



LA PORTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Connie Gramarossa
President

Richard Mrozinski
Vice President

Joseph Haney
Member

La Porte County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes Wednesday, January 17, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. County Complex Room 3 & via Zoom

President Connie Gramarossa called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by **Mike Seitz**.

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

Considered the agenda. Commissioner **Haney** motioned to amend the agenda by adding a travel request for Councilman **Justin Kiel** to attend a conference in Washington D.C. Commissioner **Mrozinski** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Considered approval of Joint Commissioners/Council Meeting November 20, 2023 minutes. Commissioner **Mrozinski** motioned to approve. Commissioner **Haney** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Considered approval of the January 3, 2024 minutes. Commissioner **Mrozinski** motioned to approve. Commissioner **Haney** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Auditor Tim Stabosz read the Claims with Payroll ending 1/12/2024 - \$1,486,313.51. Commissioner **Haney** motioned to approve payroll. Commissioner **Mrozinski** seconded. Roll call: Commissioner **Mrozinski** - Aye; Commissioner **Haney** - Aye; Commissioner **Gramarossa** - Aye. Motion carried 3-0. **Auditor Stabosz** read the Operating Expense Claims - \$2,246,795.20. Commissioner **Haney** motioned to approve the claims. Commissioner **Mrozinski** seconded. Roll call: Commissioner **Gramarossa** - Aye; Commissioner **Haney** - Aye; Commissioner **Mrozinski** - Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Public Comment

Tommy Kulavik, 1316 Ohio Street, Michigan City, via Zoom, commended the Highway Department for clearing the roads. Recycling packet arrived in the mail, verified his address on the website of the new company picking up recycling, Borden out of Elkhart, Indiana. Peace be with you. Go Wolves, beat the Slicers on Friday. Smoke and Carbon Monoxide detectors saves lives.

Attorney Scott Pejic, made Commissioners aware that an employee wanted to make a comment about a certain department but pursuant to our policy on Public Comment, this time is not for departmental issues so no comments will be made at this time. Advised the individual that approached the podium that this is still on-going and no comments will be made.

John Schick, Paramedic FTO, discussions have taken place on his current medical leave. **Attorney Pejic**, this is not appropriate for Public Comment. Personnel issues, employment issues, are not appropriate, this is not the forum for that discussion. **John Schick**, I will stand down.

President Gramarossa called for a five-minute recess at 6:06 p.m. Seconded by both Commissioners **Rich Mrozinski**, via Zoom and **Joe Haney**. Commissioner **Haney** advised Mr. Schick to email, call or both. Meeting resumed at 6:28 p.m.

Jenn Sabie, Employee of the County, Confidential information has been made public and this broke the County Whistleblower Policy.

Faye Moore, Michigan City, via Zoom, inquired about the status of the Human Resources Director position, when will **Monique Thomas** be hired for this position.

ORIGINAL

Department Reports/Comments

Jeremy Sobecki, Parks Superintendent, reported on events taking place at the County Parks. Snow shoes at Luhr Park are available to use, call the park to sign up. The previous Daddy/Daughter Dance is now the Fractal Frolic Dance, will be held February 23-24. Night Hikes and Painting classes are just a few events happening as well as the Parks Department will be participating in the La Porte Winter Fest with several events such as: Cookies and Crafts at Red Mill Park, Educational Programs, snow shoeing, campfires and more. Majority of the events are free to the public. Our new website is up and running, visit laportecountyparks.org.

Monique Thomas, Interim HR Director, requested permission to send out to employees NorthShore Health Centers' 28+1 Day Heart Health Challenge for the month of February. Every day in February an email will encourage one small action, activity, tip or resource to guide individuals towards a healthier and stronger heart. **President Gramarossa motioned to approve the request. Commissioner Mrozinski seconded. Roll call: Commissioner Gramarossa - Aye; Commissioner Mrozinski - Aye; Commissioner Haney - Aye. Motion carried 3-0.**

Commissioner Haney questioned whether the President 'stepped down' to motion the vote. **President Gramarossa** replied she did not have to 'step down' to make motions. **Attorney Pejic** used Roberts' Rules of Order, 12th Edition, for that determination.

