



LA PORTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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

Connie Gramarossa
President

Steve Holifield
Vice President

Joseph Haney
Member

La Porte County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes Wednesday, April 2, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. County Complex Room 3

President Connie Gramarossa called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Rich Gramarossa.

Auditor Mike Rosenbaum called the roll: **Commissioner Haney** - Present; **Commissioner Holifield** - Present and **Commissioner Gramarossa** - Present. Quorum present therefore meeting commenced.

Considered the agenda. **Commissioner Holifield** motioned to approve the agenda. **Commissioner Haney** motioned to add **E-911 Dispatcher Week**. **Commissioner Holifield** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Considered approval of the March 20, 2025 minutes. **Commissioner Haney** motioned to approve. **Commissioner Holifield** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Auditor Mike Rosenbaum read the Claims with Payroll ending 3/21/2025 - \$1,529,834.65. **Commissioner Haney** motioned to approve payroll. **Commissioner Holifield** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Auditor Mike Rosenbaum read the Operating Expense Claims - \$1,052,348.95. **Commissioner Holifield** motioned to approve the operating claims. **Commissioner Haney** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Public Comment

Jackie Dermody, Family Advocates, announced April is Child Abuse Prevention Month with a message 'if you see something, say something,' phone number is 1-800-800-5556 to report abuse. Distributed Child Abuse Awareness Pins to the Commissioners.

Department Reports/Comments

Barb Huston, E-911 Director, reported April 14-19, 2025, is Telecommunicators Week when Dispatchers are honored. Informed Commissioners in 2023 155,424 calls came in to the E-911 Center, 66,663 were emergency calls. In 2024, 149,911 calls were answered with 66,597 being emergency calls. For January 2025, 11,417 calls, February 2025, 10,406 and in March, 12,979 calls were answered making a total of 35,341 calls to the center. Commissioners are welcome to visit with Dispatchers during this week. It's not an easy job and we have great Dispatchers that do a wonderful job. Barb requested April 14th to use the room between Warrants and E-911 for food/drinks. **President Gramarossa**, permission was approved to use the room.

Rob Sabie, Emergency Management, busy work for everyone, after Sunday's (March 30th) storm received calls from the Fire Chief in Lincoln Township on the damage from the storms. Trees down and trees on homes. Straight-line winds with approximately 70-80 mile an hour. Trail Creek in Michigan City had significant damage as well. State sent a damage assessment team on Monday, 17 significant damages and 37 minor damages. If anyone had damages, call 211 and report it. May be more storms today.

Mike Rosenbaum, Auditor, we were the 9th County to have our tax abstract down to DLGF, it was reviewed the first week of March then turned over to the Treasurer's office. The process begins with the Assessor's office, Auditor's office next then the Treasurer's office.

Shaw Friedman, Attorney, updated Commissioners on the County's filings in IURC cause #46183. Economic Development Director Matt Reardon expressed concern that NIPSCO was delaying negotiations with data center developers. Turns out NIPSCO filed this petition in January seeking approval from the IURC to set up a largely unregulated subsidiary called NIPSCO Generation LLC that would essentially finance, develop, build and supply power to mega load users. Shaw provided the Commission with a copy of the

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testimony filed earlier this week from expert witness Michael O'Connell. United Steelworkers in a statement said, 'La Porte County has built a reputation over the years throughout Indiana as a leader in holding NIPSCO accountable.' We need regulators who will do their jobs and balance ratepayer interests. One of the Governor's campaign pledges was utility affordability. To do that we need new members of the Regulatory Commission who are more consumer friendly and not simply rubber stamps for the investor-owned utilities and its high time that someone from the NIPSCO service territory be appointed to the Utility Commission as well as five members currently are from Indianapolis and they do not pay NIPSCO rates. Again, 317-232-4567 urging the Governor to replace current IURC members. Thank you for the opportunity to update you on this case. **Commissioner Haney**, this cause number is different then the Rate Tax Increase? **Attorney Friedman**, yes. **Commissioner Haney**, will this fall under the original \$50,000 we set? **Attorney Friedman**, it's a separate case. **Commissioner Haney**, I was sick one day so maybe – **Attorney Friedman**, the Commission authorized an intervention. **Commissioner Haney**, thank you.

Requests

Considered permission to hold 13th Annual Blue Walk: Prevent Child Abuse, **Megan Nearn**, First United Methodist Church in La Porte. Blue ribbons were handed to Secretary Gonzales for the Commission. **Commissioner Holifield motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Considered permission to approach the Council to spend funds to purchase equipment. **Charity Glaser**, Highway Superintendent, purchase from budget, no additional appropriation needed for 3 2025 Ford F550 Utility Dump Trucks; 2 4-ton asphalt hotbox; Shouldermaster; Altec Forestry Bucket Truck and Hydro-Excavator. **Commissioner Holifield motioned to approve. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Old Business

None

New Business

Considered contract with EDA Consulting LLC. **Mike Rosenbaum**, Auditor. **County Attorney Guy DiMartino**, a few edits were made, services are \$150 an hour, not-to-exceed \$45,000 for the term of the contract. Recommended approval of the contract. **Commissioner Holifield**, the services in the contract will help the Assessor, Auditor and Treasurer's offices? **Auditor Rosenbaum**, yes. **Commissioner Holifield motioned to approve the contract. Commissioner Haney seconded for discussion purposes.** Were other quotes received for these services? **Auditor Mike Rosenbaum**, no, two individuals from the firm used in the past have since left and one of the contracts is under \$50,000 so there was no need for other quotes. Staff in his office recommended the services of this company. **Commissioner Haney**, he would feel remised here if he did not mention that the previous person doing this work for the Auditor last year testified in a trial that he 'was threatened that he would never work in La Porte County again by Attorney Shaw Friedman' and here we are now first time for this contract to come up for renewal since that trial and that person is not getting the work in La Porte County and that's worth noting, thank you. **President Gramarossa**, the Commission did not approve that contract, the vendor was hired anyway and paid out of the Auditor's office, whether legally or illegally, and people went rogue. **Auditor Mike Rosenbaum**, we did evaluate using that person, I have no idea about a court case you're referring to but it was based upon staff working with that person, last year that person was four weeks late and that determined not to use him this year. The work that was done was paid. **Commissioner Gramarossa seconded. Motion carried 2-1. Commissioner Haney – Nay.**

Commissioner Holifield motioned to adjourn at 10:30 a.m. Commissioner Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

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

DATE 4-16-2025
[Signature]
[Signature]
[Signature]

ATTEST: _____
Auditor

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LA PORTE COUNTY, INDIANA