



**MEETING MINUTES
LA PORTE COUNTY COUNCIL
MARCH 24, 2025**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Adam Koronka at 6:00 pm.

Koronka: Good evening, I'd like to call the LaPorte County Council meeting to order. Please silence all cell phones while we stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Yagelski

Roll Call

Koronka: Mr. Auditor, could you please call the roll?

Auditor Rosenbaum: All are present.

Councilmember	Kessler	Kiel	Koronka	Mollenauer	Novak	Pressel	Yagelski	Total	
Present	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	7	✓
Absent								0	

Approval of the Agenda

Brett Kessler: Mr. President, I have a couple corrections to the agenda as presented. First item would be to scratch appointment of county, pardon me, appointment of county council attorney. The second would be to add liaison reports in between department heads and correspondents. The third item, if we could move EDC director Matt Reardon from new business back to or and resolutions. And then the last thing would be under old business, add treasurer's office request to hire first or second deputy. That's all the corrections I have. Mr. Kessler made the motion to accept the changes and it was supported by Mark Yagelski. Vote as follows:

Councilmember	Kessler	Kiel	Koronka	Mollenauer	Novak	Pressel	Yagelski	Total	
AYE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	7	✓
NAY								0	

Approval of the February 24th, 2025 Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve was made by Mr. Yagelski and supported by Mr. Novak.

Councilmember	Kessler	Kiel	Koronka	Mollenauer	Novak	Pressel	Yagelski	Total	
AYE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	7	✓
NAY								0	

Public Comment

Koronka: Anyone from the public like to speak?

- Good evening, Steve Hollifield, 6782 East 100 South, also County Commissioner.

Just giving a little update on legislation. I spoke with Representative Pressel on Friday afternoon. Senate Bill 1 is moving ahead, but it is under lots of amendments. But it's still, if currently passed, we're looking at \$2.5 to \$3 million restrictions, a loss in the first year alone. If it's vetoed, it sits still and does nothing for at least one to two years. But these changes are coming. I mean, we need to seriously look at curtailing spending, vehicles, department heads, directorships, raises, stuff like that. We're hearing a lot every day. I heard it on sound off today. The county employees are tired of being passed up for raises, but yet other people are getting raises and other things are being spent. So I just hope you guys realize that as we go through today's agenda.

- Thank you. This is Tommy Kolovec from 1316 Ohio Street. I'm a Michigan city man. Good evening to our distinguished and honorable LaPorte County Council members. I'd like to make a couple public service announcements. You're looking for a good summer job and this is maybe for your teenager, they're hiring age 16 and up, college students, young adults, maybe you're older, you're a good swimmer. They pay almost 30 bucks an hour. Mayor Parry put that pay scale in about four years ago. We pay the highest rates for any lifeguards on Lake Michigan. Michigan City, Washington Park, lifeguards needed. Requirements, must have a valid driver's license, must pass a drug screening. Must pass a prerequisite swim prior to the hiring, test date to be determined, must currently be a certified lifeguard or enrolled in a lifeguarding class. The Valparaiso and the Port YMCA are currently offering lifeguarding classes. Applications be picked up at Michigan City City Hall at 100 East Michigan Boulevard or the Michigan City Fire Department's Administration Building Training Center on Michigan Boulevard, Across the McDonald's we all been to town over that set for mirror information. You can send a message or contact them at 2 1 9 8 7 3 1 4 4 0 extension 4 0 0 4 and that's our public information officer Tia free We need like us mostly goes out to those in South County or maybe I'll know people from around the state while she's meeting Come up here make a lot of money be a lifeguard during the summer. I also want to mention This is something really special for all the veterans out there. Just so everybody, I had a conversation with the vice commander at the American Legion, Skwiat Post 451. November 29th is National Vietnam Veterans Day. This was a day that was established by President Barack Obama in 2017. It was that day on March 29th, 1974, when the last US troops were pulled out of Vietnam. So if you know of Vietnam vet thank them for our service if you're here Vietnam vets and thank them for their service I also want to talk Mary she's gonna have another town hall meeting at the Hope Center on McAllen lab the Becky Williams Center near the old Park Elementary School and one of the things that bound to come up is the redevelopment the prison and one thing that I always said what's gonna become of the cemetery grounds at the prison I know that was talked about last year that your County Council that it's going to become a you wanted to revert into Laporte County Pioneer Cemetery and I don't think you're on the right page. Mayor Angie, she wants the city to take control of that. I think it would be best that the county takes over. Right now the city, they really can't maintain Greenwood and Swan Lake Memorial Gardens. It's gotten so bad that last December there was an elderly gentleman that came before our city council and he reported it's gotten so bad the vagrants are coming out and they're making a temporary abode out of his wife's mausoleum at Swan Lake Memorial Gardens. I think that was really sickening. You know, I think it would be great. Those men, they go from being prisoners to pioneers. So with that all being said, I'll conclude my public comment for tonight.

May peace be with you and smoking carbon monoxide detector to save lives.

- Good evening, Jackie Dermody with Family Advocates. And I am just here with a little public service announcement as well. April is child abuse Prevention Awareness Month. And just a reminder that in Indiana, we are all mandated reporters. The 800 number for families to call is 800-800-5556. And I also have little child abuse prevention pins for everybody, if I could pass those out. Thank you. Have a good night. You as well. Jackie, there's a candlelight vigil too in April.

April 16th, Geminis is hosting a candlelight vigil at City Hall. I believe it's five or six o'clock. Yes, that's correct. If you want to go down the list of events, there's a slew. I will say that if you go to LPFamilyAdvocates.com, we are having a breakfast, a child abuse prevention breakfast. We are collaborating with Doom Brook on Friday, April 11th. It is free. It is for community members. We have a speaker, and I believe it starts at eight o'clock. You can register online. And I think there's a list of all the events for April. We have Wiffle Ball, that Ola badge is coming up on April 12th also. So there's a lot, there's a lot happening, so. Yeah, I think United Methodist Church has something too.

Department Head Reports

Koronka: Any department heads that want to speak? Any on Zoom?

Hearing none, department head reports are now closed.

Liaison Reports

Mr. Pressel: Sir, Mr. President, so I'm meeting with FMEC regularly.

Planning Commission, VZA meetings, meeting with all of them. Walk through a community corrections to look at the kitchen. Definitely needs some addressing on there, and that's it.

Mr. Yagelski: Nothing

Mr. Mollenhauer: Nothing

Mr. Kiel: I spoke with all my liaison assignments this month, particularly weights and measures. He'll be having conversations with you all in the coming weeks or months about a request that he has. Mr. Yagelski asked that I speak with him, so he's familiar with that. Spoke with the chief public defender about their office and some of the things they have coming up and looking forward to budget hearings. Spoke with the surveyor's office and the recorder's office as well. Made a visit over to both of them. And I think that concludes my report.

Mr. Novak: So the usuals, FMEC, RDC and maybe Matt can give a little bit when he comes up about the groundbreaking that we attended out at KIP. That's some fantastic news out there. Attended the insurance meeting today with Adam. Spoke several times with Karl Cender regarding trying to get a handle on wheel tax if the county were to have to implement it because our state reps are telling us that it is inevitable and it's coming. And so we're just getting numbers together. This isn't saying it's coming in, but we're getting prepared for it. And then the extension board this last week, their annual dinner. So that's it.

Mr. Kessler: Nothing at this time.

Koronka: EMS and Stryker life saving updates

One thing I will add is for myself and Mr. Kessler was present, met with EMS regarding how to take the striker end of life guarantees that come with a lot of the life-saving equipment and looking at financing

options in order to move forward with the proposal. Anticipate seeing him come to this meeting next month with what I believe is an advantageous proposal for the county to be able to move forward with that yet. Frugal with our funds. With that, liaison reports are closed. Correspondence? None. I don't have it. Okay.