President Gramarossa, a workshop took place prior to the meeting on Gypsy or Spongy Moths in our area. **Considered a Resolution to be drafted, approved, signed and sent to Indianapolis. Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve the drafting of the Resolution. President Gramarossa seconded. Roll call: Commissioner Haney - Aye; Commissioner Mrozinski - Aye; Commissioner Gramarossa - Aye. Motion carried 3-0.**

Danielle Adams, La Porte County Historical Society Museum Director, reported on the 2023 year at the La Porte County Historical Society Museum. 2024 will be the Year of the Towns with Westville being the first one on exhibit. *****Report attached to minutes.**

Commissioner Joe Haney motioned to publish the Claims on our website. President Gramarossa asked for a second. Commissioner Mrozinski seconded but asked who runs our website now. President Gramarossa, Bailey McGrath. Roll call: Commissioner Haney - Aye; Commissioner Mrozinski - Aye and Commissioner Mrozinski - Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Requests

None

Old Business

None

New Business

Considered 2-year contract with Microvote, Heather Stevens, Clerk. Attorney Pejic stated this contract needs further review. **Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to table. Commissioner Haney seconded. Roll call: Commissioner Gramarossa - Aye; Commissioner Haney - Aye; Commissioner Mrozinski - Aye. Motion carried 3-0.**

Considered Clinic Site agreement between the County & Health Department, Amanda Lahners, Health Department. Commissioner Haney motioned to approve. Commissioner Mrozinski seconded. Roll call: Commissioner Gramarossa - Aye; Commissioner Haney - Aye; Commissioner Mrozinski - Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Considered Clinic Site agreement between Health Department & South Central Community School, Amanda Lahners, Health Department. Commissioner Haney motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Roll call: Commissioner Gramarossa - Aye; Commissioner Haney - Aye; Commissioner Mrozinski - Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Considered first reading for Ordinance on Speed limit change on 500 East, Jay Sullivan, Engineer. Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Roll call: Commissioner Mrozinski - Aye; Commissioner Haney - Aye and Commissioner Gramarossa - Aye. Motion carried 3-0. Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to suspend the rules and approve second reading. No seconded heard therefore motion died. Commissioner Haney preferred to approve on first reading, then motioned to approve by title only, 'Ordinance setting new speed limit on 500 East, North of 200 South to State Road 4. Commissioner Mrozinski seconded. Roll call: Commissioner Gramarossa - Aye; Commissioner Haney - Aye; Commissioner Mrozinski - Aye. Motion carried 3-0. *First Reading Only**

Considered Addendum to Bridge Inspection Contract for USI. Jay Sullivan, Engineer, this is an addition to the 2021-2023 Bridge Inspection Contract. Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Roll call: Commissioner Mrozinski - Aye; Commissioner Gramarossa - Aye; Commissioner Haney - Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

ORIGINAL

Considered Appointments to Boards and Commissions. Commissioner Mrozinski nominated Commissioner Gramarossa to the Insurance Board. Commissioner Haney nominated himself to remain on the Insurance Board. Roll call for the first nomination for Commissioner Gramarossa: Commissioner Mrozinski - Aye; Commissioner Haney - Nay; Commissioner Gramarossa - Aye. Motion carried 2-1. Commissioner Connie Gramarossa will now sit on the Insurance Board.

