

**MEMORANDUM**  
**LA PORTE COUNTY COUNCIL AND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS JSC**  
**GENERATOR, COOLING OF THE COMPLEX, AND FLOOD RENOVATION**  
**WORKSHOP**  
**June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

A La Porte County Council & Commissioners Joint Workshop was held on June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. (central time) in the Assembly Room of the La Porte County Government Complex, 809 State Street, La Porte, IN 46350.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Council President Randy Novak.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Rosenbaum.

**ROLL CALL**

While no formal roll call was taken, it was observed that Councilman Cunningham, Councilman Novak, Councilman Kiel, Councilman Rosenbaum, Councilman Koronka, Councilman Yagelski, and Councilman Mollenhauer were all physical present for the meeting. Commissioner Joe Haney was also physically present, while Commissioner Connie Gramarossa and Commissioner Rich Mrozinski attended electronically via Zoom.

**PRESENTATION**

Council Attorney Guy DiMartino explained that three topics would be addressed during the workshop: the need for a new generator at the Juvenile Services Center, the cooling of the Complex building, and flood damage repairs in the Complex building.

**The Juvenile Services Center Generator**

Board of Commissioners attorney Scott Pejic informed that room that following the failure of the Juvenile Services Center generator about three months prior, the county had been utilizing a rental generator at a cost of about \$12,000 per month. He asked that a new generator be purchased, potentially utilizing a special purchasing or emergency statute, to ensure that a proposed generator that cost \$232,000 could be purchased as soon as possible, as there was a 31-week lead time from the date of purchase to the generator's delivery. Mr. Novak questioned

if a generator could be procured from State of Indiana's QPA or a national program. Robert Rogers of Marquiss Electric responded that the \$232,000 quote received was a bundled rate that would include the installation of a new concrete pad and transfer switch, and was not solely for the generator. He explained that the previous generator, which was from 1998, had become irreparable as all of its replacement parts had become obsolete. He noted that the proposed new generator, which was a CAT model, would operate on diesel – with the previous generator having operated on natural gas – as diesel models were cheaper to purchase and run.

Mr. Kiel questioned why, if this was considered an emergency, had the item not been brought to the Board of Commissioners or Council sooner, which Mr. DiMartino would later explain was a result of the rental agreement for the temporary generator being contracted, with the bill for this contract not having been brought before the government body yet.

Mr. Novak asked if the rental generator that was currently being utilized could be purchased outright to avoid the 31-week lead time for a new generator, which Manager of LaPorte County Project Management Andy Skwiat explained that the temporary generator was smaller than what the Juvenile Services Center required in the long run, and could not serve as a long term generator. He added that the 31-week lead time was primarily for the new transfer switch that would go with the new generator, and clarified that the generator itself had a shorter lead. He gave a brief scope of what to expect with the installation of the generator once it was in the county's possession.

Judge Thomas Alevizos appeared electronically via Zoom to inform the room that about 18-20 juveniles were currently housed at the Juvenile Services Center, and noted that not only the generator, but many other features of the building were obsolete. He advised taking a percentage of the monies that were received from the Department of Child Services funding and placing them into a non-reverting fund to pay for emergencies like this when they happened at the center, and also suggested inspecting the building to develop a capital improvement plan for the repairs that it needed.

Mr. Novak inquired if it would be possible to reach out to someone who could research QPA or similar programs to see if a generator of similar capacity was available to be purchased. Mr. Skwiat clarified that he would be willing to volunteer his work product to accommodate whatever method the Council and Board of Commissioners wanted to utilize to obtain the generator and transfer switch. Since only the transfer switch had a 31-week lead time, Commissioner Joe Haney questioned if a special purchase statute could be utilized to purchase the transfer switch while the county researched where to source the generator from. Mr. Skwiat confirmed that if the county committed to purchasing the same style of CAT generator that accommodated the Generac transfer switch, this could be done. Mr. DiMartino informed the room that he would reach out to the BuyBoard National Purchasing Cooperative to inquire if they had a compatible generator for purchase.

## **The Cooling of the Complex Building**

Mr. DiMartino explained that as the Complex building was receiving ongoing repairs from the December of 2022 flood damage, additional needs for repairs on old and overlooked structural issues were actively being discovered during the building's restoration. One of these issues was with the cooling system in the building, which was inefficient and resulted in the recent need to purchase \$25,000 worth of glycol. He noted that the issue stemmed from the cooling being split when the jail was built into the Complex building, and when the vendor that had been installing that system went bankrupt and could not complete the project, the new vendor who overtook the remainder of the installation did not build it to spec, which was now resulting in the cooling system failing.

Mr. Yagelski recommended reaching out to the vendors who took over the project in 2001 so they could investigate the work that had been done on the cooling system.