Correspondence

Koronka: All right. The one thing that I would add is that's mentioned here is from Mr. George Callas gave us each a packet on at last meeting I provided to Joie just this evening in order to make a copy and to be able to scan that into the record. We probably have already done thinking was last month because we did originally have them on here and we pulled them off thinking that it was last month. Okay. All right. With that, moving on to ordinances and resolutions. Number one, a resolution establishing the policy by which members of the County Council may participate by electronic means of communicating. We held this over from the February meeting.

Ordinances and Resolutions

"A Resolution Establishing the Policy by Which Members of the County Council May Participate by Electronic Means of Communication" (Held from February meeting)

Koronka: Mr. Novak, since you've been working with the attorney on this.

Mr. Novak: So I handed out and the council received it ahead of time, the red line items since the last planning commission meeting, there were a couple of tweaks made to it. So that basically in a nutshell, Well, it allows members of the council to attend one meeting unless they have an acceptable excuse listed below to attend a Zoom meeting. And then other than that, it's only for invited guests, such as, the way I see that is if there were a elected official or a department head that was on the agenda, they could request a Zoom link if they couldn't make it, but the Zoom link would not be published publicly and put out there. So it would be for people that have business with the specific agenda for that meeting. So, it's open to, I'm open to suggestions here.

Mr. Kiel: Yeah, I have a few suggestions on the part about who's able to get the link for this meeting. I think it's nice that we have Zoom available for people, members of the public who want to attend. We have people in our County who are disabled, who may live 50 minutes from our courthouse, who might be single mothers with three kids and don't have time to drive up here to come to a meeting to give public comment. And I think it's nice that we have that and we're going to continue having Zoom. I'd like to see us have a method of those sort of people or anybody who wants to attend via Zoom request the link so we have their contact information. I think that that would successfully reduce the risk of them hijacking our meetings as has happened in the past. While still balancing the desire to have accessibility for our meetings. So, I'd offer up an amendment to this line to include anyone who requests access, pick a reasonable number of hours before the meeting and they can be given an email specific link to attend.

Mr. Novak: I could agree with that if they have specific business with the agenda. In other words, it's not just an open Anybody and everybody from the public can call in and go, hey, I want to link, I want to link, I want to link. That would defeat the whole purpose of tightening the use of zoom. So, I mean, would someone having just wanting to share public comment be specific enough to request a link?

Mr. Kiel: I guess if they wanted, if they needed to make a public comment, yeah.

OK. And are we comfortable for people who's, like jobs, like reporters who might want to report on meetings and attend via Zoom who don't necessarily have business before us?

Mr. Novak: No, that's true. And the thing is, and it's also on YouTube. So, to say, because here's the thing, Zoom links aren't always the most friendly, if you're not tech savvy, they're not the easiest things to always get on and get everything working. So there are other avenues for doing this. I mean, this is just to tighten it up so we don't have to deal with the shenanigans anymore. It's not to restrict. Public, it's just, if you didn't see it, you don't want to see it again. That's all I'm going to say.

Koronka: So I keep hearing the word Zoom through all of this. And one thing that I've found is that Zoom isn't the only application and only solution for such thing, right? And the biggest change that we would have to make is to where it is unique links assigned to the participant. That way you actually have some traceability as to who's involved with the meeting versus just having an open link, what we've had publicly posted on our website, detached door minutes, it's the same link every month. So there would need to be some changes there.

Mr. Yagelski: I guess the biggest thing that happened was, is that when all this Zoom came about, it was kind of thrown together. Somebody said, Hey, there's an idea about Zoom and it became overnight success. And we didn't really get a chance to actually study or do the stuff we did, which is a good thing. Think we have this out. Anyway, but the problem with that particular night on the council meeting was that there's a generic people that are just put out for departments. And they don't have nothing to do with that department. So, if we were going to do this, we're going to have even a modified one. We need to get our departments who want to do it educated and put their name on it. Sample the person that night that signed up. It's not that individual's fault. The problem was they left all the safeguards down that were not proper for meeting. So, we have to have an educational part with this that we were never sort of in 2021 when this whole world came to an end, or 2020, I'm sorry, whatever it was, and we just happily just jumped in this first thing that was available. But I know the particular people, we have people that have nothing to do with departments that are, their names are signed off on this stuff. That's all, thank you. All right, thank you.

Mr. Novak: The other, the other thing is, is as long as we're allowing outside participants, we have to have an IT technician here to run it. And it can't just be, you know, I mean, sometimes at redevelopment, we just have somebody sitting over there and letting people in, in the past, we don't do that anymore. But, you know, it requires somebody to be here. And there is a cost of that, so.

Mr. Mollenhauer: Didn't the county commissioners do away with Zoom also? They did away totally with it, and that's, this isn't as restrictive, I mean, I could see a reason for it, such as, you know, the commissioner's attorneys on Zoom.

Mr. Novak: Sometimes there's reason, department heads, you know, if a department head had to report, and sometimes in the past we've had department heads sit here till nine o'clock at night just ask for permission to spend and I mean that's a long time when they've got families they don't get paid extra for that so they'd be able to zoom in still any other comments or suggestions

Mr. Kiel: One other concern was I think we could still clarify what regularly scheduled council meetings are just a little bit more perhaps saying like specifically the fourth Monday of the just so that this isn't creatively reinterpreted down the line, or that there's not confusion in the future.

Mr. Biege: Right now it says- So it's regularly scheduled council meetings. So those are the ones that we approve at the beginning of the year.

Mr. Kiel: Okay. But we don't say that anywhere in here. So someone later might come up with a different, it just says regularly scheduled.

Mr. Biege: I think that's what you want. You get too specific, we're going to have to pass a new resolution. This is specific enough. So to clarify, that's the That's the understanding I have. It's the ones that were approved at the beginning of the year. If a meeting gets moved off of that, then it doesn't count as one of the meetings or if it's a special meeting or things like that.

I would prefer the language here because let's assume for the purpose of discussion, the council changes its mind next year and has it on the third Thursday of the month. I don't know, whatever. Well, we may or may not remember this resolution. If I put it this way, we have one definition and that is what you guys define it to be in the beginning of the year.

Mr. Kiel: Fair enough. So, with that, I would make a motion to approve the resolution with one edit under the first or the second whereas, so that the final sentence of the second bullet reads.

Mr. Koronka: Motion to read by title only. Do I have a motion to read by title only? Motion made by Mr. Novak and seconded by Mr. Yagelski to read by title only.

Auditor Rosenbaum: *Laporte County, Indiana County Council resolution number 2025-03A. A resolution establishing the policy by which members of the county council may participate by electronic means of communication.*

Mr. Koronka: Thank you. So now, at this point, I would ask for a motion to approve tonight.

Mr. Kiel: Motion to approve the resolution with an amendment under the second bullet point of the second whereas so that the final sentence reads allows for elected officials, county attorney, department heads and guests who request a link in advance only.

Koronka: Do I have a second?

Mr. Novak: I'll second that with a friendly amendment to your amendment.

Mr. Novak: The guests that I guess that have business. Oh, okay. In other words, with this agenda, or if they want to make a public comment, but it's not a tool to sit and just watch the meeting.

Mr. Koronka: An active participant.

Mr. Novak: Right.

Mr. Kiel: I'm probably partial to it being more open, but I'm open to other viewpoints. Guests who have business with the county who request a link in advance that would be the final language.

Koronka: All right so that suggestion came from Mr. Yagelski on a second from Mr. Novak Mr. Novak's good, I'm comfortable with it. And is the attorney following everything over there? No. We'll be listening to this over and over again.

A discussion took place as follows among the council & attorney:

What paragraph are you talking about again? It's down in the red part.

Yeah, the red part, the second bullet of the second whereas.

Where I have all my life. And he wants to remove the word invited, and it would be guests who have...

Guests who have business before the county who request a link in advance.

I got it. Business with the county. Thank you.

We have a motion and a second. Just for clarification, who do they request that from It shouldn't be from, I guess, any and every council member just willy-nilly handling it out. Maybe they need to get it through the auditor's office.

That way you got one point, and they can say who it is. He's the secretary of the council, so we could just call it secretary of the council.

Right.

I'm good with that.