Commissioner Haney, he was on the Board until just a few minutes ago, asked the new appointee to explain why, once again, in relation to missing monies, missing payments, why he was denied access to files other Commissioners were provided and why the vendor is refusing to turn over information to him and the Auditor's office, is that going to be shared with us? **Commissioner Mrozinski**, next part of our meeting. **President Gramarossa**, why did you lie about a \$650,000 overpayment? We came back and there was no overpayment of \$650,000. **Attorney Pejic**, we can take this offline. **Commissioner Haney**, there was \$650,000 in payments that went out and we are trying to track down and make sure we know where all \$650,000 went. **President Gramarossa**, moving on. **Commissioner Haney**, we had a great presentation by Guy DiMartino the other day... **Attorney Pejic**, this is being investigated. **Commissioner Haney**...where he put up \$15,000 as the number where it looks like now, we are back up to \$90,000 as part of that six fifty which we're still trying to juxtapose, is it 15, is it 90, whereas the total is 650 and once again, you're hiding it. Now I've been removed from the insurance committee and prevented from getting any information...**President Gramarossa**, no one is hiding anything. **Commissioner Haney**, yes, you are...**President Gramarossa**, you passed out wrong information...

Commissioner Haney, why did you order a vendor to not send it? **President Gramarossa**, we're moving on... **Commissioner Haney**, if I'm wrong why aren't you providing the documentation? **President Gramarossa**, why did you lie? **Commissioner Haney**, show us the documentation. **President Gramarossa**, why did the Auditor apologize at the same meeting for giving out the wrong information? **Commissioner Haney**, if I'm wrong, show us the documents, release the documents, prove it, I'd be happy to be proven wrong... **President Gramarossa**, I call for a recess. **Commissioner Haney**, I would love for this money to be out for the community to have back, happy to, release it. **Auditor Stabosz**, we would like to be able to.... **Commissioner Mrozinski**, we forgot to appoint a liaison to the Park Board.

Commissioner Mrozinski nominated himself to be Park Board as Liaison. Commissioner Haney nominated himself to be the Liaison as having attended 98% of the meetings over the last three years in person. We know right now Commissioner Mrozinski's going to miss at least 50% being down in Florida. President Gramarossa, we have two nominations. **Commissioner Haney**, you literally live half the year down in Florida. **Roll call for the first motion, Commissioner Mrozinski: Commissioner Gramarossa - Aye; Commissioner Haney - Nay; Commissioner Mrozinski - Aye. Motion carried 2-1.**

Commissioner Mrozinski, there was confusion on the appointment to the Alcohol Board, there were motions with no second and a second with no motion, **Commissioner Mrozinski nominated Jon Nebelung to the Alcohol Board Commission. Commissioner Haney nominated Rodney McCormick. President Gramarossa** requested Attorney Pejic to clarify. **Commissioner Mrozinski**, it never was formally passed. **Attorney Scott Pejic**, under Robert's Rules of Order, which we have historically gone by in this County, under section 49:21, 'Motions need not be seconded.' That does not mean you necessarily have to follow that advice for small boards but it's possible to do it in that fashion, according to Robert's Rules. **President Gramarossa** clarified if the previous vote at the last meeting stands as the final appointment, only a second with the first nomination dying for lack of a second. **Attorney Pejic**, discussion took place after the nomination but ultimately the Board decides the outcome or results. **Commissioner Mrozinski**, we need to be consistent with a motion and a second therefore the position is open and nominated Jon Nebelung for the position. **President Gramarossa**, Attorney Pejic is saying the position is not open. **Attorney Pejic**, 'According to Robert's Rules it can stand because motions are not required to be seconded for small boards, if a member would like to table this, I can look into this further, I'd be more than happy to do that so no one makes a rash decision but I'm telling you what I know based on my understanding of Robert's Rules for small boards.' **President Gramarossa motioned to table. Commissioner Mrozinski seconded. Commissioner Haney** questioned for small boards, a motion does not need a second at all, at any point? So, anybody can make a motion and call for a vote? **Attorney Pejic**, yes, it's really a distinction without a difference because if you're not going to get a second, you're more than likely not going to get two of the three votes anyway, if that makes sense, if tabled I will look into it further for the Commission. **Commissioner Haney**, could you also look into whether or not other counties in Indiana utilizes the small board options, most small boards don't preside over decisions that affect 111,000 people. **Motion and a seconded to table. Roll call: Commissioner Haney - Aye; Commissioner Gramarossa - Aye; Commissioner Mrozinski - Aye. Motion carried 3-0.**

