up by 538 from 2021, and with the rise in volume of these calls and transports, there were also a charges and collection increases, with collections for 2021 totaling \$3,468,891, which was deposited into the General Fund. He noted that the collections rate was the highest it had ever been prior to 2011, and noted that EMS still participates in the Medicaid Cost Report Reimbursement Program, which will yield reimbursement funds for 2021 in the amount of \$103,977.68 in the upcoming month.

Mr. Cunningham asked Mr. McGuire to elaborate on why he bypassed the application of La Porte County graphics on his county vehicle, to which Mr. McGuire explained that, following the dissolution of EMS's choice vehicle graphics package provider, Crismar Graphics, the company that EMS selected afterward cost more money and did not provide the same quality of work that the previous graphics provider had, so he opted not to have his vehicle receive a graphics package to save \$2,800. He noted that his vehicle was primarily for administrative purposes and not an emergency vehicle, and that a state seal of certification was located on the back windows of the vehicle, so it was not entirely unmarked. Mr. Cunningham stated that he would prefer that the vehicle had La Porte County markings so taxpayers knew that it was a county vehicle, while Mr. Yagelski added that the County had a policy in place requiring the vehicle to be marked as a La Porte County vehicle, so to aid in preventing impersonations of county officials, as well as being able to hold officials who drove these vehicles accountable for their driving habits. Mr. Novak noted that using an EMS logo on the vehicle would be an appropriate solution to the issue, and Mr. McGuire affirmed that he would reach out to other county departments to find an affordable solution to marking the vehicle.

Jeremy Sobecki – La Porte County Parks Superintendent

Mr. Sobecki reported that two full-time employees would be retiring, however there were already candidates lined up to fill the positions once the current employees retired. He also added that the Naturalist position that had previously been opened was now filled. Mr. Sobecki

stated that he would be looking for seasonal employees for all the parks, and that only one candidate had stepped forward to fill a labor position so far. He thanked the Highway Department Superintendent Allen Stevens for his offering assistance and equipment to trim an overhanging tree, and Facilities Superintendent Sean Fitzpatrick for his help with ongoing HVAC issues.

Mr. Yagelski reiterated that, to fulfill some of the positions that the County was having trouble finding candidates for, the County would need to consider modifying the educational requirements needed for hiring for them. Mr. Cunningham thanked Mr. Sobecki for reaching out to other County departments to aid with the parks' maintenance, instead of reaching out to vendors and needing to pay for the maintenance to be done.

Heather Stevens – La Porte County Clerk

Regarding the pay for election workers, Mrs. Stevens approached the Council to ask for their permission to increase the workers' pay; for Early Voting Workers, she wanted to increase pay from \$13.00 per hour up to \$16.00 per hour, and for Election Day Workers, she wanted to increase the daily pay by \$50 across the board for all positions, which was currently \$200 for Inspectors, \$180 for Lead Judges, and \$150 for all other workers. She added that she planned to save money by combining teams of workers, which as a result of multiple precincts' voting locations being in single physical locations, would allow her to reduce the number of employees at each location. Council Attorney Guy DiMartino noted that he saw no issues with Mrs. Steven's request, and the rates that she was requesting were compliant with the Council's part-time salary ordinance. Mr. Cunningham added that Election Day Workers worked a roughly 13-hour shift on Election Day. Mr. Rosenbaum clarified that the Council had no issue with Mrs. Steven's request, however she would need to go to the Election Board and approach them with the request to increase the workers' pay.

Tim Stabosz – La Porte County Auditor

Mr. Stabosz informed the Council that he heard back from Cender-Dalton, which informed him that the remaining ARP money would go over \$21.4 mil in revenue loss, and that the remaining ARP funds could be treated as lost revenue. He informed the room that he was able to send the salary study to JSC Director Erika Stallworth.

Connie Gramarossa – La Porte County Commissioner

Mrs. Gramarossa informed the room of updates regarding the County Annex building repair. She explained that the Plan Commission, Prosecutor, Health Department, IT Department, Adult Probation, and Coroner's Office were all affected by the flooding with many being displaced, while the Sheriff's Department was still working out of the building. She noted that most of the floors and walls had been removed and emptied out, with their remaining deconstruction to finish at the end of the week, to be followed by reconstruction thereafter. She added that there was a small stalemate with the insurance company regarding total loss items, including carpeting and furniture, but noted that the various pieces of furniture that were not destroyed

by the flood were temporarily rehoused until they could be brought back following construction, which would allow for cost savings.

