



# 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, November 20, 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 **Richard Lidke**.

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

Considered the agenda. **Commissioner Mrozinski** motioned to add **Sirinek v. Stabosz lawsuit; Appointment to Shared Ethics Advisory Board and Discussion on the Small Animal Shelter**. **Commissioner Haney** seconded. Motion carried 3-0. **Commissioner Mrozinski** motioned to approve the amended agenda. **Commissioner Haney** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Considered approval of the November 6, 2024 minutes. **Commissioner Mrozinski** motioned to approve. **Commissioner Haney** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

**Auditor Tim Stabosz** read the Claims with Payroll ending 11/1/2024 - \$1,486,591.35 & 11/15/2024 - \$1,526,968.57. **Commissioner Haney** motioned to approve both payrolls. **Commissioner Mrozinski** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

**Auditor Tim Stabosz** read the Operating Expense Claims - \$1,608,369.91. **Commissioner Haney** motioned to approve the claims. **Commissioner Mrozinski** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

**Presentation by Civil Air Patrol, John Keiper**, Commander of the Michigan City Squadron, opened June of this year. Currently 35 members between Cadets and Senior members, the Civil Air Patrol is the civilian auxiliary of the United States Air Force. Structure is based on Air Force rules and regulations. Civil Air Patrol was created by Administrative Order 9 on December 1, 1941. Originally it was private pilots flying single engine airplanes off the coast looking for German submarines and different patrol boats. **Lieutenant Colonel Bill Vendramin**, Commander of the adult-only squadron, La Porte Senior Squadron, was introduced, there is an airplane based out of La Porte. It flies based on the needs of the Civil Air Patrol. **Cadet Senior Master Seargent Arabella Winslett**, Michigan City's Squadron, introduced four Cadets: Maverick, Landon, Arianna and Amber. Small unit leadership is one of the things that is taught to the Cadets. A boss tells you what to do, a leader inspires you. National Wreaths Across America Day will be December 14, 2024. A wreath can be sponsored for \$17 and out of that \$17, \$5 goes back to the squadron to help offset the costs for the Cadets. **Chris West**, wife and daughter all joined the Civil Air Patrol in May, the experience has been awesome, they participated in 'encampment' which is a week-long camp event. Currently 14 Cadets are in the Michigan City Cadet program. **President Gramarossa** questioned if it is too late to request ARP funds to be used as a contribution to this organization and the answer was no, it's not too late. **Commissioner Mrozinski** motioned to request ARP funds from the Council. Discussion held on the dollar amount for the 501c3, as per Attorney DiMartino, the funds would have to be for dues or uniforms for Cadets. **Commissioner Haney** motioned to approve \$5,000 for the request. **Commissioner Mrozinski** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

### Public Comment

**Steve Holifield**, 6782 E. 100 S., Mill Creek, the Mill Creek Lions Club is seeking donations for Veterans to participate in Honor Flight trips to Washington, D.C., ensuring Veterans from World War II through Vietnam War an opportunity to visit the memorials and honoring their service and sacrifices for America's freedom. Contact Steve Holifield for further information.

**Andrew Skwiat**, 1655 N. Shebel Road, Michigan City, congratulated Commissioner Joe Haney on his recent election win. Thanked Commissioner Rich Mrozinski for his years of service on both the Council and Commission. Requested a few minutes as a citizen to speak to the Commission with no affiliation to Marquiss Electric nor La Porte County Project Management. Permission granted.