All right, so we have a motion, we have a second. Everything's clear up here. Good with the attorney who's finalizing resolution.

The vote was as follows:

Councilmember	Kessler	Kiel	Koronka	Mollenauer	Novak	Pressel	Yagelski	Total	
AYE	X	X	X	X	X	X		6	✓
NAY							X	1	

Continuing with Ordinances and Resolutions:

Mr. Matt Reardon the director of Economic Development for an Economic Revitalization Area & Abatement. Thank you, Mr. Koronka

Mr. Reardon: We had a request for assistance from a company that's looking to locate in LaPorte County, as Councilman Novak pointed out. Company purchased property and had a ribbon cutting, and that's just the beginning of the project. The request is for personal property tax abatement consideration that comes along with creation of the economic revitalization area. I like to give the existing conditions for these kind of things. Before the council would make a decision. So today there's 28.788 acres at 3500 East Central Avenue. If anybody in the crowd knows where that is, my hat's off to you. It's deep in Kingsbury. This company Nexus applied for a variance or excuse me, a special exception permit and was awarded by the planner commission for their operations of their biogas facility. And in addition to that, the company is required to procure a limited solid waste permit, which they did from the Indiana

Department of Environmental Management in June of 2023. And in order for them to do all that and get everything organized, that was before they had to buy the property and closed. So what you have before you is a resolution that would allow for consideration for personal property tax abatement. So again, going back to the existing conditions, the county annually receives 400, I'm sorry, not the county, the total tax bill is \$492 on this parcel. Simply by the change of use of this facility, that would go up annually to approximately \$78,000 in assessment. You go from assessment of 1,200 to 20,000 per acre for commercial industrial. So, the total investment \$70 million, 11 jobs with 1.1 million wages. And over the 10 years, we would collect \$1.7 million in both real property and then the graduated relief from personal property. Part of the other operations of this is that with this permit they procured from IDEM, they're required to decommission this facility if it doesn't work. And that would be some of the concerns that might be out there. What happens if it doesn't work? We know what happens when it doesn't work. It's part of their approvals from the state. There's also a hold on financing related to that cost and embedded into the approval of the contract. Company has to also report out quarterly their operations and their level of participation. So, we have a lot of sets of eyes on this, not just the county from the Plant Commission side, but also the Indiana Department of Environmental Management. If the council sees fit to approve this resolution during the next meeting, there would be a public hearing and consideration for approval of the statement of benefits that was included in your packet. And before that, you would have a public hearing and then a confirmatory resolution. Anybody have any questions?

Mr. Koronka: Motion to read the resolution by title only was made by Mr. Novak and supported by Mr. Kiel.

Mr. Kiel: This is located inside the KIP, correct?

Mr. Reardon: Right.

Mr. Kiel: So, this abatement isn't actually impacting the county's property tax collections. It's impacting yours.

Reardon: Well, technically it's not at all because we collect only real property in our TIF district. So, this does not abate real property tax, only personal property.

Mr. Kiel: So, it would affect the county then?

Mr. Reardon: It would have an impact on the county, yes. It would actually increase the amount of money the county gets over the \$492 a month in year two by thousands. That's what it would do.

Mr. Koronka: All right, so I have a motion and a second to read by title only. All in favor?

Councilmember	Kessler	Kiel	Koronka	Mollenauer	Novak	Pressel	Yagelski	Total	
AYE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	7	✓
NAY								0	

Mr. Rosenbaum: We're going to call this resolution number 2025-3B, A Resolution of LaPorte County Council identifying and declaring portions of LaPorte County, Indiana be designated as an Economic Revitalization Areas pursuant to IC 6-1.0-12.1 et seq.

Motion to approve was made by Mr. Novak and supported by Mr. Kessler. Vote was as follows:

Councilmember	Kessler	Kiel	Koronka	Mollenhauer	Novak	Pressel	Yagelski	Total	
AYE	X	X	X	X	X	X		6	V
NAY							X	1	

Mr. Koronka: Thank you. See you next month.

New Business

Permission to hire 4-H Administrative Assistant – Purdue Extension Office

Permission to hire Animal Control Officer – Jane Bernard Animal Shelter

**Permission to hire Case Manager – Community Corrections*

**Permission to hire Naturalist – LaPorte County Parks*

Permission to begin the search for one Maintenance Person and one HVAC Technician

Mr. Koronka: Permission to hire a 4-H administrative assistant for the Purdue Extension Office.

Mr. Yagelski: Are all these just replaced current employees? Is there anybody new on this or just replacing current employees?

Mr. Koronka: These are all existing employees. You'll see that three of them, including the permission to search for maintenance person and HVAC technician, who was given permission to begin the process by me earlier.

Mr. Yagelski: Make a motion to approve all these. Supported by Mr. Novak.

Mr. Mollenhauer: Is that where that Treasurer's Office hiring was also?

Mr. Koronka: No. We had that down under old business.

Mr. Mollenhauer: Okay.

Councilmember	Kessler	Kiel	Koronka	Mollenhauer	Novak	Pressel	Yagelski	Total	
AYE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	7	V
NAY								0	

Mr. Koronka: Thank you. So now we are on HR Director.

Ms. Monique Thomas on behalf of the Personnel Committee: Good evening. Good evening, gentlemen. We have re-evaluated of the MS-4 director position.

In February the evaluation committee met and we re-evaluated the MS-4 coordinator director position. I believe you all have the information in your packets that was submitted to you and the outline of the budget, the duties and responsibilities that were updated from the current MS4 for the person who was doing the job.

Mr. Koronka: So, what I have here is I have an email requesting for the re-evaluation to be on the agenda. Is there additional information that was supposed to be involved with this? I see you looking to Mr. DiMartino.

Attorney Guy DiMartino:

Just a little background and not to point fingers at anybody or anything like that. We've had issues over the years with MS-4. A couple of years ago, IDEM really came down on us with the new permitting and Mr. Beige and myself put together that whole ordinance. Remember that Mr. Bigi with the permit? Up against the gun with that and the MS-4 department has really struggled, partially because it's such a technical job. You have all the regulations for the state, you have the permit regulations, you have stormwater regulations, and you have all these technical requirements. So, in looking at this, we've had some discussions with Mr. Koronka, with Mr. Kessler, with Mr. Pressel about how we can make the department stronger and actually make the department exemplary so eventually, if the county decides to go forward, it can make its MS4 department a utility in and of itself. So, in order to do that, you need somebody with the technical qualifications. And so, part of this, what went before the job evaluation committee was the fact that in order to have this job, you need to have a bachelor's of science in environmental, civil, engineering, natural resources, or a related field. You have to have 10 plus years of experience in stormwater management. You have to be certified as a stormwater professional. This is really a professional and technical job. And so based on that, this information was submitted to the job evaluation committee. In looking at the numbers and in looking at the actual program, within 18 months, this program should be self-sufficient. So, any additional funding at that point in time from the council will really not be required. The county will be able to support that office and support that position with technical reviews. And then the next step at that point in time, we can look at actually make the MS4 and stormwater area a utility where it can actually be very supportive for the county. So, this would be the first step in doing so. You know, there was over the years, you had an MS4 coordinator, then it went under the building department. And you remember when all we had all that stuff, where is it going to be under the commission, under the building department and all that. This will give the office some structure and to move forward. Does anybody have any specific questions?

Mr. Yagelski: We first had to introduce the idea of the MS4 in 2004. We worked with all the communities to get everybody in. I agree with what you're saying, by the way, Mr. DiMartino, but I'm also suggesting when we talked about making savings for the county, I'd really like to work with other municipalities. And if this person is as strong as you say that person would be, we would bring them all back into the fold and we'd all pay a percentage of this like we did in the past. What happened was our person that we had didn't do a good job in Michigan City bowed out first and havoc happened after that. Then we all separated and we all, it's my turf and not yours and so on and so forth. I think if we had the person to say we have, I think we could make a logical stance and say that we could bring us all back together again and everybody pay their fair share by municipality and we've already had that worked out in the past.