LIAISON REPORTS

Councilman Mollenhauer: Mr. Mollenhauer waived his liaison report.

Councilman Koronka: Mr. Koronka requested that anyone who had been invited to the Purdue Extension's Meet & Greet to please attend if they could.

Councilman Novak: Mr. Novak attended the Redevelopment Commission Meeting, and additionally advised anyone who could attend the Purdue Extension's Meet & Greet to do so. He also attended the Annex Flood Committee Meeting with construction workers.

Councilman Kiel: Mr. Kiel attended the Indiana County Councils Association District Meeting, the Redevelopment Commission Meeting, and additionally met with five other local units of government. He also met with his department liaisons, and noted that the Treasurer was on schedule to send tax bills out on April 11th. He advised anyone who was having trouble paying their property taxes to reach out to the Treasurer's Office to have access to resources that could assist them.

Councilman Yagelski: Mr. Yagelski read aloud correspondence from the Data Board which addressed previous concerns over purchasing computer equipment and user system licenses. The correspondence stated that a regular Microsoft Office 365 license was not compliant with the County Government's requirements, hence why a license to Microsoft 365 G1 was required. Additionally, the correspondence stated that the County was advised to purchase computer equipment locally for the taxpayers' interests, which would need to change for all departments, not just IT, if the policy were to be altered. Mr. Yagelski noted that this was additionally in place to protect the County from hacking.

Councilman Cunningham: Mr. Cunningham waived his liaison report.

Councilman Rosenbaum: Mr. Rosenbaum attended the Indiana County Councils Association District Meeting, Redevelopment Commission Meeting, as well as a FMEC Board Meeting. He additionally had a short meeting with the Employee Compensation Review Committee, and another meeting was scheduled with them on April 18th to continue discussions. Mr. Rosenbaum explained that if anyone wanted to receive the outside salary study, they would just need to ask for it, and the process for reviewing and applying the study had not yet been decided, however was currently under review.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

There were no ordinances or resolutions.

NEW BUSINESS

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

a. La Porte County Auditor – Payroll Position

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

b. La Porte County Prosecutor Adult Protective Services Division – APS Investigator

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

2. La Porte County EMS

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|---|------------------|
| a. Motion of support to purchase one ambulance – 2025 delivery | \$317,920 |
| Loose equipment – 2025 delivery | \$18,528 |
| b. Motion of support to purchase one support vehicle – 2024 delivery | \$44,740 |
| Emergency lighting and warning equipment – 2024 delivery | \$14,413 |

EMS Administrator Andrew McGuire noted that ambulance production lead times were worsening, with orders currently being taken for the end of 2025 and early 2026, with some vendors taking a pause to catch up on production. He also noted that it could be an estimated 8-10 years before production levels returned to normal. The current ambulance being replaced was a 2017 model with 98,000 miles, which was predicted to accumulate 45,000 more miles in the next couple of years. He recommended that the ambulance be purchased from Osage, who produced quality vehicles and also promised to honor the 2025 rate for vehicles if the County's purchase ran into early 2026. With that in mind, Mr. McGuire noted that he had originally intended to only ask for an appropriation for one ambulance, however with Osage offering to honor the 2025 rate, in addition to offering the County an additional ambulance with that rate, Mr. McGuire informed the Council that he would be interested in purchasing a second ambulance and forego the purchase of another ambulance in 2026 if his request were approved. He noted that his

intentions were to save money on purchasing the vehicle in 2025, as there would be a price increase of roughly \$20,000-\$25,000 if he were to instead purchase the second ambulance in late 2026.

Mr. Yagelski asked Mr. DiMartino if the Council had permission to allot these funds if there was the potential that the currently sitting Council was different in 2025 and 2026, to which Mr. DiMartino explained that there would be no issue, as the County had a fleet replacement policy in order, and emphasized that the order must be made soon to meet the requirements of the fleet. Mr. Novak asked how many ambulances were currently on order, which Mr. McGuire answered that one was picked up at the beginning of 2023, with no more coming in for the rest of 2023. 2024 would have one arrival early in the year, while another would arrive later in 2024. He clarified that his current request immediately before the Council was strictly for 2025.