ORIGINAL

**Andrew Skwiat** set up 4 (four) easels with foamboards. Misinformation, Acknowledgeable Information, Real Information and Missing Information. Recently Andrew had Attorney Anthony Novak petition the Plan Commission to rezone his farm from Residential to Agriculture, next Tuesday he will go in front of Commissioner Haney, President of the Plan Commission, and the Board. Almost immediately after the agenda was posted with this petition as an agenda item, a post went out on social media. **'The elites in La Porte County sure know how to play the system, millions handed over in no-bid contracts, what do they do with it? Snag themselves a \$2,000,000 farm for pigeon racing of all things and just look at those property taxes, sliced from \$15,000 a year in 2021 to a laughable \$6,000 in 2023. Now they're pushing the Plan Commission to rezone it from residential to agricultural aiming to cut those taxes even lower.'** That post was followed by this post, **'We don't spread misinformation. We spread missing information.'** All of these posts were made by 'Anonymous.' Andrew is not on social media but he was made aware of the post. His taxes were cut? He needed to look into it so he reached out to Auditor Stabosz, he referred to foamboard 'Acknowledgeable Information,' showing his old residence prior to moving into 1655 N. Shebel Road, he never filed for a Homestead Exemption, zero, every home owner in La Porte County is entitled to yet he never filed for one. He purchased the home in 2023 and the title company checked the box indicating this would be his primary residence and Homestead box was checked as well. He was instructed that it would not take effect until he filed the yellow document in the Auditor's office. Andrew never filed the yellow sheet of paper with that office, never asked for a Homestead Exemption, never asked for his taxes to be lowered. Thankfully the Auditor's office went through the paperwork from the title company and saw the boxes were checked and that is how his taxes were lowered. The post was incorrect, it was also wrong with the accusation that he used money from 'no-bid contracts' to purchase all the property, not true, Andrew referred to foamboard 3, 'Real Information,' he has been acquiring adjacent properties the last 13 years, back to 2011. Four properties were purchased in 2011, 2016, 2018 and 2023. 'Somewhere around here (pointed to a map) I would have built a house on this farm but the land means so much to me I did not want to tarnish the land and develop it.' In 2023, a neighbor reached out to him asking if he wanted to purchase the property because they were moving to Florida but it includes the house, he has dreamed of living on that land, he never wanted to disrupt the land for future generations. Now he can live in the house on the property at 1655 N. Shebel Road and not disturb the land. He went back to the post with 'Misinformation' about his taxes being cut, he referred to the cut taxes, and showed the 4<sup>th</sup> foamboard, 'Missing Information,' in 2019 on one of his properties he showed his receipt for 3,000 White Oak trees and 4,000 White Pine trees to be planted on the farm to improve air quality and protect the agricultural land for future generations. He showed a receipt of \$13,716 he spent to control exotic invasive plants and to make sure the plants on that property were native to our area in Indiana. Another document, from the Office of Indiana State Chemist pesticide applicator permit, is the exact same permit that farmers in this County use to farm for a living. **'To the right is your propriate pesticide applicator permit, it allows you to purchase and apply restricted use pesticides to produce agricultural commodities on property that you control.'** He did not get a permit to apply pesticides to get his taxes lowered. Next, he showed a letter from a State Forester acknowledging Mr. Skwiat has planted 29,000 trees on his non-forested fields over the last year and will continue planting in the Spring of 2025 with another 36,000 trees. 'If 65,000 trees that I'll never live long enough to see mature and harvest is not a statement that this property is being used for agricultural reasons, I don't know what else is, here are all of my seed licenses where I've signed seed signature agreements with the farm companies for seed usage to go along with the pesticide applicator permit.' He personally purchased three developed pieces of property and undeveloped them, returning them to an agricultural state for future generations in our County to enjoy the natural beauty. 'I think it was a big insult by whoever made an anonymous post to make accusations of something they didn't know when it's completely untrue. So, as the leaders of our County (Commissioners) and as the President of the Plan Commission (Commissioner Haney) before I come before you next Tuesday, I want to take a minute of your time to tell my true story.' **President Gramarossa** apologized to Andrew Skwiat on the misinformation that spreads, look around the room and we know who the people are, 'you're never going to stop them, haters will be haters, you're doing a fabulous thing for our County, I thank you tremendously.' It's a shame these people don't do anything to benefit our County and yet here you are doing things to help our County. **Commissioner Mrozinski**, it's a shame when you have an upstanding citizen who does so much for the community, so much for the people and for the County. 'One of the good guys that I've ever met, I value your friendship and to have these haters who are cowards, anonymous they call themselves because they won't come to your face, they talk bad about us all the time but they don't have the guts to come and talk to my face, I wish they would, I'd love to have that conversation but they're gutless trash and I don't know why we got to have people like that but I guess we do but you certainly don't deserve for what they talk about you, well, actually none of us do but I'm proud to know you.' **Andrew** thanked them for their time. **Commissioner Haney** asked Andrew to email the documents for the agricultural information for his property to Plan Commission Secretary Ashley so the members would have it for the meeting. **President Gramarossa**, it's a shame a citizen has to attend our meeting to defend themselves. It's one thing to come after political figures but it's a shame to come after residents. **Commissioner Mrozinski**, they're good at lying, that's about all they're good at.

**Tim Shortt**, Department of Indiana Marine Corp League, **Toys for Tots** Coordinator, collection boxes are out in about 160 locations throughout our County. Final pickup date is December 16<sup>th</sup> so if you want to donate, please do so by that date. In years past, he's told the Commissioners all of the toys distributed to Ukraine children then Kentucky due to disasters, earlier this year there were devastating hurricanes on the east coast, Toys for Tots sent 10,400 to just North Carolina alone for Christmas, the toys were distributed to about 2,600 kids, each receiving 4-5 toys. Commissioners thanked Tim for his efforts with Toys for Tots.