Mr. Guy DiMartino:

I would agree, but I think first we have to have a strong department. So like Michigan City and Long Beach who bowed out, and then Trail Creek who bowed out, where these other municipalities would see that this would be the right way to go. But you know, right now we're having some stress, for lack of a better word, with the folks at Michigan City regarding things. And as a backup, I'm agreeing with your first part. I'd like to see the second part happen if we could do that.

Mr. Koronka: That's all, thank you, any further questions?

Mr. DiMartino: Thanks for your time.

Mr. Koronka: Thank you, Guy.

Mr. Koronka: We need approval of this.

Mr. Novak made the motion to accept this change. Support was made by Mr. Yagelski.

Kiel: Specifically, what is the approval doing here?

Mr. Novak: Restructuring of the MSD. That whole department. Thank you.

Mr. DiMartino :

Mr. Kiel, I believe it's also changing the salary requirements and how Mr. Vicari will be getting paid. He'll be getting money from the grant that he's managing on the stormwater side. And there's some other aspects to it, but I don't have that in front of me. I don't know if Ms. Thomas has that in front.

Ms. Thomas:

Didn't we say it was the permitting fees part of it will come from the permit fees.

Correct.

Mr. DiMartino:

Part of it still comes from soil and water. Yes. Right. And then there's also money in the fund that's built up for the fees that we've been getting over the years. The only additional funding, I believe, at this point in time is \$15,000. That's going to be requested at some point in time, but right now there's money And so that's what I believe the numbers are.

Mr. Kiel: Will this require an amendment to the salary ordinance?

Koronka:

It will. Yes.

Mr. DiMartino:

It'll be effective immediately, right?

Koronka: Well, we would have to make that change for probably the next revision.

Mr. Novak: I believe, if I'm not mistaken, didn't we talk that it would be effective July 1st?

Ms. Thomas: Yeah, I think so. Right.

Mr. Novak: I think because there was a period of time there, they didn't want it to be effective immediately. They wanted to, because there's some restructuring things that have to take place, so I think it was July 1st.

Mr. Yagelski: Sorry, maybe I'm a little confused.

With the statement that was made, I thought we were going to pay a little bit more money for the person that we're bringing with the education, not for anybody existing right now.

Mr. DiMartino:

That is the person with the education. That's the person that... Vacari has the bachelor, yes, he has all those requirements.

Yagelski: Okay, we brought him in under the salary we had, but now we're saying that we're revaluing to the higher level, right?

Koronka: So Paul started as a soil and water gentleman that ended up absorbing a portion of the MS4 program when we split it three ways. And now it's looking to expand everything under him.

Mr. Yagelski:

All right. So the one last question I had is, that this came out as an unclassified position, this was not?

Koronka:

Is there a dollar value affiliated with it? It's \$15,000, that's all.

Mr. Novak: It's not an additional appropriation, it's just restructuring of the money that's there. Okay.

Mr. Koronka: All right. One more question.

Mr. Yagelski: I'm sorry, I had a question in reference to this.

Last month's meeting, there was some people, brought it up, just came up here. When we make these resolutions for this salary ordinance, to us, it's just a technicality. Somebody said that we sort of just blatantly voted for it last month's meeting. I had two people ask me why we were so nonchalant about it, because we didn't really see it. I'm just saying, as long as everybody understands, it's just a technicality for what we have for the state, for us to do it for statute.

Mr. Koronka: That's all. So I have a motion and a second. Any further discussion? With that, all in favor?

Councilmember	Kessler	Kiel	Koronka	Mollenauer	Novak	Pressel	Yagelski	Total	
AYE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	7	✓
NAY								0	

Mr. Koronka: Transfer of riverboat funds to rainy day fund per ordinance in the amount of \$337,005.64.

Mr. Novak made a motion to approve and it was supported by Mr. Kiel. Motion passed as follows:

Councilmember	Kessler	Kiel	Koronka	Mollenauer	Novak	Pressel	Yagelski	Total	
AYE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	7	✓
NAY								0	

Mr. Koronka: Now we're on to treasurer's office first or second deputy discussion. Mr. Barenie, thank you for coming this evening.

Mr. Koronka: So just to kind of preface this a little bit, there was some questions came up after the January meeting to where you approached us asking the backfill position and that being a first deputy, which was clearly called out in the request during the meeting. As it was reviewed, we went through the salary grid and we saw that the opening was actually in a second deputy position, not a first deputy position. So, if you could just speak to that for us a little bit and figure out where we're gonna go from here.

Treasurer Dan Barenie:

Sure, I'll give you a little clarity. After the fall election, I went back to 2019, and I read all the audit reports that the state did from 19 to 22, because that was what was available. Wrote down all the areas that I think needed improving. Then I went into the office and I met with each employee, and I took the job description that I received from the HR department, said this is what you're being paid for, are you doing the job descriptions? And I went through that with each person in the office, and there was some that were doing it and then some that really weren't doing it. So we did a little restructuring because some people weren't doing what their job title was. So that's how this come about, the first deputy became available. You have to understand that the treasurer's office deals with \$690 million worth of transactions a year. So your chief deputy and your first deputy may as well look as the guardrails for our office. They're the ones that do the checks and balances and dot the I's and T's to make sure the office is doing what it should be doing for the public of LaPorte County. I don't believe that LaPorte County has had a strong first deputy in quite a while doing what the job description I received from HR is. And I think that's been one of the problems with the office. The chief deputy cannot handle that much on their own. It's just too much for one person to do. They need a strong first deputy to back them up to do it. So with the restructuring, that was the job that was open. We need someone to back up my chief deputy to make sure the office is staying on track. I mean, the right and left guardrail keeps treasurer's down the path of success. That's basically what it boils down to.

Mr. Koronka: Any questions from the council?

Mr. Novak: So, you have this person already or this is a new position?

Mr. Barenie: There was always a first deputy in the office. That person that was in that current position wasn't doing that job. So, they actually were doing a different job. So, we restructured and now that we need to, what that entailed was that first deputy position open because that job is not being fulfilled yet.

Mr. Mollenhauer: So, it's just restructuring, you're not putting a new person in anywhere, or is there a difference in pay?

Mr. Barenie: Yeah, I guess there would be a difference in pay.

Mr. Mollenhauer: So, you got that money in your budget?

Mr. Barenie: Yes.

Mr. Novak: Why is there a difference in pay for your first deputy but not the previous first deputy? And is what, what did you, is the first deputy now the second deputy?

Mr. Barenie: I can't answer why the pay was how it was.

Mr. Novak: So, it was the first deputy, now the second deputy.

Barenie: Correct.

Mr. Novak: And that person didn't get the pay that the new person's getting.

Barenie: And they were not doing the work either.

Mr. Novak: So they didn't, but they never got the pay.

Barenie: No, correct. They did not. Right.

Mr. Novak: But, but the job description calls for that, the job that pay you're saying.

Barenie: If you follow the job description, yes. I can give you a job description if you want. I got copies right here.

Mr. Novak: No, I don't need them.

Mr. Yagelski: I feel like I understand. I'm sorry. So, you're just moving people around. Nobody has been additionally hired?

Barenie: Correct. We had one leave, and that's why there was a vacancy. Right. We're not hiring a new person. No, it's OK. Thank you.

Mr. Novak: You didn't bring a new person in?

Barenie: We're not hiring a whole new position. Correct.

Mr. Novak: You replaced, you filled in vacancy. Correct.

Barenie: Correct.

Mr. Novak: But you've already filled it.

Barenie: Correct.

Mr. Novak: Even though you asked for the second deputy.

Barenie: No, I did not. I asked for the first deputy.

Mr. Novak: But there wasn't a vacancy at that time.

Barenie: Yes, there was.

Mr. Mollenhauer: Why, because you moved that first deputy to the second?

Barenie: Yeah. When I met with everybody, we reorganized the office, basically.

Mr. Yagelski: So that person took a loss of pay then?

Barenie: No, they did not because that person, I don't know, I don't want to, you know what I'm saying? I don't want to reveal stuff that I shouldn't. But everyone is doing, they weren't.