- i. Motion of support for both items made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Kiel.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

Mr. Novak asked Mr. McGuire if an option for the second ambulance could be included in the contract with Osage, which Mr. McGuire noted that it could not, and the decision to purchase a second ambulance needed to be made during the evening's meeting, otherwise the offer from Osage would dissipate due to high demand for the ambulances.

- i. Motion to approve the purchase of an additional 2025 ambulance, with the exception that a 2026 would not be purchased in exchange, made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Novak.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Matt Reardon – Discussion of KIP rail connectivity CSX park connection and repayment agreement.

Mr. Reardon reported that the two property owners and the park had signed off on the agreement to repay the County should the track fee not equal the cost of the loan, which was in the total of \$525,000. He noted that Paul Vincent of Economic Development would be at the next Council Meeting to discuss an ongoing project for an existing business. Mr. Rosenbaum thanked Mr. Reardon for representing the County at the recent Michigan City Council Meeting. Mr. Novak added that the Council was more

than willing to work with Michigan City to resolve their issues, however there was due process that needed to be followed.

APPROPRIATIONS, TRANSFERS, AND REQUESTS

La Porte County Planner

Requesting Additional Appropriation from General (1000) or LIT (1112) or Riverboat (1191) or Wintax (4220) for:

Community Crossings Grant	\$1,170,672.60
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Mr. Rosenbaum explained that the County would receive \$1 million from the grant, however the County would need to match no less than 50% of the grant.

- i. Motion to approve out of LIT (1112) made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Mollenhauer.

Mr. Cunningham noted that \$1,323,612 was currently available in Economic Development LIT, and that \$1,170,672.60 would be eating up most of what was left in the account. Mr. Novak asked Mr. Stabosz if the appropriated number of \$8,682,707 was entirely appropriation or if some of those funds were a result of motions of support, to which Auditor Chief Deputy Rhonda Graves confirmed that it was entirely appropriations. Mr. Kiel asked if there were commitments through motions of support that would have potentially tied up available funding for the Economic Development LIT, which Mr. Stabosz noted that this was not per se, however the account was bringing in \$600,000 in funding monthly. Mr. Yagelski stated that the Council was still concerned about the available funding, noting that the General Fund was listed as having no funding whatsoever for the month of March. Mrs. Graves noted that the General Fund would be replenished when the Spring Settlement came into effect. Mr. Novak asked why there were no funds in the account if the Juvenile Services Center had just receipted \$86,219.25 and EMS had just brought in \$103,977.68, while Mr. Yagelski added that whatever funds were unused for 2022 should have been made available in the account as well.

Mr. Kiel elaborated on the process of distributing the General Fund money, noting that, as described by Mrs. Graves in a previous conversation, the appropriations made through the budgeting process would get divided to all of the different departments that had budgets, and the money sitting in the account was committed to the departments, however they weren't actually considered spent funds, so what is available for additional appropriations isn't there until the Spring and Fall Settlements are received, which Mrs. Graves confirmed that Mr. Kiel's statement was correct. Mrs. Graves clarified that there was not a cash balance, which Mr. Cunningham noted that if there was money appropriated through the budget, there was no way for the Council to spend a year's worth of funds within two months,

which Mrs. Graves explained that the appropriations are taken out of the cash balance. Mr. Cunningham argued that it should then be shown as appropriated funds, however the paperwork given to the Council showed a balance of zero in the General Fund. Mrs. Graves clarified that they left the General Fund total as zero to indicate that there were no funds available to be utilized, as the account currently had a balance of -\$4 million, so she wanted to indicate that there was no money which could have been appropriated from it.

Mr. Yagelski debated why the Council would be going through an agenda if there was no money to spend. Mr. Cunningham asked Mr. Yagelski if, during his years on the Council, he could recall a time when the General Fund had zero or less funding, which Mr. Yagelski noted that even in the past when there was no budget, there was still money in the accounts.

- ii. During roll call, five members voted in favor (Mr. Rosenbaum, Mr. Novak, Mr. Koronka, Mr. Kiel, Mr. Mollenhauer) and two members voted not in favor (Mr. Yagelski, Mr. Cunningham). The motion carried 5-2.