### Department Reports/Comments

**Rich Mrozinski**, Farm Bureau, getting a new building at the fairgrounds, the old building will be donated and more information to follow on the new building.

### Requests

**Considered** permission for travel to Las Vegas January 26-29, 2025, **Steve Eyrick**, Adult Probation, American Probation Parole Association has two trainings every year and the winter training is in Las Vegas, six staff members will be attending and User fees will be used. **Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

**Considered** permission to approach the Council for Food baskets for Problem Solving Court, **Steve Eyrick** for Judge Greta Friedman. **Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

**Considered** permission for Probation Department to conduct a retreat in January at Red Mill Park, providing coffee in the morning and lunch in the afternoon, all paid for with User Fees. **Steve Eyrick** requested permission from both Commissioners then he will go to the Council. **Commissioner Haney motioned to approve. Commissioner Mrozinski seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

**Considered** permission to approach the Council for ARP funding for Towns of Kingsford Heights and Wanatah. **Matt Reardon**, RDC, approached by both towns who are in the middle of utility projects. Both projects qualify under ARP funds for waste water projects, designed to reduce the cost to the residents and allow more developable lots with water and sewer in the County.

**Randy and Duane**, Town of Kingsford Heights has invested well over \$6,000,000 in water main lines, upgrades and manholes lined. Duane handed out paperwork to the Commission. The Town has seen tremendous growth, in the last two years 76 permits have been issued to build new houses, the projection is to accommodate 500 more houses with infrastructure in place. The Waste Water Plant is permitted by the State for 99,000 gallons per day. The paperwork shows updates done at the Waste Water Plant, a clarifier has been added, head works redone, added a new generator but the hiccup at the Plant, the bottleneck that is preventing more waste to be taken in is the mixed liquor tank, the aeration tank and that's what is in the photos or paperwork handed out, there is deteriorated concrete and the hope is to revitalize, add to or build a whole new tank to increase the flow capacity of the Plant to 200,000 per day. **Attorney Guy DiMartino**, if the Town of Kingsford Heights get the spend from the County for ARP funds, is it for aeration equipment at the facility? **Randy**, it'll be for an increase in the capacity of the Waste Water Plant, yes. **Attorney DiMartino**, what estimates do you have for that project, moneywise? **Randy**, estimated around \$500,000. **Attorney DiMartino**, if that is all of the ARP money then the Town wouldn't be putting in any additional funds? **Randy**, if there are any funds left over then we could use it for distribution issues, sewer main lining that needs to be done. **Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve the request to approach the Council. Commissioner Haney seconded** with the caution to the Council that if that money has already been allocated out of the pool that had to be spent on infrastructure and we're looking at taking it out of Lost Revenue, I think the current Lost Revenue is about a million dollars left and considering the financial constraints that our Council is under, I caution them against using Lost Revenue to fund this but if the money is there from the prior commitment funds then this is an apples to apples transfer. **Auditor Stabosz**, that's the way we would see it in the Auditor's office. **Randy**, there are four contractors currently doing work in our Town. **Motion carried 3-0.**

**Ryan and Chuck, Wanatah**, paperwork distributed to the Commission. **Ryan**, Town of Wanatah needs to replace their existing Water Treatment Plant. **Chuck** will speak more intelligently on the Plant. About \$4.5 million dollars will be a burden to put on Wanatah residents, bills will probably double with just sewer alone. In 2017-2018, \$550,000 to \$600,000 was invested into the current Plant, included sandblasting and coating of the tank, steel repairs, installation of new flow meters, upgrades of sludge tank, new UV systems, grinder replacements, new tin for the building and procurements for miscellaneous lab equipment. New proposed plant will be all concrete, about 90% of the equipment will be brand new. Baker Tilly discussion was a proposed budget of \$4 to \$4.5 million dollars which include construction. This could be anywhere from \$30 to \$39 increase for all residents' bill. Rates may be lowered 14% if the Town gets ARP funds from the County. Currently they are at 1,000 gallons per day, 520 customers, 28,000 gallons per day of flow which could lead to potentially 233 new homes. **Chuck** was on the Town Council when the construction was done in 2017-2018, it was a steel construction plant funded through SRF in 1991 and had a 20-year life span. It was still going until 2017 and then Covid came along. Rehab was the only thing done, sandblasting but it was still a steel building. He gave it a 10-year life span and we're in year 5 now, he would like to see a new Plant made of concrete which is about a 60-year life span. **Chuck** runs the Water Treatment Plant and he would like to see expandability, innovation, ways to save. He met with the engineer, ideas of how to get everything they can and using the items purchased in 2017 that can still be used. Maintain the existing lab. It has been difficult for the Town of Wanatah to get any grant funds, did not qualify for OCRA (Office of Community and Rural Affairs). **Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded**, appreciated the handouts with all the information for their request. Another warning to the Council, if for some reason we find we can't take the funds from one account and it has to come from Lost Revenue, he cautions the Council that every bit of the funds may be needed. Instructed the Auditor or Attorney DiMartino on the money given to the City of La Porte, which fund did that come out of and if it came out of Lost Revenue there is a way to adjust that prior to the end of the year. **President Gramarossa**, that is really the Council's position, not the Commissioners. **Motion carried 3-0. Matt Reardon** thanked the Commission for their support.