Mr. Novak: Okay, the first deputy, what does it pay? COMOT VI.

Barenie: Right.

Mr. Yagleski: Is what? What is the second deputy pay?

Barenie: COMOT V.

Yagelski: So, somebody had to be reduced.

Koronka: Except for on a job description, excuse me, the salary grid, there was all three positions were Comot V's. Correct.

Mr. Novak: Correct. And there's a job description for a second deputy. Is that a COMOT V? Second deputy is a COMOT V?

Barenie: Yes, sir.

Koronka: Mr. Auditor.

Mr. Novak: Even though they hadn't been in a long time.

Auditor Rosenbaum: I just want to add this fact. The person that was moved from, that was a deputy one, was paid as a COMOT 5 for all the years that she was in that position. So in order to get it to a Comet 6, you would have to go through the job re-evaluation committee. That is it. It's simple. That's what the records show.

Mr. Novak: That's what the salary ordinance shows? Yes.

Mr. Yagelski: Right now, currently, there's no loss of anything, no matter, you don't have to even say, they're all fives right now. One and two are fives.

Mr. Novak: His one is a six.

Mr. Rosenbaum: Not according to our records.

Mr. Novak: No, what I'm saying is the one they brought in, they're paying as a six, even though the salary ordinance says they're fives. I can't pay anything more. Than a five, but that's all it is. It has to go through the job re-evaluation committee.

Mr. Novak: And the salary ordinance would need to be changed.

Mr. Rosenbaum: Yes, once it gets through the job re-evaluation committee, and it also can go, you know, and you can make the change and make it retroactive. But right now I have to go with what, where we are.

Mr. Mollenhauer: Has this, has it been requested already to go to a job evaluation committee? No, I can't speak for that.

Koronka: Well, I think that's part of why I brought this here is to make sure that we got all the steps lined out so we can get stuff resolved. So if it's not so inappropriate, I would just say, Ms. Thomas, if we could put this on to the next job valuation committee agenda so that we can get this righted properly, because I see where you're at. We have a grid that says five. We have a job description that says six. Let's make sure it meets six and get it resolved.

Mr. Barenie: And my whole goal is to make sure everyone in the office is doing the job that they're being paid to do. That's the whole goal. And for whatever reason, some things weren't happening, and I think that's part of the reason the office didn't do as well. And it's not none of them.

Mr. Novak: Regardless of that, your process, you didn't follow it. You kind of jumped the gun a little bit. Well, I was working with HR. I've only been here, you know, less than three months.

Mr. Barenie: So I thought I was doing it right. I've met with HR two or three times at three or four times, actually. So I thought I was following the process. Right. I come in to you guys and told the office that we wanted to fill and why I actually said the job description to the president of the council, so we knew exactly what was going on. So I thought I was doing everything right. No one said anything different to me, so. Mr.

Mr. Novak: Mr. Attorney, how does this, if we have a job description, it's 2019, is that what you said?

Mr. Koronka:
2009, 2006, somewhere in there.

Mr. Novak: An old job description and the salary ordinance has been changed to reflect different things.

Mr. Barenie: Somewhere along the line, your paperwork didn't catch up with each other, apparently.

Mr. Biege: Well, the salary ordinance gets approved year so that hasn't been updated since oh no I think it comes down to the job evaluation I mean the committee right.

Mr. Yagelski: One way easily would be that we didn't that just because you put that down as a job at six and the council disapproves it that's how it probably happened we probably didn't approve it in the state of the fives that's how it happened I agree that's how it can be different yep that makes sense great and you don't have you don't have to prove everything we don't have to approve everything the committee says.

Mr. Koronka: True. Okay. So I think we've sufficiently covered for everybody. We'll get that committee. Monique, is it possible that that meeting could occur between now and the next council meeting so we can get this resolved at the next one? Awesome. Thank you.
You have the job description for one intern? I'll do one person, too.

Mr. Barenie: And it was advertised as a comment six, just so you know that too. Appreciate it. Thank you.

Mr. Koronka:

All right. Moving on to appropriations, transfers and requests and to just to add a little clarity for a moment. Folks, we are going to have to either discuss and hold over to the next meeting or provide motions of support for these individual items as we had a mishap regarding advertising. So my effort here is to make sure we get everything in March adequately discussed to where we can fast track through those in April and manage the April appropriations as necessary. Understood? Okay. With that, I have an item that we tabled last month. I've entertained a motion to pull this off the table.

Motion from Mr. Yugielski, second from Mr. Novak. All in favor of removing the LaPorte County Auditor permission to appropriate funds from the Auditor's Ineligible Deductions Fund 12-16 off the table? All in favor say aye. Aye. (7-0) Opposed? Thank you. Now I'll entertain a motion or any discussion, I guess, at this point.

Mr. Auditor, if you wouldn't mind.

Mr. Rosenbaum: At the last meeting, we started a discussion, but then there was a mention that I would give you a list. And so I provided you a list. These are some of the things that we went ahead when we had a motion of support and we stopped purchasing anything once we wanted to, and make sure that everything went through. There are additional things that we still need. We have some three computers that are very slow. So those are some of the things that we'd be adding on the unexpended balance. We also talked about moving and we did, you approved it to move a Comet-5 person instead of taking it out of the insurance fund, which is, we weren't exactly sure how well that was being funded. And that's what this person's to come in and do this insurance and we figured out what it would be for the remainder of the year, and it comes out to just close to about \$61,000, but that was at full months. We're no longer at full months, but we're ready to hire somebody immediately. Okay, we've already selected the person. They don't know it yet. We're just waiting for it to be approved here. So we figured that \$60,000 would cover it, plus the \$20,000 that we originally asked for, and that's why we came up with the \$80,000. Last month, when we threw out a number, we threw out a number of \$70,000, but that was just because we hadn't had a chance to calculate what the salary is.

Mr. Koronka: Okay, any questions?

Motion of support. Motion by Mr. Novak, supported by Mr. Mollenhauer.

Any discussion? All right, all in favor? Aye. Opposed?

Councilmember	Kessler	Kiel	Koronka	Mollenhauer	Novak	Pressel	Yagelski	Total	
AYE	X	X	X	X	X	X		6	✓
NAY							X	1	

Mr. Koronka: The vote shows 6-1.

Thank you. All right, we are now down to requesting additional appropriations for DEFC from 2024.

Mr. Auditor: DEF Consulting, just for short, was hired by Tim Staboszz. This person had been working with a company by the name of SEH, and Mr. Stabosz wanted to retain the person. A contract, an engagement contract came in, and on April, and Mr. Stabosz was told by the attorney to stop because this person was already working, wasn't supposed to be working on anything, and then, but the person continued to work because this was something that needed to be done. Come July, the contract was brought up again, but it was on August 7th at the commissioner meeting that they denied the contract. I'm not going to go into all the things that were said about it, but they denied the contract. This person continued to work. This person did help put together, although the filing was four weeks late, they did perform this work. So therefore, in speaking, and unfortunately, he's no longer on the line with us. At the time when I spoke to the attorney, this was really at the beginning of the year, because I didn't know how to pay this. I went to the commissioners and they refused. I could not get two signatures for them to put it through claims, so therefore I have to come to you. And Mr. DiMartino felt that this person had done the honest work that was requested of him, and therefore that we should be paying him. So that's why I brought it up to tonight, so that we can move this forward and get this done. We are, and that's all I have, but you know, I don't want, like I said, I don't want to go into too many details, but there's a lot more and we just, you know, give you enough.

Mr. Koronka: Okay. Thank you. It looks like someone has a question.

Mr. Kiel: Not so much. You're just looking for a motion of support, right?

Mr. Koronka: Well, we, that's what we laid out for this to be.

Mr. Rosenbaum: We just want to get it paid. The invoice was dated December 30th, and the work ended in August.

Mr. Kiel: I'd make a motion of support to recommend the payment of Mr. Bodich for this work. Is that a sufficient motion? The motion was supported by Mr. Mollenhauer.