Greg Paul of Arctic explained that the jail's cooling was working properly, but the Complex was 200 tons short of glycol for the footprint of the two buildings as a result of the Complex building's chiller being removed between 2001 and 2005. Mr. Koronka inquired where the glycol was being lost, as it should not be consumed. Mr. DiMartino noted that there was the potential for a leak. Mr. Paul noted that an optimal cooling system would have a 55-gallon tank by the discharge pumps that would maintain a head pressure, however the county did not have one, and thus did not have a reservoir for lost glycol. He added that glycol was \$17.10 per gallon for concentrated, or \$7.70 per gallon for 30%. Mr. Yagelski confirmed with Mr. Paul that the propylene glycol that the county was using was water-based and safe for average drainage disposal. Mr. Paul explained that Arctic's piping service manager would be coming onto the property to make the currently existing air coolers as optimal as possible given their condition, however even if they were in perfectly working condition, the building would still be short 200 tons of glycol. He added that utilizing only the Jail's chillers to cool both buildings would eventually overwork these chillers.

Mr. Koronka confirmed with Mr. Skwiat what additional infrastructure would be needed to install a new cooling system in the Complex building following the removal of the bridge between the current system to which Mr. Paul added that this would also require doing some adjustments in the Jail's cooling system as well. Mr. Skwiat recommended establishing a short-term cooling system to ensure that the recent work on the Complex building's flood renovation remained undamaged from the summer heat and humidity while a permanent solution was investigated. Mr. Novak noted that he would want to address a short term solution at a meeting that the item could be voted on, and instead recommended isolating the glycol leak and repairing it for the time being. Mr. Skwiat and Mr. Paul clarified that it was not confirmed that there was a leak in the line for the glycol, and that there could also be an air pocket in the

line that was causing issues. Mr. Novak then asked if a refill system for the glycol could be installed, which Mr. Skwiat confirmed was a potential option.

Mr. Rosenbaum asked what the lead time was on a new chiller, which Mr. Paul reported was roughly 38-56 weeks. Mr. Kiel asked why the issues with the cooling system were only now being reported if it had been having issues for an extended period of time, which Mr. Skwiat responded that the full extent of the issue was only very recently realized when La Porte County Project Management ran a balance test on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor. When Mr. Kiel inquired what the cost of adding a new cooling system would be, Mr. Skwiat did not have an exact quote, but stated that it would be well over \$1 million. Mr. DiMartino noted that the insurance company would not be assisting with the cost of the project.

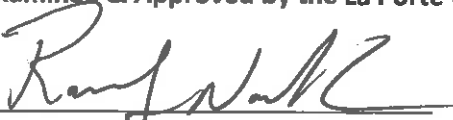
Mr. Haney inquired if anything could be done internally to assist with the building's cooling, to which Mr. Skwiat reported that short-term measures such as adding smaller, temporary space-coolers would take up too much space, would cost too much money to install and operate, and could potentially damage the recent work done as a result of the condensation from the devices. Mr. Yagelski questioned if the departments affected by the cooling system might be able to be temporarily relocated until temperatures fell and a cooling system could be purchased in 2025, when the county could more affordably purchase the system. Mr. Haney asked if, instead, dehumidifiers could be utilized by the affected departments to remove any damaging humidity, as well as reduce the perceived temperature of each floor. Mr. Novak emphasized that he wanted to see more effort directed towards maintaining the county's various cooling systems.

### **Chubb Insurance and Additional Funding Needed for the Complex Flood Renovation**

Mr. DiMartino reported that a statement of loss report to the insurance company indicated that La Porte County had contributed about \$4.4 million towards the Complex building's renovation, while Chubb had invested roughly \$5.3 million. He noted that the county would be receiving another insurance check, however the amount of the check was not currently known. He added that the county did not currently have any more money currently appropriated towards additional bills for the project going forward, and there was currently an outstanding bill for La Porte County Project Management for about \$700,000. Mr. DiMartino also noted that about \$3 million would likely be needed to finalize the renovation project, and advised appropriating it at the next regular Council meeting. Mr. Novak noted that the item would be added onto the June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024 agenda in the amount of not-to-exceed \$1 million, and stated that he also wanted to add the Juvenile Services Center's request for a generator in the amount of not-to-exceed \$300,000 onto the agenda as well.

Examined & Approved by the La Porte County Council this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of July, 2024.

Examined & Approved by the La Porte County Board of Commissioners this 7<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2024.

  
Randy Novak, Council President

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Connie Gramarossa, Board President

  
Adam Koronka, Council Vice President

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Richard Mrozinski, Board Vice President

  
Earl Cunningham, Councilman

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Joe Haney, Board Member

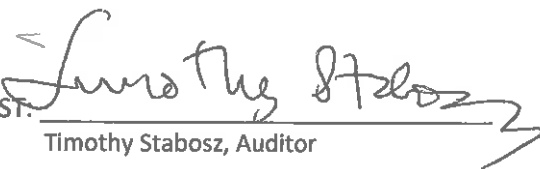
  
Mike Yagelski, Councilman

Editor's Note:  
Commission President  
Gramarossa refused to  
put approval of these  
minutes on the commission's  
agenda despite repeated  
requests of the County  
auditor. - J.J.S.

  
Justin Kiel, Councilman

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Mike Rosenbaum, Councilman

  
Mike Mollenhauer, Councilman

ATTEST:   
Timothy Stabosz, Auditor