



**LA PORTE COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

555 Michigan Avenue, Suite 202  
La Porte, IN 46350-3400  
(219) 326-6808 ext. 2229

**Connie Gramarossa  
President**

**Richard Mrozinski  
Vice President**

**Joe Haney  
Member**

**Laporte County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, June 7, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. County Complex Room 3 & via Zoom**

**Commissioner Richard Mrozinski, Vice President** called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. followed by the **Pledge of Allegiance** led by **Danny Davis**.

**Roll Call**

**Auditor Tim Stabosz** called the roll: **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski - Present; President Connie Gramarossa - Present; Commissioner Joe Haney - Present. Quorum present therefore meeting commenced.**

**Consider Agenda**

**Commissioner Richard Mrozinski** asked for consideration of agenda. **Commissioner Joe Haney** motioned to approved agenda as presented. **Commissioner Richard Mrozinski** seconded motion. **Motion carried 3-0.**

**Consider Approval of Minutes**

**Commissioner Richard Mrozinski** asked for consideration for approval of the May 17, 2023 minutes. **Commissioner Connie Gramarossa** motioned to approve minutes. **Commissioner Richard Mrozinski** seconded. **Motion carried 3-0.**

**Consideration of Claims**

**Auditor Tim Stabosz** stated Payroll ending 05/12/2023 in the amount of \$1,445,004.85 and 05/26/2023 - \$ 1,454,396.34. Operating Expense Claims in the amount of \$ 5,661,253.54. **Commissioner Connie Gramarossa** motioned to approve. **Commissioner Joe Haney** seconded. **Motion carried 3-0.**

**Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** stated that he had a question and asked Auditor Stabosz was he still in possession of check from purchase order dated April 26, 2023 for Attorney Friedman and asked was still in possession of check. Auditor Stabosz replied that he was because of a pending legal case against him.

**Public Comment**

**Rodney McCormick, Michigan City** complained about the steepness of the Michigan City Courthouse handicap ramp and stated it needs to be fixed. Rodney does not feel that the ramp is safe. We the people also wants to know where the county is at with hiring HR Director. This back and forth as we as taxpayers are tired of seeing this. The personal likes/dislikes of one another regardless of what party is interfering with the service of the people. He's hearing about elected officials not hiring people because of their skin color, not sure if it's true or not but, it needs to stop. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** replied that he agrees with him and would like to see things resolved and the business at hand move on. Rodney also stated he hears rumors about not wanting to give the Commission Assistant a raise and does not know if it's true or not.

**Pat Meaney, Laporte** stated it's a hot topic in the community and he's here on behalf of attorney Freidman. This check that has been referred to is being held up by the Auditor because he's being personally sued, he's

using his office as a tool to withhold payments and is retaliating. He stated the Auditor's action should be publically stated and brought before the public and BOC. Also, he has a chain of emails in regards to this matter between the Auditor and Attorney Friedman. Pat stated he has information/emails that he would like to present to the Commission and wants them to be put into public record.

**Tim Stabosz, Auditor** stated there's a dispute between the Auditor's office and Mr. Freidman. He went on to comment about his actions and feelings about what's going on with him, the Auditor and Mr. Freidman. Commissioner Rich Mrozinski and Attorney Pejic asked the Auditor to refrain from making comments on pending litigation and asked the Auditor to refrain from making any political comments and personal attacks. Auditor Stabosz continued to make comments at this time in regards to his situation with Attorney Friedman.

**Tom Sharp, Millcreek** stated he's a strong advocate for the recreation trail connecting Millcreek and Fish Lake. He's also a member of the county's committee that has been working with the project of bike trail. As public record Tom wanted to correct some of the mistakes that were in the petition in regards to the bike trail for public record.

**Bob Vaughn, La Porte** stated he got an issue with his tax bill. County states on bill that it can be paid multiple ways. He pays by using drop boxes over the last several years. Nowhere on tax document does it says it has to be paid by 4:00 p.m. He was informed that he had to pay a late fee. Mr. Vaughn does not agree with late fee, frustrated with the things going on with the various county issues going on. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** informed him that he understood his concerns. Mr. Vaughn asked was there someone that he could address his issue with. **Attorney Pejic** informed him to address his issue with the county Assessor.

**Randy Veatch, La Porte** stated he has been thankful for the approach the BOC has been taking in regards to stopping industrial businesses for continuing operations in their residential neighborhoods. The other day there has been truck traffic running east of Schultz Road again after weight signs had been installed/removed. He had a conversation with the Sheriff and was told to speak to the BOC. He wanted to know where the responsibility lie. He thought the signs were due to safety. Mr. Veatch asked that then signs be reinstalled. Sherriff Heeg stated he was duly elected and does not have the authority to remove signs or give orders to have them removed. Mr. Heeg stated he tries to stay in his lane at the Sheriff's office and has nothing to do with the highway department or sign business.

**Derald Borton, Michigan City** thinks it times for the nonsense to end and the auditor to do his job. Maybe it's time to start holding back the Auditor's check and maybe he will do his job. Mr. Borton stated as far as the Auditor's legal fees the county has paid enough for him and his nonsense. Maybe it's time for him to step down or do his job.