Mr. Koronka: Any further discussion? With that, all in favor? Opposed? Motion carried 5-2.

Councilmember	Kessler	Kiel	Koronka	Mollenhauer	Novak	Pressel	Yagelski	Total	
AYE	X	X	X	X		X		5	✓
NAY					X		X	2	

Mr. Koronka: All right, now we're down to community crossings matches from Mitch Bishop County Planning I know that Mr. Sullivan is here in his stead. Request to appropriate \$1,699,407.48 and a permission to spend for matching Community Crossing's grants. We approved with a motion of support coming from Motor Vehicle Highway, account 1176. Yes, this is Jay Sullivan, County Engineer. Motion to support?

Motion to support made Mr. Yagelski by and supported by Mr. Novak.

Councilmember	Kessler	Kiel	Koronka	Mollenhauer	Novak	Pressel	Yagelski	Total	
AYE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	7	✓
NAY								0	

Mr. Koronka: Requests for additional appropriation for fairgrounds improvements to the amount of \$150,000.

Joy Ziegler, FMUC manager: I'm not requesting as much as that guy just did, so should be a little quicker. I'll work up to that amount. Now I think you guys have the list of what we're looking to do this year. We're not doing any major projects, just trying to keep up on some housekeeping and some maintenance so we're into bigger issues down the road.

Mr. Koronka: Any questions from the list of projects?

Mr. Mollenhauer: Roughly \$192,000, but I see you're asking for \$150,000, right? Correct.

Ms. Ziegler: We do have some buy-in from Pioneer Land. I'm working with some of their stuff, too. They'll be contributing some funds. The amount hasn't been set yet, but they'll be contributing into that. Well as we're hoping the fair association will as well and then we'll cover what we need to do to get that done. So, this is just a tentative plan on what we're looking at but yes, only asking for \$150,000.

Motion to support was made by Mr. Mollenhauer, supported by Mr. Kessler & Mr. Pressel. Any discussion?

Mr. Kiel: Has the work for this already been contracted out?

Ms. Ziegler: No but we've gotten bid for several of those, but the pricing too on different ones. So we've gotten bids for each one coming in, but we haven't had it contracted yet.

Mr. Novak: The milk cabin replacement has started. Yes, because we had to do that to get it out of the way for fare.

Mr. Koronka:

Right. Any further discussion?

Mr. Kiel: The only thing that gives me pause with this, I feel like it needs to be said, we're looking at a particularly large fiscal problem later this year. This is a hefty chunk of money. I'm not saying I'm opposed to it, but we may end up regretting this later.

Mr. Novak: If we don't do it, we may be regretting it also.

Ms. Ziegler: These are going to lead to bigger problems down the road, and it's going to be a lot higher dollar mark to fix what's going on out there for security purposes, especially with the fencing and all of that in there. It can exceed way more than \$150,000.

Mr. Kessler: And with all the money we've already spent inside the community building let's get a roof on it to make sure we don't have water stains and everything else.

Mr. Novak: And there are things that FMEC has been paying for with rental and different things so there's a substantial amount of money that's correct.

Mr. Mollenhauer: Yeah I see some things are safety issues too and of course always concerned with that fair time.

Ms. Ziegler: Absolutely and not just fair time the rest of the year too there's a lot going on out there we've already looked I've looked at the calendar the beginning of the year and even now it's more so So there's less than quarter of the weekends that are available out there. So there's a lot of people that use that grounds. I don't think everyone realizes that. I've been out there my whole life and I didn't realize how much it was used either. So there's a lot of people that go out there. So definitely safety is highest importance. Yep.

Councilmember	Kessler	Kiel	Koronka	Mollenhauer	Novak	Pressel	Yagelski	Total	
AYE	X	X	X	X	X	X		6	✓
NAY							X	1	

Mr. Koronak: Thank you. Okay. With that all in favor of motion to support.

Mr. Koronka: A request from E911 requesting additional appropriation for a new vehicle for \$49,500. \$145. Mr. Houston.

Mr. Novak: Before you go into a lot, I'd request to have this item held over just so that with the information that we received from Enterprise last year, I'd like to talk to them to see if this is something that we could do a little pilot program with, with a few cars, because I think there's a couple other offices that are looking for something. So since we have to hold it over anyway, is, but I need to reach out to Enterprise to make sure they're willing to do a smaller number of cars than the entire fleet.

Mr. Mollenhauer: Before it gets tabled, I'd like to ask a couple of questions too.

Mr. Novak: Absolutely. I didn't motion to table. It was just a redirect.

Mr. Mollenhauer: I guess my first question would be, well, first thing, I think it's ridiculous. A brand new SUV, \$49,500 or \$545 for a vehicle that, that kind of money to run some errands and that. Did you check into pickup trucks?

Ms. Huston: If you, if we get a pickup truck, Mike, it would have to have a cap on the back of the truck this way. Well, it's not impossible, but would it be additional expense?

Mr. Mollenhauer: Much cheaper than \$49,000.

Ms. Huston: I don't know that that's true. Any vehicle is expensive these days, but, and I'm not sure that that's true, that it would be...

Mr. Mollenhauer: What kind of things are being hauled in it?

Ms. Huston: All kinds of tools.

Mr. Mollenhauer: So you think a \$49,500 vehicle should be used to haul tools?

Ms. Huston: Well, it's better than the one that we have now with 160,000 miles on it.

Mr. Mollenhauer: Well, my suggestion would be you'd get another one from the Sheriff's Department.

Ms. Huston: The Sheriff's doesn't have another one, Mike.

Mr. Mollenhauer: They've held two over, I understand, so I think you've got to hold three.

Mr. Koronka: Okay, folks, let's dial it down just a little bit. I'm sorry, but let's keep the banter going one at a time. Mr. Yagelski.

Mr. Yagleski: Yeah, I'm not, I think that if you try to tell the public this conversation, that you actually can read this statement. I'm not saying that nobody needs a new vehicle by all means, but statements were made that we get hand-me-down vehicles. There's nothing wrong with that when you have, when there's non-emergency cars. First one had 110,000 was a Chevy Tahoe 2012. This one does have 110,000. To 60,000 miles on a two. This thing about miracles, Ned, I'm not quite understanding, because the miles are not that high. We change oil regularly, batteries, transmission fluid, everything. We do all that maintenance to work on it. I've just traded my last truck in for 240,000 miles on it. I get it. The one I bought here right now is 130,000 miles as of 2018, Ford F-150. If the vehicles needs to be replaced, it doesn't necessarily mean we can't just go on the market and buy a used vehicle or something like this. This is not a requirement for some high-speed chase or for any emergency type of situations. And, or like Mr. Molnar brought up, again, if this particular car needs to be replaced, I'm okay with that. But these miles are not unusual for cars, unless our county only picks the lemons. We must be the only county, because I purchased a truck that drives just fine with that mileage on it. Quite understanding when they come up with this story to come up with. Because this hand-me-down was not a big deal. Because I remember when we gave it, it was \$110,000. That's a low mileage car. Just for clarification, this vehicle didn't go straight to the 911 center. No, no. This vehicle went through the other offices, the commissioner's office. The commissioner's office dumped it while I'm not here.

Ms. Huston: And I believe maintenance also had it prior to us.

Mr. Novak: So it's, it's been around. So I'm saying, so if we can just scope it.

Mr. Mollenhauer: I don't think that's the argument it's been around and it's wore out, but like Mark, uh, Councilman Yagelski just mentioned the county highway, the county department, the sheriff's department does the mechanics out there. And I think we all know it and do an extremely good job of maintaining these vehicles.

Ms. Huston: Not, not saying that they don't, they have said that the car's on its, you know, that car.

Mr. Mollenhauer: Yes. But they're the sheriff's trading in nine. Other vehicles. Now that's what I'm talking about. I think, and I believe the commissioners are holding two of those. So evidently they're not junk. I think we could have probably hold three would be my guess. And now I'm asking is maybe you should look into that. And if it would be a new vehicle, I would think a pickup truck would be a lot more reasonable than cost. In fact, I know that probably 10, \$15,000 cheaper, and that'd be brand new crew cap, just like they buy. And, and, uh, you could put a cap on it or, whatever for a lot less than \$49,545.