**Considered** 4 (four) sick days for EMS employee retiring in January, **Brian Beach**, EMS. Sick days have been verified and approved. **Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

### Old Business

**Considered** opening Class 6 material bid for Highway, **Charity Glaser**, Highway, bid was received in a timely manner but sat on a desk in the Auditor's office. **Auditor Stabosz** apologized, a misunderstanding with staff. **Attorney Guy DiMartino** opened the sealed bid from Michael Todd Industrial Supply, Class 6, bond included. **Commissioner Haney motioned to acknowledge bid was timely received. Commissioner Mrozinski seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

**Discussion** held for the Small Animal Shelter water loss damage. **Attorney Guy DiMartino**, in July of this year, a pump broke causing a water loss incident. Commissioner Mrozinski arrived at the facility then called on La Porte County Project Management to conduct mitigation work to stop the loss of water. An insurance claim was filed, adjusters have been out several times. Travelers, insurance carrier, estimated the total loss of \$246,048.42. The way it works for first party claims is the total amount of the estimate, the fair market value is provided to the claimant with depreciation amount, usually 25-30% depending on the age, then the actual cash value is paid out. A check was tendered to the County for \$188,247.82. Once the building is repaired and the invoices paid then the County will be reimbursed the \$32,800 for depreciation. The only cost to the County is the \$25,000 deductible that we have per claim. Recommended this is not a time and material bid, we have the funds, he negotiated with La Porte County Project Management to do the work, beginning to end, for the insurance proceeds plus the deductible or the amount of the insurance claim for the \$246,048.42. Should they get into the claim and there is something else that needs to be done, a supplement to the insurance company would be submitted and they would come out and look at it. **Recommended processing the \$188,274.82 check, get a purchase order for the \$246,048.42 from La Porte County Project Management, pay them the \$188,247.82, when the job is halfway done pay them the \$25,000 deductible then once completed, we pay the \$32,800 then we will receive the \$32,800 from the insurance company.** Four months have gone by and the Small Animal Shelter facility needs to be repaired. **Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded;** the undisputed amount came directly from the insurance company. **Motion carried 3-0. Attorney Guy DiMartino** continued to discuss the Small Animal Shelter facility, it was struck by a vehicle recently and a claim has been open with Progressive Insurance, an email was received from the adjuster requesting additional information, photos, crash report, estimate has been sent to the adjuster. This is for informational purposes only, no vote needed at this time.

