

**MEMORANDUM**  
**LA PORTE COUNTY COUNCIL WORKSHOP**  
**ARP FUNDING DEADLINE**  
**December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

A La Porte County Council Workshop on the ARP Funding Deadline was held on December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 5:00 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 Novak. Councilman Cunningham, Councilman Yagelski, Councilman Rosenbaum, Councilman Novak, Councilman Koronka, and Councilman Mollenhauer were all physically present, while Councilman Kiel appeared electronically via Zoom.

**PRESENTATION**

Mr. Novak clarified that the purpose of the meeting was to ensure that all ARP funds were obligated before the end of 2024, noting that if these funds were not obligated or appropriated, they would need to be returned to the federal government. Auditor Tim Stabosz explained that the dynamic nature of the ARP funding made determining an exact amount of remaining funds a moving target, to which La Porte County Financial Advisor Karl Cender noted that the funds would only need to be obligated towards projects, purchase orders, or inter-local agreements by the end of 2024 – not necessarily appropriated by the end of 2024 – and that the projects in question did not need to be advertised until appropriation was finalized. He added that the county could over obligate the estimated amount of ARP funding towards projects if it was unsure of exactly how many ARP funds remained, so as long as it was properly reduced when appropriation for the funds was to occur.

The Council discussed whether ARP appropriations in the amount of \$175,000 for La Crosse's and \$150,000 for Hanna's projects should be taken into reconsideration, as both of the projects had seen changes in their scope of work, to which Council Attorney Guy DiMartino responded that the projects in question could still commence so long as a descriptive plan of the scope of the work was presented to the Board of Commissioners and met with their approval. Mr. DiMartino added that Michigan City's Civil Air Patrol would also be approaching the Council for a \$4,000 ARP appropriation in the near future, so the Council needed to take this into consideration as well.

Mr. Yagelski proposed approaching the Board of Commissioners to propose dedicating roughly \$500,000 in ARP funds towards a bonus for 2024's full-time county employees to be paid out in 2025. Mr. Novak clarified that no appropriations would be made during the course of the evening's meeting to ensure that the items were properly advertised. Mr. Yagelski then proposed how the bonuses would be calculated for full-time employees who only worked part of the 2024-year period, noting that these

employees' bonuses could be calculated for each full quarter of the year worked in 2024. Mr. DiMartino stated that this would cause issues with the salary ordinance and instead recommended approving the bonus for all 2024 full-time employees regardless of how many months they worked, while Mr. Kiel recommended reaching out to the Payroll Department to secure a date and deadline that would work with their schedule. Mr. Yagelski added that full-time grant-based employees and bridge tenders would receive this bonus.

- i. Motion to ask the Board of Commissioners to consider distributing \$500,000 in ARP funding for a performance bonus for all full-time employees of 2024 to be paid out the first payroll in February made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Koronka.
- ii. Six members voted in favor (Mr. Yagelski, Mr. Rosenbaum, Mr. Novak, Mr. Koronka, Mr. Mollenhauer, and Mr. Kiel) and one member voted not-in-favor (Mr. Cunningham).

The Council confirmed with Mr. DiMartino that a motion would be needed to bring obligated ARP fund requests before the Board of Commissioners.

- i. Motion to ask the Board of Commissioners to obligate \$4,000 towards the Civil Air Patrol's request for ARP funding made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Rosenbaum.
- ii. Six members voted in favor (Mr. Yagelski, Mr. Rosenbaum, Mr. Novak, Mr. Koronka, Mr. Mollenhauer, and Mr. Kiel) and one member voted not-in-favor (Mr. Cunningham).
- iii. Motion to ask the Board of Commissioners to obligate \$100,000 in ARP funding towards the Hanna Township sidewalk project made by Mr. Yagelski and seconded by Mr. Rosenbaum.
- iv. Six members voted in favor (Mr. Yagelski, Mr. Rosenbaum, Mr. Novak, Mr. Koronka, Mr. Mollenhauer, and Mr. Kiel) and one member voted not-in-favor (Mr. Cunningham)
- v. Motion to ask the Board of Commissioners to obligate ARP funding in the amount of \$500,000 towards the Wanatah sewer project and \$500,000 towards the Kingsford Heights sewer project made by Mr. Rosenbaum and seconded by Mr. Kiel.
- vi. Five members voted in favor (Mr. Rosenbaum, Mr. Novak, Mr. Koronka, Mr. Mollenhauer and Mr. Kiel) and two members voted not-in-favor (Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Yagelski).
- vii. Motion to ask the Board of Commissioners to obligate \$3 million or less in ARP funding towards La Porte County's health insurance made by Mr. Cunningham and seconded by Mr. Koronka.
- viii. All members voted in favor.

Mr. Kiel questioned if an amendment to the salary ordinance needed to be passed before the end of the year to support the approval of employee bonuses in 2025, as elected officials' salaries would be increased, which would affect the totals of the bonuses. Mr. Yagelski recommended holding a meeting on December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 5pm central time, which would allow for proper advertisement of the item.

Mr. Stabosz additionally reported that La Porte County received its 1782 Notice from the DLGF, and believed that they approved the county's proposed budget.

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

**Examined & Approved by the La Porte County Council this 6<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2025.**

  
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Councilman Earl Cunningham

  
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Councilman Adam Koronka

  
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Councilman Justin Kiel

  
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Councilman Mike Mollenhauer

  
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Councilman Randy Novak

  
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Councilman Mike Rosenbaum

  
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Councilman Mark Yagelski

ATTEST:   
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Timothy Stabosz, Auditor