Ms. Huston: So you are, let me just to clarify, you are requesting us to get a bid on a pickup truck with a cab for less money. Cap. Cap. Cap, I'm sorry. Cap.

Mr. Mollenhauer: I think you should look into it. On the back for less than Councilman Novak just mentioned.

Ms. Huston: And new or used.

Mr. Mollenhauer: Pardon? New or used. Either way. To be cheaper than \$49,000. Have you looked into any of that?

Mr. Huston: I have not looked into a pickup truck, no. You know the Sheriff's Department gets them, and they get them for a reason, because they're- Is the Sheriff's Department, are they trading one in?

Mr. Mollenhauer: I don't know, but- My understanding that they checked into, I don't believe there's much left after the commissioners take the two, but he's coming up, he can ask him. They're trading SUVs, in and you got an SUV now, and evidently it was satisfactory. And like I say, you just said you put tools in the back of it. You're hauling tools and you want to haul tools in a brand new Chevy, um, Tahoe \$49,545. That's ridiculous.

Mr. Koronka: So let's talk scope for a moment just to scope the problem right now. We've talked about, you know, the expense and But what do we need it for? If you could walk through daily use, weekly use, what's stored in it and what's the purpose?

Ms. Huston: He stores tools and an air conditioning system in it. He goes to the towers and looks at the towers. If they're overheating, you make sure that they aren't. The way it used to be is they would just call Chicago or ChiCom and it would be an expense for them to come and take a look and see what's going on. Matt goes and routinely checks our towers. He also goes to the different departments if they need phone service to hook up their phones. He works on the radios. He does quite a bit other than just his job in the 911 center.

Mr. Kiel: So this isn't a pool vehicle. This isn't a go from here to Michigan City courthouse. It's basically a service vehicle.

Ms. Huston: A service vehicle, yes. We could get one for less than 49,000. I'm not opposed to that. We just need a dependable vehicle. If a pickup truck is better with a cab on the back, I'm sorry, is it cab? Cap on the back. We're not opposed to that. I'm not opposed to it. I haven't checked into it, so I have no idea what they cost.

Mr. Kiel: Is this a take-home vehicle or is this just purely for service calls? He does take it home. Five miles from the center.

Mr. Novak: He's on call.

Ms. Huston: He is on call. He comes in at the center. Or goes to the tower. Or if there is a problem, they call Matt.

Mr. Koronka: So what's the pleasure of the council?

Mr. Yagelski:

Motion to table supported by Mr. Mollenhauer. Vote was as follows:

Councilmember	Kessler	Kiel	Koronka	Mollenhauer	Novak	Pressel	Yagelski	Total	
AYE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	7	✓
NAY								0	

Ms. Huston: I have a question. Since you've tabled it, I can't ask a question?

Mr. Yagelski: Nope. About this particular agenda item? No, unfortunately, because it's been tabled.

Ms. Huston: Okay.

Mr. Kiel: Feel free to reach out to us after the meeting.

Mr. Koronka: Thank you, Barb.

Mr. Koronka: All right. Laporte County Clerk of the County Election Board tabled from the February meeting for an appropriation request of \$26,221.21. Entertain a motion to remove from the table.

Mr. Novak made the motion to remove from the table. Second by Mr. Kiel.

Mr. Koronka: Motion and second to remove All in favor? Aye. Opposed? Okay.

Mr. Koronka: Mrs. Stevens? I'm here.

Mr. Koronka: So, last month we talked about this request for there was an invoice from refresh my memory.

Ms. Stevens: I believe we had one from no ink and one from micro vote.

Mr. Koronka: Sounds right, just working my section of the packet.

Mr. Koronka: Now these were, these were planned.

Ms. Stevens: These came out of the blue.

Mr. Koronka: What, what do we have? So I see one for 13,210 and 50 cents and another one for 12,000 totaling \$25,000. \$26,210.50. And here you're asking for \$26,221.20. I believe there was something to do with the pay, somebody's pay.

Heather Stevens: Sorry, I'm home with a stomach flu, so I don't have everything with me.

Mr. Koronka: Please stay there. As I'm looking here, the email from Mrs. Barenie.

Mr. Yagelski: How did we end up tabling this? I'm sorry, I may have forgot. I apologize.

Mr. Koronka: Because the numbers weren't adding up and it wasn't for what we advertised.

Mr. Yagelski: Thank you. You're correct. Appreciate it. Thank you.

Mr. Koronka: All right. The concern during the meeting also was the fact that we that there's three recommended accounts that we transfer from in order to bridge this gap but that only amounts to twenty five thousand and five hundred was leaving seven hundred and twenty one dollars you just added the two together right but there was a third item that's not including these two invoices. Heather, regardless, since we're not able to actually appropriate the funds today, if we were to keep this for the April meeting in order to have line out all the concerns, is there anything that would be, Problematic for you or your vendors? No, that'll be fine.

Mr. Yagekski then made a motion to table. It was supported by Mr. Mollenhauer.

Mr. Novak: We did motions and support for them last month.

Motion to table was supported by all members. The matter was held over to the April meeting.

Mr. Koronka: The LaPorte County Sheriff requesting appropriation for vehicles from Lit Public Safety in the amount of \$665,000.

Sheriff Heeg: Good evening Councilman, Ron Heeg here.

Sheriff Heeg: This is just our yearly vehicle allotment that we come to. We average about 13 vehicles a year. We're not, we're asking for an amount not to exceed \$665,000 because we don't have trade-in values yet for our vehicles. Last year we had a pretty good return on our used vehicles when we traded it in. I think we average about \$5,000 a vehicle. We're hoping to get that much so this our actual expenditure will probably be less than this. We went with the 665 due to the fact that we don't have those trade-in values yet.

Mr. Yagelski: Sheriff Heeg, every year you've always given me the information, given us the information. You have the information on all the used vehicles like we have in the past.

Sheriff Heeg: Yeah I can get that to you.

Mr. Yagelski: Perfect. Thank you. And so nothing will be decided till we look over the vehicles, right?

Sheriff Heeg: As far as I know, nothing will.

Mr. Yagelski: There's not going to be a question. Yes, absolutely. Okay. Yeah. And with this, because we don't have the trade-in values yet for the used vehicles. Again, this was the 665 is going to be a little bit high case and this will help us if we decide we want to hold another vehicle back or two. We have identified two that we are going to turn over to the commissioner's office.

Mr. Koronka: Is there a motion for support.

A motion of support was made by Mr. Yagelski and supported by Mr. Novak.

A discussion took place on the LIT Public Safety being appropriated for the amount necessary to purchase the cars and also the remaining budget of the Fund.

The council asked to be sent the current budget for LIT Public Safety. Mr. Rosenbaum said he will send it.

Councilmember	Kessler	Kiel	Koronka	Mollenauer	Novak	Pressel	Yagelski	Total	
AYE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	7	✓
NAY								0	

Mr. Koronka: Laporte County EMS requesting additional appropriation from the lit public safety for overtime in the amount of \$150,000.

Brian Beach, Assistant Director of EMS: So yeah, we're looking for \$150,000 for overtime. We've already gone through almost \$200,000 so far this year. Currently have started the year off with two people in FMLA. Both came back, have two more in FMLA now, two more starting in May. Plus all of the call-offs, we had a stint of like three weeks where everyone was sick, I think. So we've been paying off a little bit. And we got one on military active duty.

Mr. Koronka: So this is entirely just to keep the assigned rigs on the road, not to have excess rigs. Correct.

Mr. Novak: I haven't spoke with Eric extensively about this at different times, and I know others have also. With the individual that's on active duty, we're saving his pay because when they're on active duty, everybody understands that. We don't short his pay. He's making more on active duty than he would at the EMS. Yes, we're not paying him out of his salary.

Mr. Beach: That's actually in his pocket.