La Porte County Parks Department

Requesting Additional Appropriations from General (1000) or LIT (1112) or Riverboat (1191) or Wintax (4220) or ARP (8950/8951) for:

New restroom at Creek Ridge County Park	\$74,000
Trail and parking lot repairs at Creek Ridge, Red Mill and Bluhm County Parks	\$39,000
Water Tests for Drinking Water	\$1,600

Mr. Rosenbaum asked Mr. Sobecki if his request could be held off for one more month, however Mr. Sobecki noted that doing so would push the septic design further out, and nothing could begin until the design could be created and submitted to the state for approval. Mr. Kiel asked when the cash was going to be spent for the project, which Mr. Sobecki noted that the funding required for the septic design would be issued relatively quickly, to be followed by outgoing payments for building supplies.

Mr. Sobecki clarified that he would not need the \$1,600 appropriation for water tests for drinking water, as the Health Department reached out to him earlier with a highly reduced rate for water testing options.

- i. Motion to approve the first two items out of ARP (8950/8951) made by Mr. Cunningham. No audible second could be heard or seen.
- ii. All members voted in favor during the roll call.

La Porte County Parks Department

Request to spend remaining 2022 funds from non-reverting account 2025.20200.000.0259 for:
Funds toward new Restroom Project at Creek Ridge County Park \$3420.30

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

La Porte County Sheriff's Office

Requesting Additional Appropriation from General (1000) or LIT Public Safety (1170) or Wintax (4220) or ARP (8950/8951) for:
Interact/RMS Bill \$24,679.96

- i. Motion to approve out of LIT Public Safety (1170) made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Yagelski.
- ii. All members voted in favor during the roll call.

La Porte County Highway Department

Requesting Additional Appropriation from General (1000) or Major Bridge (1171) or Major Moves (1172) or Riverboat (1191) or ARP (8950/8951) for:
Towards Remaining Franklin Street Bridge Repairs \$682,126.50

Mr. Rosenbaum explained that, instead of the previously requested appropriation of \$1,021,677.50, the current request was now \$682,126.50.

- i. Motion to approve out of Major Moves (1172) made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Novak.

Mr. Kiel stated his concerns in taking funding out of Major Moves, as it was not a replenishing account. Mr. Stabosz noted that utilizing Major Moves was recommended because not many projects met the strict requirements to utilize the funding in Major Moves, while looser accounts like Riverboat would be used for a much broader range of projects that the funding could be applied to.

- ii. During roll call, six members voted in favor (Mr. Rosenbaum, Mr. Novak, Mr. Koronka, Mr. Kiel, Mr. Mollenhauer, Mr. Yagelski) and one member voted not in favor (Mr. Cunningham). The motion carried 6-1.

Fair Management and Events Corporation

Requesting Additional Appropriation from General (1000) or Riverboat (1191) or Wintax (4220) or ARP (8950/8951) for:

1. Restroom Facilities at the Fairgrounds not-to-exceed
\$350,000

Mr. Fitzpatrick explained to the Council that he had received a more updated quote for the restroom facilities at the Fairgrounds, which was now \$450,000 instead of \$350,000. Mr. Rosenbaum informed Mr. Fitzpatrick that the Council could only make a motion to approve items that were advertised, and as such, the remaining \$100,000 request could only receive a motion of support. Mr. DiMartino also advised that Mr. Fitzpatrick could have the additional \$100,000 advertised for the next Council Meeting. Mr. Novak informed the room that the restroom would double as a storm shelter, as currently, the only acceptable storm shelter on the Fairgrounds was located inside of the Community Center.

- i. Motion to approve the \$350,000 out of ARP (8950/8951) made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Koronka.
- ii. All members voted in favor during the roll call.
- iii. Motion of support made by Mr. Novak to put the additionally requested \$100,000 appropriation on the next Council Meeting agenda, seconded by Mr. Kiel.
- iv. All members voted in favor.

2. 2023 Improvements \$250,000

Mr. Novak confirmed with FMEC's Joy Zigler that the funds for 2023 Improvements could only be utilized towards infrastructure and repairs, not towards costs for personnel.

- i. Motion to approve out of ARP (8950/8951) made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Koronka.
- ii. All members voted in favor during the roll call.