### **Department Head Comments**

**Sean Fitzpatrick, Director of Facilities** stated he wanted to give a quick update and what they had going on. In the month of April they had 554 closed work orders, in the month of May 624 closed work orders, and as of right now in the month of June, 49 work order has come in, paper delivery, we are at 134. They try to prioritize based off the urgency of the work order. We were able to do power washing around the courthouse and are in the process of preparing to do landscaping and getting flowers out on the outside. A big grease trap had to be cleaned out at the Juvenile Services Center and has been rectified. Here at the Annex, a domestic hot water line had to be replaced. It was supplying water to the jail. The second floor of the courthouse is having problems with the LG units, they run about 50% capacity right now. Components had been priced and are in process of being delivered. Spent about 881 man hours working at the fairgrounds, working on various things in preparation for the upcoming fair. This is not including the 694 hours of mowing and weeding we have to do until we are able to turn things back over to the Fair Board. We have about five new part time housekeeping employees. Mr. Fitzpatrick stated he has been working diligently to increase their housekeeping staff. We are able to accommodate as many offices daily in order to get the cleaning done. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski**

informed Mr. Fitzpatrick he was one of the department heads he talks with the most and wanted him to know publically he's doing a really good job.

**Reggie Korthals, MS4 Consultant** wanted to give an update. She stated she asked for an extension for some of submittal requirements. June 15, 2023 completes initial contract. The storm water quality management plan needs to be in July 1, 2023, July 5, 2023 actually. They will be up in the county to do a complete permit audit before the end of July. If we are not in noncompliance with the permit we will be given 72 hours to correct that and then come up with a plan to correct that so we don't stand to lose any federal highway dollars or state funds in regards to that.

**Jeremy Sobecki, Parks Department** reported that they did get their new permit. There is some construction going on for the new restroom at Creek Ridge.

**Commissioner Joe Haney** stated he has been working diligently about getting additional parking spaces for the Michigan City Courthouse. He was able to secure twenty parking spots after speaking with the owner of the Fifth Third Bank. He stated not to park there yet because he needs to get slips for the parking. Also, he commented on some outstanding invoice slips in regards to Freidman and Associates.

#### Old Business

None at this time.

#### New Business

**Consider** reassignment of county credit card(s). **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** stated there was not a lot of confusion going on when Joie Winski had the credit card. Now there is a lot going on and we have multiple credit cards. We need to get the credit card system under control and sit down and talk about this. Auditor Stabosz commented on the credit card as well. **President Connie Gramarossa made a motion to have the Commissioners' office to be the designated holder of the credit card. Commissioner Rich Mrozinski seconded. Commissioner Joe Haney stated nay. Motion carried 2-1.**

**Consider** travel and lodge to the Municipal Law Seminar, June 22, 2023 thru June 23, 2023, Indianapolis, IN for Attorney Scott Pejic. **President Connie Gramarossa motioned to approve. Commissioner Rich Mrozinski seconded. Commissioner Joe Haney stated nay. Motion carried 2-0.**

**Consider the settlement proposal by NIPSCO. Commissioner Joe Haney motioned to approve. President Connie Gramarossa seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

**Consider** legal service agreement with Attorney Scott Pejic. **Commissioner Joe Haney** stated for point of clarity the rate is increasing from \$150.00 to \$175.00 which would be a 17% raise for a municipal attorney with no experience. **Attorney Pejic** stated this would be due to the cost of inflation and it would be a benefit for all attorneys. **President Connie Gramarossa motioned to approve agreement. Commissioner Rich Mrozinski seconded. Commissioner Joe Haney stated nay due to not checking with Council first. Commissioner Rich Mrozinski stated this will be sent to the Council for approval. Motion carried 2-0.**

**Consider** addendum to software license agreement – Mike Schultz, Assessor. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski motioned to approve. President Connie Gramarossa seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

**Consider** amendment to build operate transfer agreement (Kingsbury Rail Project) – Matt Reardon, EDFP. **President Connie Gramarossa motioned to approve. Commissioner Rich Mrozinski seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

**Consider** request for permission to approach Council for an additional appropriation of \$39,288.69 for body cameras from Axon Enterprise, Inc. – Mericka Beaty, Community Corrections. **Commissioner Joe Haney motioned to approve. President Connie Gramarossa seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

**Consider** approval for Fair Board contract, working the fair – Ron Heeg, Sheriff. **Commissioner Joe Haney motioned to approve. President Connie Gramarossa seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

**Consider** approval of the 2023 Fair Board contract, working the fair – Andrew McGuire, EMS. **Commissioner Joe Haney motioned to approve. President Connie Gramarossa seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

**Consider** additional local health funding from the Indiana Department of Health – Amanda Lahners, Health Department, Director. **President Connie Gramarossa motioned to approve. Commissioner Rich Mrozinski seconded. Commissioner Joe Haney stated nay. Motion carried 2-0.**

**Consider** additional appropriation request to approach Council for more funds for office supplies \$1,000, equipment repair \$2,500 and to replace tractor not to exceed \$37,000 – Jeremy Sobecki, Parks Department, Superintendent. **Commissioner Joe Haney motioned to approve. President Connie Gramarossa seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

**Consider** request to travel and lease vehicle for trip to attend the 2023 Aging in Texas Conference in San Antonio, TX on June 28, 2023 thru June 30, 2023 – Katherine Schmitt, Director, Adult Protective Services. **Commissioner Joe Haney motioned to approve. President Connie Gramarossa seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

#### **Adjournment**

**Commissioner Rich Mrozinski motioned to adjourn at 10:23 a.m. President Connie Gramarossa seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**