### New Business

**Considered** bid opening for Franklin Street Bridge. **Attorney Guy DiMartino** opened the one and only bid while Andy Skwiat stood at the podium. Metropolitan Steel Company, south side of Chicago, submitted only a partial bid for the Bascule Bridge. **President Gramarossa**, how long has this been advertised? **Andy Skwiat**, twice locally and plans were posted on Construct Connect. Several companies reached out to him with additional questions, he responded same business day. **Attorney DiMartino**, some folks are not going to want to hear this but Metropolitan Steel Company's proposal is just under \$400,000 and it is only for a small part of the scope but basically, they're saying they will act as a sub only, **did not bid on the full scope of work.** No bond, no affidavit, a general manager will be required to run the project. **Andy Skwiat**, a letter was received from Metropolitan Steel stating they would only be able to perform a small portion of the bid, they work on all Bascule Bridges in Chicago however they could not find any companies to partner with for this job. They could not submit a bid because it was not a complete one, just a bit of work only. Metropolitan Steel's bid has 59 exclusions and 26 clarifications, it was presented with a cover letter stating Andy's team would have to do the 'heavy lifting' and they would like to be involved in the portion of work they can perform. **President Gramarossa**, please read in to the record the letter from Metropolitan Steel, referred to the 'no-bid contracts' however the advertisements are out there for several weeks and yet no one submits bids. She asked that the top letter be read. **Attorney DiMartino**, Gariup Construction knew about the work but they also understand it is a Bascule Bridge and therefore they did not submit a bid. There is a lot of permits to be applied for, the Coast Guard plays a part in the use of the Bridge and Marquiss Electric has worked on the bridge for years now. **Commissioner Mrozinski**, this is the 4<sup>th</sup> Phase, we all know the ramifications if the bridge is not repaired. It has a great impact on the County and specifically Michigan City. **Attorney DiMartino**, Metropolitan Steel has given you the areas of their work, Marquiss Electric can be appointed to put together the rest of the scope of work and present at a later time because we don't have the cost right now, no other options so late in the year. **President Gramarossa**, what is the percentage of work that they will do? **Attorney DiMartino**, the scope was for two years of work, is this mixed work on both phases? **Andy Skwiat**, in regards to timing, currently on the north side of the bridge the road grate is not even fastened anymore, anytime a car goes over the road the grate bounces because it is detached from the structural steel, the maintenance contractor or the vendor - it is my suggestion that some of those repairs are made, we need to remember that this was a two-year project, this year being the easier of the two, if we rate them on a scale, this year would be a '3' and next year will be a '10' and it scares me so if we're looking at the path and what kind of involvement we're going to get, we need to realize that next year is really tricky. **President Gramarossa**, we're always on a timeline, time constraint, special parts need to be ordered, are we already behind that deadline? Should this have been done a month ago or do we have another month to decide? **Andy Skwiat**, we knew it was going to be a process because of the bid process, if we would have got duly received bids those could have been moved forward at this meeting, I think we would have been in good shape but at this point if the Commission so choses to repair the structure then we'll need to circle back, develop a team, we need to get permitting and get a plan, we've lost time on developing a scope and advertising, now we're under pressure to act. **Commissioner Mrozinski**, use common sense, we've had the same people

working on it for 30 years, always under budget, we've tried to get others to work on it and look what happens, one company only wanting to do certain work on the bridge. **President Gramarossa**, are we fulfilling the word out there about 'no-bid' contracts? We put it out to bid, time spent, where are we? Is there still opportunity to say there is no-bid contract on this scope of work? **Attorney Guy DiMartino**, due to Andy Skwiat acting as Project Manager, none of his entities bid for the job, you can't just sit here right now and tell Andy to go ahead and take the job without a scope, money and the subs you will use...you understand that (directed to Andy) fully? **Andy**, of course. **President Gramarossa**, where do we go from here, do we wait and take a chance of closing the bridge? **Attorney DiMartino**, if the Commission is ok, Andy will have to come back with an idea of what it will cost, the Coast Guard will have to be contacted, do we wait until next year? **Andy**, if the Commissioners are okay with the road grate not being fastened to the structure. **Commissioner Mrozinski**, that's a safety issue to me. **President Gramarossa**, the bridge closes December 1<sup>st</sup>. **Commissioner Haney**, the bouncing road grate is something timely and needs to be done. What portions perhaps need to be done now versus if we build that into next year. **Andy Skwiat**, we made 15 scope items because at the meeting we were voted to be Project Manager, there was no budget established, fair reason, we prioritized those items so we could present them before you and decide what was most important, the cost limit or do we want to take out the ones that are easier or less important, either way, we have to close down the road and shut the structure down. **Commissioner Haney** motioned to acknowledge the partial bid was timely received. **Andy**, I turned that in for them just so we're clear, Metropolitan did not want to turn it in but I did on their behalf. **Commissioner Mrozinski** seconded the timely bid. **Motion carried 3-0**. **Commissioner Mrozinski**, we're liable if we don't address the safety issue. **Motioned for Marquis Electric return to us with a scope of work of what needs to be done this year with a not-to-exceed amount, hopefully get it in for this year**. It's a shame we have to get sidetracked. **Commissioner Haney** seconded. **Motion carried 3-0**. **President Gramarossa**, we have the Festival of Lights in Michigan City coming up and the grate is loose right now, the bridge is down/closed, is there an issue with all the traffic traveling over the bridge? **Andy**, no, thankfully the weather is not too cold and it should be okay for now. \*\*\***Letter attached to minutes**.

**Considered** Project Manager for Michigan City EMS Base. County Engineer **Jay Sullivan** was on vacation and not available via Zoom. **Attorney DiMartino**, we have questions but if he is not available to answer them then... **Commissioner Haney** motioned to table. **President Gramarossa** stepped down and seconded. **Motion carried 2-1**. **Commissioner Mrozinski - Nay**.