La Porte County Juvenile Services Center

Requesting Additional Appropriations from General (1000) or CCD (1138) or LIT Public Safety (1170) or Wintax (4220) or ARP (8950/8951) for:

Add a camera to the back of the building to cover blind spots	\$11,906.00
New Computers	\$7,892.85

- i. Motion to approve both items out of Wintax (4220) made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Koronka.

- ii. All members voted in favor during roll call.

With the newly increased per diem funding that the Juvenile Services Center was bringing into the General Fund, Mr. Novak asked Mr. DiMartino if a non-reverting fund could be created for the center so they could afford to make some repairs to the facility, which Mr. DiMartino noted that he would begin looking into. Mr. Rosenbaum explained that the Council was working as diligently as it could to resolve the pay differences with the Juvenile Services Center employees.

La Porte County Auditor

Requesting Additional Appropriation from General (1000) or Public Safety LIT (1170) or ARP (8950/8951) for:

Raises that were approved during Budget hearings for POLE Positions \$700,000

Mr. Cunningham asked if all the POLE positions were in public safety, which Mr. DiMartino confirmed was true. Mr. Novak asked how the POLE positions were being paid in the past if LIT Public Safety wasn't previously established, which Mrs. Graves clarified that the POLE positions were previously paid out of their respective departments' budgets, which Mr. Stabosz added that some funding for their pay had come from the General Fund, and primarily the raises were coming from LIT Public Safety, not entire salaries. Mr. Cunningham confirmed with Mr. Stabosz that \$1.2 million was available in arrears for LIT Public Safety, which Mr. Stabosz confirmed was true, however it would be difficult to offer a report of these funds to the Council as the funding did not immediately enter the account, a statement which Mr. DiMartino affirmed. Mr. Cunningham asked for the Auditor to provide information that would allow for better understanding of the County's funding.

Mr. Yagelski questioned why the General Fund was negative \$4 million when there was money in the account in December of 2022. Mrs. Graves noted that the difference between December of 2022 and January of 2023 was that, in December, twelve months of money had been deposited and the items that had been appropriated had been spend or unused, with unused money returning to its respective funds. However in January, the budget was reset, and the entire year was appropriated out, so in December the appropriations are used and all the monies come in. For Economic Development LIT, only about \$150,000 had come in, but all of it had been appropriated out. This would make January always look different than December, as this was when the budgeted appropriations for the year were rolled over.

- i. Motion to table made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Kiel.
- ii. All members voted in favor during the roll call.

La Porte County Auditor

Requesting Additional Appropriation from General (1000) or Wintax (4220) or ARP (8950/8951)
for:

Legal Fees \$10,000

Mr. Stabosz informed the Council that his request dates back to a unanimous motion of support that was given by the Council in the summer of 2022 regarding the billing disputes between the Auditor's Office and an outside vendor's law firm. There was a motion to table, alongside a motion of support, with the intent that the Auditor is not eating the cost personally, and that the Auditor's attorney be paid. He clarified that his request in question was for an attorney's \$9,610 bill from the beginning 2023, which was incurred when the judge in his lawsuit decided to have an evidentiary hearing instead of the dismissal that was expected to happen. Mr. Novak stated that he thought the original motion was for if Mr. Stabosz won his lawsuit, and that if the Council owed the money, they would cover it then. Mr. Yagelski stated that he thought there was discussion on the Auditor catching up on unpaid bills that were not in question, however a bill from December 15th had not yet been paid. Mr. Stabosz clarified that all of the bills had been paid, with the exception of the December 15th bill which was slated to go before the Commissioners, and another recent bill which was current.

Mr. Yagelski asked what was currently being done to restore the County's credit rating, which Mr. Stabosz answered that the County's credit rating had been previously withdrawn due to the imbalance of cash from the 2019 Treasurer's Office. The pulling of the County's bond rating had everything to do with the fact that, if the State Board of Accounts cannot certify the County's cash, which is still in the process of balancing the 2020 cash, then those who would buy the County's bonds would not have a basis for confidence to purchase them, thus resulting in S&P Global pulling the County's rating. The focus needed to be on bringing the cash current and balancing the cash, which Treasurer Winski was diligently working on, however it was otherwise out of the hands of the Auditor's Office, and it had nothing to do with a one-day late bond payment from the Auditor's Office.