Commissioner Mrozinski nominated Angie Carr to the Shared Ethics Advisory Committee. Commissioner Haney seconded. Roll call: Commissioner Gramarossa - Aye; Commissioner Haney - Aye; Commissioner Mrozinski - Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Mrozinski nominated Tracy Cummings to the PTABOA Board. Commissioner Haney nominated Ken Purze. President Gramarossa, first nomination, Tracy Cummings - **Roll call: Commissioner Haney - Nay, not familiar with the individual; Commissioner Gramarossa - Aye, Tracy was on the Board last year; Commissioner Mrozinski - Aye. Motion carried 2-1.**

Commissioner Mrozinski nominated Michael Ducey to the Community Corrections Board. Commissioner Haney seconded. Roll call: Commissioner Gramarossa - Aye; Commissioner Mrozinski - Aye; Commissioner Haney - Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

ORIGINAL

Considered travel request for Councilman Justin Kiel to attend the National Association of Counties (NACo) Legislative Conference in Washington D.C. February 10-13, 2024 while attending the National Association of Regional Council's (NARC) conference February 11-14, 2024. **President Gramarossa**, there was no paperwork submitted, the request came in at 3:15 p.m. today. **Justin Kiel**, via Zoom, kind of a last-minute thing he was made aware of an opportunity and this is the last meeting prior to the event, he will be in Washington D.C. in February for another conference and he was offered the opportunity to attend the National Association of Counties annual conference at no cost to the County, his travel to/from D.C. is already covered however he does need the approval from the Commission to travel out-of-state and cover lodging and miscellaneous travel expenses not otherwise already covered, his estimate is \$550. The opportunity is a considerable savings to the County as most of the expenses are paid for and he believes the request would be paid for out of the Elected Officials Training Fund. **Commissioner Mrozinski**, we should have had more notice, and when Dr. Kora would go, he paid then was reimbursed when he returned from the event. Shouldn't this have been advertised on our agenda prior to the meeting especially involving tax payer money? **Justin Kiel**, I plan on submitting my expenses to the Commission for approval when I return and as for Dr. Kora, the County probably covered the whole cost. I did not intend to go until I found out I could go with little cost to the County and that is why I am bringing it a bit late for approval. **Commissioner Haney** motioned to approve the travel request. **Commissioner Mrozinski** seconded. **Roll call: Commissioner Mrozinski - Aye; Commissioner Gramarossa - Aye; Commissioner Haney - Aye. Motion carried 3-0.**

Commissioner Rich Mrozinski motioned to adjourn at 6:59 p.m. **Commissioner Joe Haney** seconded. **Motion carried 3-0.**

ORIGINAL

**2023 Year End Director's Report
La Porte County Historical Society Museum**

Number of Visitors: 6,529 (4,785 2022 year)

Top Ten Gift Shop Sellers:

Postcard (254)
Gunness Story (175)
Vintage Postcard (113)
Record (70)
Hell's Princess Paperback (50)
Belle Magnet (45)
Belle Pin (41)
Magnet (37)
Mistress of Murder Hill (30)
Car Show Dash Plaque (27)

Events and Attendance (19):

9 Veteran Free Days
Sunflower Fair
Pioneer Land Spinners - 24 Visitors
Pioneer Land Spinners - 55 Visitors
Leigh Morris Historical Society Meeting - 36 Visitors
Spring Artisan Fair and Plow Day - 200+ Visitors (187 last year)
Trivia Night Historical Society Meeting - 36 Visitors
Camp ToPeNeBee Historical Society Meeting - 30 Visitors
David Chrisinger Author Talk - 24 Visitors
Car Show - 99 Cars and 300+ Visitors (130 last year)
Row Crop Barbeque - 160+ Visitors
Historian of the Year Historical Society Meeting - 45 Visitors
Judge Boklund Historical Society Meeting - 50 Visitors
History of the Mystery - 300+ Visitors
Trick-or-Treat at the Museum - 420 Kids (450 total people last year)
Barry Veden Historical Society Meeting - 50 Visitors
Artisan Fair - 250+ Visitors (200 last year)
Cookie Walk - 138 Visitors
Night at the Giese Church - 61 Visitors (42 last year)