**Considered** 2025 Maintenance Contracts for Facilities, **Sheryl Lestinsky**, Director of Facilities. Otis Elevator, Wildman, Hatfield Pest Control, CL Vending, LRS Waste Management, Marquiss Electric and Fire Protection Service which one quote should be coming in. These are all paid out of her current budget, no additional funds are needed. **Commissioner Mrozinski** motioned to accept recommendation of the Facilities Manager. **Commissioner Haney** seconded for discussion, asked if other companies were solicited for the other contracts. **Sheryl**, yes. **Commissioner Haney** asked if Attorney DiMartino has reviewed the contracts. **Attorney DiMartino**, no. **Commissioner Haney**, has not seen any of the contracts either so since the County Attorney has not seen them yet either he motioned to table until the next meeting. **Commissioner Mrozinski**, there is a motion on the floor. **Attorney DiMartino**, it could be an amendment. **Commissioner Haney**, yes, an amendment to your motion. **Attorney DiMartino**, provide the contracts to me and if the Commission wants to see them then pending my review, she would have the authority. **Commissioner Haney**, he would like to see the contracts. **President Gramarossa**, do we have a second? **Commissioner Mrozinski**, no intention of micromanaging her department, he trusts her to know what she is doing. **Commissioner Mrozinski** repeated his motion, accepts the recommendation from the Facilities Director. **President Gramarossa**, the contracts are just renewals, tis is done every year. This should not be a problem. **Commissioner Mrozinski** amended his motion by adding pending Attorney review. **President Gramarossa** stepped down and seconded the motion. **Commissioner Haney**, the previous Director would forward the contracts to the Commission and County Attorney ahead of time. **Sheryl** replied to be sure and do it in the future. **Motion carried 2-1**. **Commissioner Haney - Nay**.

**Considered** addendum to Bridge Inspection Contract. Engineer **Jay Sullivan** is not present nor on Zoom to explain the contracts. **Commissioner Haney** motioned to table. **President Gramarossa** stepped down and seconded. **Commissioner Mrozinski**, we received a letter explaining what happened, we already approved the contract but it didn't get to IDEM in a timely fashion so they said now you have to add an addendum, in other words you have to redo it, it's the same thing we already signed, just not timely. **Attorney DiMartino**, except there appears to be a change but I didn't see the letter, the change seems to be in the term of the contract, the new addendum is for August 1, 2025 to August 31, 2028, the prior contract did not go out that far, I have not seen any letter. I'm asking for clarification from the Engineer as to what the issue is because it looks like this contract is \$119,000 less than the other one and so I don't know what accounts for the \$119,000 because Mr. Sullivan has not gotten back to me. **Motion carried 2-0**. **Commissioner Mrozinski - did not vote**.

**Considered** proposal for December 7, 2024 auction, **Charity Glaser**, Highway Superintendent. A generator removed from the Hanna Garage, a 2006 truck from Maintenance Department, plus items from the Michigan City Courthouse that have been sitting out behind the salt barn, bricks, wrought iron, and safe doors. The items from the Michigan City Courthouse could be done on a separate auction as a Historical Sale. **Attorney DiMartino**, this will have to be published quickly if the sale is on December 7<sup>th</sup>. **Commissioner Mrozinski** motioned to approve. **Commissioner Haney** seconded. **Motion carried 3-0**. **President Gramarossa**, historical items that were removed from the Michigan City Courthouse prior to the renovation were stored at the Highway Department. The wrought iron black fencing that was around the County Home was discovered among these items and will be used at the fairgrounds, it will not

be sold. **Attorney DiMartino**, how about the scrap metal pile, is that still out there? **Charity**, the pile was sold last year as one item itself. Dumpsters have now been installed and items are separated accordingly, no longer one big pile of scrap. It was stated that no matter what department contributes to the auction, all funds go in to the General Fund.

**Charity Glaser**, Highway Department, returned with her 2025 Bid material recommendation. **\*\*\*Attached to minutes.**  
**Commissioner Haney** motioned to approve. **Commissioner Mrozinski** seconded. **Motion carried 3-0.**

**Considered** appointment to Shared Ethics Advisory Board. **Commissioner Mrozinski** motioned to appoint **Randy Novak**.  
**President Gramarossa** stepped down and seconded. **Motion carried 2-1.** **Commissioner Haney - Nay.**