Mr. Rosenbaum asked if the 2019 and 2020 Financial Statements had been filed with the state yet, which Mr. Stabosz noted that only the 2019 statement had been sent in, as the cash for 2020 had not yet been balanced. He added that a 2020 audit report from the State Board of Accounts had not yet been received.

Mr. DiMartino asked what the dollar value at issue was with Mr. Stabosz's court case, which Mr. Stabosz noted that he currently did not have this information however he was only disputing items where adequate documentation wasn't provided. Mr. Kiel asked when the billing dates were for the attorney, which Mr. Stabosz clarified was through the entirety of the calendar year of 2022. Mr. Novak asked to see the bill from the attorney, which Mr. Stabosz stated that he would provide to the Council.

- i. Motion to table until the next Council Meeting made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Yagelski.

- ii. All members voted in favor during the roll call.

La Porte County Adult Probation Department

Requesting to spend from Probation User Fees for:

Scanner, Computer and Software	\$2,700.21
Supervisor Administrative Stipend for two Officers	\$10,000.00
PERF	\$1,120.00
OASDI	\$620.00
Medicare	\$145.00

- i. Motion to approve all items made by Mr. Koronka and seconded by Mr. Novak.
- ii. All members voted in favor during the roll call.

La Porte County Maintenance/Facilities

Requesting Additional Appropriations from General (1000) or LIT Public Safety (1170) or ARP (8950/8951) for:

One Boiler for Community Corrections and One Boiler for Juvenile Services Center	not-to-exceed \$68,000
Hot Water Storage and Piping for Juvenile Services Center	\$29,200

- i. Motion to approve out of LIT Public Safety (1170) made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Koronka.
- ii. All members voted in favor.

COUNCIL/ATTORNEY COMMENTS

Mr. Cunningham thanked Mr. DiMartino for his legal guidance. Mr. Yagelski noted that the Council would need to restrict its spending, and stated his concerns that trickling incoming funding would not be substantial enough to fund the County for the rest of the year. Mr. Kiel informed Mrs. Graves that the Council's frustrations regarding the understanding of fund balances were not directed at her personally, and that while it was difficult for the council to make educated decisions without detailed information, he was certain that she would be able to find the documentation that the Council needed. Mr. Novak commended the recently deceased Richard Stalbrink Sr. and gave his condolences to his family. Mr. Rosenbaum asked that, for those submitting requests for the agenda or for appropriations on the agenda, to please include him in any correspondence, so as not to miss out on adding any requests to the agenda; he additionally asked that requests be more detailed when being submitted to the Council. Regarding Mr. Yagelski's correspondence from his liaison report, Mr. Rosenbaum

emphasized that his recommendation for purchasing computers at a reduced rate from different vendors was based on strict research that included ensuring that the computers were the exact same model with the exact same specs. He added that he would look into Windows licensing, and that he would be meeting with a higher-up from IT to assist with and affirm his research. Mr. Rosenbaum added that he asked the IT Director for a list of who was using what computers in the County, however the IT Director had not yet given him a list with this information. He also informed the Data Board that he wanted any Windows 7 machines to be taken out of commission, and reiterated that his concerns were focused on finding computers at a cheaper price.

ADJOURNMENT

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

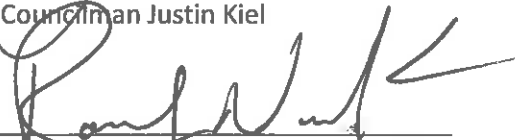
Examined & Approved by the La Porte County Council this 24th day of April, 2023.


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



**Rally Homes, LLC, (Rasheed Ally) 524 N Shebel Road, Michigan City, Parcel ID 460534400005000046
Burned out since at least 2017, sold to new owner in 2022; Photo posted on Beacon.**



**Ricky & Rhonda Deutscher Trustees, 9565 W 100 N, Michigan City, Parcel ID 460528400001000046
(abandoned since at least 2010, roof collapsed in 2021)**



Patricia Wroblewski et al, 9985 W 100 N, Michigan City, Parcel ID 460528300018000046



James R & Karen Wroblewski, W 100 N, Michigan City, Parcel ID 460533200015000046



Richard S Schlene, 277 N US 421 Michigan City, Parcel ID 460533300018000046