Tours (27):

Critchfield 3rd Graders - 86
Storypoint Retirement Facility - 10
Door Village Church Kids Club - 29
Indian Trail 3rd Graders - 67
Home School Group - 30
Plein Air Painters - 12
Home School Group - 35
Kingsford Heights Elementary School - 33
Hoosier Model A Ford Club - 20
Kingsbury 3rd Graders - 64
READ La Porte - 16
Norwegian Group - 22
Fort Wayne Auto Club - 26
School Group - 20
Cadillac Car Club - 15
Chesterton Senior Living - 9
Handley 3rd Graders - 75
Olive Elementary 2nd Graders - 75
Bethel Presbyterian Church - 11
Krueger Middle School - 60
Special Education LPHS - 6
Homeschool Group - 12
Homeschool Group - 20
Door Village Church Kids Club - 30
Michigan City English Class - 29
Rittenhouse of Michigan City
Homeschool Group - 18

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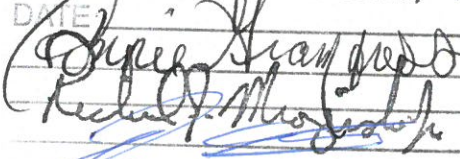
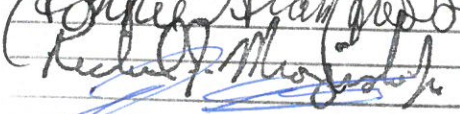
New Exhibits (18)

People and Portraits Gallery Wall
Ernie Pyle: 100 Years of Journalism
National Polka Month
Black Biographies
Women's History Month
Camp ToPeNeBee 75th Anniversary
Ralph Fletcher Seymour Gallery Wall
Indiana Through the Map Maker's Eyes (IHS)
Old Lighthouse Museum 50th Season
La Porte County Fair
Auto Indiana (IHS)
75 Years of the Tucker '48
Summer Fun
Be Heard: Latino Experience in Indiana (IHS)
30 Years of the Kesling Building
Pets of La Porte County
Easter Pop-up
St. Patty's Day Green Pop-up

Fun Things!

Got an AED and CPR Certified
Re-Curated Toy Display (Old Days of Play)
Re-Curated Photography display (Valpo University Students)
Re-Wrote Period Room Plaques
Re-Curated Scouting Exhibit
Re-Curated 4-H Exhibit
Moved Scholl Dairy items
Started work on Belle Gunness Re-Curation
Train Table
12 new Scavenger Hunts
Taught two classes at the La Porte Public Library - Hair Weaving and Cross Stitch
Re-vamped geology exhibit
Returned hundreds of postcards to their hometowns
Poster at American Midwest Museums conference in Indy
Wi-Fi throughout the building
New register and card reader
New laptop that works (sorry to the old tiny laptop)
Re-vamped the gift shop layout and merchandise
Blue Star Museum
Maintained a constant presence in the local newspapers, radio spots, and on Facebook
1,147 found in collection items cataloged, over 450 voted on by Collections Committee
130 unique donors donated to the museum
Got my Master's Degree!
Restored and mounted Dora Decker's Hat, La Porte Theatre chandelier, Holy Family Hospital Chapel window, installed light in South Shore phone booth

EXAMINED AND APPROVED BY THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
COUNTY OF LA PORTE, INDIANA

DATE: 2-7-2024



ATTEST: _____

Auditor

LA PORTE COUNTY, INDIANA



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