**Considered** *Sirinek v. Stabosz*. **Attorney Alan Sirinek** filed a lawsuit against Auditor Tim Stabosz due to a reduction of a bill that was submitted for payment. Auditor Stabosz is requesting his defense be paid by the County. **Commissioner Mrozinski** motioned that **Mr. Stabosz hire his own attorney, if he wins the case then he can go to the Council to see if they will pay it; if he loses then he loses. Hire your own attorney.** **Commissioner Haney** seconded with an amendment to the motion that any individuals being sued in their personal capacity should be funding their own lawsuit then just for consistency's sake. **President Gramarossa**, was that item put on our docket, did it come through the Commissioners' office on our Claims? **Attorney DiMartino**, There would be no claims because there is no money. **President Gramarossa**, not for the attorney fees, when the amount he is being sued for is a deduction that he made on a bill, so when the bill came through it hits our claim docket, correct? **Attorney DiMartino**, yes. **President Gramarossa**, and the claims docket was for the full amount. **Attorney DiMartino**, \$1,000, correct. **President Gramarossa**, when the Auditor made a deduction, did he clear that with the Commission? **Attorney DiMartino**, I wasn't involved with that, I don't know. **Auditor Stabosz**, I'm here if you have any questions. **President Gramarossa**, I think we need to second - you're here in the capacity as our secretary and so... **Auditor Stabosz**, I'm not merely here in that capacity. **President Gramarossa**, you're here as our secretary, sir. **Auditor Stabosz**, that's your claim, that's not statutorily accurate. **President Gramarossa**, I'm not going to get into with you, you're here as our secretary, I'd like to get further information because again, I think the huge difference is if it came through as a claim, we can't go back and look at this now, we need to table... **Auditor Stabosz**, why don't I tell you. **President Gramarossa**...this until the next meeting so we can see when the claim came through, was it a claim the Commissioners approved a deduction on it or not... **Auditor Stabosz**, why don't I tell you what happened. **President Gramarossa**...so at this point I would like to have - **Commissioner Mrozinski**, we approved the original claim of \$600, we approved that and it was paid but when he took it out of a separate thing that never came before us. **Auditor Stabosz**, actually you did not approve that, Commissioner Matias approved it without the other - without you and Commissioner Haney, she took it upon herself, the next County Attorney told me she did it illegally. **President Gramarossa**, we're not going to get into this, I'm not going to have a discussion with the secretary. Can we have a motion to table this? **Auditor Stabosz**, I don't appreciate... **Attorney DiMartino**, Mr. Mrozinski made a motion and I believe it was seconded. **Commissioner Haney**, I made a motion with an amendment, if that doesn't get a second then both my amendment fails and Commissioner Mrozinski's motion fails. **Attorney DiMartino**, then you can entertain a motion to table, after that it fails or it just dies. **President Gramarossa**, what was your amendment? **Attorney DiMartino**, that anybody that personally is served, obviously sued, you guys are personally sued in a matter, have to pay their own attorney. **President Gramarossa**, was the Commission sued, correct? **Attorney DiMartino**, correct, but that was what the amendment was, correct? **Commissioner Haney**, that is correct. **Auditor Stabosz**, would say what's good for the goose is good for the gander Commissioners. **President Gramarossa**, here we go again, sir, you're out of order, sir, you're out of order. **Auditor Stabosz**, I'm sued personally, you're sued personally, I need to be treated the same way you're treated. You're acting politically against me when I'm entitled to an attorney from this, this is the first time in the history of La Porte County that someone has not been provided an attorney. **President Gramarossa** called for a recess. She asked Attorney DiMartino how to handle it. **Auditor Stabosz**, why don't you ask me about the nature of the dispute I'm having with Sirinek, why don't you ask that? **Attorney DiMartino**, you called for a recess, there was a motion... **President Gramarossa**, we have a motion, do we have a second, she seconded, all those in favor say aye. Both **Commissioners Gramarossa and Mrozinski - Aye.** **Auditor Stabosz**, you called a recess, you got to call 'Back in Session.' **Attorney DiMartino**, let's take a breath, now I'm confused on what was pending so Mr. Mrozinski made a motion - **President Gramarossa**, I seconded. **Attorney DiMartino**, no, Mr. Haney made an amendment saying that what's good for the goose is good for the gander and obviously if anyone is served personally, they're responsible, nobody seconded that and then you called a recess. **President Gramarossa**, we're going to have our secretary screaming in a meeting, I mean this is ridiculous. **Auditor Stabosz**, the Auditor, the Auditor of La Porte County, not the secretary. **President Gramarossa**, you are here in the capacity of a secretary, you're supposed to be taking minutes for us and you don't even do that, you farm that out. **Auditor Stabosz**, I'm not going to respond to personal attacks. **Attorney DiMartino**, Mr. Mrozinski made a motion, Mr. Haney attempted to amend the motion and then there was a recess called. **President Gramarossa** called the meeting back to order. No second was heard for the amended motion therefore it died. **Commissioner Mrozinski's** motion was repeated, motioned that **Mr. Stabosz hire his own attorney, if he wins the case then he can go to the Council to see if they will pay it; if he loses then he loses. Hire your own attorney.** **President Gramarossa** stepped down and seconded. **Auditor Stabosz**, you are hypocrites. **Motion carried 2-1.** **Commissioner Haney - Nay.** **Auditor Stabosz**, hypocrites. **President Gramarossa**, you need to stop sir, you're here as a secretary. **Auditor Stabosz**, you're sued personally also. Pay your own bills. **President Gramarossa**, call for adjournment. **Commissioner Mrozinski**, one more motion, I think it was a month ago the Council did a vote of 'No Confidence' in our Auditor, I thought that was very timely and it needed to be said, **I would make a motion that we also support a motion of 'No Confidence' in our Auditor.** **Auditor Stabosz**, splendid, just