Mr. Novak: So it's being pocketed. So at this time, I'd like to make a motion to reduce the 150,000 to 75,000, see where it falls with the money that they have left over in their 100 account and see where it is and come back and we can make it right. Cause his salary is 72,000. So it's going to put them right near that.

Mr. Novak: I'll make a motion of support. It was supported by Mr. Kiel.

Mr. Kiel: On this number here that you have for us, 150,000, that was to finish the year, correct?

Mr. Beach: So we were hoping, so predictions on last year, we ended up around this time again, maybe one month later, we ended up in the exact same boat. We came to you guys for 150, somehow we made it through the year, not sure how, but we did. We were kind of looking at the same thing. And to answer your question, Mr. Novak, Right now he, I think you said 72,000. I believe that's pretty accurate. I'm not looking at it. So, but he is due to come back October. So we will pay him for a few months of pay. Um, right now I would say his surplus that we have sitting that we know of right now is probably around 20,000, maybe just over just so you guys are aware. Okay.

Mr. Kiel: I guess I would just ask, make sure you keep an eye on it so that we don't get too close to the end of the year and then find out that there's a large amount of overtime that's needed.

Mr. Koronka: Definitely keep an eye on it. Absolutely. Call for the vote.

Mr. Rosenbaum: Yeah, I'd like to add the following thought. Knowing that we're going to continually getting money, the \$707,000 a month into this, knowing that he's already stripped out at most of his budget amount, and therefore he can't be spending any more for that overtime that he's already spent in the first four months, three months. Okay? So there's room there. When I told you that what they've been spending every month, that actually goes down because he can't spend it. Have room for the full 150 for the rest of the year. I don't know how to picture it without showing you layers of it. He doesn't get to come up here and talk that often. You can do it, you know. I've been there just trying to make your life easier.

Mr. Koronka: So we have a motion of support from Mr. Novak, second by Mr. Kiel for \$75,000. All in favor?

Councilmember	Kessler	Kiel	Koronka	Mollenauer	Novak	Pressel	Yagelski	Total	
AYE	X	X	X	X		X		5	✓
NAY					X		X	2	

Mr. Koronka: So if we would, for the April agenda, please list it as \$75,000 instead.

Mr. Koronka: While you're still here, permission to spend from public outreach, \$10,000.

Mr. Beach: So can I lump those two together, the next two?

Mr. Koronka: Sure, let's talk about them both.

Mr. Beach: So we have public outreach for \$10,000 and we've got permission to spend from donation account for \$2,500. So this is going to be funds that are going to get us through EMS week. It'll get us through EMS week. It'll get us through fair week. All of our PR stuff we do during the fair. Any of our, we've been doing some career fairs lately. So all of our PR stuff for that. And then also EMS World Expo in Indianapolis, which we're attending this year. Visitor's Bureau was gracious enough to donate \$5,000 to get us a booth. So that way we can represent the county, represent LaPorte County EMS, kind of sell the county, sell service to everyone else, essentially in the world, because it's a world expo. Okay.

Mr. Koronka: When it comes to the public outreach stuff, when you say the county fair and those sorts of things, what is it that you're looking to gain? You don't have currently any openings. Are you looking to develop those? Of the workforce in order to backfill upcoming retirements?

Mr. Beach: Yeah, so hopefully, I mean, unfortunately in this line of work, people come, people go. I mean, we try to retain as best as possible. I don't want to beat you guys up on money, but obviously money plays a big role in it. And when someone can go somewhere else for more, that's what happens. Sometimes I feel like we're a stepping stone for them. We train them and they ship off. So we try to figure out a way, even with some of these community outreaches or like the expo, trying to get that buy-in, trying to get them to retain them, things like that. So the more we can put ourselves out there, the better we can sell ourselves, the better off we're going to be.

Motion of Support was made by Mr. Novak and supported by Mr. Mollenhauer.
Any further discussion?

On the question:

Mr. Kiel: Are we sure these are permission to and not an appropriation?

Mr. Novak: It's out of their ordinance. You need to double-check that by next month.

Mr. Rosenbaum: Yeah. We'll work with them.

Mr. Koronka: Okay, whatever. So do we want to treat this as a support?

Mr. Novak: My motion is a motion of support because you're not going to spend it between now next month if we can wait.

Mr. Koronka: Jane Bernard animal shelter requesting permission to appropriate \$35,000 to fund 4100 for animal shelter donations into other services and charges.

Good evening. Good evening, gentlemen., Rachel Delaney, Director for Gene Bernard Animal Shelter.

Mr. Koronka

So you broke down everything here. It looks like there's a surplus in addition to these individual amounts that you have for about \$4,000. I'm assuming that's to cover any other minor costs here and there, and that makes sense when it comes to the donation account. With that, is there any other

Mr. Novak: Motion to support and seconded by Mr. Kessler and Mr. Mollenhauer.

Mr. Koronka: All in favor? Aye. Opposed?

Councilmember	Kessler	Kiel	Koronka	Mollenhauer	Novak	Pressel	Yagelski	Total	
AYE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	7	✓
NAY								0	

Mr. Mollenhauer: I'd just like to mention I've heard nothing but good things coming that's coming out of the animal shelter now.

Ms. Delaney: Very good, thank you very much.

Mr. Rosenbaum: And she'd welcome all the volunteers.

Mr. Koronka: You and your staff, yes. All right, now we're down to LaPorte County Circuit Court requesting permission to appropriate Fund 2503 Domestic Relations, \$50,000 into 2503, 30,135, and 273.

Mr. Rosenbaum: There was nothing budgeted, so this is a way to budget. And that's why it's an appropriation. And just to let you know, there's \$129,986 in there.

Mr. Koronka: Motion to support by Mr. Novak and supported by Mr. Kessler. I'll call for the vote. All in favor? Aye.

Council Comments:

Mr. Mollenhauer: Nothing

Mr. Kiel: As we're nearing budget season, we have talked periodically about doing an efficiency study. If there's interest in doing that, and we want it done before the budget season is over, probably ought to get started on it pretty soon. So I'm just throwing that out there to start the conversation. I don't know if there's other feelings about whether we want to go that direction, how we go about doing it. I want to make sure I put it out there before we run out of time. Is there more than one place that does that?

A discussion took place.

Mr. Novak: I just want to send out a condolence to the family of Rob Schaefer. He was a retired Michigan city firefighter and he taught the fire science class at, what do you call it? Smith Center. Mr. Schaefer did not wake up this morning, so condolence. He was going to be 57 next month, way too young. And he was, I worked with him for a long, a lot of years fire department and condolences to his family.

No further comments were made.

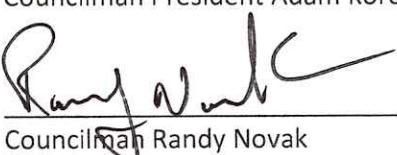
ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 pm on a motion to adjourn by Mr. Kessler and supported by Mr. Yagelski.

EXAMINED & APPROVED BY THE LA PORTE COUNTY COUNCIL this 28TH day of April, 2025.



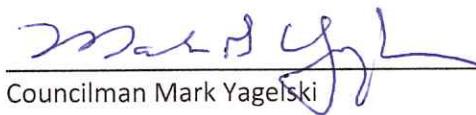
Councilman President Adam Koronka



Councilman Randy Novak



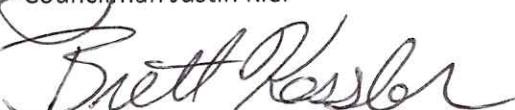
Councilwoman Mike Mollenhauer



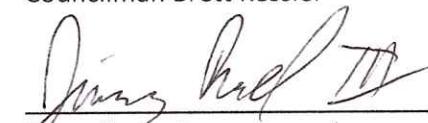
Councilman Mark Yagelski



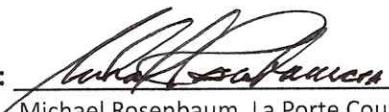
Councilman Justin Kiel



Councilman Brett Kessler



Councilman Jimmy Pressel

ATTEST: 
Michael Rosenbaum, La Porte County Auditor