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splendid. **President Gramarossa stepped down and seconded.** Open for discussion. Hearing none, all those...**Commissioner Haney**, we've got roughly six weeks here left, you know, the current make-up here and it's unfortunate that we continue to go down this path as well as rules for some but not for others, it's unfortunate. **President Gramarossa, we have a motion and a seconded, all in favor say aye. Motion carried 2-1. Commissioner Haney - Nay. Auditor Stabosz, pure politics, you should be ashamed of yourselves.**

**Commissioner Mrozinski motioned to adjourn at 8:08 p.m. President Gramarossa stepped down and seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

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MBE/DBE Certified Company

Metropolitan Steel, Inc.  
1931 E 177<sup>th</sup> Street  
Lansing, IL 60438  
Phone: (708) 474-2072  
Fax: (708) 474-2073  
www.metropolitan-steel.com

November 20, 2024

RE: LaPorte Highway Department  
**Project 2024.2585.1**  
Rehabilitation of Bridge 505  
Franklin Street over Trail Creek  
Bridge Repairs  
Michigan City, IN

This letter is to inform you that Metropolitan Steel, Inc. (MSI) has made a good faith effort to subcontract the structural steel scope work to a General Contractor for the above project to no avail.

MSI has been informed that Marquiss Electric, Inc. in Michigan City Indiana could fulfill any obligations for MSI that the General Contractor would have provided as far as other crafts and equipment needed to do MSI's work.

Attached is a Proposal to complete all of the Contract Documents field repairs that MSI will perform as long as MSI is awarded all the work as listed.

MSI has extensive project experience in repairing and building bascule bridges in the Chicagoland area and considers itself qualified to perform this scope of work at the Franklin Street Bridge.

Thank you for this opportunity and we look forward to working with the County of LaPorte, Michigan City, Indiana.

Sincerely,

*Alex Mitchell*

Metropolitan Steel Incorporated  
**Alex Mitchell**  
**Bridge Estimator**

cc: File

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# LAPORTE COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

1805 W 5<sup>th</sup> Street

LaPorte, IN 46350

Telephone: (219) 362-2051 Fax : (219) 362-4221

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November 14, 2024

RE: LaPorte County Highway Annual Material Bid Recommendations for 2025

## **Class 1 - Crushed Limestone**

### Two Bidders:

US Aggregates Inc.

South Lake Stone

We will accept both bids.

## **Class 2 – Bituminous Patching / Rap Materials**

### Two Bidders:

Rieth-Riley Construction Co., Inc.

Central Paving Inc.

We will accept both bids.

## **Class 3 – Blast Furnace Crushed Slag**

No Bidders

## **Class 4 – Ice Sand, Gravel, Dirt & Top Soil**

No Bidders

## **Class 5 – No-lead, Diesel and E-85**

### One Bidder:

Triple J-Mar Petroleum, Inc.

We will accept the bid.

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**Class 6 – Signs and Sign Posts**

One Bidder:

Michael Todd Industrial Supply – bid arrived on time but was not opened. Will open the bid during the meeting. \*\*\*Opened at the meeting, Accepted.

**Class 7 – Culvert Pipe and Guardrail**

Three Bidders:

Debco Metal Culverts  
St Regis Culvert, Inc.  
Metal Culverts, Inc.

We will accept both Debco and St Regis's bids. Debco will be our primary bidder and St Regis

Metal Culverts bid came in late, it will be returned.

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

12-9-2024  
*Cynthia Chapman*  
*Paul M. ...*

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_ Auditor  
LA PORTE COUNTY, INDIANA

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